

# THE COURT-MARTIAL OF WILLIAM CALLEY

A re-creation of Lt. William Calley's trial in 1970,  
covering the issues related to the My Lai Massacre

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# ... a relationship to the Nuremberg War Trials of 1946?

The Vietnam conflict was the longest and most costly war in United States history. Nevertheless, because of its negative outcome and because it has not yet been systematically studied in schools and colleges, many Americans remain relatively ignorant of Southeast Asia, of the military's responsible commanding officers, and of tactics adopted by these officers.

Like any other human undertaking, war is supposed to have limits. Specific rules protect the innocent, guarantee the safety of prisoners, and diminish the destruction. Various conferences, starting with one in 1864 in Geneva, Switzerland, have been held to set boundaries for war. The Hague Convention of 1907 established guidelines for land warfare. Other conferences after World War I further defined the rules of war, particularly in regard to the use of poison gas and treatment of prisoners. The 1946 Nuremberg Trials explored the relationship between a soldier and his superiors, with the result that German soldiers, today, are legally bound to criticize and question any order they think unreasonable or immoral. The United Nations organization, set up in 1946, restricts armed actions to defense only. Unfortunately, these rules have often been ignored.

During the Vietnam War, the U.S. government charged Lt. William Calley with breaking the rules of war. His trial began November 17, 1970, at Fort Benning, Georgia, and lasted several months. This trial is the subject of this re-creation. As your students participate in it they should specifically experience the following:

## **Knowledge**

1. The differences between military and civil law courts
2. Southeast Asian geography and the placement of Vietnam
3. The intense desire of American foreign policy-makers to keep the Vietnam "domino" free from communism
4. The unusual combat tactics used during the Vietnam War
5. Some idea of the American military chain of command
6. The circumstances surrounding the events at My Lai on March 16, 1968

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## PURPOSE - 2

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*Your students will practice several speaking skills during this re-creation ...*

### **Attitudes**

1. Appreciating the complexity of the question of foreign intervention in war
2. Desiring to understand the responsibilities of direct obedience in war conditions
3. Desiring to differentiate between cultures and how they evolved
4. Realizing that our political and military systems were on trial along with Calley

### **Skills**

1. Speaking clearly and forcefully before a group
2. Utilizing military courtroom procedure
3. Researching, sequencing, and ordering evidence logically

# Why study My Lai?

This Calley trial re-creation focuses attention on a subject given too little attention by most secondary school textbooks. Calley and the war in which he fought are often skimmed over so that the crucial issues are not really examined. As time lessens America's sense of guilt over Vietnam, more cries are heard for increased American involvement in foreign affairs, such as in the Middle East. Consequently, issues of our intervention in foreign wars and obedience to orders are once again being brought to public attention.

Academically, this re-creation familiarizes students with military law and justice. Unlike civilian trials, a military court-martial allows for jury questioning of witnesses, since the jurors are military officers and, sometimes, enlisted men. Since about half of your class will be jury members, attorneys, or witnesses, there should be little problem with involvement as they will be part of the dialog. The other half will also be intent listeners as they have to act as news reporters with varying kinds of assignments.

Lt. Calley was charged with four crimes, each involving murder, but the author has chosen to reduce the charges to two. The re-creation is not intended to dwell on the mass murders of the accused. Instead it brings out more pertinent issues such as whether or not obedience to orders of a superior is a military duty, and whether the tactics used in Vietnam, including search-and-destroy missions, were wisely used. It also poses the possibility of Calley being used as a scapegoat since the testimony in the court-martial presents evidence of similar mass executions during the war. Your students should understand that other incidents similar to what occurred at My Lai likely happened during the course of the war but only Calley, to date, has been put on trial for such an incident.

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## HISTORICAL ACCURACY

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### How accurate is this re-creation?

Because of the length and complexity of the Calley court-martial, some steps have been taken to synthesize certain elements so as to facilitate learning.

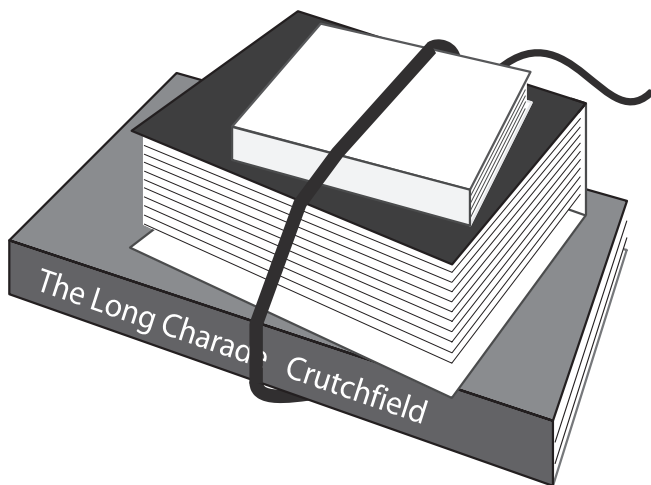
1. In reality Calley stood trial on four counts:
  - a. premeditated murder of 30 or more people;
  - b. murder of more than 70 people at an irrigation ditch;
  - c. murder of one male, possibly a monk; and
  - d. murder of a two-year-old child.All charges involve shooting the people with a rifle. The author has chosen in this re-creation to try Calley on only counts b and d.
2. Some witnesses in this re-creation court-martial are composites of several actual witnesses. Each of these witnesses' testimony synthesizes several persons' fundamental testimony.
3. All identities are factual and their testimony quoted in the Court Procedure is often verbatim from the actual transcript. Whether students adhere to this information strictly or merely use it as a reference depends on your desire and the students' preparation. *In order to keep witnesses from boring one another, however, do not allow students to read the statements provided while they present their case. Instead, have them rewrite the statements in their own words or verbalize them from an outline.*
4. All sources listed in the bibliography were helpful in the writing of this re-creation, but the books written by Seymour Hersh and Richard Hammer were used extensively.
5. In the court-martial at Fort Benning, Lt. Calley actually testified before Captain Medina. The directions call for Calley to testify last to heighten drama.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Investigation of the My Lai Incident*, Hearings of the Armed Services Investigating Subcommittee of the House of Representatives, 91st Congress, 2nd session.
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Consider contacting your friendly school librarian in order to have a RESERVE SHELF: THE COURT-MARTIAL OF WILLIAM CALLEY set up where your students can access books and magazines such as listed above prior to the trial's beginning.

## SETUP DIRECTIONS - 1



*Who you select for key roles is particularly important if this is the first Interact re-creation you have done. Although before the school year ends you want all students to play challenging roles—if they can be helped to meet the challenges—the first time you do a re-creation you need to ensure that the class feels that the participatory experience was a success!*

1. How you *select* who will play which role is very important to the outcome of the re-creation. Make sure you pick your most highly motivated students to be Calley, Medina, and the attorneys.
2. Either select a strong student to be the judge or play the role yourself. This individual must be strong enough to insure that the trial is not bogged down by petty arguments. If you pick a student as judge, then act as a civilian legal adviser for the court.
3. You need three government attorneys and three defense attorneys. The government witnesses are Paul Meadlo, Hugh Thompson, and Ron Haeberle. The defense witnesses include Charles West, Capt. Ernest Medina, and the defendant, Lt. William Calley. Each attorney should question one of his/her own witnesses and be prepared to cross-examine an opposition witness. Although a team effort is required for producing opening and closing statements, one student on each team should deliver each.
4. The bailiff assists the court by swearing in witnesses and keeping order. If any person disrupts the proceedings, the bailiff should bring that person to order immediately. If the judge orders an individual removed from the courtroom, it is up to the bailiff to do so.
5. Select one or more of your students as court reporters. Since at any time during the trial they may be asked to play back a portion of testimony or other proceeding for the benefit of the court, either side, or the jury, provide them with a tape recorder that has an accurate counter. They then should keep a log of witnesses' testimony by tape length numbers.
6. Select five to seven members of the class to be jury members. They should take notes on each witness' testimony.  
**Remember:** *Each juror may question a witness at any time.* After the verdict, jury members will be questioned as to why they voted innocent or guilty. Tell them they are all Army officers and should act accordingly.
7. Tell the rest of the class they will attend the trial as newspaper reporters. Have them follow the directions in the Student Guide.
8. Encourage all students to supplement the information you give them by doing more research on their own. Consider basing grades on a combination of preparation, role-playing, and testing, whatever is appropriate.



## SETUP DIRECTIONS - 2

**Note:** You will not need to duplicate the bulleted items the first time you use this re-creation, for Interact has given you different colored handouts for those students playing roles. If you choose to give the STUDENT SURVEY and/or the UNIT TEST—optional activities—you will have to duplicate them. All other necessary items are in the Student Guide.

9. See note at left the first time you use this re-creation—or if you are using this trial with more than one class. For subsequent classes, duplicate the number in parentheses, using the masters in this Teacher Guide.

### **Government package**

- LEGAL PLAN FOR GOVERNMENT (three: one for each prosecutor—four pages, back to back)
- GOVERNMENT WITNESS: Hugh Thompson (four: one for Thompson, three for prosecutors—one page)
- GOVERNMENT WITNESS: Ron Haeberle (four: one for Haeberle, three for prosecutors—one page)
- GOVERNMENT WITNESS: Paul Meadlo (four: one for Meadlo, three for prosecutors—one page)

### **Defense package**

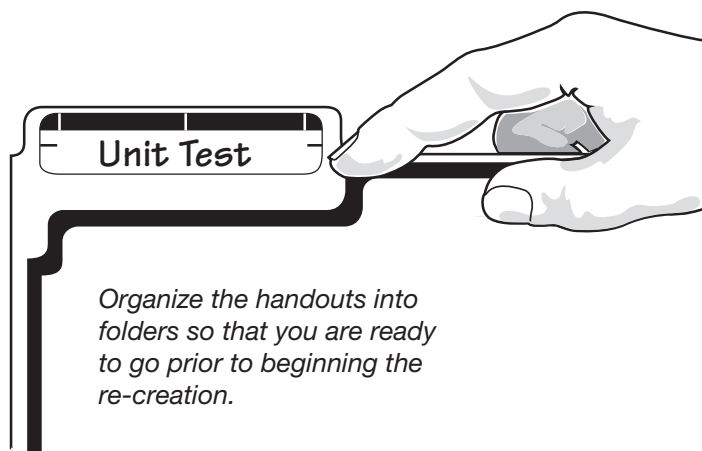
- LEGAL PLAN FOR DEFENSE (three: one for each defense attorney—six pages, back to back)
- DEFENSE WITNESS: Charles West (four: one for West, three for defense attorneys—one page)
- DEFENSE WITNESS: Captain Ernest Medina (four: one for Medina, three for defense attorneys—one page)
- DEFENSE WITNESS: Lt. William Calley (four: one for Calley, three for defense attorneys—two pages, back to back)

### **Other**

- JUDGE COL. REID KENNEDY (one: one page)
- BAILIFF (one: one page)
- COURT REPORTERS (one-two: one page)
- JURY MEMBERS (seven: one page)

### **Optional**

- \* STUDENT SURVEY (class set: one page)
- \* UNIT TEST (class set: one page)



Organize the handouts into folders so that you are ready to go prior to beginning the re-creation.

