OBSERVER

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500 MASSACRED:  
‘WOMEN AND CHILDREN’

"I remember the night before we went in... We were briefed that everything in the village was supposed to be wiped out... It was all considered V.C.,... supposed to be killed."

"Can you remember who gave the briefing?"

"Uh, Captain Medina."

"That was his unit!"

"Yes, Captain of our unit... Company Commander 'C' Company."

"How many civilians would you say were killed... one hundred, two hundred, three hundred... Were there more than that?"

"All I can tell is everyone in the village... Animals and everything."

That’s what former G.I., Charles Grover, told television reporter Robert Roy of KWTR, Oklahoma City. Grover is one of several participants in the Songmy massacre who have been interviewed on tv. The massacre occurred on March 16, 1968, at Songmy, South Vietnam, when a company of U.S. soldiers murdered over 500 Vietnamese civilians.

Army Sergeant Michael Bernhardt told of his part in the massacre at a press conference held on November 20, 1968, Sergeant Bernhardt is currently stationed at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

BERNHARDT: We—we got to the village, there wasn’t any resistance that I saw or heard. No incoming fire. Apparently no military age males. It was just like an ordinary Vietnamese village. Usually the ones that we go to are women, children, old men. And what was happening is the people were being shot by members of my company, being rounded up into groups. I saw, at least, myself, I saw a group people were being shot by members of my company, being rounded up into groups. I saw, at least, myself, I saw a group rounded up and fired into, and all the civilians to my knowledge there were killed. Throughout the village I saw, myself, approximately a hundred bodies. The bodies were laid out—it appeared to me that similar acts of this type I’ve described before had occurred.

REPORTER: Was there at the time or afterward discussion among the members of your company and would you describe the discussion if so?

BERNHARDT: I didn’t—I didn’t know that there was. Just my—myself. I didn’t—I didn’t wish to take part in the—action.

REPORTER: You heard your CO’s order?

BERNHARDT: Yes, prior to the operation the CO’s order was to destroy the village and its inhabitants.

REPORTER: Did you think the people in the village were Viet Cong?

BERNHARDT: Some of the people in the village weren’t old enough to walk yet. I don’t see how they could be Viet-cong.

REPORTER: Did you consider trying to stop it?

BERNHARDT: Did I consider—did I try to stop it? I—I seemed to be alone in my conviction.

REPORTER: How many Americans were doing these things?

BERNHARDT: There were approximately between 60 and 70. I believe, between 60 and 70 in my company. At the time it was under strength.

REPORTER: As far as you know, were you the only man who refused to do it,

BERNHARDT: As far as I know at the time, I was the only man who refused to do it.

REPORTER: Were you given any reprimand or any punishment? For refusing to take part?

BERNHARDT: No, No.

REPORTER: You have a small smile there, Sergeant.

BERNHARDT: Well, no, I—I just say no, I didn’t.

REPORTER: What were the efforts, Sergeant, by the army to hush up this thing? It’s been a year and a half. Was there anything after this incident which—in which people did not report this?

BERNHARDT: It was—it was like this. There was a helicopter pilot who—who lodged a complaint. And soon afterwards he was killed. And I don’t know how. And then the incident was dropped.

REPORTER: Are you suggesting he was killed by one of his own men?

BERNHARDT: I—I don’t—I don’t want to suggest anything. There—there are the facts, and—and I didn’t know how the Army would take it. I really had no place to go.

REPORTER: Did you know Sergeant Mitchell?

BERNHARDT: Yes, I did.

REPORTER: Were you in the same outfit?

BERNHARDT: The same company.

REPORTER: Were you, Sergeant, ever told not to talk about this?

BERNHARDT: I was.

REPORTER: By whom?

BERNHARDT: By the commanding officer.

REPORTER: (Indistinct.) (cont’d.)
2 SONGMY (cont’d.)

BERNHARDT: The company commander, the company commander.

REPORTER: Lieutenant Calley is being charged with murder in this case. Are you suggesting that Lieutenant Calley was simply carrying out the orders of the company commander?

