

# Calley Released on \$1,000 Bond; Will Seek 'Gainful Employment'

COLUMBUS, Ga., Nov. 9 (UPI)—Less than four years after he was sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering 22 civilians at Mylai, former Army Lt. William L. Calley Jr. walked out of court today a free man and fervently acknowledged well wishes with, "Thank you, thank you."

The 31-year-old soldier, the only U. S. officer convicted for the 1968 slaughter in which as many as 500 South Vietnamese civilians lost their lives, eventually won his freedom through the civilian courts after the military had rejected his appeals.

U. S. District Judge J. Robert Elliott released Calley under a \$1,000 personal recognition bond that amounted to little more than a formality.

The Army, less than 24 hours before, had announced it was granting him a parole, effective Nov. 19, no matter what the courts did. Army attorneys thus did not contest the setting of bond today.

"I'm going to relax and do what free people do," Calley said through his attorneys. He said he would attend a Methodist church service Sunday, but refused to say which of the 25 Methodist churches in the Columbus area it would be.

Calley's attorneys refused to let him speak directly to newsmen for fear that something he would say might possibly be used against him at a future date. They said he planned to make his home in the Columbus area and would "seek gainful employment." There have been reports he might go into the construction business.

Calley contended throughout that he was guilty of no wrongdoing at Mylai—that the Vietnamese village had been pinpointed as a Vietcong stronghold and that he was merely carrying out orders of his superiors when he led an infantry platoon on a sweep through the hamlet.

The former lieutenant was convicted on March 29, 1971, and drew a life term. This sentence was cut to 20 years and finally to 10 years under the military appeals process. But

there the Army's leniency ended.

Calley then turned to the civilian courts and to Judge Elliott.

At one point while Elliott had the case under consideration, he set Calley free on bail, but the Army went into appeals court and succeeded in getting the bail revoked. Calley, who had been confined in his bachelor officer quarters here at Ft. Benning for almost three years, was then taken to the military prison at Ft. Leavenworth, Kan., to finish serving his term.

On Sept. 25 Elliott overturned Calley's court-martial conviction on grounds that massive publicity in the case had prevented him from receiving a fair trial. Elliott again ordered Calley freed, and the Army again filed an appeal with the Fifth U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans.

Friday, the appeals court agreed Calley should be released on bond. He was then flown to Columbus from Leavenworth in the middle of the night so he could be on hand for a hearing at 11 a.m. today before Elliott.

The session lasted 16 minutes and Elliott wryly commented on how history was repeating itself.

"We've come full circle so here this court sits to do ex-

actly what this court did last February (grant bond)," Elliott said.

He also noted the Army had ordered Calley paroled and said: "That's, to me, an interesting thought, because it's directly contrary to what the Army has been telling the Circuit Court of Appeals. The Army's been telling the Circuit Court that my freeing Mr. Calley from Leavenworth would wreck the Army, destroy the nation."

Although it has granted Calley a parole, the Army intends to pursue its appeal before the Fifth Circuit on Elliott's overturning of the court-martial. The Army says it feels this is necessary because of serious legal questions raised in the case that may have an influence on future Army policy.

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Calley is escorted to court in Columbus, Ga., by Ft. Benning provost marshal.