

CO ORDERED VILLAGE WIPED OUT
Saw Viet Civilians Slain, GI Says

(By the Associated Press)

An Army sergeant stationed at Ft. Dix, N. J., says he saw American soldiers kill hundreds of South Vietnamese men, women and children in the village of My Lai in March 1968.

Sgt. Michael Bernhardt said last night that Company C, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry of the 11th Brigade of the Americal Division conducted the mass slaying as the result of an order by the company commander.

In another development related to the deaths, the Cleveland Plain Dealer today printed photographs showing South Vietnamese civilians allegedly killed in the incident. It said the photographs came from a former Army combat photog-

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—AP WIREPHOTO.
RONALD L. HAEBERLE
 former Army photog.



—AP WIREPHOTO.
RONALD LEE RIDENHOUR
 triggered probe.

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rapher, Ronald L. Haerberle, of Cleveland.

HAEBERLE SAID in a copyright story that he joined the company just before it entered the village and heard from the men that it was suspected the villagers were Viet Cong sympathizers. He said he saw men, women and children slaughtered.

Lt. William L. Calley Jr., 26, of Miami, Fla., has been charged with murder in the case and Staff Sgt. David Mitchell, St. Francisville, La., has been charged with assault with intent to murder.

A Pentagon spokesman in Washington said he does not

expect there will be any official comment on the Plain Dealer story or photographs. "We don't want to say anything that would prejudice this case," he said.

The charges brought against Calley Sept. 5, one day before he was due to be discharged from the service, were prompted by the actions of Ronald Lee Ridenhour, 23, a former Army Spec. 4 now attending college in California.

RIDENHOUR SENT 30 letters to officials in Washington telling them of stories he heard from returning Vietnam veterans who told of hundreds of civilians being shot and killed by American GIs.

Newsweek magazine said in its current issue that Calley's case is "only one of a string of related incidents" in which 567 civilians in three hamlets were killed.

Bernhardt, 23, of Hempstead, N. Y., said in an interview that the My Lai incident rose out of an order given the day before by the company commander whom he refused to identify.

He said the company was temporarily stationed in a field base about five miles from the village. He said the commander gave a briefing during which he said "words to the effect that the village and its inhabitants were to be destroyed."