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FOREIGN MEDIA REACTION TO THE

ALLEGED VIETNAM MASSACRE

(digested from 12/4 USIA Summary)

Overseas press, television and radio have given prominent news coverage to the alleged massacre. Editorial reaction in non-Communist countries generally has been sober and moderate, with expressions of shock and dismay often balanced by awareness of public revulsion and official condemnation in the U.S. A widely held view -- particularly in Western Europe and Latin America -- is that "American honor has been saved" by the fact that the episode, however abhorrent and inexcusable, was brought to light by the U.S. press and that American authorities are taking action in the case.

The great majority of commentators in most countries thus far have refrained from suggesting that Americans are an inhumane or ruthless people. Rather, the allegations are seen as a reminder of what war does to people, and what it can make people do.

A notable exception to the generally restrained treatment abroad is Great Britain, where each new development was extensively reported with sensational headlines and photographs. The furor in Britain, where support of the war is a domestic political issue, has gradually subsided, but interest remains unusually high there.

In many instances, expressions of horror and dismay were tempered by an appreciation of the fact that the American system encourages the surfacing

of evidence and its presentation in the courtroom. Peru's conservative Correo stated: "The simple fact that these acts have moved the North American conscience so deeply and have disturbed the acute moral sense of that nation is enough to show that they regard them as abnormal. "

Tokyo's independent-moderate Mainichi remarked that although the story had "soiled the prestige of the U.S....we see the greatness of the U.S. in the way this terrible incident was brought to light. "

The White House statement calling the alleged massacre "abhorrent" was widely and favorably played. Ceylon's independent Daily Mirror said, "Mr. Nixon's action in ordering an immediate probe must be conceded its measure of credit. " Bangkok World noted that "the U.S. government has moved bravely and quickly to establish the facts in the incident. " The conservative Sydney Morning Herald observed that "the press has exposed the facts. The President has condemned them. Congress is investigating them....There is every reason to believe that the truth will be published and the guilty punished. " It suggested that "Australians, British and others should avoid the temptation to use this incident, terrible though it is, to condemn the U.S. or even American policy in Vietnam. "

El Tiempo of Bogota found "the way in which Mr. Nixon has faced up" to the incident "admirable and truly convincing. " Rio de Janeiro's conservative Jornal do Comercio asserted that "the White House has not shirked its responsibilities. It confronted the judgment of the free world with the courage of one who has nothing to hide. " The London Sunday Times declared that

"Washington's response was late but right, " and that "the Pinkville trial is a striking reflection of America's open society. "

Pro-Gaullist Paris-Jour, while noting that "we have gone through atrocities in all wars, " held that "they can have no excuse. " Nevertheless, it said, "the Americans have saved their honor by revealing them to the world and permitting the punishment of the culprits. In other countries, silence would have been imperative. " West Berlin's independent Tagesspiegel asserted that "it would be unjust to regard the My Lai massacre as an expression of American warfare in Vietnam. This massacre and similar incidents are undoubtedly the excesses of individual officers and soldiers, and the reason for it is almost always an emotional short-circuit. "

# # #

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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December 5, 1969

PERSONAL

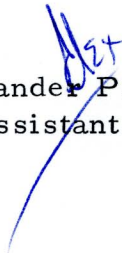
MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE VICE PRESIDENT

Reference: My December 3rd and 4th Memoranda  
to You, Both Marked "Confidential/  
Sensitive"

I am attaching to this memorandum a chronology of  
Mylai press coverage and information as to how the  
stories were handled.

This is the third and final item which I was instructed  
to deliver to you prior to the close of business today.

  
Alexander P. Butterfield  
Deputy Assistant to the President

Attachments

cc: Mr. Pat Buchanan

CONFIDENTIAL/SENSITIVE

EARLY PRESS COVERAGE -- MY LAI

4 Sept 69 -- CINFO Public Affairs Guidance sent to field informing that, in response to query only, specified information may be released to the press.

5 Sept 69 -- Working on a tip, reporter Dave Leonard of the Columbus (Ga.) Enquirer requests information from the Fort Benning Information Office. Information furnished within the framework of CINFO guidance of previous day. Leonard prepares an article which appears the next morning in the Enquirer and in the afternoon Columbus Ledger.

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13 Nov 69 -- Articles based on copyrighted story by Dispatch News Service appear in 36 newspapers and the New York Times, which developed its own account of the incident.

1 Dec 69 -- Article by Peter Osnos in Washington Post outlining background on news release. (Copy attached)

Prepared by: Lt. DeFrank  
OCINFO, U.S. Army  
72351/72352  
5 December 1969

# Mylai Story Almost

Washington Post

1 DEC 1969

By Peter Osnos

Washington Post Staff Writer

Last Sept. 6, an item dated Ft. Benning, Ga., clattered across Associated Press wires around the country. It read:

"FT. BENNING, Ga. (AP) — An Army officer has been charged with murder in the deaths of an unspecified number of civilians in Vietnam in 1963, post authorities have disclosed.

