

## Witness Testifies Calley Shot Civilians at Mylai for an Hour

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FORT BENNING, Ga., Dec. 7 — A witness at the murder trial of First Lieutenant William L. Calley Jr. said today that the killing of South Vietnamese civilians in a ditch outside Mylai went on for an hour, with group after group of women, children and old men being shoved into a trench by soldiers and then shot by Lieutenant Calley.

This testimony of Thomas Turner, a member of Lieutenant Calley's platoon during the assault of March 16, 1968, on the hamlet of Mylai 4, appeared to stun the defense. Lieutenant Calley's lawyers moved for a mistrial, contending that the witness's allegations went beyond the specifications charged by the Gov-

ernment.

Mr. Turner, now a student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, further alleged that Lieutenant Calley had shot down a Vietnamese woman who came running toward him with her hands in the air, pleading for mercy.

The military judge, Col. Reid W. Kennedy, ordered all reference to the incident of the woman stricken from the record because it was not included in the four counts of the Government's bill of particulars against Lieutenant Calley.

Those four counts allege that the young officer shot an individual Vietnamese male, that he shot an individual Vietnam-

Continued on Page 12, Column 3

ese child, that he shot or ordered the shooting of "not less than 30" civilians at the southern edge of Mylai, and that he shot or ordered the shooting of "not less than 70" Vietnamese in the ditch east of the hamlet.

But Colonel Kennedy delayed his ruling on the motion for a mistrial. He said he would "hold the Government to the bill of particulars" and that he would instruct the six officers of the military court tomorrow on how they should regard Mr. Turner's story of the hour-long shootings.

To the defense complaint that the Turner testimony came as a complete surprise and that Mr. Turner had refused to be interviewed by any of Lieutenant Calley's lawyers, Colonel Kennedy replied that the defense had access to Mr. Turner's prior testimony at the David Mitchell at Ford Hood, trial last month of Sgt. Tex. Except for the reference to the woman, the Fort Hood testimony was the same as that heard here today, Colonel Kennedy said.

"You should have raised this objection before he (Turner) testified, not after," the judge told the chief defense counsel, George W. Latimer.

#### Says He Fired Into Ditch

The killings at the ditch lasted "approximately one hour," Mr. Turner testified. He told of "several small groups" being brought up, "some screaming and crying," and of "Calley firing into the ditch," pausing between groups of victims to insert a fresh clip in his M-16 rifle.

Pfc. Paul D. Meadlo helped Lieutenant Calley in the killing Mr. Turner testified.

Mr. Turner said there was a small number of Vietnamese corpses already in the ditch when he first came upon it. He said he stood 70 yards from the ditch and saw soldiers herd several groups of civilians into the trench before Lieutenant Calley and Private Meadlo. He said he saw Lieutenant Calley open fire on all these groups. He estimated that 90 to 100 defenseless noncombatants met their deaths in the ditch.

An earlier witness, Charles Sledge, a radioman who accompanied Lieutenant Calley through the scenes at Mylai, testified that he saw the defendant shoot a Buddhist priest at point-blank range, then toss a child into a ditch and shoot into the ditch.

As he spoke, Mr. Sledge, 23, a black who now works in a luggage factory at Sardis, Miss., avoided the steady gaze of Lieutenant Calley. He swore he saw both the Lieutenant and Sergeant Mitchell pour automatic fire into a ditch filled with 20 to 30 screaming civil-

ans, mostly women and young children.

Earlier, he testified, Lieutenant Calley left "30 to 40 women and children and a few old men" in the custody of Private Meadlo with orders to "waste 'em."

Then, Mr. Sledge continued, as he and Lieutenant Calley were walking away from the group at the intersection of two trails on the southern edge of the village, "Meadlo started shooting into the people." Mr. Sledge said he glanced back.

"A new people started falling and I turned my head," he said. "I heard fire, I heard screams. I didn't look back."

Mr. Sledge said under cross-examination that he never saw Lieutenant Calley fire into this group. Not until they arrived at the ditch did he see the lieutenant use his M-16 rifle, he said.

His testimony conflicted with that of Dennis Conti, the Providence, R. I., truck driver who said on Friday that Lieutenant Calley did most of the killing of the trailside group.

#### Describes Ditch Scene

But Mr. Sledge did provide the Government with details of the scene at the ditch.

He said Lieutenant Calley and Sergeant Mitchell, with their rifles outstretched, began shoving people into the ditch. Then they opened fire, he said, sweeping the ditch with automatic fire.

"People started falling and screaming," he said.

How far were these people from the muzzles of the rifles, asked the Government prosecutor, Capt. Aubrey M. Daniel 3d.

"Four to five feet," Mr. Sledge replied.

He recounted how a helicopter landed near the scene. He said Lieutenant Calley talked briefly to the pilot, then returned to his men, saying angrily: "He [the pilot] don't like the way I'm running the show. I'm boss here."

He said that after the helicopter departed, the killings resumed.

#### Saw Priest at Ditch

Lieutenant Calley saw a priest standing near the edge of the ditch, Mr. Sledge said. The witness said he knew that the Vietnamese was a priest because of his white robes. He said he and Lieutenant Calley went up to the priest and the officer asked if there were any Vietcong in the village.

"No Viet," the priest replied and he started begging for mercy, Mr. Sledge said.

"He placed the palms of his hands together in front of his face and bowed his head," the witness said.

"Lieutenant Calley asked him a few questions, then hit him in the mouth with the butt of his rifle. He [the priest] fell back a little, bleeding from the

mouth. He stood there, sort of pleading.

"Lieutenant Calley pointed his rifle point-blank, pulled the trigger and fired right into the priest's face. The priest fell. Half his head was blown away."

Then a small child scrambled out of the ditch, he went on.

"Someone hollered, 'There's a child running back to the village,'" Mr. Sledge said. "It was a little baby, maybe one or two years old, I don't know whether it was a boy or a girl."

"Lieutenant Calley picked it up by the arm, slung it into a deep part of the ditch and fired one shot."

Under cross-examination, Mr. Sledge said that he did not see the bullet strike the child.

The defense got him to say that, at the age of 17, he had

been convicted of a "peeping Tom" offense involving a white woman in Batesville, Miss., and had served two years in prison.

A halt to the Mylai killings finally came, Mr. Sledge testified, when the commander of Charlie Company, Capt. Paul D. Medina, called over the radio: "Take a chow break."

Anticipating a defense argument that the civilians were slain not by the soldiers of Charlie Company but by artillery fire or perhaps by strafing from helicopters, the Government called to the witness stand Maj. Charles D. Lane, an Army pathologist of Fort Belvoir, Va. Dr. Lane said none of the wounds observed on photographed corpses strewn along the Mylai trail were "inconsistent with small-arms fire."

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