## TEACHING SUGGESTIONS - 1

### Day 1: Introduction

1. Three to four days prior to actually beginning the re-creation, briefly explain to students why they are going to study this trial. Then pass out the Student Guides and have students read the Overview, Purpose, and Brief Summary of Major Roles.
2. Explain how you have assigned a few roles to certain students. Possibly allow volunteers to fill other roles, or encourage classmates to recommend persons for certain remaining roles.
3. Give key roles their separate handouts.
4. Have everyone read the Background Essay.
5. Cover with your students the Discussion Questions on page 4 in the Student Guide. *Option 1:* You lead a general discussion. *Option 2:* Divide your students into activity groups of about four students each. Make each activity group collectively write the answers to the 18 Discussion Questions on one sheet of paper for the whole group. *Each group member's handwriting must appear on an equal number of answers.*



*Present some background information on the Vietnam War by using a lecture, a guest speaker, a video, some readings in students' textbooks.*

### Days 2-3: Background and preparation

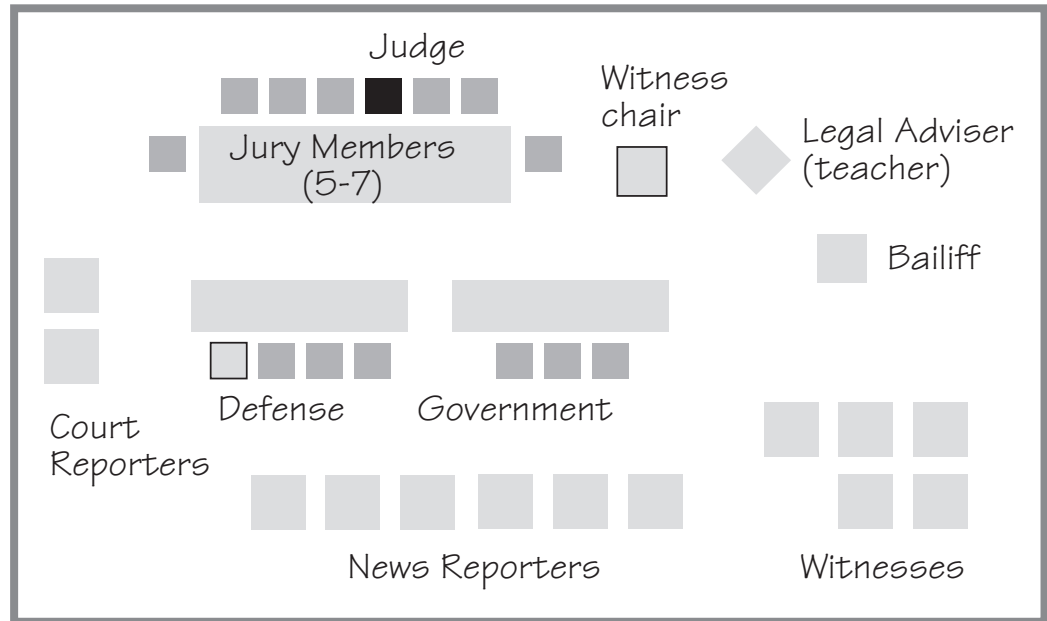
1. Motivate the trial by using one or more of the following: a) audio-visual materials on the mid-1960s through the early 1970s; b) a guest speaker; c) a lecture; d) the STUDENT SURVEY.
2. Be sure you give both sides' attorneys sufficient time to meet with their witnesses and to plan their opening and closing statements.
3. Build a classroom atmosphere that reflects the signs of the times. Have students suggest quotes that are applicable.

For example, **"My country right or wrong"** ... **"Get our boys out"** ... etc. Try to capture the ideals of the opposing factions in the early 1970s. Explain to students what the counterculture and the silent majority stood for.

**"Send the draft  
card burners to  
Vietnam tomorrow!"**

## TEACHING SUGGESTIONS - 2

4. Decide how you will physically arrange the room into a courtroom. If available, risers effectively elevate the judge and the jurors. Fold separate sheets of paper in order to make individual name sheets to place in front of the judge, the jurors, the court reporters, and the government and defense tables. Here is a possible room arrangement:



### Days 4-5: The Court-martial

1. The actual number of periods devoted to the trial will vary according to length of attorney statements, witness testimony, extent of research, level of student interest, and your judgment.
2. Make sure all participants are present and sitting in their correct places. If someone is absent, replace the student immediately and give this stand-in the proper background sheet. (You may opt to play the missing role yourself.)
3. Before beginning the trial, ask if there are any questions about handouts or other pre-trial materials. *Remind jury members that they may question a witness on testimony at any time.* Do not rush the court-martial. Give time for all participants to “settle in.”

## TEACHING SUGGESTIONS - 3

4. Get the class quiet and send the judge outside the classroom. Instruct the bailiff to open the door for the judge and announce that the court is in session. At this point the re-creation is turned over to the judge who should follow the Court Procedure on page 7 in the Student Guide.
5. When the trial has concluded, immediately ask jury members the reason for their verdict. Also ask witnesses how they would have voted had they been on the jury.

### Days 6-7: Debriefing and testing

1. The first period following the trial can be used for an informal discussion about issues raised in the court-martial and the way in which students portrayed their characters. The differences between military and civil law should also be pointed out.
2. The post-trial discussion is an excellent opportunity for reviewing for the UNIT TEST.
3. In your follow-up discussion, try to examine the essential moral questions inherent in the Calley case. Highlight the limits set down from previous wars and discuss the concept of obedience to orders. Another possible discussion topic is whether or not Calley was being used as a scapegoat for his superiors' guilt.
4. Examine the tactics of the search-and-destroy mission and comment on "free-fire zone." Discuss U.S. involvement in Vietnam and how the war affected the homefront. Ask if these issues are relevant today.
5. Conclude the re-creation by giving the UNIT TEST on Day 7. Here is a key: 1. +, 2. +, 3. +, 4. +, 5. 0, 6. +, 7. +, 8. +, 9. +, 10. +, 11. 0, 12. +, 13. 0, 14. 0, 15. +, 16. +.



*Can you and your students find any parallels in the issues that have surfaced following the war in the Persian Gulf?*

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# LEGAL PLAN FOR THE GOVERNMENT - 1

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You are the team of attorneys trying to prosecute and convict Lt. William Calley of the murders specified in the charges. (See Court Procedure on page 7 in the Student Guide.) You bear the burden of proving these charges true. You must prepare an opening statement, coordinate witness testimony, and examine and cross-examine witnesses. During the trial preparation period, you should meet with all of your own witnesses and discuss the questions you will ask them.

Remember that this is a military court and your conduct should adhere to the strictness of military behavior. When questioning witnesses, support your own and try to discredit the defense witnesses' testimonies. Be intense, but do not be rude. Object only to those points brought out in dialog. Do not waste the court's time with unnecessary arguments.

## General Strategy

1. First have witnesses set the scene at the irrigation ditch; then tie Calley to the killings.
2. When questioning Calley, be intense. Try to phrase short, snappy questions in an attempt to fluster him.
3. Keep testimony directed toward Calley's actions. Do not try to implicate his superior officers or broaden the scope of the trial.



*Put your points on small notecards ... Then practice giving such statements or asking your witnesses questions from your notecards ... Reduce your points or questions on your notecards to sentence fragments, and you will sound more spontaneous. Above all, don't read your points, and don't read your questions!*

## Opening statement

Cover the points made in the following outline. Try to avoid reading it verbatim.

1. The accused is charged with two specifications of premeditated murder. They took place at My Lai on March 16, 1969.
2. This is an unusual case because the victims were unnamed and their exact ages are unknown. However, we shall prove Lt. Calley murdered a group of at least 70 civilians at an irrigation ditch east of My Lai and that he also murdered a child of two at the ditch. We shall show that Lt. Calley and Private First Class Paul Meadlo stood side by side pointing their weapons at the inhabitants of the My Lai village who sat on the ground, unarmed, offering no resistance. Then, with four bursts of automatic fire, Calley and Meadlo shot these people, these unarmed men, women, and children, in cold blood without provocation of any kind.

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## LEGAL PLAN FOR THE GOVERNMENT - 2

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3. We will place on the stand some soldiers who saw what happened. They will testify they heard firing as they moved toward an irrigation ditch that circles south of the village. They will testify that Calley ordered his men to shove the people into the ditch and execute them ... that a soldier named Meadlo cried and fired into the crowd of unarmed villagers ... that another private saw what was happening and left.
4. You will hear Warrant Officer Hugh Thompson, who, piloting a helicopter, flew over and saw the bodies in the ditch. He will testify he landed, went over to Calley and told him to take the wounded to a medic. Then he took off with some of the wounded. Calley, however, returned to the ditch and ordered the living finished off. More than 70 people were executed at the ditch under orders from the accused. At the same time, somebody shouted, "A child is getting away." A child had miraculously crawled out of the ditch. Then Calley shot and killed it.
5. Ladies and gentlemen, there was no hostile fire, no combat. Calley executed unarmed men, women, and children. Ladies and gentlemen, at the conclusion of the evidence in the name of the U.S. government and human decency, I will ask you to convict the accused on both charges.

### Examination of your witnesses

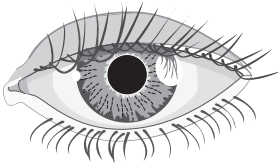
Ask them the following questions plus any others that will help your case.

#### **Ron Haeberle**

1. Mr. Haeberle, what can you tell us of the March 16 morning at My Lai?
2. Did you hear any hostile fire?
3. What did you see when you returned to the ditch?
4. What did the other GIs see?

#### **Hugh Thompson**

1. Mr. Thompson, what was your first contact with the My Lai tragedy?
2. Did you encounter Lt. Calley? What took place? What did he order you to do?
3. Did you see Lt. Calley near the irrigation ditch? How close were you?
4. Would you describe your landings to the court? Did you discuss what you saw with anyone?
5. Mr. Thompson, were you rewarded for your actions that tragic morning?



