

Army Prober Says My Lai Report False

FT. MEADE (Md.) — (AP) — An Army criminal investigator testified today he is satisfied a report was made soon after the My Lai assault but said he feels it "was just a falsification to satisfy a commanding general that civilians were not murdered."

The report, attributed to Lt. Col. Frank A. Barker, has never been found. Barker was killed in a helicopter crash three months after his task force stormed the South Vietnamese village.

"I feel like the report was just a falsification," said Roland W. Thompson, operations officer for the Criminal Investigation Division team that interviewed 1500 people about the My Lai killings. However, he said, he is convinced the report did exist.

No-Jury Hearing

Thompson testified at a no-jury hearing held in conjunction with the courtmartial of Col. Oran K. Henderson. The hearing is into the adequacy of the Army's efforts to find the Barker report.

"I'm satisfied Col. Henderson received a report and Col. Henderson forwarded a report," Thompson said, adding that its origin and content are in question.

The document allegedly contained statements of 15 to 20 soldiers but Thompson said investigators were unable to find anyone who admitted signing such a statement.

Artillery Versions

Thompson said he felt the report conceivably was to convince a higher command that civilians were killed by artillery.

Six weeks after the March 16 attack, Henderson said, in a letter to the division commander, Maj. Gen. Samuel W. Koster, that 128 enemy soldiers were killed and 20 civilians died when they were inadvertently caught in preparatory fire and cross-fire.