

General Says He Knew of No Atrocities When He

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FORT MEADE, Md., Nov. 22 —A retired officer who had been censured by the Army for his role in the Mylai 4 incident said today that he had no knowledge of atrocities carried out by American troops when he ordered Col. Oran K. Henderson to investigate the attack.

The testimony by Brig. Gen. George H. Young Jr., retired, sharply contradicted that of two high-ranking officers who had testified that they had given the general a detailed ac-

count of the reported killings the morning after the assault on the undefended hamlet.

The jury of two generals and five colonels also heard a tape recording made by the late Lieut. Col. Frank A. Barker, the infantry task force commander at Mylai, describing the attack as a "successful operation," one that was "typical of the operations taking place in this country from one end to the other."

"It is doubtful that the Vietcong would be so stupid as to enter the Pinkville [the Mylai vicinity] area again," Colonel Barker said on the tape. "We

have gone into his base, destroyed his troops and captured or destroyed his munitions ... We have destroyed his fortress."

'Derelict of Duty'

Colonel Henderson, a highly decorated veteran of three wars, is charged with "dereliction of duty" in covering up the Mylai massacre, of failure to report a war crime and of lying to an Army board looking into the matter. His court-martial is now in its third month.

In his day-long testimony, General Young, who served as

the deputy commander of the Americal Division, said that the officers who had told him that something had gone wrong at Mylai had mentioned only an armed confrontation between a helicopter pilot and American ground troops.

He testified that the two officers, Lieut. Col. John L. Holladay and Lieut. Col. Frederic W. Watke, then a major, had come to him on the morning of March 17, 1968, the day after the Mylai assault, to report a claim by a helicopter pilot that he had to threaten American troops with gunfire if they did not cease fir-

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Told Henderson to Look Into Mylai Attack

ing on a group of civilians "caught in a crossfire."

The witness, whose testimony was frequently interspersed with the phrase "to the best of my knowledge and recollection," said that the two officers had not told him about allegations that soldiers had deliberately killed civilians.

Tells of Meeting

On the next day, he told the court, he met with Colonel Henderson, Colonel Barker and the two officers, both of whom were helicopter unit commanders, and passed on an

order to Colonel Henderson from the division commander, Maj. Gen. Samuel W. Koster, to investigate the incident. At the meeting, he testified, no one mentioned civilian casualties.

Both Colonel Holladay and Colonel Watke have testified here that wild firing by ground troops and the reports of deliberate killings were mentioned.

Last May, the Army censured both General Young and General Koster, and stripped them of their Distinguished Service Medals, for failing to

conduct an adequate inquiry into the Mylai incident. General Koster was also demoted one rank to Brigadier General. General Young retired last June.