"Col. Douglas Tucker, information officer, said the charge was brought yesterday against First Lt. William L. Calley Jr., 26 years old of Miami, who was to have been discharged Saturday after two years in the service.

"Col. Tucker declined to give details of the case other than to say that the incident occurred in March, 1963, in Vietnam, and that the charge involves the death of more than one civilian.

"Lt. Calley was assigned to the 23d Infantry Division."

## Pentagon Was Ready

At the Pentagon, men aware of the Calley investigation prepared for a barrage of press queries about the specifics of the charge. None came. The Associated Press story was all but ignored.

"We were amazed that the story never went any place," a Pentagon lawyer said last week, "absolutely amazed."

More than two months later, the story of what Calley was alleged to have done finally did come out after reporters received tips from various sources telling them about a lieutenant and something called the "Pinkville" massacre.

One of those reporters was Seymour M. Hersh, a Washington-based free-lancer, 32, who has written a successful book about chemical and biological warfare and has good sources at the Pentagon, where he once

# Went Unnoticed

## Free-Lancer Hersh Told It First After Getting Telephone Tip

worked for AP.

In late October, one of Hersh's sources called him. "I was simply told," Hersh recalled last week, "that the Army was holding a man at Ft. Benning charged with 70 civilian deaths." The tip seemed solid.

With a promise of \$1,000 from the philanthropist Philip M. Stern, Hersh set off on a chase around Washington and the country tracking the story: to Salt Lake City, where Calley's civilian attorney lives, and finally to Ft. Benning.

## Located Calley

After a two-day search of the base, Hersh said, he found Calley, and out of that meeting came the first story containing a few of the details of the incident at Pinkville.

Meanwhile, other newspapers, including The Washington Post, had received separate tips and were working on the story. The Post interviewed Calley's lawyer; The New York Times sent a man to Ft. Benning.

In a public information office at the base, Hersh said he encountered a Times man and decided he could no longer wait to sell his story. He had planned to wait until after the Nov. 15 anti-war march, Hersh recalled.

"I didn't want the Pinkville story to get confused with the activities of the anti-war movement," said Hersh, who had served briefly as a campaign press secretary to Sen. Eugene McCarthy, "but I panicked."

Hersh's agent was David Obst, 23, who is general manager of the Dispatch News Service, which he describes as a loose confederation of free-lancers organized in Saigon in the summer of 1968.

On the afternoon of Nov.

11, Obst began telephoning newspapers offering Hersh's story for \$100. He talked to 50 editors, he recounted last week, and 36 decided to buy.

Among the papers which put Hersh's Pinkville report on page one were: the St. Louis Post Dispatch, the Charlotte Observer, Chicago Sun-Times, Milwaukee Journal, Cincinnati Enquirer, Boston Globe and Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.

The Washington Post and Newsday bought the story but assigned their own re-

porters to check it out. The New York Times ran a Pinkville story which Washington Bureau Chief Max Frankel said was independently gathered.

Of the coincidence of publication on the same morning that Hersh's story appeared, Frankel said, "I wouldn't doubt for a minute that the fact that Hersh was around town peddling the story gave it a competitive edge."

## Struggling Service

While Hersh had a reputation from a book on classical and biological warfare, Dispatch News Service had almost none. The young men who founded it in Saigon barely made a living selling articles. The going was only a little better when Obst set up shop in Washington.

They rented an office in the National Press Building, but all it contains is a telephone. Hersh maintains a separate office, as do other Dispatch writers like Richard Barnet of the Institute of Policy Studies, who recently visited Hanoi.

The image of the group was decidedly New Leftish, an image which Hersh and others contend has nothing to do with the quality of their investigative reporting.

After the first story appeared, Hersh said he was puzzled over why Calley had been charged. In newspapers over that weekend, he spotted a short wire service story quoting Ronald L. Ridenhour, the former GI who said his urgings had prompted an Army investigation.

## Visited Ridenhour

Hersh flew out to California to see Ridenhour and got a copy of the letter the soldier had sent to congressmen and the Defense Department recounting the al-

## Celler Asks Impartial Inquiry Into My Lai 4

NEW YORK, Nov. 30 (UPI)—Rep. Emanuel Celler (D-N.Y.) today called for a "full inquiry by an impartial body" into the alleged massacre of 109 civilians at My Lai 4.

Celler said either Congress or President Nixon should establish an impartial commission to investigate the alleged slaying of the civilians by American forces.

"I believe that the armed services (committees) either of the Senate or the House are too close to the military, too close to the Pentagon" to stage an impartial inquiry, Celler said.