*Establish eye contact as you question witnesses.*

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# LEGAL PLAN FOR THE GOVERNMENT - 3

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## Paul Meadlo

1. Were you with Lt. Calley at the time of the shooting in question?
2. Have you ever discussed the incident before? Why did you refuse to testify when first called? Why have you decided to testify now?
3. How long did your tour of duty last in Vietnam?
4. What were your specific duties in the village at My Lai? Did you suspect them of anything?
5. What did Lt. Calley instruct you to do with these people? When he returned, what was said to you? What did you then do?
6. How did you feel at the time of the shooting at the irrigation ditch?
7. Was there any incident involving a small child? Can you describe it?

*Ask these questions when the defense is finished questioning Meadlo.*

8. When did you see your first Vietnamese?
9. What were your orders?
10. Did you expect the children to attack you?
11. Did Captain Medina or Lt. Calley order you to kill?



*Never ask a cross-examination question unless you are sure you know how the question will be answered.*

*Many lawyers have sunk their own ships by getting carried away and asking a question before they have carefully anticipated the answer.*

## Cross-examination of defense witnesses

Ask them the following questions and any other questions you feel are pertinent.

### Charles West

1. Isn't it true that a man in your platoon molested a young girl at My Lai?
2. Wouldn't you say that things got out of hand that day?
3. Who shot first at the 10 Vietnamese people you encountered? What did you do?
4. Were you at any time near the irrigation ditch where Lt. Calley ordered 75 people executed?
5. You did not see Calley at My Lai except for the brief meeting already mentioned?

### Captain Ernest Medina

1. Captain Medina, I will be brief. You say you gave no orders as to what to do with prisoners?
2. You say this was to be a revenge mission?
3. Again, when Colonel Barker briefed you, what specific permission did he give you? What did you say about the handling of women and children?

### Lt. William Calley

1. Did you see any women being shot?
2. You mean you couldn't recognize individuals?
3. Do you remember hearing enemy fire?
4. Is it true that you gathered a group of people to be used to clear the mine field. Was this your idea? Why did you decide not to use them after all?



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# LEGAL PLAN FOR THE GOVERNMENT - 4

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5. What did you tell Meadlo to do with them?
6. When you returned and saw Meadlo in the same place, what did you tell him? Were you mad at him?
7. Is it true that you then headed southeast to talk with Sgt. Mitchell? What took place after your conversation?
8. What was your objective in killing 75 people at the ditch?
9. What did Captain Medina say when you met him? Did you tell him about the people in the ditch?

## Closing statement



*Speak slowly and deliberately with all the confidence of a person who knows his case is won.*

*Look the jury members right in the eye as you make your final summation.*

Cover the following points. Try to avoid reading them verbatim. Thank the judge, then address the jury.

1. You have a difficult job because you must take all the evidence and resolve the conflicts. Has the government proved what happened in the village of My Lai? I think we have.
2. In My Lai, the troops found only unresisting females, children, and older males. They herded them into groups. Then Calley and Meadlo shot more than 70 people at the irrigation ditch. Not content with that mass murder, Calley ultimately shot a child trying to escape.
3. Realize that we are bound to prove that only one person died as a result of the accused's actions. We need only to have proven that his deeds were unlawful and premeditated.
4. Even the defense acknowledges the evidence. People were at different places and saw different things, but almost all members of his platoon place Lt. Calley at the ditch. Witnesses testified that they saw him firing into the ditch. Calley, himself, admits this.
5. Now did Lt. Calley have a premeditated intent to kill? When you stand up a group and shoot them, you have intent.
6. Like all soldiers, Lt. Calley was bound by the rules of law, rules explaining when human life may be taken in combat. Even if they were Vietcong, these people held their arms up and surrendered. If any order was given to kill them, it was illegal.
7. Calley had the obligation to make moral decisions. When he put on the American uniform, he still had an obligation to respect human life.
8. What do you think would have happened if the accused had asked Captain Medina about the 100 unresisting civilians. Would Captain Medina have said, "Waste them!"? No! Calley believed he was running the show and it was a great day for his battle ...  
... **Calley is guilty as charged.**

*Pause dramatically before boldly and forcefully delivering your final statement.*





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## GOVERNMENT WITNESS: Hugh Thompson

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You are one of the few authentic heroes of that tragic March 16 morning. You flew over the area in your helicopter and landed many times to help wounded civilians, especially children. On one of the landings you encountered Lt. William Calley near the irrigation ditch. Lt. Calley ordered you to help gather 50 to 100 people together and take them to the ditch. He then ordered you to begin firing, but you refused.



Your refusal is important because by testifying about how you refused to obey an order, you will break one of defense's key arguments—that all done at My Lai that morning was done by following orders.

You relate that you saw Lt. Calley and Paul Meadlo pointing their weapons into the hole and firing, killing nearly 100 people. You were close enough to see them reloading after shooting for about 10 seconds.

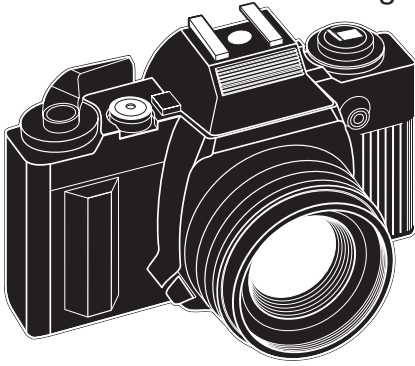
You landed your chopper three times. Your first two landings were to help civilian refugees fleeing the village. On your third landing, you confronted Calley and disobeyed his order. You left the scene and met two friends and discussed the tragedy before returning to your helicopter. For your actions you received the Distinguished Flying Cross for landing in the middle of a battle zone and, in disregard for your own life, for rescuing civilians.

The defense will try to discredit you by questioning the validity of the medal you received. The defense attorney will refer to the House of Representatives subcommittee ruling that medals should not be given under such questionable circumstances. Still you kept the medal. The defense will also likely ask if you are a conscientious objector. You will reply that you were not at that time but that you are now.

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## GOVERNMENT WITNESS: Ron Haeberle

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You took the pictures published in *Life* magazine that stunned the nation. Your testimony is supportive of government charges that a large group of 50 to 75 Vietnamese of various ages were killed near an irrigation ditch. There was no hostile fire, and you were ordered to head south to look for possible Vietcong soldiers. You returned to the ditch and saw the dead people. You questioned fellow GIs as to what happened. They told you that Lt. William Calley and Paul Meadlo had shot the people and pushed them into the ditch.

Upon cross-examination by the defense you will admit that the people could have been killed by helicopter or artillery fire.

You will admit that you did not see Calley firing directly into the ditch. The defense will ask why you didn't report the incident to a higher officer. You should reply that your group decided to keep it quiet. The defense also will try to discredit you by revealing that you earned \$35,000 from the sale of your pictures and that therefore you have a financial interest in the case. The defense will also ask if you were with Captain Ernest Medina that day. Reply that you were and that while searching through the village you saw a woman with a grenade whom Medina shot to death. You should also testify that you and Medina saw a soldier shoot down an eight-year-old boy. Medina said nothing.

### IMPORTANT



*Read carefully.*

**Special note:** *Locate a copy of the December 5, 1969, issue of Life magazine, which contains your famous photographs. (See your school, community, or local college librarian for help. If possible, bring a copy into the classroom so that the government attorneys can pass it to jury members to examine.)*

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## GOVERNMENT WITNESS: Paul Meadlo

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You are the most important witness in the government's case. You were with Lt. William Calley at the irrigation ditch. Together you two shot the civilians. In an interview with Mike Wallace of CBS News you told him of the gruesome slaughter.

The day after My Lai your foot was blown off by a mine; you soon returned home a bitter man. You originally refused to testify on the grounds of self-incrimination. The judge ordered a grant of immunity for you, but again you refused to testify. Finally, you were issued an ultimatum: Either testify or the U.S. marshals will take you away to prison for contempt. You then agreed to take the stand.



*Don't forget that men can cry.*

*This was the most traumatic moment of your life. It left a scar that will never heal.*

*Therefore, you may come close to—or actually break into—tears.*

While testifying be very emotional at times. When asked by the government about your duties in the village, say that “we just gathered up about 50 to 75 people and led them to a designated area.” With some anger say that “we suspected them of being Vietcong” and “as far as I’m concerned they’re still Vietcong.” After gathering the people, Calley came up to you and said, “You know what to do with them.” You assumed he meant to guard them. Lt. Calley returned in 15 minutes and said, “How come they’re not dead?” You said you didn’t know you were supposed to kill them. When Calley started shooting, you joined in.

The attorney then will ask how you felt at the time. State the following: “I was upset, scared, and crying. Calley and I pushed them in the ditch and continued shooting the Vietcong. Someone yelled that a child was escaping and Lt. Calley then killed him.”

The defense will begin its cross-examination by asking if you were ordered to kill. You should reply, “Yes.” When asked why you carried out the order, say that you were ordered to and were emotionally upset. “We were supposed to get satisfaction from this village for all the men we’d lost.” The defense will then ask about Ernest Medina. Say that you saw him and that he didn’t say anything so you figured you were doing the right thing. When questioned about Calley, reply that you thought he was doing his duty. He was not violent or raving around.

When the government is allowed to redirect questions, you will be asked when you saw the first Vietnamese. You will answer, “Right after we landed in an open field.” Explain that you were not ordered to fire. You gathered the people together because that was your orders and “it ain’t my business to say why.” When asked about the children, answer, “There were many children and they carried fully loaded grenades. Their mothers would throw the babies at you, and I assumed every minute they had a string and could blow us up at any time.” When asked what the children were doing and if they attacked you, reply, “I expected a counter-balance at any time.” A last question you may be asked is, “Did Lt. Calley or Captain Medina order you to kill?” You answer, “I took my orders from Lt. Calley, but Captain Medina was there before the ditch and I thought everything was okay, because he didn’t put a stop to it.”

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# LEGAL PLAN FOR THE DEFENSE - 1

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You are the team of attorneys trying to get charges dismissed against Lt. William Calley. You bear the burden of responsibility for the trial. You must prepare an opening statement, coordinate witness testimony, and examine and cross-examine witnesses. During the trial preparation period, you should meet with all of your own witnesses and discuss the questions you will ask them.

Remember that this is a military court and your conduct should adhere to the strictness of military behavior. When questioning witnesses support your own and try to discredit the prosecution witnesses' testimonies. Be intense, but do not be rude. Object only to those points brought out in dialog. Do not waste the court's time with unnecessary arguments.



