

Felt Actions Necessary, Ex-Beret Says

By JOSEPH B. TREASTER
BLOOMFIELD, N. J.

"Anything we did in Vietnam we felt was necessary, justified and approved," said former Army Capt. Robert F. Marasco. The tall, dark-haired man who was a key figure in the Green Beret spy case, was relaxing at his parents' home, where he is gradually recovering from critical injuries received in a traffic accident last October.

bewilderment in his voice, Marasco said he and the seven others who had been accused of murdering a Vietnamese double-agent last summer still wondered why they had been arrested.

"WE DIDN'T understand it then and we don't think we ever will," he said, spreading his hands wide in a questioning gesture.

"We had canteens read to us speaking softly, a trace of and that sort of thing. But the

In late September the charges were abruptly dropped because, according to Secretary of the Army Stanley Resor, the Central Intelligence Agency would not permit its agents to testify in court.

The eight Green Beret soldiers were returned to the United States and in October Col. Robert Rheault, the commander of the Special Forces in Vietnam, and Marasco resigned their commissions.

"I DECIDED that it wasn't the kind of organization I wanted to devote my life to," the 27-year-old Marasco said. "I felt I couldn't work for any kind of organization, military or civilian, that did not stand behind its people."

"I'm not anti-Army or anti-military," he added. "It was just a very unfortunate situation and a few people involved in the situation are not on the top of good-guy list."

In fact, leaving the Army was for Marasco a rather painful experience. He had found military intelligence challenging and he was considered quite good at it.

Before enlisting and going through Officers' Candidate School, Marasco had been a million-dollar-a-year life insur-

ance salesman. Now, however, he feels somewhere the drive and desire needed for selling are gone from him.

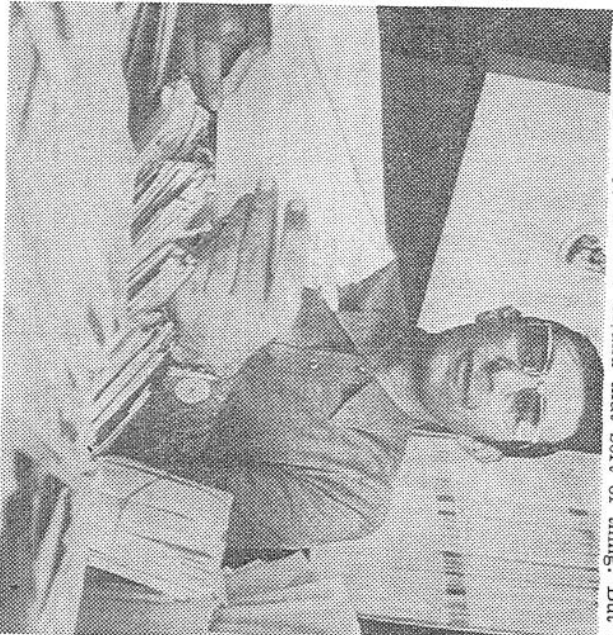
AND ALTHOUGH his former employer has talked with him about a supervisory or managerial job, he is not overly enthusiastic about that either. He has thought about working for the CIA but in light of his recent experience, that seems an unlikely possibility.

Marasco was disappointed that instead of clearly absolving the Green Berets of murder allegations, Resor said in his statement when the case was dropped that the "acts charged, but not proved, represent a fundamental violation of Army regulations, orders and principles."

While the lack of official exoneration, Marasco said he believes a large segment of the American public is in sympathy with him and the other Green Berets.

AND WHEN he was hospitalized, Marasco continued to receive mail from all over the country from people, he said, "who had followed the case and were apparently upset, felt we had got a bad deal."

The mail and the gifts "really made me feel great," Marasco said. "I thought, 'maybe everything was worth while after all.'"



—AP WIREPHOTO.

ROBERT F. MARASCO, former Army captain and a key figure in the Green Beret spy case, reads some mail he has received as his parents' home in Bloomfield, N. J., where he is recovering from injuries he received last October in a traffic accident.