BERNHARDT: I’m not suggesting — I’m saying exactly what he did. If — if what he did was — or rather, what he allegedly did was carried out, he was carrying out orders, then —

REPORTER: He wasn’t the commanding officer, no?

BERNHARDT: No, he was not the commanding officer, no.

REPORTER: — lined up, told to line up, or how were they — how were they shot?

BERNHARDT: They were gathered — they were gathered into a group, and this group was in a ditch, a bomb crater or quarry of some type. And they were put there. They gathered — or herded into that ditch there, and then they were fired into.

Paul Meadlo, a Vietnam veteran from Terre Haute, Indiana, says he killed a number of the Songmy villagers during the massacre. He gave the following interview to Mike Wallace of C.B.S. The interview was televised on November 24, 1969.

MEADLO: We landed next to the village, and we all got on line and we started walking toward the village. And there was one man, one gong in the shelter, and he was all huddled up down there, and the man called out and said there’s a gong over here.

REPORTER: How old a man was this? I mean, was this a fighting man or an elderly man?

MEADLO: An older man. And the man hauled out and said that there’s a gong over here, and then Sergeant Mitchell holstered back and said shoot him.

REPORTER: Sergeant Mitchell was in charge of the 2nd of 19th?

MEADLO: He was in charge of the whole squad. And so then the man shot him. And then we moved on into the village, and we started searching up the village and gathering people and running through the main thoroughfare of the village.

REPORTER: How many people did you round up?

MEADLO: Well, there was about 40-50 people that we gathered in the center of the village. And we placed them there, and it was like a little island, right in the center of the village, I’d say. And —

REPORTER: What kind of people — men, women, children?

MEADLO: Men, women, children.

REPORTER: Babies?

MEADLO: Babies. And we all huddled them up. We made them sit down, and Lieutenant Calley came over and said “You know what to do with them, don’t you?” And I said “Yes.” So I got it for granted that he just wanted us to watch them. We heard, and he left, and came back about 10 or 15 minutes later, and said “Give me some of them that you ain’t killed them yet.”

And I told him that I didn’t think you wanted to kill them. That you just wanted us to guard them. He said, No, I want them dead. So —

REPORTER: He told this to all of you, or to particular people?

MEADLO: Well, I was facing him. So, but the other three, four guys heard it and so he stepped backed about 10, 15 feet, and he started shooting them, and he told me to start shooting. So I started shooting, and I poured out about four clips into the group.

REPORTER: You fired four clips from your . . .

MEADLO: M-16.

REPORTER: And that’s about — how many clips — I mean how many . . .

MEADLO: I carried seventeen rounds to each clip.

REPORTER: So you fired something like 87 bullets.

MEADLO: Right.

REPORTER: And you killed how many?

MEADLO: Well, I fired them on automatic; so you can’t — you just spray the hell out of them and so you can’t know how many you killed ’cause they were going west. So I might have killed ten or fifteen of them.

REPORTER: Men, women, and children?

MEADLO: Men, women, and children.

REPORTER: And babies?

MEADLO: Babies.

REPORTER: OK, then what?

MEADLO: So we started to gather them up, more people, and we had about seven or eight people, that we was gonna put into the hochoo, and we dropped a hand grenade in there with them.

REPORTER: Now you’re rounding up more?

MEADLO: We’re rounding up more, and we had about seven or eight people, and we was going to throw them in the hochoo, and well, we put them in the hochoo and then we dropped a hand grenade down there with them. And somebody holed up in the ravine, and told us to bring them over to the ravine, so we took them back out, and led them over to — by that time, we already had them over there, and they had about 70-75 people all gathered up. So we threw ours in with them and Lieutenant Calley told me, he said, “Meadlo, we got another job to do.” And so we walked over to the people, and led them pushing them off and started shooting . . .

REPORTER: Started pushing them off into the ravine?

MEADLO: Off into the ravine. It was a ditch. And so we started pushing them off and we started shooting them, so altogether we just pushed them all off, and just started using the automatics on them. And then —

REPORTER: Again — men, women, children?

