

I do not know personally whether Lieutenant Calley is guilty of murder or not. I could not possibly make a decision on the matter without spending many hours examining evidences, looking into testimonies, and determining the exact situation. There are full provisions for appeals and further investigation. If there is reason to think that there has been an error committed at some point a new trial might be requested, but for me to ask for a pardon of one whom a competent set of investigators has adjudged guilty of murder would make me myself an accessory to murder. It would be just as reasonable to ask the courts to free Angela Davis and to make a heroine of her.

The second principle is the difference between a civilized nation and a barbarous one. Barbarous armies commit all kinds of outrages in war. Civilized nations try to observe rules of decency. They know that among their soldiers there will be some who will commit atrocities. This inevitably occurs, but a civilized nation carefully examines all evidence presented to it that such an event has occurred, and punishes those guilty of it. One of our greatest reasons for hostility to the communists is the fact that they do not follow the rules of civilized warfare. North Vietnam has refused even to give lists of the prisoners of war or to allow representatives of the Red Cross to make sure that they are being treated in accordance with these laws. If we sink to their level we lose all that we are fighting for. In every past war conducted by a civilized nation individual soldiers or officers who have been found guilty of atrocities have paid with their lives for their crimes. After World War II the German officers who were guilty of atrocities were severely punished. Japanese generals were hanged for having ordered the perpetration of atrocities.

An order to bomb military installations is entirely different. In the bombing of a military installation there may be injury to civilians in the neighborhood, but this is altogether different from placing unarmed civilians in a line and shooting them, or shooting down women and babies in a trench.

An individual soldier might find himself in a position where the terrible atrocities of the communists would cause him to lose his head. Such a possibility would certainly be taken into consideration by any military court. The court has declared that the evidence shows that Lieutenant Calley was guilty of premeditated murder, killing innocent women and shooting babies. If signs should be included in the parade making a hero of Calley or asking that he be pardoned, how can any decent citizen be asked to participate? It would put us on the same level with the communists and would be contrary to all Christian principles.

There is no one in the country who is more opposed to communism than I am. One reason I so strongly oppose it is the terrible atrocities that the communists commit, both against their own citizens and against others. It would be tragic if the march in Washington should include any propaganda that would undercut the Christian stand for righteousness and put us on the same level with the communists.

A second matter should also be brought to your attention. It has been rumored that the American Nazi party is planning to try to bring into the parade individuals in uniform carry swastikas and racist slogans. I know that in the past marches you have strongly resisted such endeavors. In view of the persistent rumors I have heard in this direction I hope that you will be particularly careful in this regard at this time.