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3	MY LAI
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PAVN POLITICAL SECTION REPORT ON MASSACRE AT MY LAI

Circa Late March, 1968

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 GEORGE A. FISHER, MAJ, MI
 ORNS OFF, US ELM, CDEC

6. EVALUATION: SOURCE B INFORMATION 3 14. APPROVING AUTHORITY: *Harry E. Evans*
 HARRY E. EVANS, LTC, USA
 DIRECTOR, US ELM, CDEC

7. SOURCE: CAPTURED ENEMY DOCUMENT

15. SUMMARY:
 (C) This report contains information obtained from an enemy document captured on 19 December 1969, and concerns a circular from the Political Section, F.42 ((possibly 209th Regiment, 7th NVA Division)), describing in detail the massacre of people in Son My Village, Son Tinh District, Quang Nam Province on 16 March 1968.

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(C) Following is a full translation of a captured enemy document. This document was captured on 19 December 1969 in South Vietnam (YU005296; III CTZ) by 3rd MSF, 1st US Inf Div (Airmobile). The document was received at CDEC on 22 December 1969, and was summarized in Bulletin Number 27,501, dated 23 December 1969, under Item 2 of CDEC Document Log Number 12-2391-69.

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----- FULL TRANSLATION -----

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Political Section, Fl2 ((possibly 209th Regiment, 7th NVA
Division))C I R C U L A R

The massacre of 502 compatriots conducted by the US imperialists in Son My Village, Son Tinh District, Quang Ngai Province on 16 Mar 68.

Picturesque and prosperous Son My with firm spirited people.

Son My is a coastal village belonging to Son Tinh District, Quang Ngai Province. It includes My Lai and My Hoi Hamlets. The population there is about 700. The people earn their living by fishing, planting sugarcane, making sugar, and farming. The scenery is beautiful. Bamboo and coconut trees around the village shade the roads, and green willows grow throughout the four seasons. On the river, boats are anchored together snugly.

Living in the area belonging to Quang Ngai Province, a "cradle" of the Central Trung Bộ Revolutionary Movement where the Ba Tô War Zone and the famous Ba Tô Guerrilla Unit was located, the people of Son My and Son Tinh opposed the French colonialists many times.

Since the day the Diem Nhu Dictatorial Government was overthrown, the Son My people, under the leadership of the NFLSVN have competitively increased their production to feed the resistance troops who protect their village.

Since the day the US aggressors set foot on South Vietnamese soil to fulfill their aggressive schemes and were stationed in Quang Ngai, the people there often harassed them, causing them to eat and sleep uneasily. To undermine the fighting spirit of the Son Tinh people, the US aggressors drowned over 1,000 people living in An Hoa and An Bien Villages in the sea in May 69, and had previously massacred 502 innocent people in Son My ((in Mar 68)).

A grievous day. On 16 Mar 68, as in previous days, the daily activities of the people went on normally. The people got up early, cooked their meals and then went to work. In the village, children played under the shade of the trees. Women carrying their babies in their arms talked with one another about the coming harvest. Young girls helped their mothers to strike coconut fibers. In another hamlet, girls wove fish nets skillfully. Under the big trees, some young boys crowded around old men who were plaiting ropes for pulling boats. Here and there were heard the friendly crowing of roosters, and buffaloes and cows moving. In the sound of the wind, there reverberated a melodious folk song. Some brown fishing boats appeared on the sea.

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Six-thirty:

Suddenly the deafening noise of guns was heard. Artillery fire was fiercely and indiscriminately conducted on the village from the US post at Nui Gam Mountain, Sơn Tinh Sub-Sector, and Quang Ngai Sector.

As usual, the people led their children to take shelter in trenches ((possibly tunnels)).

They did not side with the US, but they could not have expected the tragedy that would befall them that day.

The enemy conducted shellings incessantly for half an hour.

After the shelling, and on receiving orders to "destroy Sơn Mỹ", the commanders of the 11th US Independent Brigade used 11 helicopters to strafe Sơn Mỹ, then they landed troops.

