

# Letters

## LETTERS OF THIRD SQUAD

TO THE EDITOR

I should like to congratulate Tom Buckley for his brief but authentic look at one particular bunch of boys fighting in Vietnam, "The Men of Third Squad, Second Platoon, C Company, Third Battalion," Nov 5. The cast of characters, their gripes and the whole general atmosphere of Army life will probably be familiar to anybody who has done a hitch of service.

The cast is right out of Hollywood: the "New York sophisticate" who makes himself comfortable at every opportunity, even when under sniper fire, the Negro "ironist" who says aloud what the others are thinking, the chubby one "fighting to stay alive and get home", the "cheerful" kid who had been promised safe duty in the Army Finance Center, and their tight-lipped sergeant from Nebraska. Even the casualties are absurd: two men drowned after jumping into a river they thought was a paddy field and another one accidentally shot in the head by a friend "on a social call."

But the best irony of all—for it is no irony at all—is that the one kid who wholeheartedly supports the war ef-

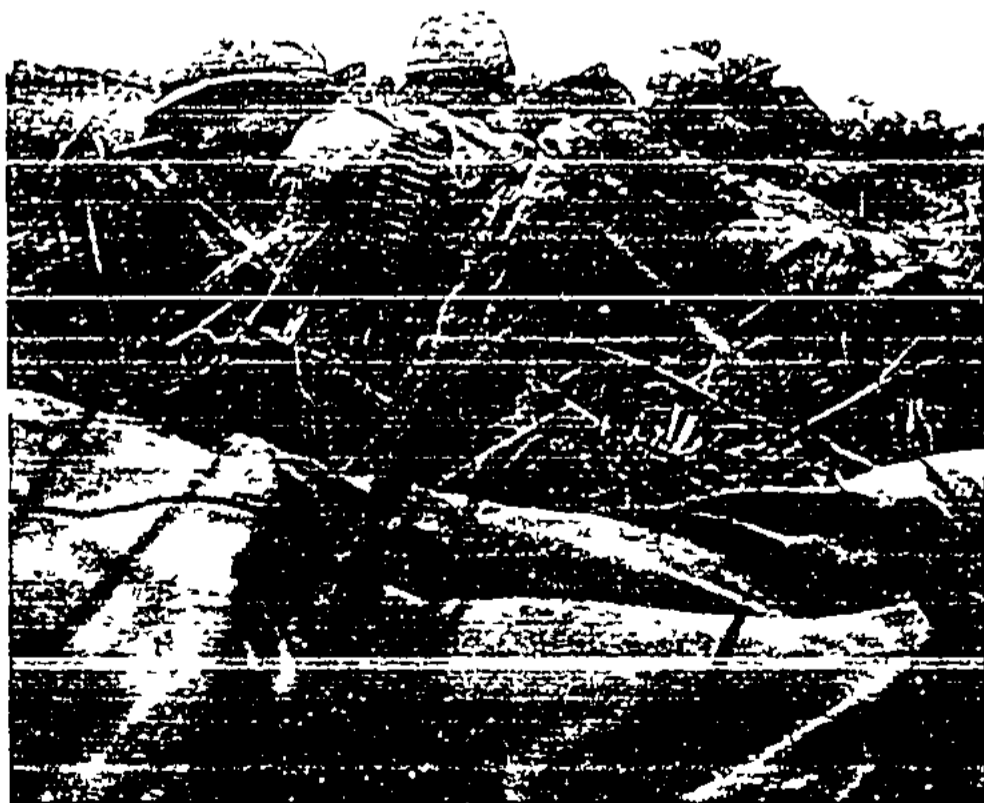
fort is the one who runs a bayonet through his foot while trying to open a coconut and then applies for a Purple Heart. Perhaps, when the Secretary of State gets around to reading the story, that boy will get his medal after all. Things being the way they are these days, I wouldn't be at all surprised. Nor, I think, would most of his buddies.

CALVIN K. TOWLE  
New York

TO THE EDITOR

I strongly object to Tom Buckley's article since the opinion expressed by each man represents a small group whose caliber can be compared to those dissenters we have in the States. It is unfortunate that this squad is composed of such a homogeneous group of men. Granted, being overseas in a war-torn area is depressing, but the situation cannot improve in their minds when all they do is discuss their sad plight. Their leader does not encourage them either, sad to say. Can any group or organization function when they themselves do not believe in their ultimate purpose?

One does not expect to find such an article in The Times.