But he cautioned against passing judgment on the soldiers allegedly involved in the massacre before they are tried, and said that America has killed civilians before without meting out punishment.

leged massacre. A number of eyewitnesses were mentioned and Hersh started to track them down.

On Nov. 19, Obst was phoning newspapers again, this time with a story based on interviews with three soldiers who claimed to have been in Pinkville. The Washington Post bought the story, again assigning its own reporters to check and interview the soldiers and publish its own story.

On Nov. 21, according to Hersh's lawyer, Michael Nussbaum, CBS called and said it would pay \$10,000 for an exclusive. A meeting was held in New York two days later to arrange an interview with Paul Meadlo.

Meadlo, a wounded veteran of Pinkville, 22, gave an account of the incident to CBS. The soldier was well aware of the possible legal dangers of his public confession of a part in the killings, Nussbaum said and stated that others had advised him of his rights and arranged for him to have a lawyer in Terre Haute, Ind., where he lives. Meadlo received none of the \$10,000.

Hersh also wrote a story about Meadlo. The Washington Post did not buy it, insisting on retaining final editorial control of copy appearing on its pages. Hersh had wanted a commitment to have his story run essentially as he wrote it.

A source close to Dispatch News Service said Hersh was more concerned with publicizing Dispatch than with payment for the article.

A curious sidelight to the scramble for Pinkville stories is the difficulty Ridenhour encountered last spring when he and a literary agent sought to interest Life, Look and Newsweek, among others.

None of those publications seemed interested. On Oct. 22—just three weeks before the story broke—the agent wrote Ridenhour saying there was nothing more he could do.

(END)

FRIDAY MORNING, 5 DECEMBER 1969

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- A MEMORANDUM OF THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HAS REVEALED DAY-TO-DAY DEVELOPMENTS OVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL MONTHS IN THE UNFOLDING OF THE SONG MY MASSACRE STORY.

THE MEMORANDUM, ENTITLED "ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING 'PINKVILLE' AND ALLEGED ATROCITIES," REVEALS THE FIRST APPARENT OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO RONALD RIDENHOUR, WHO WROTE SEVERAL LETTERS TO HIGH OFFICIALS ABOUT THE MASSACRE, AND DILIGENT STAFF WORK BY REP. MORRIS K. UDALL, D-ARIZ., AND HIS OFFICE.

THIS IS THE CHRONOLOGY, AS LISTED BY THE MEMO:

APRIL 4, 1969 -- THE COMMITTEE RECEIVES A MIMEOGRAPHED LETTER FROM RIDENHOUR "ALLEGING A MASSACRE OF THE INHABITANTS OF A VILLAGE CALLED 'PINKVILLE' SOMETIME IN MARCH, 1968 BY U.S. ARMY PERSONNEL."

APRIL 7 -- THE COMMITTEE DIRECTED A LETTER TO THE ARMY REQUESTING THAT THE "ALLEGATIONS" RE PINKVILLE BE INVESTIGATED.

APRIL 7 -- THE COMMITTEE RECEIVED A LETTER FROM UDALL ENCLOSING A COPY OF RIDENHOUR'S LETTER AND ASKING "WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR YOUR COMMITTEE TO LOOK INTO THIS SO WE CAN GET AT THE TRUTH?"

APRIL 10 -- THE ARMY ADVISES THAT A REQUEST FOR A REPORT HAS BEEN SENT TO THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE U.S. ARMY IN VIETNAM.

APRIL 14 -- THE COMMITTEE REFERS UDALL'S LETTER TO THE ARMY.

APRIL 24 -- THE COMMITTEE RECEIVES TWO LETTERS FROM THE ARMY. IN BOTH, THE ARMY ADVISES THAT BECAUSE THE EVENTS IN THE RIDENHOUR LETTER HAPPENED MORE THAN ONE YEAR EARLIER AND THE PERSONS INVOLVED HAD LEFT VIETNAM, IT WAS TRANSFERRING THE REQUEST TO THE INSPECTOR GENERAL. THE ARMY ALSO SAID: "OUR FINAL REPLY CONCERNING THIS MATTER CAN NOT BE EXPECTED FOR SOME TIME IN AS MUCH AS INVESTIGATIONS SUCH AS THIS ONE ARE EXTREMELY TIME CONSUMING."

AUG. 8 -- MAJ. GEN. WILLIAM A. BECKER, THE ARMY'S CHIEF CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON, DISCUSSES THE ALLEGATIONS ORALLY WITH COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN L. MENDEL RIVERS, D-S.C.

