

'I'm Beginning to Feel the Pressure,' Says Officer

Linked to the Murder of Vietnamese Civilians

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FORT BENNING, Ga., Nov. 13 —First Lieut. William Laws Calley Jr. sat at a table next to a Spanish fountain in the dining room of the Officers Club at Fort Benning today and ate his lunch without enthusiasm. He poked a fork into a plate of roast beef and sipped from a tall glass of iced tea. "I'm beginning to feel the pressure," said the short, boyish-looking bachelor whose blond hair is thinning at the temples. Lieutenant Calley, who is 26 years old, stands accused by

the Army of murdering "quite a number" of civilians in a battle in South Vietnam 20 months ago when he was an infantry combat officer. His civilian lawyer, while maintaining that he the lieutenant is innocent, said the number of Vietnamese victims specifically mentioned in the charges against the officer "might reach 109." The Army has had the case under investigation for months. But the decision either to court-martial the Miami lieutenant or drop the charges has not yet been made. Informed Army sources said today that the army's investigation began in March—a year

after the alleged murders — while Lieutenant Calley was still stationed in Vietnam as a member of the 23d Infantry Division. A letter to the Pentagon by a discharged Vietnam serviceman, not a member of Lieutenant Calley's platoon, shed the first light on the case, the sources said. Lieutenant Calley was formally charged in September when he was scheduled for discharge. Since then, he has not been confined in any way except by the routine requirements of his temporary assignment on the staff of the deputy post commander. "Last week I was in Miami

to visit my dad," he said. "I hope my family is left out of this. They don't know anything." Lieutenant Calley agreed to an interview today with the stipulation that no questions pertaining to the charges would be asked. His military counsel, Maj. Kenneth A. Raby, a former Judge Advocate's officer in Vietnam, who now teaches military law at Fort Benning, accompanied him and advised the lieutenant not to respond to a majority of the questions that were put to him. For his service in Vietnam, Lieutenant Calley, who is 5 feet 3 inches tall and weighs 13

pounds, had been recommended for a Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster and had been awarded the purple Heart for a combat wound. When asked why he volunteered for additional duty in Vietnam after his normal one-year tour had elapsed, the officer said he believed in the nation's military role in Vietnam. "I guess everyone has their own feelings about the war," he said. "I doubt I can explain all of mine." "I had planned to stay in the Army for at least a few more years, until this happened," he continued. "I wasn't sure

whether to make it a career or not." Now, he said, he plans to return to college when he is discharged. Born and raised in Miami, he spent one year at Palm Beach Junior College in Lake Worth, Fla. He said he was an "average student." "I took a general education course and was O.K., I guess, but it just seemed like the 13th year in high school," he said. He worked in 1964 as a pick-up worker on the strike bound Florida East Coast Railway, he went on, and later worked his way west as an appraiser for an insurance concern, going from New Orleans to New

Mexico. "It didn't take much skill," he said, "I just took pictures of buildings and let someone else figure out how much they were worth." **Enlisted in 1966** As a railroad worker, he had been given a 1-Y draft deferment, but lost it when he went into the insurance business, he said. Anticipating the draft, he enlisted in the Army in Albuquerque in 1966 and went to officers' school in Fort Benning before his assignment to Vietnam in December, 1967. He was reassigned to Fort Benning last June, 26 days before his tour of duty would have normally been completed.

He was formally charged in September—two days before the date of his expected discharge. "I wish this was over," he said, tearing open a pack of Camels and lighting a cigarette. "I guess you could call me a heavy smoker but it's just nerves: I light one up and put it our right away." He looked across the dining room. A few heads at other tables turned away. Some of the other officers had been staring at him. Lieutenant Calley looked uncomfortable. "I am now recognized wherever I go," he said. "I don't like the feeling."