

VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

Violence is not new to America. White men of European stock seized the lands of indigenous Indians with a ferocity which endure until our own times. The institution of slavery shaped the character of the nation and leaves its mark everywhere today. Countless "local" wars were mounted throughout the Twentieth Century to protect commercial interests abroad. Finally, the United States emerged at Hiroshima as the arbiter of world affairs and self-appointed policeman of the globe.

What is new in 1969 is that for the first time many affluent Americans are learning very little of this disconcerting picture. The revelations of atrocities by U.S. servicemen in Viet Nam illustrate not isolated acts inadvertently committed by disciplined troops, but the general pattern of the war, for its character is genocidal. It has been fought from the air with napalm and fragmentation bombs, helicopter gunships and pellet bombs, the spraying of poisons on thousands of acres of crops and the use of enormous high explosive weapons. Civilian areas have been declared "free fire zones" and the policy has been one of mechanical slaughter. On the ground, "search and destroy" missions have used gas in lethal quantities, the killing of prisoners, and systematic interrogation under electrical and other tortures.

Senator Kennedy has released figures given to him as chairman of the Senate refugees subcommittee. He says that there have been one million civilian casualties in South Viet Nam alone since 1965, of which 300,000 have been killed. In the *London Times* of December 3, Washington correspondent Louis Heren compares such slaughter to the Nazi record in Eastern Europe: "These are terrible figures, proportionally perhaps comparable to the losses suffered by the Soviet Union in the Second World War." Two days earlier, the same paper's correspondent in Saigon, Fred Emery, reported: "What begins as a firefight in a hamlet continues compulsively long after opposing fire has been suppressed. With such appalling fire discipline among all units in Viet Nam, it is only exhaustion of ammunition that brings engagements to an end."

This is precisely the picture which emerged from the sessions on the International War Crimes Tribunal in Scandinavia in 1967. The Tribunal heard from former U.S. servicemen of the dropping of Vietnamese prisoners from helicopters,

the killing of prisoners under torture and the shooting on orders of those trying to be accepted as prisoners. All this and much more was known years ago to anyone concerned with the truth. It was certainly known to tens of thousands of troops in Viet Nam. The *London Times'* Saigon correspondent, describing the reactions of recent revelations of Americans in Viet Nam, commented: "...There is a strong undercurrent of knowledge and fear that 'there, but for the grace of God, go I.'"

This is why the prosecution of isolated junior officers is quite inadequate. They are to be made scapegoats. The more wicked war criminals are the highest ranking military and civilian leaders, the architects of the whole genocidal policy. Have we so soon forgotten the regular breakfasts at which, Johnson boasted openly, he and McNamara and their closest colleagues selected the targets for the coming week?

This in turn is why it is ludicrous to suggest that no inquiry should be mounted by anyone associated with the government or armed forces. The whole establishment stands condemned, including those more moderate politicians whose every utterance is still dictated by caution and petty ambition. Goldberg's call for a commission of "concerned patriotic Americans" would be a sublime irrelevance were it not the very means whereby the full horror would be hidden. Only a Pentagon enquiry could do worse. Because I doubt whether an enquiry in the United States would be free from the most severe harassment, I have invited some 15 heads of state around the world to press the U.N. Secretary General to establish any enquiry into war crimes in Viet Nam.

Several American newspapers have observed the reaction to the massacre revelations has been much more rapid and sharp in Western Europe than in the United States. This is highly alarming. The entire American people are now on trial. If there is not a massive moral revulsion at what is being done in their names to the people of Viet Nam, there may be little hope for the future of America. Having lost the will to continue the slaughter is not enough; the people must now repudiate their civil and military leaders.

Reprinted from *Ramparts*,
March 1970

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"GUYS AND DOLLS"

IN PERFORMANCE

MARCH 6 - 11 8:15 PM

OPERAS PROVIDE EVENING OF FUN

By Beverly Wolter
(from Sat. Winston Journal)

"An Evening of Chamber Operas" was an evening of fun last night at the North Carolina School of the Arts.

The students presented excerpts from two operas -- "The Marriage of Figaro" by Mozart and "The Barber of Seville" by Rossini -- and a one-act opera, "Une Education Manque" or "Incomplete Education" by Chabrier.

The operas are comic operas. The students did with them what professional singers almost never succeed in doing -- they made them comic.

Granted the effort involved a certain amount of slapstick, but it was never overdone.

SINGERS ARE GOOD

Besides that, the singers sang and performed very well. Some of them are new to the school's operatic stage, and some are students who have been heard locally in school productions and in other undertakings.

The singers enjoyed excellent support from the orchestra conducted by Norman Johnson. The singers performed against an ingenious set, which with only a few changes served for all three operas. William Beck was the stage director.

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