

Calley's Trial Is Recessed for Psychiatric Tests

By HOMER BIGART
Special to The New York Times

FORT BENNING, Ga., Jan. 18 — A defense psychiatrist brought the court-martial of First Lieut. William L. Calley Jr. to an abrupt halt today by testifying that the young officer had behaved "like a robot" during the alleged Mylai 4 massacre and had killed unarmed women and children because of a compulsion to obey orders from his "father image," Capt. Ernest L. Medina.

After hearing this from Dr. Albert A. LaVerne, senior psychiatrist at the New York University-Bellevue Medical Center in New York, the murder trial was recessed until at least Feb. 16 by the military judge, Col. Reid W. Kennedy, so that Lieutenant Calley could be examined by a sanity board of Army psychiatrists at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington.

Defense lawyers had sought to avoid this long interruption in the trial. They have said they had no intention of raising the sanity issue and only wanted to show that Lieutenant Calley might have been "under the influence of marijuana fumes" on the day of the incident at the Sonmy village complex on March 16, 1968.

Had Warned Defense

But Colonel Kennedy had warned that the slightest hint of any mental or behavioral deviation by Lieutenant Calley

as expressed by the defense psychiatrists would force the Government to order a full sanity board hearing. The Government, he noted, must prove beyond reasonable doubt that Lieutenant Calley, who is charged with the premeditated murder of at least 102 South Vietnamese civilians, could distinguish right from wrong.

Dr. Laerne hVad interviewed and tested Lieutenant Calley extensively during the Christmas recess and had watched the effects of marijuana fumes

on him at St. John's University in Queens, N. Y.

He said it was his conclusion that although Lieutenant Calley was "perfectly sane and knew right from wrong," he suffered a "derangement" that impaired his capacity to resist an illegal order from Captain Medina.

"He was like a person with a compulsion to turn off faucets or avoid walking on cracks," Dr. LaVerne said. "He had a compulsion to obey orders, to do his duty as an officer."

Suggested Hangover

Lieutenant Calley's chief defense counsel, George W. Latimer, had suggested tha the officer might have inhaled marijuana unconsciously when visiting the bunkers of soldiers who used it on the eve of Mylai and that a marijuana hangover, added to the stress of a combat situation, had affected his brain.

However, Dr. LaVerne said Lieutenant Calley was unable to remember any such exposure.

"I asked him, 'Rusty, were you in a room where people were smoking marijuana?'" the psychiatrist recalled. "Rusty said, 'Honestly, I couldn't say I was.'"

At St. John's, Lieutenant Calley was placed in a small room, "smoke filled like a politicians' meeting," said Dr. LaVerne, and marijuana fumes were introduced along with ordinary cigarette smoke.

The purpose of the smoke was to lower the oxygen con-

tent of the room and test how this anoxia, which causes symptoms like those of combat stress, might affect the officer's ability to answer written problems. The test was conducted by Dr. Vincent de Paul Lynch, chairman of the toxicology department at St. John's.

Some Impairment

"Lieutenant Calley showed minimal to moderate impairment," said Dr. LeVerne. "He was quite upset toward the end. He felt I'd gotten him into some sort of trap. He became hostile, gesticulating with his hands. I assured him it wasn't a trap."

Capt. Aubrey M. Daniel 3d, the Army prosecutor, asked: "He had a paranoid reaction?"

"Yes, in layman's terms a paranoid reaction. But he wasn't paranoid, because I could talk him out of it," the psychiatrist replied.

Asked for an analysis of Lieutenant Calley's personality, Dr. LaVerne said: "He doesn't have the characteristics or traits of a premeditated murderer. He wasn't able to formulate a judgment for premeditated murder. There is no evidence of his being a killer."

He said the lieutenant was "proud of the military, proud of being an officer," but he had "a compulsion to obey."

"Is that not characteristic of any soldier?" demanded Captain Daniel.

"No," retorted Dr. LaVerne. "Who else did what Lieutenant Calley is alleged to have done?"