

Deserters' Story of Viet Atrocities

Stockholm, Sweden

Six U.S. military deserters described to a press conference yesterday atrocities and torture they said they witnessed in Vietnam.

The conference, organized by New York lawyer Mark Lane, also saw a taped interview with a former Army sergeant now living in Paris who claimed to have seen a Vietnamese village of 400 wiped out in an attack three years ago.

At the conference here, Terry Whitmore of Memphis, Tenn., commented, "This Pinkville thing happens every day."

TRAINING

Chuck Ronan from Berkeley, Calif., a deserter living in Stockholm, told the conference that special forces units were given training in torture methods before being sent to Vietnam.

These included suspending

prisoners by rope from helicopters with a second rope around their necks. The prisoners could be flown through treetops "to cut them up," he said. The methods were taught at Camp Pendleton, Calif., San Diego, Memphis and South Carolina training camps, he claimed.

Army deserter Walter Marshall from Boston said that in March 1966 he had seen men from the First Cavalry Division (Airmobile) tie a young girl to a stake and burn her alive. A week later he saw another girl tied upside down and burned to death at the same spot, he said.

DETAILS

Other deserters gave details of how U.S. soldiers cut off ears and fingers from captured Viet Cong and kept them in jars of alcohol, how women were raped, decapitated or slit in half and how wounded persons, including

children, were rounded up and mowed down.

In the taped interview, Sergeant Kenneth Stilwell from Oregon, who said he served in the U. S. Army for more than seven years, said the alleged killing of the inhabitants of Bau Tri, 150 miles northwest of Hue, took place after the village chief admitted he was sympathetic to the Viet Cong and ordered an American patrol out.

"That night, we came back with a bigger force and tore the village apart," Stilwell said adding that the attack force used Napalm, mortars and hand weapons.

"We killed everything. Women and children, water buffalo, goats, everything," he added.

Reuters