*Put your points on 3" x 5" (or 4" x 6") notecards. Then at home practice giving such statements or asking your witnesses questions from your notecards. If you reduce your points or questions on your notecards to sentence fragments, you will sound more spontaneous. Above all, don't read your points—and don't read your questions!*

## General strategy

1. You are defending the entire U.S. Army as well as Lt. Calley. You must be careful not to say anything that will harm your case with the Army officers on the jury.
2. One line of defense should be that these type of killings occurred all over Vietnam. Stress that Lt. Calley is being used as a scape-goat in order to absolve blame for the rest of the troops' actions and for those superior officers who gave wrong orders.
3. Question American involvement in Vietnam and the means we used to fight there. Point out that tactics such as the search-and-destroy mission are against those international agreements which operate as laws of war.
4. Another line of defense should be that Lt. Calley was merely being a good soldier because he followed the orders of his commanding officers. If he had disobeyed orders, he could have been court-martialed.
5. At all times broaden the scope of the trial. Try to get other witnesses to say that they observed other incidents like My Lai. As a result, you will prove that what happened at My Lai was not unique.

## Opening statement

Cover the following points. Try to avoid reading them verbatim.

1. It is now time to hear the case for Lt. Calley. We will present evidence that his acts and conduct from the standpoint of his position as platoon commander were fully justified.
2. Remember that the burden of proof is on the government. The defense will present testimony which we believe will cause you to return a finding in Lt. Calley's favor.

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## LEGAL PLAN FOR THE DEFENSE - 2

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3. To remove all doubt and speculation, I can assure you that the accused will take the stand and testify, giving a full account of his actions and behavior. Only by hearing the facts can you determine his guilt or innocence.
4. We will bring the court the following facts and circumstances: Lt. Calley and his platoon were inadequately trained and instructed for this type of combat.
5. The accused had knowledge of many atrocities committed against Americans by the Vietcong soldiers and by the South Vietnamese civilians in the area. Resentment and anger filled the minds of the American soldiers because of the enemy's methods. Booby traps, sniper fire, and ambushes were used by Vietcong soldiers—and civilians—of all ages and both sexes.
6. The day before the attack, funeral services were held for at least three members of the unit who had been killed in the My Lai area. The nature of the services was such that a feeling of revenge was created.
7. The company commander held a briefing and informed the members that at long last they were to have an opportunity to encounter the enemy. The villages were being defended by the 48th Vietcong Battalion. The mission was to search and destroy. The commander further stated that intelligence information projected that all civilians had left the area and any occupants remaining were Vietcong sympathizers. No instructions were given on the handling of civilians.
8. Higher commanders were in the area and knew what was happening on the ground.
9. The evidence will further show that helicopters killed Vietcong in the area.
10. Much of the evidence of the prosecution will be disputed, challenged, or rendered unbelievable by defense testimony.
11. I will not discuss at this time Lt. Calley's personal testimony because his life is at stake. I prefer to have him relate it to you himself. I merely say that his orders were to kill every living thing.



*Never ask a cross-examination question unless you are sure you know how the question will be answered. If you do, you may sink your own ship.*

### Cross-examination of government witnesses

Ask the following questions and any other questions you feel are pertinent.

#### **Ron Haeberle**

1. Mr. Haeberle, could these people have been killed by helicopter or artillery fire?
2. Did you actually see Lt. Calley at the ditch?
3. Why did you not report the incident to a superior officer?

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## LEGAL PLAN FOR THE DEFENSE - 3

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4. How much did you earn from your My Lai photographs?
5. Isn't it true that you have a financial interest in this trial?
6. Did you see Captain Medina at all that day? What incident took place?

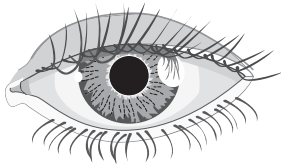
### **Hugh Thompson**

1. Mr. Thompson, didn't the House subcommittee question the award of such medals as you received under questionable conditions? Yet you still decided to keep the medal?
2. Did you not testify that you refused to obey an order? And you still received a Flying Cross?
3. You say you saw Paul Meadlo and Lt. Calley at the scene?
4. Mr. Thompson, do you consider yourself a conscientious objector?

### **Paul Meadlo**

1. Mr. Meadlo, you say that you were ordered to kill? Why did you carry out the order?
2. Were you supposed to get satisfaction from this mission? Did you see Captain Medina at all that morning? What did he say about the killings?
3. What did you think of Lt. Calley's actions? Was he mad or upset?
4. You said you considered the people at the ditch Vietcong? Do you still feel that way?

## **Examination of your witnesses**



*Establish eye contact as you question witnesses.*

Ask the following questions plus any other questions that will help your case.

### **Charles West**

1. Mr. West, can you describe for us your responsibilities in the My Lai search-and-destroy mission? Where were you to lead your platoons?
2. Did you see Lt. Calley? What was said?
3. Did you meet any Vietnamese? What was done with them?
4. Had you ever before received orders to kill unarmed civilians?
5. Did Captain Medina know what was happening at the My Lai operation?
6. Specifically, what did Medina say at the pre-My Lai briefing? Did he give the final orders that day?

### **Captain Ernest Medina**

1. Captain Medina, could you please give us your military background?
2. What personnel problems did you encounter?
3. How did the secretary of defense try to help the Army?
4. Do you think these men were qualified to be in the U.S. Army?
5. How long was it before you were sent to Vietnam with these unqualified, untrained men?



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## LEGAL PLAN FOR THE DEFENSE - 4

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6. What was the extent of training given in regard to prisoners? Did you receive any training on how to distinguish Vietcong from innocent civilians?
7. What orders were given to you about the My Lai mission? Specifically, what were the soldiers to do?
8. Did Colonel Henderson have a special interest in the mission?
9. When briefing the troops, what did you say about enemy forces? about civilians? about prisoners? about women and children?
10. What happened when you saw Lt. Calley?
11. When did you learn innocent civilians had been killed?
12. Did Col. Henderson know what was happening?
13. How about generals Koster and Young?

*Ask these questions when the government finishes with Medina.*

14. Captain Medina, isn't it a fact that in the briefing you instructed your men to "kill everything that moved" and that you also said, "I don't want to see anything living but GIs"?
15. Did you give orders to burn buildings?
16. Didn't you know that these tactics were banned by the Geneva Convention?
17. Captain Medina, what were your reasons for not reporting the killing of innocent civilians?

### **Lt. William Calley**

1. Lt. Calley, please review for us your assignments before Vietnam?
2. How much instruction did you receive regarding Geneva Convention rules of warfare?
3. What did you learn about the orders given to you?
4. What were your feelings toward Captain Medina?
5. At any time did you stop to judge the legality of your orders?
6. Could you please define the term civilian as you know it?
7. Lt. Calley, did you realize what might happen if you disobeyed a senior officer? What is the procedure if you have a complaint about an order?
8. How did you react when first arriving in Vietnam?
9. What did reports and stories tell you about Vietnam? In what way was Vietnam different from World War II and the Korean War?
10. How did the communists use women and children against U.S. soldiers?
11. How were most of your fatalities incurred?
12. Can you please describe for the court, Captain Medina's briefing? What did he say about civilian inhabitants? about women and children?
13. Was My Lai a "free-fire zone"? Can you please define free-fire zone for us?



*If possible, spend time practicing with Lt. Calley. Your success heavily depends upon how well you handle this crucial witness during the trial.*

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## LEGAL PLAN FOR THE DEFENSE - 5

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14. Lt. Calley, in your own words, please describe the My Lai operation for us? Did you not shoot an enemy soldier wearing a bright green uniform?
15. What did you instruct Paul Meadlo to do?
16. Lt. Calley, did you shoot any children?
17. What orders did you give?
18. Did you, at any time, intend to kill or form a premeditated opinion to “waste” anyone?
19. Did you consider the people enemies that Meadlo was guarding?
20. Was Captain Medina interested in a body count? What does that include? Had you ever been criticized for having an unfavorable body count?

### Closing statement

Cover the following points. Try to avoid reading them verbatim. Thank the judge, then address the jury.

1. I am proud of the Army, and it grieves me to see it being pulled apart from within. This case is a vehicle to hurry along that destruction.
2. Each man at My Lai was part of a common effort. Somebody called the wrong signals and something went wrong. I feel the facts will never come up. I believe the full truth is buried forever.
3. Many of those who testified have been discharged from the Army and are therefore shielded from prosecution. They have pointed the finger at those who have remained loyal soldiers. With few exceptions, they said, “Others shot civilians, but I did not.”
4. The untrained soldiers of My Lai were led by untrained leaders. Their mission was to search and destroy. And what did they face? The type of booby traps and mines used by the Vietcong took many soldiers’ friends’ lives. Women and children were being used by the enemy to help kill American soldiers. This perfidy breeds hatred against any possible enemy.
5. The testimony of the government witnesses was rehearsed until perfect. *(Point out weaknesses in each of these witnesses’ testimony.)*
6. If anyone was a culprit, it was Captain Medina. He gave the briefing the night before the attack. He led the troops to believe there would be no innocent civilians in the village. Calley obeyed Medina’s order to kill everything that breathed. I think Captain Medina is acting out of self-preservation in testifying at this trial.



*Speak slowly and deliberately with all the confidence of a person who knows his case is won.*

*Look the jury members right in the eye as you make your final summation.*



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## LEGAL PLAN FOR THE DEFENSE - 6

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*Pause dramatically  
before boldly and  
forcefully delivering  
your final statement.*



7. There was no way Calley could consider orders legal or decide if he should obey them. Calley was overcome with fear, terror, and considerations of his buddies. Calley was in a “no-win” situation: you get court-martialed if you don’t carry out orders; you may receive the same if you do obey them.
8. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, Lt. Calley’s fate is in your hands. You have to measure him by right or wrong. What is criminal in your conscience? Who cannot argue the morality of war? A second lieutenant is bound to follow the orders of his company commander. I cannot recall when the United States of America had a similar situation and put a similar combat group on trial.
9. Those who have testified cannot be prosecuted. But the man who stays in service does not have that protection.
10. During the time preceding the trial, the finger had pointed at Medina. All of a sudden it turned and charges were aimed at Calley. I ask you to give honest consideration to this. The lowest ranking officer is charged. We have to make a distinction between errors in judgment and criminal acts. ...  
**... I ask you to let this young man go free.**

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## DEFENSE WITNESS: Charles West

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*Answer all questions directly, for you are a man who approaches life that way—head on.*

You are a gung ho squad leader who describes the search-and-destroy mission in military vocabulary: “We were to overrun the village leaving nothing walking, crawling, or growing .... We was to kill all livestock .... There was to be no living thing when we left.”

