A Former Chaplain Says He Passed On Mylai Allegations DEC 4 1971

By DOUGLAS ROBINSON Special to The New York Times

FORT MEADE, Md., Dec. 3—A former Army chaplain told the court-martial of Col. Oran K. Henderson today that a helicopter pilot had informed him of "excessive civilian casualties" in the hamlet of Mylai 4 and that he had immediately reported the allegations to his superior.

The witness, the Rev. Carl E. Creswell, an Episcopalian, said that although he had mentioned the report several times to the superior officer, he had never received an answer on what an investigation had disclosed, although he had been told an inquiry was being made.

"In hindsight, I feel I should have done more when I couldn't learn what was going on," he said. "At the time, I relied on the Army's investigative system."

Mr. Creswell, who recently went to New York City from Emporia, Kan., to work as a purchasing analyst for the Health and Hospital Corporation, was called by the jury of two generals and five colonels to testify at the trial.

Three Witnesses Sought

Colonel Henderson, a 51-yearold combat veteran, is charged with failing to conduct a proper investigation of the Mylai massacre, of not reporting a war crime to Army headquarters in Saigon, and of false swearing before an Army board of inquiry.

Although the prosecution and the defense have both rested their cases, the jury asked that three more witnesses be heard. Under military law, a court-martial jury may examine witnesses on the stand and is permitted to call witnesses on its own if the military judge agrees that the witnesses are relevant to the case.

The officer to whom Mr. Creswell said he reported the massacre allegations was Col. Francis R. Lewis, the former Chaplain of the Americal Division. When he testified here, Colonel Lewis said he had passed the complaint on to two division officers. He also said he had not followed it up to see what action had been taken.

Another chaplain, Lieut. Col. Raymond P. Hoffman Jr., testified here that he had dismissed Mr. Creswell's complaint as coming from a man "who was always ragging people."

Today, Mr. Creswell said that Colonel Hoffman appeared to have taken him seriously when he told him of the pilot's allegations, "I was quite serious about it," he told the court. "It was not a joke."

Colonel Doubts Report

Another witness called by the jury, Lieut. Col. Henry I? Lowder, former assistant chief of staff of the Americal Division, testified that he could "not recall" ever being ordered to look for a report of the Mylai operation in the files nor could he remember that it had ever been found,

Another high-ranking officer has testified here that he was present when Colonel Lowder was ordered to look for the report and said that he had later seen it in the possession of the officer.

The report was made by the late Lieut. Col. Frank A. Barker on the orders of Colonel Henderson, then a brigade commander. The document, which vanished from division files, apparently concluded that only 20 civilians had been inadvertently killed at Mylai.