SEPT. 5 -- THE ARMY ADVISES THE COMMITTEE THAT THE INVESTIGATION IS CONTINUING; "HOWEVER, IT HAS REVEALED SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO WARRANT THE PREFERRING OF CHARGES AGAINST A LIEUTENANT CALLEY, FORMER PLATOON LEADER IN THE UNIT, FOR VIOLATION OF THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE, ARTICLE 118, MURDER." THE ARMY ALSO ADVISED: "WE ARE EXERCISING UTMOST CAUTION TO AVOID ANY PUBLIC DISCUSSION WHICH COULD PREJUDICE THE CONTINUING INVESTIGATION OR THE RIGHTS OF LT. CALLEY."

SEPT. 8 -- DURING A BRIEFING, BECKER ADVISED COMMITTEE COUNSEL THAT CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE ARMY WERE BEING HELD ON ACTIVE DUTY BEYOND THEIR SCHEDULED RELEASE DATE SO AS TO ENABLE THE ARMY TO COMPLETE ITS INVESTIGATION. COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS, TAKEN BY AN ARMY COMBAT PHOTOGRAPHER ALLEGEDLY AT THE TIME OF THE SO-CALLED "MASSACRE," WERE SHOWN.

NOV. 12 -- THE COMMITTEE RECEIVED A CONFIDENTIAL, WRITTEN COMMUNICATION FROM THE ARMY STATING "ARTICLE 32 INVESTIGATION OF THE ALLEGED OFFENSE ON THE PART OF LT. WILLIAM L. CALLEY IS NEARING COMPLETION. AN INVESTIGATION OF OTHERS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED OFFENSE IS CONTINUING." THE COMMUNICATION ALSO CONTAINED A FACT SHEET ENTITLED "ALLEGED MURDER OF NONCOMBATANT CIVILIANS IN THE HAMLET OF MY LAI, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM." THE FACT SHEET WAS MARKED CONFIDENTIAL, ALTHOUGH THAT STAMP HAS NOW BEEN REMOVED EXCEPT FOR THAT PART OF THE ENCLOSURE WHICH CONTAINS A "STATEMENT OF SERVICE" OF CALLEY.

NOV. 14 -- THE COMMITTEE WAS ADVISED THAT S.SGT. DAVID MITCHELL HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH ASSAULT WITH INTENT TO MURDER.

NOV. 20 -- COMMITTEE COUNSEL CONTACTED THE ARMY WHETHER IT WOULD BE PROPER TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS RIDENHOUR'S LETTER. THE ARMY SAID IT HAD REFUSED TO RELEASE THE LETTER BECAUSE IT COULD PREJUDICE THE RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED, BUT IT HAD NO CONTROL OVER COMMITTEE ACTION.

NOV. 24 -- COMMITTEE COUNSEL DISCUSSED WITH AN ARMY CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON OFFICER A NEWSPAPER STORY QUOTING PHOTOGRAPHER RONALD L. HAEERLE AS SAYING U.S. TROOPS INDISCRIMINATELY KILLED CIVILIANS IN THE HAMLET.

THE OFFICER SAID REP. GEORGE H. MAHON, D-TEX., HAD REQUESTED A FULL REPORT ON THE MATTER, AND SEN. CHARLES E. GOODELL, R-N.Y., HAD ASKED THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE.

NOV. 24 -- SECRETARY OF THE ARMY STANLEY RESOR ISSUED A FACT SHEET, ENTITLED "INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS," STATING THAT CALLEY WILL BE TRIED BY GENERAL COURT-MARTIAL ON A CHARGE OF PREMEDITATED MURDER.

NOV. 24 -- RESOR AND ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF WILLIAM WESTMORELAND ANNOUNCE IN A SEPARATE INFORMATION ISSUANCE THE APPOINTMENT OF LT. GEN. WILLIAM R. PEERS TO "EXPLORE THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE ORIGINAL ARMY INVESTIGATION OF THE SO CALLED MY LAI INCIDENT..."

## TELEVISION REPORT

(December 9, 1969)

(Monday night telecasts)

### VIETNAM

ABC announced RN's news conference predicting that Vietnam and My Lai would be the major points of question. Calley's defense attorney said that statements by RN about the massacre would make it impossible for him to carry out his responsibilities as Commander-in-Chief because RN would have to inflict the death penalty if Calley is convicted. RN's statement was cited that if the Massacre occurred those responsible should be punished. The attorney also restated his position that the handling of the case in the press made it impossible for Calley to receive a fair trial. NBC said the attorney asked that the charges be dropped. ABC followed with a report that Congressman Ichord believed that too much attention was being paid to US atrocities in the war and not enough to the communist atrocities ... so he requested that films of Hue be shown. Still shots were shown of decapitated and bound bodies as a result of Communist action. Ichord said that the world press was obligated to represent properly all such events.

NBC also reported that SVN Senator Don found no bodies of alleged massacre victims at My Lai; in fact he said it was hard to tell if a massacre ever occurred. Then NBC film report on the difficulty of finding any grave sites in the village. The reporter said it seems strange that no one knows where the bodies are and it is becoming clear that the truth on the massacre will have to emerge in the US, not in SVN.

