



The Village of Song My as it was in early March 1968. Even at that time the community had sustained serious damage. An American division's operation there began on March 16 of that year. An alleged massacre of at least 109 civilians followed. Unlike most South Vietnamese villages, Song My had a large number of stucco houses blending with the thatched houses in the village. (Religious News Service)

Chaplains View of My Lai

By FR. PATRICK BURKE
(NC News Service)

Salgon — Although many explanations of what allegedly took place at My Lai on March 16, 1968, may be attempted, no number of explanations can amount to an excuse. This sums up the reaction of United States Army chaplains to the charges of atrocities against Vietnamese civilians.

Vietnamese Catholic bishops and priests hold the same view — that the deliberate killings of civilians is morally wrong and cannot be excused under any circumstances.

The horror of the alleged massacre in the small Vietnamese hamlet is that women, children and old men were said to have been deliberately killed in large numbers. The moral implications of any atrocity, even a single one, are never in doubt.

"We do not measure the gravity of an atrocity by its size. They are all morally wrong," said Father (Lt. Col.) Daniel Byrne of Norwich, Conn., U.S. Army Republic of Vietnam (USARV) deputy command chaplain.

Father William R. Fitzgerald, O.M.I., of Washington, D.C., command chaplain of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) and senior chaplain in Vietnam, said: "If the reports are correct, it means there was a breakdown, a moral collapse. In our character guidance lectures we set ethical standards and in

church we preach Christ crucified." Father Byrne added: "We do not debate the morality of war in general or the morality of any particular war. Our job is to look after the spiritual welfare of the men."

Vietnamese priests, while adamantly maintaining that all atrocities are morally wrong, are skeptical about the numbers. Having lived with war for 23 years, a particularly dirty war, they are shocked to think that such a thing could happen.

Perhaps more than the American chaplains, the Vietnamese suspect that the enemy propaganda machine is working full time to blacken the name of the U.S. soldier as a fighting man who kills indiscriminately.

U.S. chaplains, without exception, also pointed to the moral outrage and said the alleged massacre is getting so much publicity precisely because it is an exception.

Guerrilla warfare is a new experience for military men arriving in South Vietnam for the first time.

If the guerrillas live among the civilian population like fish in water, then inevitably there are going to be civilian casualties. But, there are rules of engagement specifically drawn up to minimize civilian casualties. They are strict, concise and clear. They are adequate for the protection of civilians if they are followed.

If they are deliberately violated

perpetrators are tried and punished.

Chaplains pointed out there are some U.S. soldiers now in prison for deliberate violations of the rules of war as proof that the U.S. military does not condone deliberate violations.

The chaplains pointed out that every U.S. military man arriving in South Vietnam is given two small leaflets. One of them gives nine rules for the proper behavior toward the civilian population. The second one titled "The Enemy in Your Hands," states plainly and unequivocally that U.S. soldiers must comply with the Geneva Prisoner of War Conventions of 1949.

It states: "You cannot and must not" mistreat your prisoner, humiliate or degrade him, take any of his personal effects which do not have a significant military value, refuse him medical treatment if required and available.

The leaflet then very clearly states: "Mistreatment of any captive is a criminal offense. Every soldier is personally responsible for the enemy in his hands," and again: "All persons in your hands whether suspects, civilians or combat captives, must be protected against violence, insults, curiosity and reprisals of any kind."

It adds: "Leave punishment to the courts and judges. The soldier shows his strength by his fairness, firmness and humanity to the persons in his hands."

Songmy -- Are We all Guilty?

(NC News Service)

Washington — Are the U.S. troops who allegedly massacred Vietnamese villagers any more guilty of the atrocity than the American people as a whole.

This question was raised in a statement on the incident issued by Msgr. Marvin Bordelon, director, Division of World Justice and Peace, United States Catholic Conference.

The incident occurred at Songmy, Vietnam, on March 16, 1968, when a platoon led by Lt. William J. Calley Jr. was said to have killed a large number of civilians, including women and children. Lt. Calley has been charged with the murder of at least 109 persons and is facing a court-martial.

The statement said that President Nixon, in his Dec. 8 news conference, "shed some light on the Mylai issue by stating 'What appears was certainly a massacre, and under no circumstances was it justified.' This admission helped clear the air, but certain fundamental questions were left unanswered."

"What difference does it make," Msgr. Bordelon asked, "if the people of Mylai were mowed down in

cold blood or incinerated with napalm or blasted apart with bombs from a high-altitude B-52 attack?

"In other words, are the soldiers who did the killing at Mylai almost two years ago any more guilty than the B-52 crews who continue to this very day to systematically destroy villages in the so-called 'free-fire' zones? Are they more guilty than those who order such actions? Or than the people of the United States who are ultimately responsible for public policy?"

"Such questions," Msgr. Bordelon continued, "point to a basic uncertainty in this war. It is so different from any war we have ever fought, because we are not really sure who the enemy is. Nor are we sure that continued reliance upon military power will achieve freedom for the people of South Vietnam."

"What is apparent is the systematic annihilation of the Vietnamese people and their land. Will the Vietnamization of the war really end this? Will it accomplish the political and social reforms so necessary for lasting peace in Southeast Asia?"

"These are complex questions," Msgr. Bordelon said. "Their responsible resolution weighs heavily upon

us all, as citizens, especially as we prepare to celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Peace."

\$100,000 Gift Donated for Aid to Biafra

New York — (RNS) — A "Christmas gift" of \$100,000 from the people of America to the Biafran people was presented to Auxiliary Bishop Edward E. Swannstrom, head of Joint Church Aid, U.S.A., for the airlift of food and medicine to Biafra.

