

DISPOSITION FORM

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ENCL OR OFFICE SYMBOL

SUBJECT

AJAIN-P

My Lai-Related Trials and Proceeding

Area Military Judge,
Judicial Area III

FROM: Info Office

DATE: 23 June 1970

Mr. Halm/2107/ve

The attached Public Information Plan for My Lai-related trials and proceedings should be considered as a draft indicative of the capabilities of various Third U. S. Army and Fort McPherson offices, agencies, and activities, rather than as a specific set of recommendations. In this context, suggest approval as a point of departure in order that necessary planning and work can proceed with a minimum of delay.

COORD: SJA *CHT 24 June*
Post PM *24 June*
Post CQ *24 June*

for *Daniel C. Beirne, Jr.*
L. B. MATTINGLY
Colonel, GS
Information Officer

PUBLIC INFORMATION PLAN -- MY LAI-RELATED ACTIVITIES
FORT MCPHERSON

JECT: Public Information Plan (My Lai Trials)

Purpose: This plan describes steps this installation will take to support news media and their representatives during trials and related proceedings in connection with the alleged My Lai incident.

Mission:

- A. Establish methods for accrediting correspondents and other media representatives.
- B. Establish and supervise press centers and related facilities.
- C. Establish methods for controlling media representatives (hereafter referred to as "press") inside the courtroom, in accordance with instructions of the military judge, in the vicinity of the courtroom building, and around the press centers, and at other points on post.

Responsibilities:

- A. The Third U. S. Army Information Office has overall responsibility
 - (1) Establishing press centers.
 - (2) Accreditation of the press.
 - (3) Allocation of courtroom seats reserved for, or made available to the press.
 - (4) Establishing ground rules for press conduct in and around courtroom and the courtroom building, in accordance with instructions of the military judge, in and around the press centers, and in the use of on-post facilities as may be open to them.
 - (5) Arranging interviews, briefings, etc.
- B. Appropriate post agencies and activities will be responsible, upon coordination with the Information Office and other interested agencies, for:
 - (1) Renovation and/or modification of physical facilities, to include press centers and lounges in Buildings 40 and 44, courtroom including 41, etc.

- (2) Installation and/or provision of adequate latrine facilities.
- (3) Arrangements for snack bar(s) and similar facilities.
- (4) Procurement of necessary furniture.
- (5) Actual control of press and the general public during trials and related proceedings, primarily through MPs.
- (6) Furnishing and installation of communications facilities in press centers, to include telephones.
- (7) Arrangements contacts between press and Southern Bell for special communications requirements.

4. Execution:

A. Prior to initial trial or related proceeding, the Information Office will be considered the main press center.

B. On announcement of first pre-trial proceeding that is open to the public, and hence to the press, a press center will be established in Building 44.

C. On announcement of the first trial, or of protracted open pre-trial proceeding, a second press center, for use of press personnel accredited to the courtroom, will be established in Building 40.

D. Press will be informed of accreditation procedures in advance of all proceedings and/or trials.

E. Press center(s) will be activated as required.

5. Accreditation:

A. It is assumed that, as courtroom facilities exist as of 23 Jun 70, 20 of the 30 available seats will be reserved for the press. Of these, 15 will be occupied by permanently-accredited media representatives, and 5 by pool representatives.

B. Accreditation will be on the basis of coverage and/or circulation and geographical distribution. Each major wire service and TV network will have one seat. No medium will have more than one seat. Pools will, in general, be grouped by types of media, since requirements for coverage differ (e. g., a morning newspaper and an evening newspaper could effectively share one seat).

C. The Information Officer or his designated representative will have the final authority to determine accreditation and admission to press centers and related facilities.

6. Control:

A. Admission to the courtroom will be only by red courtroom pass. These passes will be issued on a daily basis, and will be good for one day only.

B. Press accredited to the courtroom and/or the courtroom press center in Building 40 will be issued blue passes good for the duration of trials and proceedings. Facilities of the main press center in Building 44 will also be open to holders of blue passes.

C. Press accredited only to the main press center will be issued white passes good for the duration of trials and proceedings.

D. Press will be issued automobile passes which may be affixed to windshields of vehicles, and which will be used for admission to the post, and to such reserved parking areas as may be designated by the Post Provost Marshal.

E. Subject to orders of the military judge, members of the general public wishing to attend trials and/or proceedings will be issued numbers at a designated place and time on the day concerned. Spaces in the courtroom will then be allocated by drawing. Such spaces will be available to the holder only on the day concerned. If holder vacates a space in the middle of the day it will be assigned to someone else, the new holder also to be determined by drawing.

F. Spectators, including press, may enter or leave the courtroom in keeping with court procedure established by the military judge. Violation of court procedure may be cause for expulsion. If a member of the press vacates a seat for longer than a normal recess it may be reassigned for the remainder of that day.

G. Artists may enter the courtroom. Photography and sound recordings are, however, strictly prohibited.

H. News media representatives not accredited to the courtroom, to include photographers, sound men, and TV cameramen, are restricted in the degree to which they may approach the courtroom building. They may approach no closer than the east curb of Hardee Avenue across from Building 41 or the west curb of the parking lot to the west of Building 41. Areas adjacent to the ends of Building 41 are off limits.

7. Billeting: Press will arrange for their own billeting off post.

8. Transportation: Press will arrange their own transportation.