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COLUMBUS OHIO 29

THE PRESIDENT

THE WHITE HOUSE

DEAR MR PRESIDENT, I REPRESENT CAPTAIN ERNEST L MEDINA, UNITED STATES ARMY, WHO HAS BEEN NAMED AS SUSPECT OF MILITARY MISCONDUCT IN INNUMERABLE NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS AND ON EVERY MAJOR NETWORK. NEWS REPORTS HAVE INCLINED THE PUBLIC TO BELIEVE THAT THE WHITE HOUSE CONCURS IN THESE UNWARRANTED CONDEMNATIONS OF THOSE ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED. I BELIEVE THAT ISSUES OF THE GRAVEST LEGAL IMPORTANCE

ARE RAISED BY THIS ENTIRE MATTER WHEREIN IT NOW APPEARS THAT A SOLDIER IN COMBAT MUST FIRE AT HIS OWN PERIL WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF PROSECUTION FOR HOMICIDE SHOULD A TARGET OTHER THEN MILITARY BE STRICKEN. THIS SITUATION OF COURSE COULD SWIFTLY DESTROY THE EFFICIENCY OF OUR ARMED TROOPS IN THE FIELD. AS THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE COMPANY WHICH CONDUCTED THE ASSULT ON MY LAI FOUR, CAPTAIN MEDINA SEEMS TO BE AT THE FULCRUM OF THIS MOST DELICATE MATTER, A CHECK OF HIS FILE WILL DISCLOSE THAT HE IS A FINE OFFICER WITH AN EXCELLANT RECORD OF NEARLY 16 YEARS SERVICE. I CANNOT PERMIT HIM TO BE VILIFIED IN THE NATIONAL

0004  
PRESS AS A BUTCHER WITH THE ECHOING CONCURRENCE OF PROMINENT NATIONAL OFFICIALS ON CAPITOL HILL WITHOUT RESPONDING IN SOME FASHION, UNDERSTANDING AS I DO THAT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS RESPONSE MAY FAR TRANSCEND HIS PERSONAL PREDICAMENT, I SHOULD LIKE TO CONFER WITH APPROPRIATE MEMBERS OF YOUR STAFF AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THANK YOU VERY KINDLY FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER VERY TRULY YOURS

MR F LEE BAILEY SHERATION HOTEL COLUMBUS OHIO.

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NEW YORK, Nov. 30 (UPI)—Rep. Emanuel Celler (D-N.Y.) today called for a "full inquiry by an impartial body" into the alleged massacre of 109 civilians at Mylai 4.

Celler said either Congress or President Nixon should establish an impartial commission to investigate the alleged slaying of the civilians by American forces.

"I believe that the armed services (committees) either of the Senate or the House are too close to the military, too close to the Pentagon" to stage an impartial inquiry, Celler said.

But he cautioned against passing judgment on the soldiers allegedly involved in the massacre before they are tried, and said that America has killed civilians before without met-

leged massacre. A number of eyewitnesses were mentioned and Hersh started to track them down.

On Nov. 19, Obst was phoning newspapers again, this time with a story based on interviews with three soldiers who claimed to have been in Pinkville. The Washington Post bought the story, again assigning its own reporters to check and interview the soldiers and publish its own story.

On Nov. 21, according to Hersh's lawyer, Michael Nussbaum, CBS called and said it would pay \$10,000 for an exclusive. A meeting was held in New York two days later to arrange an interview with Paul Meadlo.

Meadlo, a wounded veteran of Pinkville, 22, gave an account of the incident to CBS. The soldier was well aware of the possible legal dangers of his public confession of a part in the killings, Nussbaum said and stated that others had advised him of his rights and arranged for him to have a lawyer in Terre Haute, Ind., where he lives. Meadlo received none of the \$10,000.

Hersh also wrote a story about Meadlo. The Washington Post did not buy it, insisting on retaining final editorial control of copy appearing on its pages. Hersh had wanted a commitment to have his story run essentially as he wrote it.

A source close to Dispatch News Service said Hersh was more concerned with publicizing Dispatch than with payment for the article.

A curious sidelight to the scramble for Pinkville stories is the difficulty Ridenhour encountered last spring when he and a literary agent sought to interest Life, Look and Newsweek, among others.

None of those publications seemed interested. On Oct. 22—just three weeks before the story broke—the agent wrote Ridenhour saying there was nothing more he could do.

(END)

FRIDAY MORNING, 5 DECEMBER 1969

WASHINGTON (UPI) --A MEMORANDUM OF THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HAS REVEALED DAY-TO-DAY DEVELOPMENTS OVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL MONTHS IN THE UNFOLDING OF THE SONG MY MASSACRE STORY.