MEADLO: Men, women, children.

REPORTER: And babies?

MEADLO: And babies. And so we started shooting them, and somebody told us to switch off to single shot so that we could save ammo. So we switched off to single shot, and shot a few more rounds. And after that, just — we just — the company started gathering up again. We started moving out, and we heard zaps in front of us that was taking point, you know.

REPORTER: Taking point. You mean out in front? To take any fire that might come?

MEADLO: Right. And so we started walking across that field. And so later on that day, they shot him up, the gooks, we had, and I reckon they took him out to Chi Le or some camp that they was questioning them, so I don’t know what they did with them. So we set up (Indistinct) the rest of the night, and the next morning we started leaving, leaving the perimeter, and I stepped on a land mine next day, next morning.

REPORTER: And you came back to the United States.

MEADLO: I came back to the United States, and lost a foot out of it.

REPORTER: You feel —

MEADLO: I feel cheated because the V.A. cut my disability like they did, and they said that my stump is well healed, well-padded, without tenderness. Well, it’s well healed, but it is a long way from being well padded. And without tenderness? It hurts all the time, I got to work eight hours a day on my feet, and at the end of the day I can’t hardly stand it. But I got my work because I gotta make a living. And the V.A. don’t give me enough money to live on as it is.

REPORTER: Veterans Administration.

MEADLO: Right.

REPORTER: Did you feel any sense of retribution to yourself the day after?

MEADLO: Well, I felt like I was punished for what I’d done, the next morning. Later on in that day, I felt like I was being punished.

REPORTER: Why did you do it?

MEADLO: Why did I do it? Because I felt like I was ordered to do it, and it seemed like that, at the time, I felt like I was doing the right thing, because I said I was butch-husbands. I lost a damn good buddy, Bobby Wilson, and it was on my conscience. So after I done it, I felt good, but later on that day, it was getting to me.

REPORTER: You’re married?

MEADLO: Right.

REPORTER: Children?

MEADLO: Two.

REPORTER: How old?

MEADLO: The boy is two and a half. The little girl is a year and a half.

REPORTER: Obviously, the question comes to my mind . . .

MEADLO: I didn’t have the little girl. I just had the little boy at the time.

REPORTER: Uh huh. How do you shoot babies?

MEADLO: I don’t know. It’s just one of them things.

REPORTER: How many people would you imagine were killed that day?

MEADLO: I’d say about 370.

REPORTER: How do you arrive at that figure?

MEADLO: Just looking.

REPORTER: You saw, you think that many people, and you yourself were responsible for how many of them?

MEADLO: I couldn’t say.

REPORTER: Twenty-five? Fifty? I couldn’t say . . . just too many.

REPORTER: And how many men did the actual shooting?

MEADLO: Well, I really couldn’t say that, either. There was others . . . there was another platoon in there and . . . but I just couldn’t say how many.

REPORTER: But those civilians were lined up and shot? They weren’t killed by cross-fire.

MEADLO: They weren’t lined up . . . they (were) just pushed in a ravine or just sitting, squating . . . and shot.

REPORTER: What did these civilians — particularly the women and children, the old man — what did they do? What did they say to you?

MEADLO: They weren’t saying much to them. They were just being pushed and they were doing what they was told to do.

REPORTER: They weren’t begging or saying "No . . . No" or —

MEADLO: Right, they was begging and saying No, no, more than the mothers were hugging their children and, but they kept right on firing. We kept right on firing. They was waving their arms and begging . . .

REPORTER: Was that your most vivid memory of what you saw?

MEADLO: Right.

REPORTER: And nothing went through your mind or heart?

MEADLO: Many a times . . . many a times . . .

REPORTER: While you were doing it?

MEADLO: Not while I was doing it. It just seemed like it was the natural thing to do at the time. I don’t know. It just . . .

REPORTER: You call the Vietnamese “gooks”?

MEADLO: Gooks.

REPORTER: Are they people to you? Were they people to you?