**SQUAD UNDER FIRE** — Members of Third Squad, Second Platoon, C Company, Third Battalion, take cover behind a dike somewhere in Vietnam.

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when the paper could do so much to improve feelings and morale both at home and for the boys in Vietnam

BERNADETTE WATSON  
Staten Island

## **RETARDED CHILDREN**

TO THE EDITOR

I am grateful, as I am sure are thousands of other parents to Mr and Mrs Bruce Solomonson, who shared with the world the beautiful picture of their two daughters, Jill and her mongoloid sister Vicky, to Rita Kramer, the National Association for Retarded Children and others who made the story "Some Children Are Special," Nov. 5, possible—and most of all to Mrs. Hubert Humphrey who, by her example of facing the problem of mental retardation forthrightly, with sensitivity and without bathos, has inspired other grandparents, as well as parents, to do likewise

However, there is in the article one line of thought that I see appearing over and over again. "As recently as 20 years ago, parents of retarded children were usually advised to 'put him in an institution and forget him.'" There is in this statement an implied rejection, which in thousands of cases is not justified

Twenty-one years ago to be exact, a psychologist said to me, in effect. "Place the child in an institution where she will get good medical care, training, the love of foster parents and a routine suited to her limited ability. But remember always that the child is a part of your family. Visit when you can. Make each visit as joyous as possible. Take the other children along if you can, so that the retarded child will understand that she has a family, and the family will realize that the retarded person belongs to the family unit. Mention the child often at home." Untold numbers of parents received essentially the same advice from many sources and followed it.

Our mongoloid daughter, who today contributes her full share to cottage life in the residential center where she lives, is just as much a part of our family as our daughter who is married and living in California and our son who is stationed with the Air Force in Texas. All are away from home and each is constantly in our thoughts. Not one is rejected. The same condition exists in thousands upon thousands of other homes

Although many educational opportunities now exist that

*(Continued on Page 62)*

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(Continued from Page 42)

were not even considered in home communities 20 years ago, problems remain for parents of retardates, and in many cases parents are still strongly advised to enroll a



Mrs. Hubert Humphrey with her granddaughter Vicky, who is a retarded child.

retardate in a residential school or center.

BERNICE WELLS CARLSON  
Somerset, N. J.

## SCHOOLING THE YOUNG

TO THE EDITOR

I am happy that I hit a raw nerve in the early-childhood Establishment with my article, "Slum Children Must Make Up for Lost Time," Oct 15—as witness your letter-writers' intemperate reactions. It was high time to stir up a debate on how best to help young children from the slums, since the traditional methods used in most preschool programs—mere copies of nursery schools for middle-class children—have proved such a dismal failure.

However, several of your correspondents have misinterpreted the facts cited in my article. They fail to distinguish between prevention and cure. I tried to make clear that the innovators are attempting to revolutionize education, starting at the crib. To do this they are developing programs that "hook" children on learning, not by drills or pressure but by exposing children to situations in which they are intellectually stimulated. All children, both rich and poor, enjoy such deliberate stimulation if it is offered early enough.

Since slum children do not get enough intellectual stimulation at home, the innovators have developed or revived various techniques to offset

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this deficit Home visits, Montessori nursery schools and responsive-environments projects which do not require expensive equipment seem to work with very young children To be really successful, however, these techniques must be applied before the child reaches the age of 4

Past the age of 4, slum children need intensive remedial programs One such program, started by Bereiter and Engelmann, has provoked most of your correspondents' criticism. I would like to stress two things about this program—first, it works, and second, it is not the only possible approach. In my book, "Revolution in Learning The Years From Birth to Six" (Harper & Row, 1967), I describe a number of other new approaches. I hope that those who are interested in young children's intellectual growth will find additional ideas there for alternatives or supplements to conventional nursery-school fare.

MAYA PINES

Washington, D C

## ISSUE-MAPPING

TO THE EDITOR

I read with interest Martin Arnold's article on "The Lindsay Inner Circle," Oct 15 I was particularly interested to read "The latest Lindsay innovation, 'issue-mapping,' centered in what City Hall habitués have dubbed 'the war games room,' is another Kriegel project"

I happen to belong to one of Mayor Lindsay's committees headed by Deputy Mayor Costello I was present when David Hertz and some others on the committee suggested the idea of issue-mapping and did the work involved As the Mayor himself undoubtedly would say, "One way to become informed about what is going on in New York City government circles is to read The New York Times"

Perhaps, given your comment on Mr Kriegel, you might indicate the sense in which it is a "Kriegel project"

MARTIN SHUBIK,

Professor of Economics of  
Administration  
Yale University.