THE MEMORANDUM, ENTITLED "ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING 'PINKVILLE' AND ALLEGED ATROCITIES," REVEALS THE FIRST APPARENT OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO RONALD RIDENHOUR, WHO WROTE SEVERAL LETTERS TO HIGH OFFICIALS ABOUT THE MASSACRE, AND DILIGENT STAFF WORK BY REP. MORRIS K. UDALL, D-ARIZ., AND HIS OFFICE.

THIS IS THE CHRONOLOGY, AS LISTED BY THE MEMO:

APRIL 4, 1969 -- THE COMMITTEE RECEIVES A MIMEOGRAPHED LETTER FROM RIDENHOUR "ALLEGING A MASSACRE OF THE INHABITANTS OF A VILLAGE CALLED 'PINKVILLE' SOMETIME IN MARCH, 1968 BY U.S. ARMY PERSONNEL."

APRIL 7 -- THE COMMITTEE DIRECTED A LETTER TO THE ARMY REQUESTING THAT THE "ALLEGATIONS" RE PINKVILLE BE INVESTIGATED.

APRIL 7 -- THE COMMITTEE RECEIVED A LETTER FROM UDALL ENCLOSING A COPY OF RIDENHOUR'S LETTER AND ASKING "WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR YOUR COMMITTEE TO LOOK INTO THIS SO WE CAN GET AT THE TRUTH?"

APRIL 10 -- THE ARMY ADVISES THAT A REQUEST FOR A REPORT HAS BEEN SENT TO THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE U.S. ARMY IN VIETNAM.

APRIL 14 -- THE COMMITTEE REFERS UDALL'S LETTER TO THE ARMY.

APRIL 24 -- THE COMMITTEE RECEIVES TWO LETTERS FROM THE ARMY. IN BOTH, THE ARMY ADVISES THAT BECAUSE THE EVENTS IN THE RIDENHOUR LETTER HAPPENED MORE THAN ONE YEAR EARLIER AND THE PERSONS INVOLVED HAD LEFT VIETNAM, IT WAS TRANSFERRING THE REQUEST TO THE INSPECTOR GENERAL. THE ARMY ALSO SAID: "OUR FINAL REPLY CONCERNING THIS MATTER CAN NOT BE EXPECTED FOR SOME TIME IN AS MUCH AS INVESTIGATIONS SUCH AS THIS ONE ARE EXTREMELY TIME CONSUMING."

AUG. 8 -- MAJ. GEN. WILLIAM A. BECKER, THE ARMY'S CHIEF CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON, DISCUSSES THE ALLEGATIONS ORALLY WITH COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN L. MENDEL RIVERS, D-S.C.

SEPT. 5 -- THE ARMY ADVISES THE COMMITTEE THAT THE INVESTIGATION IS CONTINUING; "HOWEVER, IT HAS REVEALED SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO WARRANT THE PREFERRING OF CHARGES AGAINST A LIEUTENANT-CALLEY, FORMER PLATOON LEADER IN THE UNIT, FOR VIOLATION OF THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE, ARTICLE 118, MURDER." THE ARMY ALSO ADVISED: "WE ARE EXERCISING UTMOST CAUTION TO AVOID ANY PUBLIC DISCUSSION WHICH COULD PREJUDICE THE CONTINUING INVESTIGATION OR THE RIGHTS OF LT. CALLEY."

SEPT. 8 -- DURING A BRIEFING, BECKER ADVISED COMMITTEE COUNSEL THAT CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE ARMY WERE BEING HELD ON ACTIVE DUTY BEYOND THEIR SCHEDULED RELEASE DATE SO AS TO ENABLE THE ARMY TO COMPLETE ITS INVESTIGATION. COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS, TAKEN BY AN ARMY COMBAT PHOTOGRAPHER ALLEGEDLY AT THE TIME OF THE SO-CALLED "MASSACRE," WERE SHOWN.

NOV. 12 -- THE COMMITTEE RECEIVED A CONFIDENTIAL, WRITTEN COMMUNICATION FROM THE ARMY STATING "ARTICLE 32 INVESTIGATION OF THE ALLEGED OFFENSE ON THE PART OF LT. WILLIAM L. CALLEY IS NEARING COMPLETION. AN INVESTIGATION OF OTHERS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED OFFENSE IS CONTINUING." THE COMMUNICATION ALSO CONTAINED A FACT SHEET ENTITLED "ALLEGED MURDER OF NONCOMBATANT CIVILIANS IN THE HAMLET OF MY LAI, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM." THE FACT SHEET WAS MARKED CONFIDENTIAL, ALTHOUGH THAT STAMP HAS NOW BEEN REMOVED EXCEPT FOR THAT PART OF THE ENCLOSURE WHICH CONTAINS A "STATEMENT OF SERVICE" OF CALLEY.

