

# Calley Pleads for Understanding

MAR 31 1971

Text of Calley's Statement  
appears on Page 18.

By HOMER BIGART

Special to The New York Times

FORT BENNING, Ga., March 30—Gasping for breath, First Lieut. William L. Calley Jr. made a final plea for understanding today as he faced the military jury that convicted him yesterday of the premeditated murder of at least 22 South Vietnamese civilians at Mylai.

The 5-foot 3-inch platoon leader, who has described himself as "just a finger, a fragment of a Frankenstein monster," said he never "wantonly" killed anyone. Shaken with sobs, he said the Army never told him that his enemies were human.

The enemy was never described to him as anything but "Communism," he said.

"They [the Army] didn't give it a race, they didn't give it a sex, they didn't give it an age," said Lieutenant Calley, who had been accused by the Government prosecutor of slaying old men, women, children and babies.

After hearing Lieutenant Calley, the jury of six beribboned career officers retired to consider his punishment. Pre-Continued on Page 18, Column 1



United Press International

Lieut. William L. Calley Jr., left, and lawyers, Maj. Kenneth A. Raby and George W. Latimer, read telegrams.

## LAST CALLEY PLEA HEARD BY COURT

Continued From Page 1, Col. 2

meditated murder carries a mandatory penalty of death or life imprisonment.

The jury had not voted a sentence by 5 P.M. when the military judge closed the court, and it will resume deliberations tomorrow.

Too short to use the lectern, Lieutenant Calley spoke to the jury from behind a lowered microphone stand. His hands were jammed into his pockets. His chief counsel, George W. Latimer, stood nearby as if to catch him if he buckled. "I hope the boy won't cave in," Mr. Latimer told the court.

Lieutenant Calley, 27 years old, stood erect during his plea of 2 minutes 12 seconds. He wheezed noisily through the microphone and had to pause a number of times.

He said at the outset that he was not begging for his life. His voice quavering, he said: "I don't really think it matters what type of individual I am. And I'm not going to stand here and plead for my life or my freedom."

### 'A Thousand More'

All he asked, he said, was that the court consider "a thousand more lives that are going to be lost in Southeast Asia" and the "thousands more" who would be maimed for life.

"I've never known a soldier nor did I ever myself," Lieutenant Calley said, "ever wantonly kill a human being in my entire life. If I have committed a crime, the only crime I've committed is in my judgment of values. Apparently I valued my troops' lives more than I did that of the enemy."



He said his troops were "massacred and mauled" by "an enemy I couldn't see, I couldn't feel, and I couldn't touch," an enemy, he said, that nobody in the military system had ever described as "anything other than Communism."

"They never let me believe [that Communism] was just a philosophy in a man's mind," he said. "That was my enemy out there."

Then, in a choked voice, he made his last statement:

"Yesterday, you stripped me of all my honor. Please, by your actions that you take here today don't strip future soldiers of their honor, I beg of you."

#### Prosecution Replies

Capt. Aubrey M. Daniel 3d, the Army prosecutor, was quick to rebut Lieutenant Calley. Captain Daniel told the jurors:

"You did not strip him of his honor. What he did stripped him of his honor. It is not an honor—it has never been an honor—to kill unarmed men, women and children."

Captain Daniel did not specifically ask the jury to bring in a death penalty. "You know the facts," he said, "and I know you'll reach an appropriate sentence."

Not since April 13, 1961, has an American soldier been executed. On that day Pvt. John Bennett was hanged at Fort

Leavenworth, Kan., for rape.

Before Lieutenant Calley spoke, his lawyers made pleas against the death sentence.

Flourishing a bunch of tele-

grams, Mr. Latimer told the jurors that the Calley case had "torn America apart." He declared:

"The flag may fly at full mast over military installations, but it will always be drawn at half mast over the homes of people whose sons may be going into military service. This case cuts very deep.

"When Lieutenant Calley went into the service of the United States Army he was not a killer, he was not an aggressive young man.

"It is one of the most unusual situations where a man was taught at Fort Benning, Ga., to kill, was not properly trained, when he comes back to Fort Benning, what's it for? To stand trial on a capital charge."

#### 'That Oriental Area'

Mr. Latimer went on: "Lieutenant Calley, outside of an ordinary traffic violation, was a good boy and he remained that way until he got into that Oriental area over there in Vietnam.

"Maybe, shall we say, he used bad judgment, maybe he became too aggressive, went too far. But who trained him to kill, kill, kill?"

"You don't have to have eyes of glass and hearts of stone. Somewhere along the line, there is some place where a few humanities ought to be worked into this case, where a maxi-

imum sentence isn't given, where it should not be."

Mr. Latimer asked that "some small consideration be given to a boy who did not necessarily want to go to Vietnam but was sent there, a boy who did not want to kill anybody but who thought he had to."

"I think there is a place for Lieutenant Calley to go on and make something of his life," Mr. Latimer said, "but he can't do it in the graveyard. Thank you all so much. I go away with a heavy heart for I see a life ruined."

The shooting of noncombatants was not unique, Mr. Latimer added. Many soldiers in Lieutenant Calley's company admitted shooting civilians indiscriminately at Mylai, but some had left the Army and charges against others have been dropped.

Of the whole company, said Mr. Latimer, only Lieutenant Calley and his commanding officer, Capt. Ernest L. Medina, would "go before the scales of justice and be measured whether they die or not."

## Text of Calley Statement

Special to The New York Times

FORT BENNING, Ga., March 30—Following is the text of a statement to the court today by First Lieut. William L. Calley Jr.:

Let me know if you can't hear me sirs. Your Honor, members of the court, I asked my attorney, George Latimer, and my other attorneys not to go into mitigation in this case. There's a lot of things that aren't appropriate, and I don't think it really matters what type of individual I am.

And I'm not going to stand here and plead for my life or my freedom.

But I would like you to consider a thousand more lives that are going to be lost in Southeast Asia, the thousands more to be imprisoned, not only here in the United States, but in North Vietnam and in hospitals all over the world as amputees.

I've never known a soldier nor did I ever myself ever want to only kill a human being in my entire life. If I have committed a crime, the

only crime I've committed is in judgment of my values. Apparently I valued my troops' lives more than I did that of the enemy.

When my troops were getting massacred and mauled by an enemy I couldn't see, I couldn't feel and I couldn't touch—that nobody in the military system ever described them as anything other than Communism.

They didn't give it a race, they didn't give it a sex, they didn't give it an age. They never let me believe it was just a philosophy in a man's mind. That was my enemy out there.

And when it became between me and that enemy, I had to value the lives of my troops—and I feel that was the only crime I have committed.

Yesterday, you stripped me of all my honor. Please, by your actions that you take here today don't strip future soldiers of their honor, I beg of you.