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This US unit was Company C, 1st Battalion, 20th Regiment, 11th Independent Brigade, commanded by Captain Medine and First Lieutenant Coly. The US soldiers rushed to the village without meeting any resistance and spread out to search the village and hamlets. In accordance with the drafted plan, the commanders ordered their soldiers to burn houses, cut trees, and kill cattle and people.

In a moment, 300 wooden and brick houses were turned into flames, with smoke rising skyward. The US troops chopped down the trees and killed the cattle. The noise of guns, the crackle of burning bamboo, the noise of falling trees, and the cries of dogs, cats, buffalo, and cows created a terrible and fearful sound. A number of inhabitants who rushed to their houses to stamp out the fires were shot to death. Afterwards, the US troops were ordered to drive the people out of their trenches for annihilation.

US soldiers, with thick bearded faces filled with anger, spread out to search the trenches in the village. They pulled up eight of the 15 people hiding in Brother Le's trench and killed them with grenades. They then detonated a mine in the trench, destroying it and burying the remaining seven people. Sister Vo Thi Thu was sitting in her trench with Lien, a young girl, carrying her child. They pulled her out of the trench and fired at her. She could only tell Lien: "Please tell my husband that I hid the 6,000\$ ((SVN)) ((118\$ SVN = \$ 1.00 US)) at the foot of the coconut tree."

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She fell down, still carrying her child, who was suckling at the mother's breasts. An American rushed to her, pointed at the child and shouted "Việt Cộng, Việt Cộng" (?). He then pulled and threw burning thatch all over the mother and child. Another American threw some more thatch to make the flames rise higher. In the afternoon, the ((local)) compatriots dug through the ashes and saw that the child had been burned to ashes and just two black lips were left on the mother's breasts. Mrs Mui and Mrs Min each had two children. They were hiding in a trench and the US troops exploded a mine to kill all of them. Mrs Trinh was having a meal with her children. The US troops rushed into ((her house)) and fired at her two children. Mr Đức was forced to leave the trench he was hiding in and was shot in the head. The blind grandmother of Miss Liên was killed as soon as she left the trench. Miss Liên cried: "Grandfather; Grandmother has been killed." As soon as she cried, the US troops caught her grandfather and set fire to his beard and killed him. Mrs Thi was killed by the US troops. Mrs Mao, 72 years old, was thrown into a fire. Miss Liên's aunt was killed while she was hiding in a trench. Miss Minh was killed. Her body remained against the wall of a trench, her face looked so indignant. Mrs Ngón was eight months pregnant; she was raped until she had a miscarriage and then was killed. Mrs Võ Thi Mai, who had just given birth to a baby 10 hours before, was also raped to death. Mrs Dâm, 60 years old, was raped and stabbed in the stomach. Miss Mui, 14 years old, was hung up on a tree and raped. After that, she was thrown into a fire. Old man Trương Phó, ((number missing)) years old had his beard cut, was thrown into a well, and then the US troops threw a grenade into the well to kill him. Mrs Liên, who had two children, was killed. She only had enough time to give a last recommendation to her mother, "Please look after your grandchildren." Then she died.

When all the people were forced to leave the trenches ((possibly tunnels)), they were gathered at the ditch close to Mr Nhieu's house and were slaughtered ((by the troops, using)) M-16 rifles, M-60 machine guns, grenades and M-79 grenade launchers.

Those who were not killed outright were stabbed to death with bayonets. The dead bodies were piled on top of one another five-high.

Blood, brains, bones and flesh lay in the water and sand, and were hardly recognizable. Many children were not hit with bullets, but suffocated in puddles of blood. Sister Di's child, eight months old, a survivor, was found in a puddle of blood.

Piles of dead bodies were left in disorder in ponds, in corners of vegetable gardens, in houses, in stables, on floors, in front of gates, in kitchens and in ditches. For five hours after the massacre of the Sơn Mỹ villagers, the Americans stayed there to find and kill any survivors. They did not withdraw until late in the afternoon. Survivors, covered by dead bodies, crawled from the

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piles of dead bodies, their bodies stained with blood. In the evening, ((Son My)) villagers came back to bury their relatives. The most heartbreaking fact was that all the dead bodies were badly mangled. The villagers buried these dead bodies together in one mass grave.

----- END OF TRANSLATION -----