MEADLO: Well, they were people. But it was just one of those words that we just picked up over there, you know. Just any word you pick up. That’s what you call people, and that’s what you been called.

REPORTER: Obviously, the thought that goes through your mind — I spent some time over there, and I killed in the second war, and so forth. But the thought that goes through your mind is, we’ve raised such a dikeus about the what the Nazis did, or what the Japanese did, but particularly about what the Americans did in the second world war, the brutalization and so forth, you know. It’s hard for young American kids to understand that young, capable American boys could line up old men, women and children and babies and shoot them down in cold blood. How do you explain that?

MEADLO: I wouldn’t know.

REPORTER: Did you ever dream about all of that that we were in in Vietnam?

MEADLO: Yes, I did . . . I still dream about it.

REPORTER: What kind of dreams?

MEADLO: I see the women and children in my sleep. Some . . . some nights, I can’t even sleep; I just lay there thinking about it.
**EPC REPORTS**

The following are the final Educational Policies Committee recommendations on junior faculty matters. They have already been submitted (along with all student evaluations and EPC summary recommendations) to the divisions and the joint committees. EPC will keep the original booklet. Each teacher being evaluated has received a copy of the evaluations concerning him or her. There is also a copy of the entire EPC evaluation booklet on reserve in the library.

Following the evaluations this semester EPC has heard a considerable amount of complaint and confusion about the way we conducted the evaluation process. Apparently some students were not aware that all the evaluations were to be made public. (Those specific evaluations which students requested be kept confidential were not published.) We had thought that this was made clear from the outset. In any case, there have been many questions about the nature and purpose of student evaluations. EPC meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 7:00 P.M. in Allen Social. Like all student gatherings, THEY ARE OPEN. Please do not wait until after the fact...we are always anxious to hear any suggestions and would be glad to act upon them. We hope to hold a community meeting after Thanksgiving to discuss this semester’s evaluations, to explain our intentions, to hear your response.

—Lila Semel
EPC Chairman

**LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE:**

Mr. Lafarge — Rehire

Mr. Brandstein — EPC feels an empathetic recommendation to retain Mr. Brandstein is necessary. Although this is the professor's first teaching experience he has demonstrated what students consider to be competence and promise. Furthermore, Mr. Brandstein is working in a field of literature which is unique in the Bard curriculum and certainly essential to it.

Mr. Minihan — Rehire, recommended for tenure if he so desires.

Mr. Kargogere — Rehire

Mr. Black — Mr. Black received a unilaterally positive response from students. EPC considers him to be among the most valuable and promising teachers at Bard. The committee demands the retention of professor Black with tenure.

Mr. Lambert — Rehire, recommended for tenure if he so desires.

Mr. Soroush — Rehire

Mr. Wilson — Rehire with tenure

Mr. Rodewald — Rehire

**SOCIAL STUDIES**

Mr. Tischer — Rehire, recommended for tenure if he so desires.

Mr. Kirshon — Rehire, recommended for tenure if he so desires.

Mr. Drazan — Rehire

Mr. Griffiths — Rehire for the coming year, needs further evaluation.

**AMDO**

Mr. Greensberg — Rehire

Miss Lipton — Rehire

Mr. Sullivan — Rehire, recommended for tenure if he so desires

Mr. Pace — Rehire

Miss Keydel — Rehire
Mr. Reich — Rehire, recommended for tenure if he so desires
Miss Wheeler — Rehire
Mr. Yarden — The committee demands the retention of professor Yarden with tenure if he so desires.
Miss Paaslov — Rehire

**NATURAL SCIENCES**

Mr. Seif — Rehire

Mr. Libbin — Rehire

Mr. Paciencior — The committee demands the retention of professor Paciencior with tenure.

**YOUNG RACIST**

PALO ALTO, Cal.,—(CP) — Stanford President Kenneth S. Pitzer said this week he has instructed athletic super- visors at the school to schedule no further football games with Brigham Young University.

