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Army Report Said to Show 347 Killings in Mylai Area

By DOUGLAS ROBINSON

Seymour Hersh, the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who first wrote in detail about the massacre of civilians at Mylai 4, has reported that, according to Army documents, 347 men, women and children were killed in the South Vietnamese hamlet by American troops. The usually accepted figure had been under 200.

At the same time Mr. Hersh reports that the documents show that as many as 90 civilians were shot down on the day of the Mylai assault in a hamlet shown on military maps at Mykhe 4, some two miles northwest of Mylai 4.

The Hersh accounts are given in the first installment of a two-part article in *The New Yorker*, published today, in which the journalist accuses the Army of covering up factual material about the atrocities.

In the article Mr. Hersh identifies the source of his information as the transcript of the Army's 1969-70 inquiry into the Mylai massacre, a document that has not been made public by the Pentagon.

Since word of the Mylai case came to public attention late in 1969 the Army has consistently refused to disclose how many civilians were killed at Mylai by the company of the American Division that attacked the hamlet on March 16, 1968.

Estimated Up to 400 Dead

Estimates of the civilian casualties have run as high as 400. Newsmen covering the various Mylai courts-martial have used an estimate of "at least 100" because of the 109 murders initially charged to First Lieut. William L. Calley, Jr., a platoon commander.

Mr. Hersh, in his article, says that a secret investigation by the Army's Criminal Investigation Division, undertaken at the request of the Army inquiry board, concluded that 347 civilians died—a total, Mr. Hersh writes, "twice as large as had been publicly acknowledged.."

The inquiry, officially known as the Department of the Army Review of the Preliminary Investigations into the Mylai Incident, sought to discover why initial investigations had failed to disclose the atrocity. The panel was directed by Lieut. Gen. William H. Peers.

In his newest article Mr. Hersh concedes that one reason the results of the Peers inquiry have not been made public has been the Army's "serious concern" for the rights of possible court-martial defendants.

"A careful examination of the testimony and documents accumulated by the Peers commission," he writes, "makes equally clear that military officials have deliberately withheld from the public important but embarrassing factual information about Mylai 4."

Last Trial Completed

Part of that hidden information, he concludes is the number of civilians killed, especially since the last court-martial arising from Mylai was completed last month.

In the afternoon of Mylai only Lieutenant Calley, who was charged with murder, was found guilty. Five men accused of crimes ranging from murder to covering up the atrocity were acquitted and charged against 19 other officers and enlisted men were dismissed.

Lieut. Col. Stanleigh K. Fisk, a spokesman for the Army information office at the Pentagon, when asked if the Hersh material was accurate, said, "It is inappropriate to release copies of the Peers inquiry while Lieutenant Calley's appeal is still pending." He said the Army would have no further comment.

Discussing the attack on Mykhe 4, Mr. Hersh says that the Peers inquiry and his own interviews with the men who

participated found that men, women and children were mowed down by infantrymen or were blown up in their bunkers.

Extent Not Disclosed

Although it had been known that some South Vietnamese civilians were killed at Mykhe, the extent of the atrocity had not been discovered by the Army.

Writing of Mykhe, Mr. Hersh says:

"The incident at Mykhe 4 would perhaps be just another Vietnam atrocity story if it weren't for four facts: Its vital connection with the Mylai 4 tragedy; the American public's total ignorance about it; the total, detailed knowledge of it among the Peers investigators, the Department of the Army and higher Pentagon officials; and the failure of any of these agencies to see that the men involved were prosecuted."

Mr. Hersh also said the infantrymen attacking Mykhe, who were also part of the American Division, had suffered a number of casualties from booby traps at their original objective, the hamlet of Mylai 1.