

# Meadlo Says He Feared Mylai Babies Held Grenades

By HOMER BIGART

Special to The New York Times

FORT BENNING, Ga., Jan. 12—Former Pfc. Paul D. Meadlo testified today at the court-martial of First Lieut. William L. Calley Jr. that he had shot some babies in their mothers' arms at Mylai because he was afraid the babies might be carrying concealed grenades.

Mr. Meadlo testified yesterday that he and Lieutenant Calley killed as many as 140 South Vietnamese, mostly women and children, during an American attack on the hamlet March 16, 1968.

"Were you afraid the babies might attack you?" the Army prosecutor, Capt. Aubrey M. Daniel 3d, asked today.

## Attack Feared

"Yes," Mr. Meadlo replied. "Any baby might have been loaded with grenades that the mother could have thrown."

"Were they making any move to attack?"

"Not at that time, no."

But, the witness said, one never knew when some mother or child might "give one little pull on a string or a chain and blow us up."

He said he had shot "a few" babies during a mass execution of 30 to 40 men, women and children inside the hamlet and later "a few" more babies during the shooting of 75 to 100 unarmed and unresisting civilians at a ditch outside.

"What were the mothers doing?" the prosecutor asked.

"They were just squatting there," Mr. Meadlo said.

"What were the babies doing?"

"They were in their mothers' arms."

Lieutenant Calley is on trial for premeditated murder in the slaying of at least 102 civilians at Mylai.

Mr. Meadlo said he had been instructed at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, that the "natural procedure" for handling civilians was to hold them for interrogation by a Vietnamese interpreter, then "send them back through channels" and let others decide what to do with them.

However, he said, the action at Mylai was a "search and destroy" mission, and he interpreted "destroy" to mean killing all people and animals.

Mr. Meadlo said he had opened fire on the noncombatants only when ordered to do so by Lieutenant Calley.

Captain Daniel asked if Lieutenant Calley's order conflicted with standard procedure.

"It ain't for me to figure out what they [the officers] were going to do with them [the civilians]," Mr. Meadlo said.

Other witnesses have testified that Mr. Meadlo wept when ordered to shoot the civilians. Exploring Mr. Meadlo's emotions at Mylai, Captain Daniel asked: "Why were you afraid of carrying out Lieutenant Calley's order?"

"Because nobody really wants to take a human being's life," Mr. Meadlo said.

## Reluctant Witness

Mr. Meadlo, a reluctant witness for the Government, testified only because "I'd be thrown in jail if I didn't." He had been given testimonial immunity by the Justice Department, and there were Federal marshals standing by to arrest him if he refused to testify.

He insisted yesterday that Lieutenant Calley was only "doing his job, doing his duty" in shooting the civilians. Today he said he felt assured of the correctness of the action when he saw Lieutenant Cal-

ley's superior, Capt. Ernest Medina, the commander of Charlie Company, Task Force Barker, Americal Division, walk past a group of bodies without any sign of displeasure.

"I assumed everything was O.K. because Captain Medina saw all these bodies lying around and didn't put a stop to it," Mr. Meadlo said.

The defense has tried to shift responsibility from Lieutenant Calley to Captain Medina. Mr. Meadlo said today that Captain Medina told the troops on the eve of the Mylai action that "everyoen" found in the village should be "destroyed."

## Mistrial Sought

Captain Daniel challenged Mr. Meadlo so vigorously in this point that the chief defense counsel, George W. Latimer, asked for a mistrial, contending that the prosecution was trying to impeach its own witness. The mistrial motion was denied by the military judge, Col. Reid W. Kennedy.

After Mr. Meadlo's testimony, the prosecution rested, and the defense resumed with the calling of Nicholas Capezza, a New York City housing patrolman, of 105-18 80th Street in Queens.

Mr. Capezza, who was a medical corpsman in Charlie Company on the day of the Mylai incident, gave partial

support to the defense contention that Lieut. Col. Frank A. Barker, commander of the task force, or some other superior officer landed briefly at Mylai during the action and gave no orders to stop the shooting. Colonel Barker was later killed.

Mr. Capezza said he had seen a helicopter land Captain Medina. An officer emerged, and Captain Medina saluted. Mr. Capezza could identify neither the officer nor his rank.

Another witness, Tommy L. Moss, 24 years old, of Spartanburg, S. C., recalled Captain Medina's briefing. He said the captain had ordered the troops to burn Mylai, pollute the wells and kill the inhabitants.

## Canada Bars Abbie Hoffman

Special to The New York Times

OTTAWA, Jan. 12—Canadian immigration authorities have refused to allow Abbie Hoffman, the Yippie leader, to enter Canada for a television appearance. Mr. Hoffman, who was to have arrived tomorrow, was barred in accordance with a section of the immigration law that prohibits the entry of anyone convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude, a Government spokesman said. Mr. Hoffman is appealing his conviction in the "Chicago 7" riot conspiracy trial.