

2 Generals Face Demotion Over Roles in Mylai Case

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By The Associated Press

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WASHINGTON, March 18 — Gen. William C. Westmoreland has recommended that Maj. Gen. Samuel W. Koster and the general who was his assistant in command of the Army division involved in the alleged massacre at the South Vietnamese hamlet of Mylai 4 be demoted and reprimanded, Pentagon sources said today.

General Koster, 51 years old, and Brig. Gen. George H. Young Jr., 50, were told in a letter from the Army's general counsel that General Westmoreland, the chief of staff, had recommended that General Koster be reduced in rank to brigadier general and General Young to colonel.

The final decision for this administrative action, a form of nonjudicial punishment, will be made by Secretary of the Army Stanley R. Resor after

the two generals are given a chance to reply to the charges.

[At Fort Benning, Ga., a court-martial jury that is weighing a verdict in the case of First Lieut. William L. Calley Jr., charged with murdering 102 South Vietnamese civilians, ended its second day of deliberations. Page 6.]

The Army, in January, dismissed criminal charges against General Koster that accused him of covering up the alleged massacre of more than 100 Vietnamese civilians at Mylai by a unit of the Americal Division, which he commanded in March, 1968. General Koster, the Army said, "did not show any intentional abrogation of responsibilities."

But in clearing General Koster, a former West Point sup-

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erintendent, the Army handed him a letter of censure for failing to report civilian casualties and to insure that these casualties were properly investigated.

Cover-up charges against General Young, the division's assistant commander, were dismissed last June because, the Army said, they were "unsupported by the evidence."



Associated Press
Maj. Gen. Samuel W. Koster

A spokesman at Fort Meade, Md., where General Koster is assigned, said the general would have no comment on General Westmoreland's recommendation.

In an interview, General Young said the effect of this administrative punishment was that "more than eight months after I was declared innocent, I am being sentenced."

In addition to demotion, General Westmoreland recommended that General Young be stripped of a Distinguished Service Medal awarded for 18 months' duty in Vietnam and that a letter of reprimand be placed in his personnel file.

General Young said he had been told by the Army that it was taking "adverse action" against him "because of substandard performance of duty" related to the Mylai incident and subsequent investigations.

"It's like a bolt of lightning hit," said General Young, now director of maintenance for the Army Materiel Command. "I've given almost 29 years to this profession because I love it and I believe in the Army."

Young Is Optimistic

The general said he was mystified as to why the Army chose to punish him now after dropping legal proceedings. But, he added, he is optimistic that Secretary Resor will rule in his favor once "he has been advised of all the facts."

General Young and General Koster have until March 31 to submit a written rebuttal.

Reduction in rank would substantially reduce the active duty and retirement pay of the two men as well as put a permanent blight on their Army careers.

Officially, the Army has said only that the cases of all the individuals involved in the Mylai incident, against whom judicial action has been completed, are being reviewed and that no decision has been made as to whether administrative action will be taken.

Cover-up charges have been dismissed against all but one of the 14 officers originally accused of trying to conceal the alleged massacre.