

(As of 1 Apr 71)

63. ROTTMANN ALLEGATION (CCI)

ALLEGATION: GEN Westmoreland ordered the destruction of a village in the Mekong Delta.

COMPLAINANT: 1LT Larry L. Rottmann (USAR), [HOME TOWN REDACTED] (formerly assigned as an Assistant Information Officer, 25th Inf Div, Cu Chi, RVN).

BACKGROUND: On 1 Dec 70, at the Du Pont Plaza Hotel, Washington D. C., 1LT Larry L. Rottmann (USAR) made public statements before a press conference sponsored by the Citizens' Commission of Inquiry on US War Crimes in Vietnam (CCI). He stated that in 1967 he heard GEN Westmoreland, then COMUSMACV, state: "The Pacification Program is out. I want more bodies," during a briefing by the CG, 25th Inf Div. Rottmann alluded to war crimes but principally directed the body of his statements toward GEN Westmoreland.

STATUS/PROGNOSIS: CID investigation completed; allegation unfounded.

On 10 Dec 70, Rottmann was interviewed by CID, but did not wish to make any written statement. Rottmann produced an article from the Boston Globe, UPI release, 6 Dec 70, which indicated that a "high-ranking military official" had stated that GEN Westmoreland had, during his tenure as COMUSMACV, ordered the destruction of a village by the 9th Inf Div in the Mekong Delta. Rottmann related to the article by stating it was not his objective to bring GEN Westmoreland or anyone else before the bar of justice, as he was opposed to war crimes trials. However, he felt that general officers were as guilty as those persons being tried for war crimes, e.g., Medina and Calley, considering that "suggestions" made by general officers were construed as orders by subordinates who passed these orders down the chain of command with proportionately increasing emphasis. He would not, or could not, relate any specific information regarding war crimes. He stated that the number of veterans testifying publicly should be proof that the guilt of war crimes rests with general officers and/or as a result of the policies of the US Govt in Vietnam. The declaration of "free-fire zones" was proof that their intent was to kill all.

[REDACTED] former CG, 25th Inf Div, denies hearing such statements by GEN Westmoreland as does [REDACTED] former division IO. [Redacted] further states that Rottmann, a radical, was never in a position to have heard GEN Westmoreland make the alleged statements. On the basis of Rottmann's irresponsible, unsubstantiated public statements and his affiliation with the CCI, DCSPER has action to direct CG, First Army, to reopen board hearings re Rottmann's elimination from the Reserves, previously considered as a result of his rating officer's evaluation/recommendation.

WITNESSES: N/A.

INITIATED BY WHOM: USACIDA.

RESPONSE TO INITIATOR: Rottmann interviewed by CID on 10 Dec 70. He declined to make any statement concerning his knowledge of war crimes in Vietnam and the remarks he made about GEN Westmoreland on 1 Dec 70.

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