Your involvement in My Lai was to lead two platoons through the northern part of the hamlet. At one point you saw Lt. William Calley and told him that his platoon was too much in your area, so he moved his men. Next, as you moved on, you encountered and apprehended 10 Vietnamese. One of your men asked what to do with them and you stated, “We are to kill every living thing. We killed about ten persons.”

The defense attorney will ask if you had ever received orders to kill unarmed civilians before the My Lai incident. Reply that when you were with another platoon, a Lt. Lowe ordered you to kill all men, women, and children. Lt. Lowe then ordered you to kill a young man. Later you saw that someone had fixed the young man’s body to look like a grenade had killed him.

When asked what Captain Ernest Medina was doing during the My Lai incident, respond, “He knew exactly what was happening in My Lai. I saw him at the ditch where we both saw the bodies.”

The next few questions will pertain to what you heard Medina say at the pre-My Lai briefing. Point out how you remember that Medina said he didn’t want to see anything living except GIs. Medina gave the final orders at My Lai that day. He said, “The party’s over. That’s enough shooting for the day.” Captain Medina reported the final body count at 310.

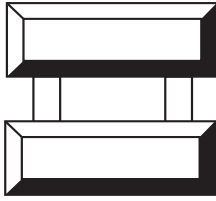
The government’s cross-examination will try to discredit you by bringing up an incident where a Vietnamese girl was molested. You must say yes to all the questions about this incident. This attorney will also ask who shot first at the group of 10 Vietnamese. You should answer, “I don’t know, but when I saw they were injured I joined in.”

If asked if you ever saw Calley at the ditch during the My Lai invasion, say no.

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# DEFENSE WITNESS: Captain Ernest Medina

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*Captain, your position is vulnerable. Therefore, you should practice answering questions you expect you will be asked. Get a friend or family member to go over your material with you and ask questions that both sides will likely ask you.*

*To be more convincing, don't take any notes with you to the witness stand. And of course, above all, don't take this handout with you.*

You are a tough, imaginative officer who was Lt. William Calley's immediate superior. You arrive at the trial angry because the testimony begins to implicate you. The defense asks that you give your military background and you begin, "I was appointed commanding officer of Charlie Company in Hawaii December 1966. My problems were in getting adequate personnel for officers." Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara sent 100,000 men who would not normally have qualified for the Army on the basis of intelligence. Within a year you were sent with these untrained, unqualified personnel to Vietnam. You state, "There was little training given to us regarding prisoners and we received limited training on how to distinguish Vietcong and innocent civilians."

Next, you will be questioned about the orders given to you. Respond: "Colonel Barker briefed me at the beginning of March that My Lai would be our first engagement with the enemy and that we had permission to kill livestock, close wells, and destroy the food crop. It was to be a revenge mission and since Colonel Henderson had just taken over the 11th Brigade, he wanted it to be a smashing success."

When you briefed the troops, you told them to expect to be outnumbered and that artillery and helicopters would support. You further told the troops that all innocent civilians would have gone to market. You made no comments about the handling of prisoners. You said not to kill women and children "unless they engage you."

During the day at My Lai you encountered Lt. Calley once and asked for a body count. You then instructed him to speed up his progress. Later during the evening you learned that innocent civilians had been killed. When questioned you also say that Colonel Henderson was in a helicopter over the My Lai area and saw the gathering at the ditch. Generals Koster and Young were also near the My Lai area.

Upon cross-examination the government attorney will ask pivotal questions in your testimony about the briefing and the orders you gave. The government wants to convict Calley, not you, so they will not spend a lot of time questioning you.

The defense will redirect questions asking if you stated "kill everything that moved." Reply, "No, sir, but I gave orders to burn all buildings." At the time you didn't know that these tactics were barred by the Geneva Conventions.

The last question you will likely be asked is, "What were your reasons for not reporting the killing of innocent civilians?" Answer, "First, I realized that the intelligence information was faulty. Actually, we found nothing but women and children; and after what happened, I thought it would bring disgrace upon the United States and its Army. I realized the repercussions it might have. And lastly, I feared for my family and myself."

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# DEFENSE WITNESS: Lt. William Calley - 1

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*Lieutenant, you are on trial for your life—And of course, it's not just you on trial. The American military's performance in Vietnam is on trial. You have a responsibility to yourself and the American military.*

*Therefore, you should practice answering questions you expect you will be asked. Get a friend or family member to go over your material with you and ask questions that both sides will likely ask you.*

*If possible, meet with the defense attorney who will question you. Practice answering the questions he will ask before the military tribunal.*

*To be more convincing, don't take any notes with you to the witness stand. And of course, above all, don't take this sheet with you.*

As the accused you have the most demanding of all witness parts. Your basic training was in Texas and you were sent on to Officer Candidate School. Your assignment before was in Hawaii, where you received limited instruction about the Geneva Conventions in regard to the rules and regulations of warfare. You learned that all orders were to be assumed legal and that the soldier's job was to carry out orders to the best of his ability. You felt Captain Ernest Medina was a fine officer and you respected him. You were proud to serve under him.

At no time did you stop to judge the legality of your orders. When asked to define the term *civilian*, define it as "the Vietcong living in the area and all Vietcong sympathizers." You realized that if you disobeyed a senior officer, you could be court-martialed and could be ultimately sentenced to death. You were never required to determine the legality of an order, then submit your complaint.

Upon arriving in Vietnam, you found things confusing because nobody had the answers as they did back in Hawaii and the States. You heard reports and stories from many people. They all told you to be afraid of Vietnamese civilians. You read that it was essential for troops in Vietnam to put out of their minds the World War II and Korean War concepts of giving candy and things to children. That was taking its toll, because the communists were using women and children effectively by planting grenades on them as they rushed toward GIs. As time went on, you understood this more: 95 percent of the fatalities in your platoon were caused by mines and booby traps.

Describe Captain Medina's briefing as follows: "The men were sitting on ammunition bunkers with Captain Medina in front. There was a short memorial service for those killed. Then he said our platoon was under strength and that we would have to be extremely aggressive. He said we were to neutralize My Lai on our way to Pinkville, and that the 48th Vietcong Battalion was there. He said all civilians had left the area and anyone who remained was to be considered the enemy." Someone asked about women and children and Medina said that means everything. This area was classified "free-fire zone," which means we had political clearance to destroy everything in the village.

Here is your description of the actual My Lai operation: "We entered the hamlet with a burst of fire and neutralized everything by dropping grenades down bunkers and firing into hootches. I saw many dead Vietnamese in the village and shot two myself, one with a bright green uniform. I saw (Paul) Meadlo near a ditch and told him to get rid of his prisoners if he couldn't move them faster."

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## DEFENSE WITNESS: Lt. William Calley - 2

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*A good way to first approach this two-page handout is to use a colored highlighter pen to mark key points. Then you will possibly wish to transfer such points to note cards so that when you practice answering questions, you can refer to your notes. However, remember not to take any notes or this handout to the witness stand.*

You should deny shooting any children. Say that all the orders you gave came directly from Medina. He gave the orders at the previous night's platoon leaders briefing.

The defense attorney will ask if you ever intended to kill or whether you ever formed premeditated opinion to "waste" anyone. Respond that your intentions were to waste and destroy only the enemy. You considered the people Meadlo was guarding as enemy soldiers and acted as directed by Captain Medina's orders.

You admit that Captain Medina was interested in a body count. You explain that a body count includes Vietcong, buffalo, pigs, and cows. You had been criticized previously for getting too many shot and not coming back with accurate body counts.

The government's cross-examination will begin by asking if there were any women being shot. You respond that you weren't discriminating between individuals: they all were enemy and were to be destroyed. You don't remember enemy fire because you were too busy giving orders and gathering people to be used to go through the mine field. Captain Medina had told you to gather a mine-sweeping group. Then he told you to get rid of them. You gave the same order to Meadlo and moved on. You came back and found Meadlo in the same place with the people and said, "If you can't move the people, waste them." You were not angry with Meadlo, but you found the situation distressing because you were being slowed down.

You walked southeast to talk to Sgt. Mitchell and heard fire near the ditch. You returned and began firing into the ditch at the people. Your main objective was to finish them off as fast as possible because you were running late. Medina told you that you had done a good job, but you hadn't been fast enough. You told him about the people at the ditch, but he didn't ask questions because it wasn't out of the ordinary.

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## JUDGE COL. REID KENNEDY

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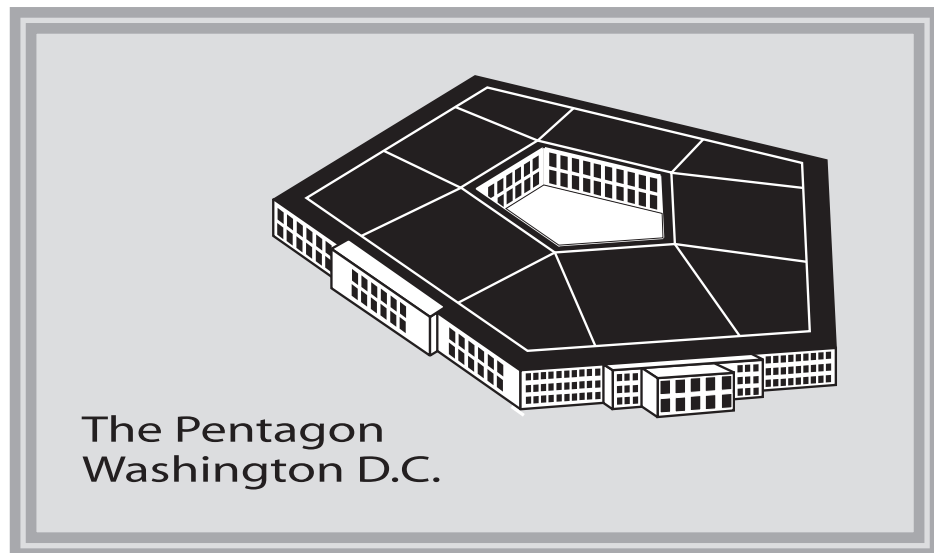
You have been selected to play the judge. Read this short history of Colonel Reid Kennedy. You worked in private law, then returned to a military career during the Korean War. You are a fair person who does not let his opinions affect the court-martial. You are a conservative man who believes in maintaining order at all times.

