

Colonel Says Every Large Combat Unit in

FORT MEADE, Md., May 24 (UPI)—Col. Oran K. Henderson, the highest ranking officer charged in the Mylai massacre, said today that every large American combat unit in Vietnam had committed similar atrocities.

Colonel Henderson, who is facing court-martial charges in the alleged coverup of the slaying of Vietnamese civilians at Mylai 4 in March, 1968, also said he volunteered at one point to accept full blame for the incident, but Gen. William C. Westmoreland, the Army

Chief of Staff, rebuffed the offer.

Talking to reporters during a noon recess of his pretrial hearing, Colonel Henderson said, "Every unit of brigade size has its Mylai hidden some place." (A brigade generally consists of two or more regiments; there are about 2,400 men in a United States Army regiment.)

Colonel Henderson said such incidents remained undisclosed because "every unit doesn't have a Ridenhour." He referred to Ronald L. Ridenhour, a Vietnam veteran who disclosed de-

tails of the Mylai incident in a letter to the Defense Secretary more than a year after the incident.

The colonel, who was accompanied by his army and civilian attorneys, said that he became concerned in December, 1969, on hearing that several young West Point graduates intended to resign their commissions after the disclosure that First Lieut. William L. Calley Jr. would be court-martialed. Lieutenant Calley was convicted last March of premeditated murder in the deaths of at least 22

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Vietnam Has a Mylai

Vietnamese civilians at Mylai. The case is being reviewed.

Colonel Henderson said he then wrote a letter and had it hand delivered to General Westmoreland, saying he would do anything the Army asked, short of signing false statements, to reduce the embarrassment of his service over Mylai.

"I got a very blunt reply saying that 'I've received your letter and I don't contemplate taking any action,'" the colonel added.

He contended that he had been completely honest with

his superiors in reporting what happened at Mylai, but that the Army's official investigation, headed by Lieut. Gen. William R. Peers, "chose to believe the worst" about the incident.