Brigham Young has been the target of recent attacks on its discrimination against blacks, who aren’t allowed to hold officials in certain sections of the Mormon Church, the sponsoring institution.

Pitzer’s instructions were made after he reviewed the recommendations of a committee he set up just previously to the Stanford-Brigham Young football game last Jan. 3. At that time, Pitzer announced he would prefer that the school not engage in competitive activities with schools that discriminate.

The committee’s findings indicated that Brigham Young did in fact discriminate, Brigham Young Assistant to the President Heber Wotley said Pitzer’s action was “unfair” and “discriminated” against the school.

**QUESTIONS:** I have enjoyed a close personal and sexual relationship with a girl to whom I was engaged. But then I began to vomit whenever I saw or thought of her.

The frightening part of the story is that the same thing happened to my son during a casual sexual relationship with another girl.

Is it possible that the puritanical sexual attitudes of my mother have made such a deep impression on me that my attempts to liberate myself from the “old morality” are being foiled by a built-in preventive?

**ANSWER:** Allergic reactions to mates have been reported before, but your response is a bit unusual. More often the symptoms are those of hayfever or asthma. You should explore this problem with a therapist. Either that or keep a supply of Dramamine.

The Puritan heritage is the real reason for our marijuana laws, according to Dr. Flander, chairman of the National Science Board. Dr. Handel, also chairman of the Department of Biochemistry at Duke University, recently testified before a House of Representatives appropriations subcommittee.

“It is our Puritan ethics which say we shouldn’t do this rather than science which says we should not, at the moment.”

Handel said there is no scientific evidence that using marijuana will lead to the use of other drugs, reported the San Francisco CHRONICLE.

Meanwhile, the Justice Department’s Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs has written a bill making possession of marijuana a crime under the interstate commerce provisions of the Constitution (the tax requirement was struck out by the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark Tim Leary case). A treasoning of penalties for possession of marijuana will be proposed. Let’s see now...15 years instead of 30? Or 6 years? Or 20 days? Perhaps “Justice” lawyers should read the Primate to the U.S. Constitution.

**EszO GRANT:**

$2,500

Esz’s Education Foundation has announced grants to some 300 colleges for the academic year 1969-1970, including $2,500 to Bard, under the Foundation’s Presidential Contingency Program.

The grants this year total more than $3 million in new support for experimental and innovative projects exploring new approaches to higher education.

The Foundation maintains seven grant programs: SPUR (Support for Promoting the Utilization of Resources, Educational Research and Development, Presidential Contingency, Capital, Engineering and Science, Special Assistance, and Incentive).

The grant to Bard directs that it be expended according to the discretion of President Reinhar Kohn, and can be used to underwrite the costs of strengthening an aspect of undergraduate education not provided for in the 1969-1970 budget.

Commenting on the fact that support of pioneering efforts in education accounts for nearly 50% of current Foundation disbursements, as contrasted with 8% in 1964-65, George M. Buckingham, the Foundation’s Director said:

“There are critical times for higher education for unprecedented numbers of students, but to provide a new, more meaningful type of education.”

The Foundation hopes to “encourage and, more especially, facilitate the constructive change that is so vital if our institutions of higher learning are to meet the needs of the present and the challenge of the future.”

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**QUESTION:** William Baird, the birth control expert, is quoted in May, 1969, RAMPAIRS as saying:

“You’d be surprised how naive about sex last of these bright college kids are. Some of them believe they can prevent pregnancy by withdrawal...”

Now, just what is wrong with “pulling out” as a form of contraception?

**ANSWER:** Coitus interruptus is a risky means of contraception—and a drag as well.

Small amounts of semen may be deposited in the vagina before the sensation of ejaculation occurs. Studies have shown this fluid contains thousands of spermatozoa.

**Dear Dr. Schoenfeld:**

Girl One writes your column for help with pain during intercourse. Girl Two writes a 6 point plan to eliminate the pain which is a beautiful example of

machine mentality. She advises among other things to lubricate well, relax—relax—relax (if necessary by thinking about something besides sex) and don’t let yourself be pushed.

