

A General's Talk Stops My Lai Trial

Atlanta

The defense counsel for a sergeant accused of murder at My Lai moved for dismissal of charges yesterday on the ground that Third Army commander Alberto O. Connor, who is in effect grand jury and appellate judge in the case, characterized the My Lai incident in a public speech last fall as "pure unadulterated murder."

Attorney Charles L. Weltner said the newly discovered information could "blow the whole thing sky high," not only for his client, Sergeant Esequiel Torres, but also seven other men under Connor's jurisdiction.

SPEECH

The military judge hearing Torres' case, Colonel James A. Hagen, ordered General Connor to appear at a hearing September 21 on Weltner's motion.

He also issued subpoenas for five men Weltner identified as witnesses to Connor's remarks.

Connor allegedly made the remarks in a speech before an audience of 64 persons at American Legion Post 134 in Atlanta last October 2.

The five witnesses named yesterday by Weltner include a member of the Georgia Pardon and Parole Board, the editor of a daily legal newspaper and an attorney.

MURDER

Their recollections of Connor's exact words vary, Weltner reported. One recalled that the general called the My Lai events "pure unadulterated murder." Others remember "murder" but were less certain about the adjective.

Weltner said he learned of Connor's alleged remarks to the American Legionnaires only Thursday.

Setting of the hearing temporarily halted further action in the Torres court-martial.

Torres is charged with two counts of murder and one of assault with intent to murder.

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