You and your courtroom must be a model of military decorum. See that you and everyone else within your courtroom practices courtroom etiquette. Use legal terminology when possible. Ask questions of witnesses to clarify confusing testimony. Sustain or overrule objections according to the testimony or the comment presented. *Carefully study in advance the Court Procedure on page 7 in the Student Guide.*

*Never forget that this is a military courtroom...*

*...that you are a colonel representing the army and the military establishment located in the Pentagon in Washington, D.C....*

*and that **you** are in charge!*



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# BAILIFF

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You bear the main responsibility for keeping order during this court-martial. At the start of each session you will proclaim: “All rise” when the judge enters the courtroom. At the beginning of the trial you should read the charges as described in the Court Procedure on page 7 in the Student Guide. The case should be read as: *The United States Government vs. Lt. William Calley*.

If anyone disrupts the proceedings in any manner at any point during the court-martial, bring that person to order immediately. If the judge orders an individual removed from the courtroom, do so firmly but politely. When the jury reaches its verdict, hand a copy of the written verdict to the judge and make sure all is silent before the jury spokesperson reads it.



Remember that you are an officer of the court who should assist the judge in his conduct of the trial. You will be able to perform your duties more precisely if you have carefully studied the Court Procedure in advance.

*What body language should you use in order to maintain order? (Remember that this is a military court!)*



# COURT REPORTERS



No role is more essential than yours to insure a proper and fair court-martial. At any time either during the trial or during deliberations you may be asked to read back a portion of the testimony or other proceedings for the benefit of the court, either side, or the jury. A tape recorder is essential. Use its counter to keep an accurate log of each witness' testimony. This is done by noting the number when the witness starts and when he ends his testimony.

## Court Reporter Witness Record

Witness (or lawyer giving an opening/closing statement)	Testimony begins	Cross- examination begins

If you do not have an audio tape recorder, design a system of your own so that you can take down everything necessary. Be sure that your notes are clearly legible so that you can read them back instantly when called upon to do so.



# JURY MEMBERS



As members of this military jury, your task differs from civilian jury members. You may question witnesses and address remarks to the bench at appropriate times. All of you are career military officers, and most have had combat experience in Vietnam. You must keep an open mind at all times and listen carefully. Wait until all testimony and statements are given before you decide on guilt or innocence.

Performing your duties requires constant concentration. Try to place yourself in Vietnam undergoing the complexities of the My Lai assault. *Take a page of brief notes on each witness' statements and testimony so that you can back up your vote with reasons.* After the trial you will be asked individually why you voted as you did.

## Witness:

Testimony	Cross-examination

My reaction to the witness:

**Remember:** You have the opportunity to ask questions of the witnesses to clear up any doubts you may have. Try not to discuss the case with anyone except fellow jurors. At the conclusion of the court-martial, you will be asked to mark guilty or innocent on a slip of paper and present it to the jury spokesperson. It takes a two-thirds vote to convict Calley. The spokesperson will deliver the verdict after the judge instructs Calley to stand.

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# STUDENT SURVEY

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Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Circle **SA**, if you strongly agree; **A**, if you agree; **NO**, if you have no opinion; **D**, if you disagree; **SD**, if you strongly disagree.

- | <b>SA</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>SD</b> |  |
|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|--|
|           |          |           |          |           | 1. A person who breaks the rules of war is a criminal and should be tried for his/her actions.                           |
|           |          |           |          |           | 2. Despite the circumstances, a soldier should always obey orders from his/her superiors.                                |
|           |          |           |          |           | 3. A country should hesitate in intervening in another country's affairs and supporting the nation if a war breaks out.  |
|           |          |           |          |           | 4. Lt. Calley should not have been tried because many incidents such as My Lai were reported.                            |
|           |          |           |          |           | 5. Orientals place a lower value on human life than do Americans.  |
|           |          |           |          |           | 6. Lt. Calley was being court-martialed because he was the lowest ranking officer; he was used as a scapegoat.           |
|           |          |           |          |           | 7. Increased military spending is usually necessary to provide for a more powerful country.                              |
|           |          |           |          |           | 8. War must be governed by clearly defined rules and regulations.  |
|           |          |           |          |           | 9. Mandatory draft registration violates a man's or woman's freedom of choice.   |
|           |          |           |          |           | 10. A country should never surrender in a war, even if no solutions exist and the nation obviously will not win the war. |
|           |          |           |          |           | 11. Nationalism is bad because it so often leads to war.   |

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# UNIT TEST

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Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**True-False** Write a + for True, a 0 for False.

- \_\_\_ 1. The French entered Vietnam in 1945 in hopes of finding a southern river route to China.
- \_\_\_ 2. The “domino theory” holds that if one country becomes communist, its bordering nations will soon follow.
- \_\_\_ 3. When the partitioning of Vietnam took place in 1954, 90,000 residents of Quang Ngai Province fled north to join Ho Chi Minh’s communist government.
- \_\_\_ 4. By 1968 U.S. war costs were \$25 billion annually.
- \_\_\_ 5. The U.S. forces sent to Vietnam were well-trained and had adequate knowledge of Vietnamese customs.
- \_\_\_ 6. The Vietnam War ended in 1973 and by 1975 all of Vietnam was communist.
- \_\_\_ 7. The term “free-fire zone” means that all civilians in a designated area were suspected of being either Vietcong soldiers or sympathizers.
- \_\_\_ 8. Lt. William Calley was a platoon leader in Charlie Company.
- \_\_\_ 9. Captain Medina used the funeral of killed GIs as a motivator during the My Lai operation briefing.
- \_\_\_ 10. The Vietcong tactics—booby traps, snipings, and mines—led to hostility among American soldiers.
- \_\_\_ 11. There were many signs of enemy fire when U.S. troops invaded My Lai.
- \_\_\_ 12. Generals Samuel Koster and Dean Henderson were allotted airspace for the My Lai assault.
- \_\_\_ 13. My Lai village survivor Do Chuc estimated that 200 people were killed on the day of the operation.
- \_\_\_ 14. The *New York Times* account of My Lai described the situation very accurately.
- \_\_\_ 15. Intelligence reports received by Captain Medina were said to have been faulty in regard to civilian activity.
- \_\_\_ 16. There were many instances in which vague orders were given during the war.

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**Short Essay** Answer one or more of these questions on your own paper. Your teacher will suggest how many to answer, what format your essay(s) should have, and what the minimum length for each essay should be.

- 1. Describe what is meant by a “search and destroy” mission. Refer to the trial testimony of Charles West and the GI’s letter in the Background Essay.
- 2. In previous wars how did U.S. soldiers interact with the native inhabitants? How did the Vietcong use this concept to their advantage?
- 3. Take each line of defense and comment on its validity.
  - Calley was only obeying orders.
  - Calley was being used as a “scapegoat” because of his low ranking and career status.
  - This type of killings occurred all over Vietnam; therefore, singling out Calley is unfair.

---

**Good luck!**



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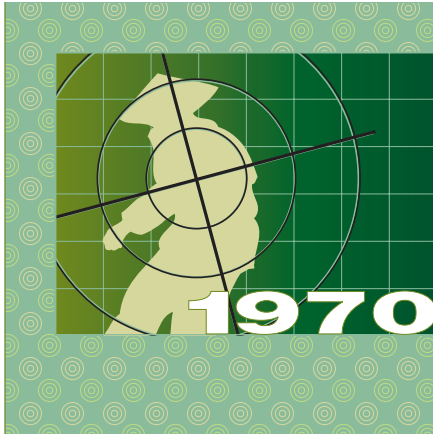
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# THE COURT-MARTIAL OF LT. WILLIAM CALLEY

A re-creation of Lt. William Calley's trial in 1970, covering the issues related to the My Lai Massacre

## OVERVIEW

This fact is not well known: the Vietnam conflict was the longest and most costly war in United States history. Many Americans, even today, are unfamiliar with the geographic location of Southeast Asia and the combat tactics used there. Too, it is not generally known that often both the soldiers and commanding officers received limited training before entering combat zones.

This re-creation centers on Lt. William Calley, who is charged with breaking the rules of war. His court-martial is presented to help you better understand the many complexities of the Vietnam War and its aftereffects. In the years right after U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, military involvement in world affairs was held to a minimum. Since the Iranian crisis, however, Congress has called for more defense spending and preparation for reinstatement of the draft. Since military involvement will likely affect you directly, the more you learn about Vietnam, the better prepared you will be to understand similar issues in the future.

The Calley court-martial also gives you the opportunity to discuss matters such as foreign intervention into war and obedience to orders. One of the major lines of the Calley defense is that he shot civilians because those were his orders. Lt. Calley is charged with two counts of premeditated murder of Vietnamese villagers at My Lai. After examining the evidence, you will decide on his guilt or innocence. A possibility exists that Calley is being used as a scapegoat for his superior officers as he is the lowest ranking individual officer involved. Finally there is the issue of fairness, since the testimony in the court-martial presents evidence of similar mass executions during the course of the war for which no one else has stood trial.

## PURPOSE

Aside from the issues examined, the purpose of the Calley court-martial is to give you and your teacher a break from ordinary classroom procedures. Try to take on the identity of your role and place yourself at the time of the My Lai tragedy. By participating in the Calley trial, you will learn a great deal about this moment in American history. You will gain knowledge of important people and issues during the Vietnam War. You will learn about military law and how it differs from the usual laws affecting regular citizens. You will improve your skills in speech making, note taking, decision making, and listening. By role-playing the trial, you will appreciate the importance of cooperating and learning from fellow classmates.

# BACKGROUND ESSAY



*Study carefully,  
for this war will  
be troubling our  
nation for many  
future decades.*

## American involvement in Vietnam

Before examining the My Lai incident, it is necessary to trace the events which led to United States involvement in Vietnam. Foreign intervention began in 1945 when the French entered the region in hopes of finding a southern river route to China for trading purposes. At the same time, a Vietnamese leader named Ho Chi Minh founded rebel organizations to expel the French.

When China became communist in 1949, U.S. foreign policymakers feared that communism might spread south to Vietnam. The “domino theory” held that if Vietnam was taken over, the countries south of it would also fall, and in time all Southeast Asia would become communist.

Ho Chi Minh, with Chinese help, forced the French out of North Vietnam in 1954 and established an uneasy truce with a South Vietnamese government headed by Ngo Dinh Diem. When Ho Chi Minh’s guerrillas, known as the Vietcong, infiltrated South Vietnam and threatened to take it over, President John Kennedy in 1962 sent 8,000 American troops as military “advisers” to help train the South Vietnamese. This effort proved ineffective, however, and when in 1964 two American destroyers were attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin, President Lyndon Johnson decided to escalate the war.

