

Helicopter Pilot Has Little to Say

Washington

The Army private who flew a stolen helicopter onto the White House lawn Sunday was returned to the Walter Reed Army Hospital's psychiatric center yesterday after federal charges against him were dropped.

However, authorities said, Private First Class Robert Kenneth Preston still faces possible prosecution for violating military regulations, including the charge of theft of government property.

Preston, a 20-year-old flight school wash-out, remained mute yesterday during his brief appearance in District of Columbia Superior Court. A U.S. attorney said that the government did not wish to press charges because Preston was volun-

tarily returning to the Army.

The private, dressed in neat Army fatigues, was immediately turned over to military authorities and hustled away in a sedan to the psychiatric center for further study.

Asked by reporters what prompted his wild, unpredictable aerial ride, Preston declined comment.

But asked if the ride was prompted because he was angry over flunking out of Army flight school, Preston replied, "could be."

Preston was arrested amid a storm of gunfire as he brought the military helicopter down on the White House lawn Sunday about 2 a.m.

Associated Press