NOV. 14 -- THE COMMITTEE WAS ADVISED THAT S.SGT. DAVID MITCHELL HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH ASSAULT WITH INTENT TO MURDER.

NOV. 20 -- COMMITTEE COUNSEL CONTACTED THE ARMY WHETHER IT WOULD BE PROPER TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS RIDENHOUR'S LETTER. THE ARMY SAID IT HAD REFUSED TO RELEASE THE LETTER BECAUSE IT COULD PREJUDICE THE RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED, BUT IT HAD NO CONTROL OVER COMMITTEE ACTION.

NOV. 24 -- COMMITTEE COUNSEL DISCUSSED WITH AN ARMY CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON OFFICER A NEWSPAPER STORY QUOTING PHOTOGRAPHER RONALD L. HAEBERLE AS SAYING U.S. TROOPS INDISCRIMINATELY KILLED CIVILIANS IN THE HAMLET. THE OFFICER SAID REP. GEORGE H. MAHON, D-TEX., HAD REQUESTED A FULL REPORT ON THE MATTER, AND SEN. CHARLES E. GOODELL, R-N.Y., HAD ASKED THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE.

NOV. 24 -- SECRETARY OF THE ARMY STANLEY RESOR ISSUED A FACT SHEET, ENTITLED "INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS," STATING THAT CALLEY WILL BE TRIED BY GENERAL COURT-MARTIAL ON A CHARGE OF PREMEDIATED MURDER.

NOV. 24 -- RESOR AND ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF WILLIAM WESTMORELAND ANNOUNCE IN A SEPARATE INFORMATION ISSUANCE THE APPOINTMENT OF LT. GEN. WILLIAM R. PEERS TO "EXPLORE THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE ORIGINAL ARMY INVESTIGATION OF THE SO CALLED MY LAI INCIDENT...."

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DNS formed in SVN about 1-yr ago ... very possibly for purpose of generating & spreading anti-war propaganda

No one or no press has ever said of Vietnam war - in 8-9 yrs - "watch it... there are a hell of a lot of atrocities going on." EXCEPT DNS

RN: Courts will decide - (alleged incident)

(us) if true, <sup>NOT</sup> IAW our nat'l policy + persons involved will be punished

(NVN) if true, IAW nat'l policy - accepted

→ & if we pull out - we leave pop of SVN to such a fate

Orders issued to the ground forces are —  
—  
—

and in 99 - prob 99.99% of the time these orders are carried out ... to the letter

HKis will get figures re human int stories (D F-U)

Breaches may occur - we don't make EXCUSES for them - but they may occur, just as they occur here in America.

VA - play up what "our boys" have done on the positive side

① Turn this off - on basis awaiting the trial

② If it won't "turn off" - we institute a Pres'l Commission

↓  
[or, if more atrocities come to light]

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NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

# Massacre Locale Was Viet Cong Stronghold

By Col. R. D. HEINL JR.

Tel Aviv:—It is difficult to write with authority from abroad about the shocking 1968 My Lai massacre charges directed against U.S. Army officers and men.

What crimes were committed and by whom will be up to a court martial and, in larger context, to the congressional inquiries which will and must surely follow.

But even at this distance and at this stage, certain observations and questions seem in order regarding the context of the crimes and the manner of their disclosure.

The locale of the affair, Quang Ngai Province, is one of the hardest-core Viet Cong areas remaining in South Viet Nam. Anybody who has been in Viet Nam knows that for 20 years Quang Ngai has been a Viet Minh and subsequently a Viet Cong stronghold.

Every village—like Song My and neighboring My Lai—is a fortified hamlet, honeycombed with tunnels, bunkers and booby traps.

Quang Ngai has been the scene of repeated Communist terrorism. Within the past year government schools and hospitals of Quang Ngai City have had rooms of children and wards full of patients slaughtered by grenade and machine gun attacks.

To heighten Quang Ngai's sinister atmosphere of death and terror, it must be recalled that the alleged massacre took place only a month after the Tet offensive of 1968.

The time was one of national panic and the Viet Cong were still trying to push the U.S. forces into the sea and destroy South Viet Nam in a volcanic "general uprising" long foretold by Ho Chi Minh.

Turning away from what may be called the local context of the "Pinkville Affair" the central question one asks is how far up the Army chain of command responsibility really extends?

The Army's Field Service Regulations, for generations the Bible of professional officers, succinctly says, "The commander is responsible for all that his unit does or leaves undone."

By this definition, which is a hard one (and meant to be), responsibility for this matter could theoretically extend up the line to Gen. William Westmoreland, who was then in command.

Certainly culpability cannot stop at the level of the platoon leader who has thus far been charged. The company commander concerned has already been named and implicated. Other reports indicate that a battalion-scale operation took place.

It seems inconceivable that an operation of this character could have proceeded without the knowledge and sanction of brigade and division headquarters.

