

Tues., Oct. 7, 1969

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San Francisco Chronicle 11

New Assignments For the Berets

Washington

The Army announced new assignments yesterday for seven soldiers involved in the Green Beret incident in South Vietnam.

The assignments indicated that the Pentagon will be scrupulous in treating the

men as innocent of all charges.

All of them, except Colonel Robert B. Rheault, received assignment that appeared to be normal and routine in the progression of their military careers.

Rheault had not received

his new assignment, according to spokesmen, because his rank requires handling by a special colonels section.

The Army said his assignment will be in keeping with his education, training and experience. A spokesman implied that a staff position might be the colonel's next post.

The reassignments conformed with recent statements by Defense Secretary Melvin Laird and Army Secretary Stanley R. Resor proclaiming that the men, who were charged with murder and conspiracy in the alleged killing of a South Vietnamese, would be considered innocent unless proved guilty in a court of law.

All seven assignments were in the U.S. Four were made to military intelligence units, which is the area in which the seven men were trained.

An Army spokesman said that the other men will also probably be given military intelligence duties, but that these were not mentioned in their assignments because of a variety of openings at the posts to which they were going.

New York Times

U.S. Frees Beret In Earlier Case

Washington

A Green Beret captain, sentenced to 24 years in prison for the murder of a Cambodian he suspected of being a double agent in Vietnam, was released from military prison "on bail" yesterday.

Captain John J. McCarthy of Phoenix, Ariz., was convicted by a court-martial in Long Binh, Vietnam, in January, 1968, of the murder of Inchin Hai Lam, a Cambodian who had been working for the Green Berets.

Since then he has been confined at the disciplinary barracks at Ft. Leavenworth, Kan. He was released pending final consideration of his appeal to the Army's Court of Military Review.

ASSIGNMENT

McCarthy, 26, will be reassigned to Ft. Huachuca, Ariz.

The captain was released under a provision of the Military Justice Act of 1968 giving Major General John H. Hay Jr., the commanding

general at Ft. Leavenworth, the authority to grant deferments to prisoners under his jurisdiction. The provision, likened to bail, became effective August 1 this year.

McCarthy, in his appeal, said he was "suddenly thrust into the world of spies and double agents without the benefit of special training."

DENIAL

He denied shooting Lam, although he said he had reasons to suspect the man's loyalty. Lam was an interpreter for McCarthy's unit — the same one to which the eight Green Berets recently freed from a similar charge belonged.

The appeal to the Court of Military Review says McCarthy should have had a civilian trial, that he was denied the right to a public trial and that the government failed "to compel the attendance at the trial of the foreign nationals as requested by trial defense counsel."

Associated Press

White House Denial in Beret Case

Washington

The White House denied yesterday that Representative L. Mendel Rivers (Dem-S.C.) had brought pressure on President Nixon to drop charges against eight Green Berets accused of murdering a Vietnamese national.

Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler was asked about the Time magazine report that Rivers, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, had forced Mr. Nixon to drop charges against the eight by threatening to air the case in a public hearing before his committee.

Ziegler said Rivers discussed the case with Bryce M. Harlow, Mr. Nixon's congressional liaison assistant, but "at no time did Chairman Rivers indicate anything in his discussion with Harlow relating to the House Armed services committee."

United Press