New Haven, Conn

The author replies "Issue-mapping was another case of 'Clear it with Jay' The committee to which Mr Shubik refers did, it is true, work out the issue-mapping procedures—on a single city issue The City Hall people, under Kriegel, expanded it to more than 200 issues, did the staff work and plugged it into the city government—turning it from a rather sterile academic exercise into part of the Lind-

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say administration apparatus  
That is the sense in which it  
is a 'Kriegel project' "

## **BENEDICTS' EGGS**

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing to correct the statement by Edward P. Montgomery concerning the origin of Eggs Benedict, as reported recently by Craig Claiborne in "American Classic Eggs Benedict."

The true story, well known to the relations of Mrs Le Grand Benedict, of whom I am one, is as follows

Mr. and Mrs Benedict, when they lived in New York around the turn of the century, lunched every Saturday at Delmonico's. One day Mrs Benedict said to the *maitre d'hôtel*, "Haven't you anything new or different to suggest?" On his reply that he would like to hear something new from her, she suggested poached eggs on toasted English muffins with a thin slice of ham, hollandaise sauce and a truffle on top

This recipe has gone around the world

Commodore E. C. Benedict, who was given the credit, was a cousin and undoubtedly enjoyed these eggs, but it would have been unlike him to have called them his invention

The name is occasionally given, erroneously, as "Eggs Benedictine."

MABEL C BUTLER

Vineyard Haven, Mass

## **THE STRUGGLE**

### **FOR REFORM**

TO THE EDITOR.

I hope Paul Good's knowledge of internal Harlem politics ("A Political Tour of Harlem," Oct. 29) is more accurate than his grasp of Democratic affairs at large. To say that the 1966 surrogate contest was not a moral issue, to call it a power play at the "price [of] a decent judge," is an insult to Judge Silverman and an indication of the writer's ignorance of the struggle for judicial reform

As one of the district leaders who led the attack five years ago against "the million-dollar surrogates' patronage pie" (which garnered editorial plaudits in *The Times* and elsewhere), let me say that one need but compare Judge Silverman's handling of his office with that of his predecessor, his co-surrogate and some of his counterparts in the other boroughs to perceive that this was indeed a reform victory.

Mr Good should also be cautioned against soliciting quotes on the moral implications of the surrogate race from judicial patronage recipients or their close relatives—particularly when there is no

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effort to strike a fair balance

As to the chronology of the Silverman campaign, Senator Kennedy's initial role was to lend his prestige to the search for a candidate that had already been launched by reform leaders. It was not a case of his cracking the whip to get us into the fray. Also for the record, "reform" did not, as stated by Mr. Good, originally back Mr. Jones for county leader. Though a few reformers voted for Jones, most voted for Bob Wechsler, the reform candidate for county leader.

Mrs. CAROL GREITZER,  
Democratic District Leader,  
63d A D South  
New York.

## **ASSESSING MEADOWBROOK**

TO THE EDITOR:

Jonathan Kozol has the unfortunate habit of viewing complex institutions in stark black and white terms. In "A Junior High That's Like a College," Oct. 29, Meadowbrook Junior High School in Newton, Mass., is depicted as an educational utopia—the last word in public school education. In his book, "Death at an Early Age," Kozol depicts the Boston public schools as a hopeless mass of prejudice, ill-management and ignorance.

Neither assessment is wholly correct. The Boston public schools, although certainly not without faults, can boast of many positive achievements. And Meadowbrook Junior High School has always been beset by numerous serious problems. The continuous torrent of educational innovations in the school has had an unsettling effect on student and teacher alike, which may be a factor in the abnormally high annual teacher turnover. Perhaps most important, most of the innovations are geared to the bright, highly motivated student, the others, those that need the most attention, are often given the least.

RICHARD J. GORDON, Ph.D.,  
Assistant Professor of  
Education, Clark University  
Worcester, Mass.

## **'PASSIVE' POSTURE**

In the comments by William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, on the article by John Kenneth Galbraith, "The Galbraith Plan to End the War" (Nov. 12), there was a typo in the sentence: "In short, if Professor Galbraith is simply prescribing a massive military posture, it seems unlikely that this could lead toward peace . . ." The word "massive" should have read "passive."

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