

WITNESS STATEMENT

For use of this form, see AR 195-10 - TB PMG 3; the proponent agency is Office of the Provost Marshal General.

PLACE Midland, TX	DATE 14 Jan 70	TIME 1900	FILE NUMBER
LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, MIDDLE NAME RIGGS, William Clifton	SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NO.		GRADE Civilian
ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS 1002 Tarleton St, Midland, TX			

SWORN STATEMENT

I, William C. RIGGS, WANT TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT UNDER OATH.

On 16 Mar 68, I was the Commanding Officer of A Company, 3rd Bn, 1st Infantry and I held that position until approximately July 68 when I became the S4, 3rd Bn, 1st Infantry. I rotated from Viet-Nam on 28/29 Nov 68.

On 15 Mar 68, I believe in the middle of the afternoon, at LZ Dottle, I attended a briefing, held by LTC Frank BARKER, regarding the operation to be held on 16 Mar 68. As best as I can recall, the specific assignments of the units concerned was to be A/3/1 (my unit) was to establish a blocking force north of the Song Diem Diem river; B/4/3 was to participate in a combat seep in the area ~~XX~~ on the southeast of C Company, 1st Bn, 20th Infantry; C/1/20 was to make a combat sweep through the My Lai complex of villages. The intelligence estimates stated that both C/1/20 and B/4/3 could expect to encounter heavy resistance during their assaults. I don't recall the enemy strength report but it was an element of some size of a VC battalion. I do not recall that BARKER said anything about killing the inhabitants of any of the villages, nor of burning the huts, nor of killing the livestock, nor of destroying the crops found. As far as I can recall these things were not a part of any Standard Operating Practice used by Task Force Barker. I definitely know that my unit had no standing instructions in these regards. I do not recall that BARKER made any mention of the handling of VC prisoners. Usually any prisoners taken during any operation were passed up through channels to the Task Force Barker S2, CPT KOTOUC, first name unrecalled. I recall that the following persons were at BARKER's briefing: CPT KOTOUC, CPT ERNEST MEDINA, CPT Earl MICHLES, and MAJ CALHOUN, first name unknown. I cannot recall anything specific about the briefing.

On the morning of 16 Mar 68, my unit, which had spent the night in a bivouac area north of the Song Diem Diem river, moved into its assigned blocking position on the north bank area of the river. We reached this position at first light of day. My unit remained in this position all throughout the day. We had no action of any kind; we saw no one moving in our direction; we took no prisoners. This position was about 1500 meters to the north of C/1/20's assigned assault area. I could not see what was happening in the area assigned to C/1/20 because of the intervening trees and foliage. My unit did not join up with C/1/20 or B/4/3 in any manner. When I appeared before the Board of Inquiry, headed by GEN PEERS, I was informed that one of my platoons had secured the ~~XXXXXX~~ LZ from which C/1/20 was extracted the next day. I had, nor still have, no recollection of this action on the part of one of my platoons.

I have no knowledge of any "atrocities" incidents which are alleged to have taken place on 16 Mar 68 or the next few days and this includes my unit, C/1/20 and B/4/3. I have never heard of any such incidents occurring, other than what I have read and heard about recently in various media. I know nothing of what transpired in My Lai (4) on 16 Mar 68.

I have no hearsay information about any such thing happening either.

EXHIBIT	INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT <i>WCR</i>	PAGE 1 OF <u>2</u> 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.

STATEMENT (Continued)

I do not have any souvenirs of this operation, nor do I have any documents, photographs or tape recordings of this operation.

I have no knowledge of an investigation having been conducted in Viet-Nam about the operation of 16 Mar 68. I know that I was never questioned about it while I was in Viet-Nam. Logically, I do not know of any type of investigation being suppressed by anyone.

During the operation of 16 Mar 68, my unit necessarily was on the Task Force Parker Command Radio Net, as well as being on its integral net. I do not, however, recall anything of the traffic that was on the command net other than the one message sent by MICHLES to the effect that his Executive Officer, his #2, had been killed. MICHLES' #2 was LT Roy COCHRAN. I think he was killed by a booby trap.

I do not believe that any of my radios were set for traffic between ground units and helicopters. I do not recall hearing or monitoring any such traffic at all.

Q: Is there anything else that you want to add to this statement?

A: No, nothing.///////NOTHING FOLLOWS//////////

AFFIDAVIT

William C. RIGGS

HAVE READ OR HEARD OR READ SOME. THIS STATE-

MENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1 AND ENDS ON PAGE 2. 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. 2

OR UNLAWFUL INDUCEMENT.

William C. Lipp

(Signature of Person to Whom Stated)

(Signature of Person Making Statement)

WITNESSES:

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law
to administer oaths, this 14th day of January, 1970
at Midland, Texas

Thomas Nothke

(Signature) of Person Administering Oath

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

THOMAS J. PORTER

(Typed Name of Person Administering Oath)

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

Art 136 (b) (4), UCMJ

(Authority To Administer Oaths)

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT

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