By 1966 there were 358,000 American troops in Vietnam, and President Johnson ordered continuous bombings in hopes of forcing peace talks. In his 1968 State of the Union message, Johnson said there were 525,000 troops in Vietnam and that the war cost 25 billion dollars per year. However, because of the Vietcong’s familiarity with the jungles and their sympathy gained from rural villagers, they continued to gain ground despite heavy U.S. bombings. Finally, after the longest and costliest war in U.S. history, President Richard Nixon signed a peace treaty in 1973 ending the war and withdrew all American forces. By 1975 all Vietnam was under communist rule.



*Are you aware  
of how such  
warfare differed  
from that which  
American troops  
had traditionally  
fought?*

## Village warfare

My Lai is set in the Quang Ngai Province, which was considered a North Vietnamese stronghold. When Vietnam divided into North and South in 1954, 90,000 Southern residents went north to join Ho Chi Minh’s regime. Later, many returned as Vietcong guerrillas.

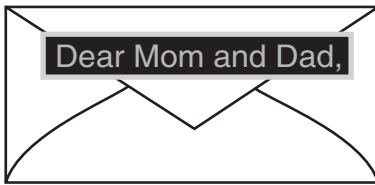
Both the Vietcong and the South Vietnamese army tried to control the villages in the South through terror. They commonly killed unarmed civilians in Quang Ngai and other provinces. When Americans started helping the South Vietnamese, the Americans soon learned not to trust any villager, regardless of age or sex. By contrast, in previous wars the American soldier interacted freely with the native inhabitants, giving chocolate and gum.

The Vietcong used this concept of familiarity to their advantage. Sympathizing women sacrificed themselves or a child to inflict casualties upon infantrymen by blowing up both themselves and soldiers with hidden grenades. Vietnam was not a war in which the opposing sides were easily distinguished and a friendly villager by day often became a deadly enemy at night.

## “Free-fire zone”

Because the Quang Ngai Province was a stronghold for the Vietcong, it became a “free-fire zone”: all civilians were automatically suspected of being Vietcong sympathizers and were in danger of being fired at because the American soldiers feared the villagers firing at them. The majority of the troops in combat units were draftees. They knew little about Vietnam and were not highly thought of by their regular army officers. In 1968, the Army’s effort to educate GIs on the rights of prisoners they might take in combat consisted of two hours a year. In addition, the average GIs’ ignorance of Vietnamese customs was appalling. This ignorance often led the soldiers to misunderstand a Vietnamese villager’s actions.

Invasion without specified orders was also commonplace in Vietnam. Many of the tactics used were somewhat vague in purpose. The infantry’s basic search and destroy tactic is described in this abbreviated version of a GI’s letter to his parents:



Dear Mom and Dad,

Today we went on a mission, and I'm not very proud of myself, my friends, or my country. We burned every hut in sight. We burned small villages of people who are incredibly poor. Each hut has a dried mud bunker to protect the families and we were ordered to burn them to the ground. We landed ten helicopters and immediately began firing into the huts. People were crying and begging not to be separated from their families. My buddy threw a grenade into a hut where there was a baby. Only afterward did we hear the crying.

### Charlie Company

The unit directly involved in the My Lai assault was called Charlie Company; it was commanded by Captain Ernest Medina and had been sent to Vietnam in December 1967. Charlie Company was a “grunt” unit; its men were foot soldiers, the “GI Joes” who understood they were to take orders, not question them. Lt. William Calley, a 24-year-old second lieutenant from Miami, served as a platoon leader. The company initially had little enemy contact. They were responsible for a 150-square-mile area that included parts of Quang Ngai Province. Members of Charlie Company were occasionally stunned by the attitude veterans displayed toward the Vietnamese. It was common to see Vietnamese ears on the antennas of transport vehicles. Soldiers had placed these ears there in order to frighten villagers.

### Pressure on Charlie Company

During the early weeks Captain Medina warned the troops they were in a dangerous area; mines and booby traps—often placed by women and children—were everywhere. After a while the mines, traps, and snipings began to take their toll on Charlie Company. These attacks created both hostility and anxiety among the company. Men were getting more violent. They began to routinely kick Vietnamese children who were begging for gum or money. The soldiers took their cue from Medina, who was quick to beat civilians. According to the Criminal Investigation Division hearing in October 1969, several incidents of hostility had come up with both Calley and Medina having been mentioned.

Charlie Company had suffered many fatalities and casualties the last two weeks of February and the early part of March 1968. On March 15, a funeral service was held for Sgt. George Cox, who had been blown up by a mine. Accounts say the company was very upset, angry, and was talking of revenge. Medina had used the funeral as a motivator. After the service, he began to tell the company about the next day's mission.



*This name  
is engraved  
into America's  
historical memory.*

### My Lai

This mission would be at My Lai, where elements of the 48th Vietcong Battalion were located. Intelligence reports said all women and children would be gone by 7 a.m. en route to market. Colonel Barker ordered Medina to burn houses, to blow up bunkers and tunnels, and to kill all the livestock. Medina said the idea was to destroy the village so the 48th Vietcong unit would be forced to move. There are conflicting reports as to what orders were given in regard to civilians. Captain Medina said he did not include civilian orders in his briefing; others say he did.

The My Lai assault was the biggest thing going on in the American division that day. Both General Samuel Koster and General Dean Henderson would be allotted airspace at 2,500 feet to observe the action. Gunships would fly below 1,000 feet. The hamlet itself had a population of about 700 people living either in flimsy thatched huts known as “hootches” or red-brick houses. There were footpaths running throughout the village. As the first two platoons entered the hamlet, they received no enemy fire. Medina's command post and the third platoon were in the rice paddies to the rear. When Calley and some of his men walked into the village, none of the inhabitants ran away. They knew U.S. soldiers would assume anyone running was a Vietcong and would shoot to kill.

### The My Lai killings

At 8 a.m. the indiscriminate killings began without warning. Reports say one member of Calley's platoon stabbed and shot a man. Another GI threw a 50-year-old man down a well. He then pulled the pin from a M26 grenade and threw it in after him. In another location, about 50 to 75 Vietnamese were grouped together and were being guarded by Paul Meadlo. Calley asked Meadlo to move them and later ordered him to “waste them.” Trial testimony shows that Lt. Calley stood 10 to 15 feet away from the people and began firing. Meadlo, upon Calley's orders, also began shooting.



Consider highlighting ideas in the Background Essay or taking notes related to these 18 questions.

Do Chuc, a 48-year-old Vietnamese peasant, had two daughters and an aunt killed that day. He said there was no panic until the American GIs set up a machine gun and started firing. The few Vietcong soldiers who were in the area fled when they heard the helicopter noise. The second platoon also entered My Lai with guns blazing, but it found no resistance. By this time slaughtering was taking place everywhere. One GI saw Medina shoot a young girl and heard him order soldiers to machine gun another group. Ron Haeberle took photographs of the massacre which were later published in *Life* magazine.

### Some people saved

Helicopter pilot Hugh Thompson had directed his men to fire on the road adjacent to the village at a fleeing Vietcong soldier with a weapon. As he approached the village, Thompson saw wounded civilians with no sign of enemy force. When he saw American GIs killing young children, he managed to hide some from death. He encountered Lt. Calley on the road and asked who was in charge. Calley replied, "I'm the boss here." Thompson made three flights rescuing the wounded before he decided he must tell superior officers what he had seen.

As the day continued, other large groups of villagers were gathered together and killed. Soldiers recall many gruesome events with Calley's name coming up often. Later questioning of village survivors produced an estimated death toll of between 400 and 500. The official brigade report listed 15 Vietcong soldiers killed.

By contrast, the *New York Times* reported that the infantry company led by Captain Medina had caught a North Vietnamese unit in a pincer movement and killed 128 enemy soldiers. The operation was described as another offensive that cleared enemy pockets still threatening the cities. The report said two American GIs were killed and 10 wounded during the day-long fight, even though only one casualty had actually been sustained. No civilian casualties were mentioned.

Charlie Company's victory did not go unnoticed. A few days after the battle, General William Westmoreland, then commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, sent the following message: "Operation Muscatine (code name for My Lai assault) contact northeast of Quang Ngai City on 16 March dealt the enemy a heavy blow. Congratulations to officers and men of Charlie Company for outstanding action."

### Discussion Questions

1. When did the French enter Vietnam? What was their interest?
2. Why did a new communist China frighten U.S. foreign policy makers? What is meant by the "domino theory"?
3. Who led the opposing factions after Vietnam's partitioning in 1954?
4. What was the extent of American involvement in the early 1960s?
5. In 1968, how many U.S. troops were in Vietnam? What was the cost of the war?
6. What advantages did the North Vietnamese have over U.S. forces? When did the war end? When did all of Vietnam become communist?
7. Where is My Lai located? Where did residents go when partitioning took place?
8. In previous wars how did U.S. soldiers interact with natives? How did the Vietcong use this concept?
9. What does "free-fire zone" mean?
10. Describe the troop units sent to Vietnam in regard to training, knowledge of customs, etc.
11. Who commanded Charlie Company? What type of unit was it?
12. What type of attacks occurred on GIs? How did soldiers react?
13. When did Medina brief his men on the My Lai mission? How had he used the funeral service? What had intelligence reports said?
14. Were there any superior officers aware of the My Lai assault? What was the population of the village? How did they react when U.S. soldiers entered?
15. How did survivor Do Chuc describe the actions of GIs and villagers?
16. Did the second platoon encounter resistance? What was Medina said to have done?
17. How was Hugh Thompson involved? What did village survivors estimate the death total to be?
18. Describe the *New York Times*' report of the My Lai assault?

# BRIEF SUMMARY OF MAJOR ROLES

You will receive special identity handouts.



## **Judge—Col. Reid Kennedy**

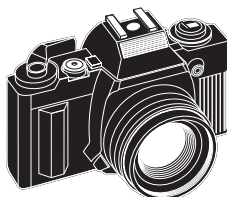
You are in charge of all court proceedings and must rule on objections. You have a distinguished military background and must at all times keep proper courtroom decorum. You are a conservative soldier who usually rules in favor of any testimony that may shed light on the case.

## **Government attorneys**

A team of three of you will prosecute and attempt to convict Lt. William Calley of two murder counts. You bear the main responsibility of the trial. You will work to coordinate all witness testimony and statements in order to get a conviction.

## **Defense attorneys**

A team of three of you will try to prove that what Calley did was common in Vietnam. You will stress that he is being unfairly singled out. Since there is little doubt about the charges in question, your job will be difficult. At all times you will try to broaden the scope of the trial to include others who might be even more guilty than Calley.



## **Government witness Ron Haeberle**

You took the *Life* magazine photos that stunned the nation. You heard no hostile fire and saw Calley shooting into the irrigation ditch. The defense will try to discredit you by revealing earnings you made on the *Life* photos.