Although what actually happened is the major question, subordinate but not unimportant questions arise as to the motives and bent of those responsible for making this affair public.

The actions of Ronald Ridenhour,

a 23-year-old student who was not in the unit or even at My Lai, in pursuing his own investigation and publicizing the episode seems rather curious.

Even more curious is the fact that first word of the massacre was channelled to the press via Seymour Hersh's anti-war "Dispatch News Service," which is reportedly associated with Richard Barnet's radical-left Institute for Policy Studies.

Both Hersh and Barnet are authors

of violent anti-military books containing sensational and in places inaccurate and unfair attacks on U.S. policies.

Yet the fact must be faced that something, probably something horrible, did happen at Pinkville. Until that something is fully investigated and until responsible parties, regardless of rank, have been made to pay, the U.S. Army (and behind it the United States) will be on trial.

The final question no trial can answer, however, is this:

How can you fight a war of this abominable kind on terms that are morally acceptable to Western democracies?

The answer is, you can't.

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its own... This most  
had its positive re...  
Israel. It provided a  
for Israel to release  
prisoners who were apparent-ly being held illegally under  
tion after... Israeli press

# Rivers Said to Bury Mylai Investigation

Chairman L. Mendel Rivers (D-S.C.) has buried his congressional investigation of Mylai rather than block out an "in depth" study of the alleged massacre, informed sources said yesterday.

Rivers did this at the urging of Army Secretary Stanley R. Resor, who feared the publicity from the hearings was jeopardizing the case.

Resor, with backing from Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird, argued that the publicity coming out of the Mylai congressional hearings might make it difficult to give those involved a fair trial or to obtain a conviction that would stick.

The Rivers hearings were closed to the public. But some members who heard testimony disclosed what they had been told, partly because Rivers had chosen to characterize the testimony himself to newsmen.

On Friday, Rivers announced that one of his old friends on the committee, Rep. F. Edward Hebert (D-La.), was going to take over the Mylai investigation as a special unit within the investigation subcommittee.

However the Rivers statement, according to Pentagon sources, really amounts to an

attempt at a graceful burial of the whole Mylai investigation.

## Army Questions Two About Earlier Inquiry

Associated Press

An Army board trying to determine whether there was a cover-up or a failure in the first investigation of the alleged Mylai massacre yesterday questioned two brigadier generals who were assistant commanders of the Americal Division at the time.

Brig. Gen. George H. Young Jr., of Pine Bluff, Ark., and Brig. Gen. James V. Galloway, of Glouster, Ohio, testified in secret before a board headed by Lt. Gen. William R. Peers in a Pentagon war room.

Army spokesmen said the two generals declined to talk with newsmen.

## Nothing New In Viet Probe Of Pinkville

Reuters

SAIGON, Dec. 14 (Sunday) — Sen. Tran Van Don said today that a South Vietnamese Senate committee investigating the alleged Mylai massacre agreed with the provincial authorities' estimate that 43 civilians had been killed.

The senator, chairman of the Senate Defense Committee, returned yesterday from his second visit this month to the scene of the alleged massacre, six miles northeast of Quangngai City.

Accompanied by three other senators, Don spent three days in Quangngai. Besides talking with survivors, he interviewed two South Vietnamese army interpreters who were with American troops when they swept through Mylai March 16, 1968.

Don, a former general, declined to say what the two sergeants had told him. However, he told reporters, "after two investigations, our delegation agrees with the Quangngai province authorities that a total of 43 Vietnamese civilians from nine families were killed."

The U.S. army has charged Lt. William L. Calley Jr. with the murder of 109 civilians in Mylai.

After his first two-day fact-finding trip to Quangngai early this month, Don announced that he had confirmed that a massacre had been committed by American troops, but said that a further investigation was necessary to collect "more correct facts."

## Metropolitan Opera Strike Ends in N.Y.

NEW YORK, Dec. 13 (UPI) —The last striking union at the Metropolitan Opera came to terms with management today. Rehearsals will begin Sunday to open the season, originally set to begin Sept. 15.

General manager Rudolf Bing said he could get the season, the Met's 85th, under way late this month or in early January.

Details of the settlement with the American Guild of Musical Artists were not released, but it was known that working conditions, not money, was the chief issue blocking agreement.

Unions representing singers, dancers and soloists agreed to new contract terms earlier.

A champagne party was held at the Met tonight to celebrate the settlements.

## Brazil Jails Priest

Reuters

SAO PAULO, Brazil, Dec. 13 — A military court yesterday condemned a Roman Catholic priest to unlimited detention for subversion.

## Thais Buy Bombers

Reuters

BANGKOK, Dec. 13 — The Thai government will buy 10 fighter-bombers from West Germany at a cost of about \$6 million, reliable sources reported today. The planes will be used to cope with increasing Communist guerrilla activities in the country.

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