

ALAUX

WITNESS STATEMENT
(AR 195-10 - TB PAG 3)

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PLACE	DATE	TIME	FILE NUMBER
Washington, DC	28 Oct 69	1400	69-CID011-00014
LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, MIDDLE NAME	SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NO.		GRADE
THOMPSON, Billy Howard			Crim. Inves.
ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS			

1st MP Detachment (CI), OPMG, DA, Washington, DC 20314

SWORN STATEMENT

SIGNED: Billy H. THOMPSON

, WANT TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT UNDER OATH.

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

On 21 October 1969, Mr. Roger Louis ALAUX, Jr., was interviewed and stated he was released from Active Duty with the US Army in the grade of 1LT on 22 January 1969. Sometime prior to December 1967, he was assigned to C Company, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, in Hawaii as an Artillery Officer. On 1 December 1967, he accompanied the unit to the Republic of Vietnam, where he served with C Company for a period of six months. He recalled participating in the combat assault mission on the village of My Lai (4) during March 1968 and stated substantially as follows:

On the evening prior to the mission, the unit was located at LZ Dottie. CPT MEDINA, the Commanding Officer, held a briefing which lasted 30 minutes or so and was somewhat longer than the usual mission briefing. ALAUX stated that from this briefing, there was no doubt in his mind that CPT MEDINA issued orders to the company to destroy everything and everybody in the village. He stated MEDINA indicated that a clearance had been received from "higher up" and that also the Vietnamese National Police had reported the village being completely VC. Further, that the National Police had physically moved out all the villagers but the villagers later returned. He stated that CPT MEDINA gave the impression that the villagers had been warned many times to clear out of the area. At any rate, the village was suspected of being a stronghold of the 47th VC Battalion and a VC supply point. MEDINA also indicated that all the excessive food and rice was to be destroyed. ALAUX stated there was no question that CPT MEDINA had received clearance from "higher up" to destroy the village which was a thorn in everyone's side, including the Vietnamese Forces.

ALAUX stated that to understand the members of the unit at the time of this mission, it was necessary to provide a little background information. He said that several units, including Vietnamese Forces, had attempted to clean out the VC in this particular area several times and that there were always a high rate of casualties. He stated that C Company had had many casualties and this was their first opportunity to search out and destroy the VC. He indicated that the morale of the unit was low, and shortly prior to this mission, the unit had encountered a mine field where 15-18 members of the unit had been injured or killed. He described CPT MEDINA's briefing as being a "pep" talk and not the usual type of briefing.

ALAUX stated that the following morning he departed LZ Dottie by helicopter with the Command Group. He believed the Command Group was with the first air lift and consisted of himself; CPT MEDINA; MURRAY, the CO's RTO; MARTIN, ALAUX's RTO; CAPPEZZA, the senior medic; CPL William KERNS; and SGT PHU, the CO's interpreter.

EXHIBIT	INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT	PAGE 1 OF 4 PAGES
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ADDITIONAL PAGES MUST CONTAIN THE HEADING "STATEMENT OF _____ TAKEN AT _____ DATED _____ CONTINUED." THE BOTTOM OF EACH ADDITIONAL PAGE MUST BEAR THE INITIALS OF THE PERSON MAKING THE STATEMENT AND BE INITIALED AS "PAGE ____ OF ____ PAGES." WHEN ADDITIONAL PAGES ARE UTILIZED, THE BACK OF PAGE 1 WILL BE LINED OUT, AND THE STATEMENT WILL BE CONCLUDED ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF ANOTHER COPY OF THIS FORM.

They landed in a dry rice paddy about 100 meters on the western side of the village. He stated the Command Group stayed together while the remaining elements of the unit arrived at the landing zone. Then the first and second platoons formed on line and moved into the village with the third platoon and the Command Group remaining in reserve in the rice paddy area. ALAUX estimated that this formation time took 30-45 minutes considering the ferrying time of about 15 minutes from LZ Dottie to the village area.

ALAUX advised that he was not aware of the extent of artillery preparation on the village, although he was aware that there was some firing on the village from a 105mm Battery located on LZ Uptight. He stated that this Artillery support was from D Battery of the 196th Infantry and was directed and controlled by Task Force Barker and the Battalion Headquarters. He stated that he did not call for any further artillery support after arriving at My Lai (4) and had no knowledge as to how many artillery rounds were delivered on the village. ALAUX advised that his RTO, PFC MARTIN, could have been aware of the number of rounds delivered inasmuch as MARTIN was continually monitoring the radio and such information would probably have been relayed to C Company. He did not recall hearing any information as to the number of artillery rounds fired on the village.

ALAUX stated that he moved out of the rice paddy into the village with the Command Group. He indicated that there were some 15-20 people dead and scattered along the trails of the village and indicated that he did not know who shot and killed these persons. ALAUX stated that he carried an M-16 rifle and about 10 magazines of ammunition and did not fire his weapon during this assault. He stated that to the best of his recollection, he did not observe the members of the Command Group firing at any of the Vietnamese civilians. ALAUX stated that the length of time that it took to clear the village was approximately one hour. He stated that initially there was extensive small arms fire, but that the firing stopped. He could not recall hearing CPT MEDINA issue a cease fire order; however, he stated that it was possible such an order was given after the Command Group entered the village area. ALAUX was of the opinion that all the dead persons he observed had been killed by small arms fire rather than artillery fire. He stated that he did not see any of the villagers being shot and they appeared to have been shot by the two lead platoons by the time he arrived in the village proper. He described the dead persons as ranging from babies to old men and women.