## **Government witness Hugh Thompson**

You are one of the few authentic heroes of the My Lai invasion. You flew over the area in your helicopter and landed three times to help wounded civilians. On one of your landings you encountered Lt. Calley and disobeyed an order he gave you. For your actions that day you received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

## **Government witness Paul Meadlo**

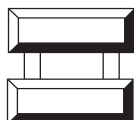
You are the most important witness in the case against Calley. You were with Calley at the irrigation ditch and together with him shot the civilians. Originally you had refused to testify on grounds of self-incrimination, but the judge has granted you immunity. Once before, in an interview with Mike Wallace of CBS news, you told the gruesome details of My Lai.

## **Defense witness Charles West**

You are a gung ho squad leader who will describe the search-and-destroy mission in military vocabulary. You will admit you killed 10 civilians at My Lai, and that you had received orders to kill everything many times before. You will also say you saw Captain Medina at the village and that Medina was aware of everything that was happening.

## **Defense witness Capt. Ernest Medina**

You are a tough, imaginative officer who is highly respected by superiors and subordinates. You will arrive at the trial angry because some of the testimony implicates you. You will describe your briefing of Calley and his men and what was to be accomplished by the mission. You will say that you never gave any specific orders regarding prisoners or civilians. You are a dedicated officer and are worried that this incident may have repercussions against the U.S. Army and yourself.



## **Defendant Lt. William Calley**

As the accused you will have the most demanding witness part. You respect and admire Captain Medina and learned in officer school that all orders were to be assumed legal and that a good soldier carried them out without question. At no time did you stop to judge the legality of your orders. You knew that by not obeying an order you could be subject to court-martial and that the proper procedure is to carry out the order, then register a complaint. You will say that such enemy killings





were common in Vietnam. You don't know why you are being singled out. You refer to the civilians as enemy personnel and deny any premeditation about the killings.

### **Bailiff**

You will begin and end each court session and will have the responsibility of keeping order and silence throughout the court-martial. You will swear in each witness. Also, if anyone disrupts the proceedings, you must bring that person to order.

### **Court reporter**

Your part is essential because at any time you may be asked to read a portion of the testimony or other proceedings. You must make every possible effort to keep notes that are complete and accurate. (If you don't take shorthand, arrange for the use of a tape recorder.)

### **Newspaper reporters**


Everyone who isn't playing one of the above roles will be a news writer representing a major newspaper or wire reporting service such as Associated Press. You should take good notes as preparation for a specific article as described in Role Responsibilities.

### **Jurors**


All of you are career military officers who have had combat experience in Vietnam. Your task differs from a civilian juror in that you have the opportunity to question witnesses on their testimony. Thus, you will be able to help the court by clearing up matters. You will render a verdict when the trial finishes. In order to convict Calley, you need a two-thirds vote. Try to place yourself in the defendant's position. Remember, too, there is pressure from higher ranking officers who want the Army's reputation untarnished and who might someday be evaluating your performance as a junior officer. Keep brief notes of statements made by attorneys and witnesses so that you can justify your vote.

## **ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES**


### **Bailiff, judge, attorney, witnesses**

- 
1. Prepare for your role by carefully reading your role sheet in detail.
  2. Study and follow the sequence of the trial as given in the Court Procedure on page 7.
  3. After the trial write a one-paragraph description of your character. Indicate how much impact your role-playing had on the court-martial. Bring out your positive contributions as well as those points you could have improved on.


### **Court reporters**

- 
1. Take detailed written notes during the trial. Consider audio taping the court-martial.

### **Jurors**

- 
1. Read carefully and follow the court-martial as it is presented in the Court Procedure on page 7.
  2. When not positive about the interpretation of testimony, ask questions. (Keep a record of the questions you ask.)
  3. You are also responsible for at least a one-page outline of notes you take as each witness testifies. Under each witness' name list what you believe to be the main points of his testimony. Do not hesitate to ask the judge for permission to have a witness clarify his testimony.

### **Newspaper reporters**



You should take out some note sheets and take detailed notes on lawyers' speeches and witnesses' testimony. Why? After viewing the trial, write an article or editorial from *one* of these viewpoints:

1. A "disinterested" observer who reports as clearly and exactly as he can a summary of the testimony presented;
2. As a "feature" writer who describes the personalities of the main participants in the trial;
3. As a "hawk" editorial writer who firmly believes Calley is being made a scapegoat;
4. As a "dove" editorial writer who favored complete withdrawal of American troops and who firmly believes Calley is guilty of murdering innocent civilians.

# COURT PROCEDURE

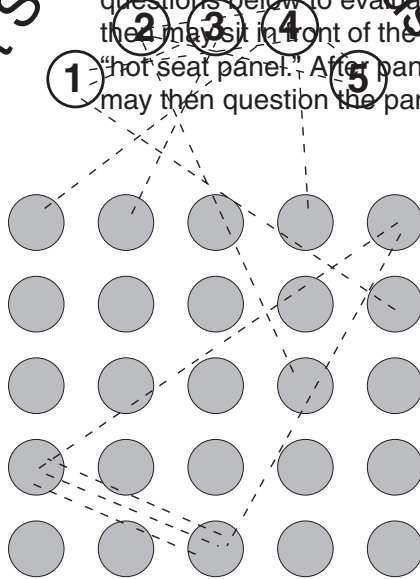
**Directions:** This trial sequence has been designed to indicate how lines should be delivered. The dialog represents a synthesis of correct procedure. (Attorneys should develop additional questions from witness character sketches.) Action begins when both judge and jury enter from outside the classroom. The presiding judge then waits until all persons are settled. The court-martial then begins.

1. **Bailiff:** All rise, the honorable Col. Reid Kennedy presiding.
2. **Judge:** Lt. Calley, please rise. Bailiff, will you read the charges.
3. **Bailiff:**
  - With premeditation, Lt. Calley did murder more than 70 Oriental human beings, males and females of various ages, by shooting them with a rifle. *(Pause)*
  - With premeditation, Lt. Calley did murder one Oriental human being, approximately two years old, by shooting him with a rifle.
4. **Judge:** *(to Calley)* You are charged with violations of Article 118 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. How do you plead to these charges?
5. **Calley:** I plead not guilty, sir.
6. **Judge:** The defendant may be seated. Will the government please begin its case.
7. **Government prosecutor:** *(Opening statement is delivered to the jury.)*
8. **Judge:** Will the government please call its first witness.
9. **Bailiff:** The court calls Ron Haeberle to the stand. *(Hold Bible while Haeberle places left hand on Bible, right hand raised.)* Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God? *(Pause for response—repeat this procedure for each witness.)* State your name.
10. **Haeberle:** Ron Haeberle *(At this point the government and defense attorneys will question Haeberle, attempting to elicit the information provided in their legal plans. The same is done with subsequent government witnesses Hugh Thompson and Paul Meadlo. When Meadlo finishes being cross-examined, the government prosecutors will rest their case.)*
11. **Judge:** The defense may now begin its case.
12. **Defense attorney:** *(Opening statement is delivered to the jury.)*
13. **Judge:** Will the defense please call its first witness.
14. **Bailiff:** The defense calls Charles West to the stand. *(The defense and government attorneys should now question the defense witnesses, attempting to elicit the information provided in their legal plans. After West, Medina, and Calley have testified, the defense attorneys will rest their case.)*
15. **Judge:** Now that all the testimony has been given, I will ask the government to sum up its arguments.
16. **Government attorney:** *(Closing statement is delivered to the jury.)*
17. **Judge:** Will the defense please sum up its arguments with its closing statement.
18. **Defense attorney:** *(Closing statement is delivered to the jury.)*
19. **Judge:** *(to jury)* I will ask you to deliberate on the two charges against the accused: 1) the murder of 70 villagers in one incident; 2) the murder of a young child in another. To convict Lt. Calley, two-thirds of you must vote your belief that Lt. Calley is guilty as charged. *(Time will now be taken for the jury to reach a verdict.)*
20. **Judge:** Has the jury reached a verdict?
21. **Jury spokesperson:** *(Rise from your seat and do not speak until the classroom is totally silent.)* We have, your honor. The jury finds Lt. William Calley \_\_\_\_\_ of both charges.
22. **Judge:** Lt. Calley, please stand. *(If Calley has been declared guilty, say the following.)* It is my duty as president of this court to inform you that you are sentenced as follows: first, you are to be confined at hard labor for the length of your natural life; second, you are to be dismissed from the service and to forfeit all pay and allowances. *(If Calley has been declared innocent, say the following.)* It is my duty to inform you that you are freed of all charges against you.
23. **Calley:** I'll do my best, sir.
24. **Judge:** This court is closed.



## DEBRIEFING

### "Hot Seat" Panel Discussion



After you have finished the court-martial, you will likely be placed in small groups to discuss the questions below to evaluate your learning and opinions. Representatives from the various groups then may sit in front of the whole class to report their groups' conclusions to other members of this "hot seat panel." After panel members agree/disagree with one another, all members of the class may then question the panel members.

1. What testimony was the most effective in convincing you as to Calley's guilt or innocence?
2. What was different because this was a military trial?
  - a. Did jury questioning affect the outcome?
  - b. Did the difference in vote tallying (a two-thirds majority required) affect the trial? (Civilian criminal trials require that *all* jurors agree.)
3. From the evidence provided, do you think Lt. Calley did anything out of the ordinary in My Lai?
4. Describe your opinions and feelings about the three lines of defense.
  - a. Calley was a scapegoat for the Army because of his low rank.
  - b. Calley was only obeying orders given by a superior officer.
  - c. These type of civilian killings occurred often, and Calley is being singled out unfairly.
5. If Lt. Calley had left the Army, would he have been tried in the regular court system as a civilian?
6. Should Captain Medina also have been court-martialed?
7. Show how the Vietnam War differed from World War I, World War II, and the Korean War by answering these questions:
  - a. What combat tactics were different?
  - b. How did the native inhabitants react differently?
  - c. How did GI training and knowledge differ?
8. Do you think any of the issues in this re-creation are applicable today?
  - a. What type of draft system now exists?
  - b. What are the "hot spots" in today's world?
  - c. Does the U.S. have vital interests in any of these regions?
  - d. Have any American troops participated in anything such as My Lai since the Vietnam War ended?

Questions such as #8c and #8d should stimulate real debate among you and your classmates.



DEAN SICKELS, the author of THE COURT-MARTIAL OF LT. WILLIAM CALLEY, wrote this trial while working as a student teacher with Bill Lacey, the Interact author who wrote the other re-creation trials. Dean received his B.A. degree from the University of California at Irvine. He has traveled extensively around the world: to Europe, Australia, and Asia.