The gift was accumulated by Americans for Biafran Relief (ABR) from donations over a six-week period by thousands of Americans across the country and presented beneath the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center here on Christmas Eve.

Actor Cliff Robertson and Jack Yogan, members of the ABR board made the presentation. The goal set by the fund-raising organization for the next six months is \$9 million, in order to keep some 2 million Biafran children from starvation.

In accepting the check, Bishop Swannstrom pointed out that the \$100,000 will fund flights to the Portuguese island of Sao Tome to Biafra for two nights, providing food for 80 days for 100,000 persons. JCA is the sole life support of about 4 million Biafrans, mainly women and children.

Also attending the presentation were James McCracken, executive director of Church World Service, overseas relief arm of the National Council of Churches, and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee. The two organizations, with Catholic Relief Services, make up Joint Church Aid, U.S.A.

Americans for Biafran Relief is a national coalition formed last spring to involve Americans in an all-out relief program for Biafra.



Cardinal Visits Wounded

Terence Cardinal Cooke, Archbishop of New York and Vicar to Catholics in the U.S. Armed Forces, visits wounded soldiers in a field hospital at Cam Ranh Bay, South Vietnam. Cardinal Cooke is on his annual Christmas trip visiting U.S. troops overseas.

COURIER-JOURNAL

Vol. 81 No. 14 January 2, 1970

Published Weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Single copy 15¢; 1 year Subscription in U.S., \$3.00; Canada and South America, \$3.50; other foreign countries, \$4.50. Main Office, 35 Scio Street, Rochester, N.Y. 14604. Second Class Postage Paid at Rochester, N.Y.

Sibley's

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS ONCE-A-YEAR OPPORTUNITY TO ORDER STERLING PIECES FROM INACTIVE PATTERN LISTS

If you have a sterling pattern that is on an inactive list this is your chance to add to or replace missing pieces from your set. We have listed the available patterns and their companies below. If you are not sure of your pattern name, just bring a piece in and we will identify it. An order placed for any of these inactive patterns may not be canceled. Please order by Jan. 31 to insure proper delivery. Sibley's Silver, Fourth Floor, Downtown; orders taken at all suburban stores

ONEIDA HEIRLOOM

Flower Lane
Silver Rose
Reigning Beauty
Mansion

ONEIDA STERLING

Virginian
King Cedric
Heiress

LUNT

Colonial Manor
Chased Classic
Chateau
Charles II
Coronet
English Shell
Early Colonial
Early Am. Engraved
Festival
Monticello
Modern Classic
Mount Vernon
Mary II
Pendant of Fruit
Raindrop
Regency
Rose Elegance
Starfire

WALLACE OR WATSON

Antique
Carmel
Colonial Antique
Discovery
Foxhall
George II
John Alden
Juliana
King Christian
Lady Windsor
Larkspur
Lotus
Melanie
Normandie
Penrose
Princess Mary
Rhythm
Soliloquy
Sterling Rose
Still Mood
Washington
Windsor Manor

TOWLE—SPECIAL SAVINGS

Aristocrat
Awakening
Cascade
Contour
Chased Diana
D'Orleans
Esplanade
Georgian
Lady Constance
Louis XIV
Lafayette
Lady Mary
Lady Diana
Maderia

Mary Chilton
Old Mirror
Old Brocade
Old English
Old Newbury
Paul Revere
Peachtree Manor
Petit Point
Rose Solitaire
Royal Windsor
Silver Spray
Southwind
Symphony
Silver Plumes
Virginia Carvel
Vespera

GORHAM ENCORE

GROUP—25% OFF!

Aspen
Blithe Spirit
Celeste
Chapel Rose
Decor
Etruscan
English Garden
Firelight
Lily of the Valley
Louis XV
Old French
Secret Garden
Versailles

GORHAM MADE-TO-

ORDER COLLECTION

Adam
Antique
Albemarle
Bead
Bradford
Baronial
Buckingham
Chateau
Chatham
Clermont
Colfax
Colonial (Gotham)
Colonial (Whiting)
Covington
Cromwell (Durgin)
Cromwell (Gorham)
Chesterfield
Christina
Cinderella
Chrysanthemum
Cluny
Colonial Eagle
Dolly Madison
Dauphin
Duke of York
Danascora
Edgeworth
Essex
Empire
English Rose
Eventide
Fleury
Fashion Lane
Fontainebleau
Florentine
Governor's Lady
Griswold
Gotham Plain
Hamilton

Hampshire
Hanover
Hunt Club
Henry II
Imperial
Chrysanthemum
Imperial Queen
Iris
Jefferson
King Albert
King George
King Edward
LaModele
Lady Baltimore
Late Georgian
Lenox
Livingston
Lily (Whiting)
Lily of the Valley
(Whiting)
Luxembourg
Mothers
Madam Jewel
Madam Morris
Madame Royale
Mandarin
Marechal Niel
Medici
Mythologique
Navarre
Newcastle
New Queens (Durgin)
New Standish
New Vintage
New Queens
(Gorham)
Nocturne
Old Standish
Old Colony
Old Dominion
Old London
Oriana
Plymouth
Portland
Portsmouth
Princess Patricia
Patrician
Poppy
Paris
Perspective
Roanoke
Royal Oak
Rose Marie
Robert Bruce
Shamrock V.
Spotswood
Stratford
Stardust
St. Cloud
St. Dunstan Plain
St. Dunstan Chased
St. Martin's
Sheaf of Wheat
Stuart
Sovereign
Tist
Theme
Turleries
Villa Norfolk
Victorian
Vine
Virginiana
Wedgewood
Wreath
Weamouth
Willow

Sibley's open tuesday and thursday 'til 9 p.m.

All suburban stores open monday thru friday 'til 9:30, Saturdays 'til 5:45