ALAUX recalled one incident involving a Vietnamese male wherein someone in the Command Group might have killed one of the villagers. Somewhere near the center of My Lai (4) this male was running away from the village and SGT PHU, CPT MEDINA's interpreter, yelled for the Vietnamese man to stop. The man continued to run and was chased by CPT MEDINA, SGT PHU and several other members of the unit whom ALAUX could not identify. The man was then shot by someone, possibly from the group, although ALAUX could not state who shot this individual. When questioned as to whether or not the man could have been shot by CPT MEDINA or SGT PHU, ALAUX replied that he did not think so and stated it would be highly unusual for the CO to shoot anyone. He stated he did not know who had shot and killed this Vietnamese.

ALAUX stated that PHU did not openly disapprove of the villagers being killed, but that it was his personal opinion that PHU was very unhappy with the situation at My Lai (4). He stated that he thought most of the unit was remorseful about the number of persons killed in the village. ALAUX stated that he saw in a combat mission report that 128 Vietnamese had been killed and as far as he knew, this was an actual physical count of the dead bodies. He said that he did not see this many dead bodies, although he might have seen as many as 50.

ALAUX stated that he did not recall seeing 2LT CALLEY during this mission. He denied seeing a ditch or area wherein a large group of bodies had been killed. He stated that he did observe one group of dead Vietnamese laying along a trail leading from the south of the village. These persons appeared to have been shot by small arms fire; however, he could not offer any explanations as to how they were killed. ALAUX estimated that there were about 12 persons in the group of people, ranging from babies to old men and women.

ALAUX was aware of CARTER being shot in the foot. He could not recall if the Command Group was notified of CARTER's injury or just happened to come upon the scene. He arrived in the area where CARTER was shot about 3-4 minutes after the shooting. He stated CARTER was treated by CAPPEZZA and subsequently evacuated. He advised that CARTER had shot himself but he did not know if it had been accidentally or intentionally. He stated he had no reason to believe that CARTER shot himself intentionally.

Upon further questioning, ALAUX related that on one prior occasion, approximately February 1968, he was aware of an incident wherein 2LT CALLEY had allegedly killed a Vietnamese man. He stated that after he heard shooting, he came upon a well located in a small Vietnamese village somewhere to the south of LZ Uptight. At this time, STADIO, SLEDGE, CALLEY, MARTIN, and several other persons were present. He stated that he asked what happened and was told by someone that a VC had been captured and thrown into the well and then shot by LT CALLEY. ALAUX stated that he did not observe this man being shot and his information was only hearsay. He thought that it might have been MARTIN who told him that CALLEY had killed the man in the well. ALAUX stated that he was aware of no other incidents allegedly involving 2LT CALLEY. He stated that CALLEY appeared to be a conscientious person who did his job fairly well. He thought that CALLEY had a discipline problem with his platoon and expanded on this by saying CALLEY appeared to be the type of person who wanted to be a "good guy." He stated that CALLEY called most of his men by their first names and this seemed to create an undesirable relationship between him and his men.

ALAUX stated that he observed CARTER being medivaced by helicopter; but that he did not see any other helicopters landing in the area. He stated that he heard from someone that an OH23 bubble type helicopter landed on one of the trails in or near the village. He also heard that the pilot reportedly landed the helicopter to tell some members of C Company to stop all the killings. ALAUX could not furnish any additional information about this helicopter and stated he did not know which members of the unit were involved. He denied seeing a ditch

STATEMENT (Continued)

or area at the west of a village where a large group of villagers had been killed. He stated that the shooting was over with very quickly and he was of the opinion that most of the people were killed within the first 30-45 minutes of the assault mission. He indicated that he thought most of the unit was remorseful about what had happened, and ALAUX stated that he thought you could not put the blame on any one person but it was a combination of the situation and a morale of the company at the time. He denied being questioned by anyone about the mission after returning to LZ Dottie and was unable to offer any additional information about the mission.

ALAUX stated that he would not make a written statement. He stated he believed it was wrong to order someone to combat, give them orders to destroy a village and then try to take some sort of disciplinary action against them. He stated, therefore, that he would not be willing to voluntarily testify in any courts-martial or other judicial proceedings.

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AFFIDAVIT

Billy H. THOMPSON

HAVE READ OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME THIS STATE-

MENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1 AND ENDS ON PAGE 11. I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF THE ENTIRE STATEMENT MADE BY ME. THE STATEMENT IS TRUE. I HAVE INITIALED ALL CORRECTIONS AND HAVE INITIALED THE BOTTOM OF EACH PAGE CONTAINING THE STATEMENT. I HAVE MADE THIS STATEMENT FREELY WITHOUT HOPE OF BENEFIT OR REWARD, WITHOUT THREAT OF PUNISHMENT, AND WITHOUT COERCION, UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE, OR UNLAWFUL INDUCEMENT.

Billy H. Thompson, 80

WITNESS: *Without my knowledge and consent, I, (Signature of Person Making Statement)*Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this 28th day of October, 1969
at Washington, DC

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

ROBERT N. ZAZA

31 GMZ, DIAVETHEA (Signature of Person Administering Oath)

THE STATEMENT WAS MADE IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, DC, STATE

ROBERT N. ZAZA

31 GMZ (Typed Name of Person Administering Oath)

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

Art 136(b)(4), UCMJ

31 GMZ (Authority To Administer Oaths)

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT

Bolt