I (Girl Three) ask both of them — who are you doing this for anyway? If you’re in danger of being pushed faster than you want to go, something is wrong with the whole scene.

“Sex is good” was liberating as a truth. As a moral imperative it is as repressive as any other.

**ANSWER:** Authorities in Vancouver, B.C., also objected to Girl Two’s 6 point plan. Two thousand copies of Vancouver’s GEOGRAPHY STRAIGHT were seized because of an alleged obscenity in her letter.

**DEAR DR. HIP HOP CRATES:**

A collection of letters and answers published by Grove Press. $5 at your favorite bookstore.

Dr. Schoenfeld welcomes your letters. Write to him c/o P.O. Box 9002, Berkeley, California 94709.
To the Editor:

In your article on the Washington March last week, you quote me as saying (in reference to the Justice Department demonstration), "We marched with the Weathermen because we didn’t like the football game atmosphere of the rest of the March. When the VC flags started flying, we got the feeling of suppressed power." That quote is a misquote, and it leads to several implications which are of typical press-distorted quality.

By saying "we marched with the Weathermen" you imply that the Weathermen led the demonstration and that I supported them. Neither implication is true. The demonstration was called by Dave Dellinger, the Yippies, RYM II, and the National Committee to Combat Fascism (whoever that is). It was called in support of the Conspiracy 8 and specifically Bobby Seale. I supported the purposes of the demonstration, and the fact that nearly 10,000 people were involved in it. The larger march up Pennsylvania Ave. had been good; but it had also been frustrating. Because of its size it had been slow and cumbersome. It was amazing that 500,000 could converge on the nation’s capital, to express their discontent, it was disturbing that their expression could force no change. Anticipation built upon anticipation and the main march continued to build up.

The march rallied the build up. It was an emotional build up and it contained a lot of energy. I listened suddenly to the speeches and sang happily with the music. Dick Gregory’s speech was the highlight of the rally, but soon it was over. Then people began marching to the Justice Department. The march was led by people carrying National Liberation Front and Yippie flags. By the time we were in the streets we were marching fast and chanting, "END THE WAR IN VIET NAM, POWER TO THE PEOPLE!" This march was not slow and cumbersome like the earlier ones, it was no longer a build-up. It was a release because it was movement, it was action, and in the action we forgot that no matter what we did, we’d be ineffective. The release came in the feeling of group power that swept through the crowd as it approached the Justice Department building.

To the Fort Dix demonstration in October there was a distinct feeling of oneness, on the way to the Justice Department. I felt not only togetherness but also movement. The two together were frightening. They meant spontaneous and uncontrolled power.

The cops surrounded the Justice Department on three sides. On the fourth side there were no cops and the marchers swelled up onto the sidewalk. We waited a few minutes for the speakers to arrive, they never arrived. Two sculptures about 20 feet high guarded the door to the building, a VC flag was perched on one, a red flag on the other. I heard a crash, and looked up to see a second window broken by a flying bottle. Within ten minutes about 40 windows were broken, two bottles of red paint had been thrown on the wall, and a smoke bomb was filling the air with a purple haze. New Mobe marathons were standing on a wall in front of the building trying to stop the bottle-throwing. They were unsuccessful. There were less than 20 people throwing things, the rest of us watched, not exactly sure where to stand concerning the violence. Then the tear gas poured in and within an hour after everyone had been passed at least once, the crowd dispersed.

The violence seemed to have only one aim and that was to provoke the cops. It seemed really stupid just to stand around waiting for the what everyone knew was inevitable. And the same time the demonstration was justified and necessary. The Justice Department had been violently suppressing the Panthers and the Conspiracy 8, the Justice Department stands for repression and bullshit. It represents John Mitchell, J. Edgar Hoover, and Sheriff Quillen, and that is repression and bullshit. However, it would have been a lot better if the speakers had showed up. If so there probably wouldn’t have been any violence and the protest against the Justice Department would have probably been more meaningful as it was. Thought it would accomplish virtually nothing in either case.

—Rick DeGolia