

Protests on Calley Conviction and Sentence Grow

By The Associated Press

With telegrams, offers of money and demonstrations, Americans in both the public and private sectors expressed growing opposition yesterday to the conviction and sentencing of First-Lieut. William L. Calley Jr.

One man offered to serve a day of hard labor in Lieutenant Calley's place. Another volunteered to put up a \$100,000 bond for the officer's release.

Lieutenant Calley, 27 years old, was convicted Monday by a six-man military jury at Fort Benning, Ga., of the premeditated murder of at least 22 old men, women and children at the South Vietnamese hamlet of Mylai 4 on March 16, 1968. He was sentenced on Wednesday by the same jury to life imprisonment at hard labor. The appeal is automatic.

More than 1,200 telegrams were delivered yesterday morning to the courthouse at Fort Benning and thousands of letters were delivered to Lieutenant Calley's apartment. Most were believed to support the soldier, now being held in the post stockade.

Ronald L. Ziegler, the presidential press secretary, said

on Wednesday that the White House had received 5,000 telegrams and there was a backlog of 20,000 waiting to be transmitted. He said they were running 100 to 1 in support of Lieutenant Calley.

Radio Station WLIL in Lenoir City, Tenn., said it had received 1,137 telephone calls in a 2½-hour period after the soldier's conviction. All but one, the station said, denounced the jury's verdict.

Poll Sent to President

Radio Station WKIP in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., took a one-hour poll of nearly 2,000 calls and said only 36 agreed with the verdict. The station sent the results of the poll to President Nixon.

There were comments and actions from public officials at all levels of government.

Vice President Agnew, in an interview with The Chicago Tribune, refused to comment specifically on the Calley case, but said conditions during a military operation "are not subject to Monday morning quarterback judgments."

Gov. Edgar D. Whitcomb of Indiana, a decorated World War II veteran, ordered all state flags flown at half-staff to protest the conviction and sentencing. He said Lieutenant Calley's conviction "on the basis of actions carried out in time of war in the defense of the nation is a body blow to America and its system of military defense."

Gov. Calvin L. Rampton of Utah, a lieutenant colonel in the National Guard, said, "I regard the Calley verdict as inappropriate and the sentence as excessive."

Gov. Jimmy Carter of Georgia

proclaimed April 5 "American Fighting Men's Day" in the state and urged residents to display the flag and drive with headlights on. He said he had taken the action because Lieutenant Calley's conviction and sentence have lowered the morale of United States soldiers in Vietnam.

The Arkansas Senate and House approved a resolution asking President Nixon to grant Lieutenant Calley executive clemency. The Kansas House adopted a resolution urging that he be freed.

A similar resolution was passed in the Texas Senate and introduced in the Texas House.

Support from individuals took several forms.

A Volunteer for Prison

Edgar M. Nobles, a member of the Houston County draft board in Georgia offered to serve a day in Lieutenant Calley's place and urged others to do the same.

B. F. Taylor, president of an Indianapolis construction company, offered to post \$100,000 for the lieutenant's release and said, "I'll take the check per-

sonally to Fort Benning if necessary." Mr. Taylor said, "I'm fed up with this ridiculous miscarriage of justice."

Soldiers and veterans, including some highly decorated former servicemen, also complained of the verdict.

Audie Murphy, who killed an estimated total of 240 enemy troops in World War II and was the most decorated American soldier of the war, said, "I'm not so sure that in those days, having been indoctrinated to a fever pitch, I might not have committed the same error — and I prefer to call it an error — that Lieutenant Calley did."

Clarence Evans, 92, an Army veteran of the Spanish-American War, said of the verdict, "That's the worst decision I ever heard tell. They train you to go out and shoot somebody. You got to do it." He said that when he served in the Philippines "they hung four natives for murdering their own people. I had to pull the trap on two. I didn't want to do it. But that's orders and I did nit."

The four-man Stafford County draft board in Virginia resigned in protest over the Calley case.

A protest march is planned in San Diego on Sunday. Several thousand marchers are expected. A spokesman for 11th Naval District Headquarters said the Navy had declined to furnish bands and color guards for the march, but there would be no objection to servicemen taking part.

Members of the LaSalle American Legion Post in Niagara Falls, N. Y., said they also planned a march Sunday to protest the conviction and life sentence.



United Press International

ACTION ON CALLEY IS PROTESTED: Veterans of the Vietnam war attending Mercer County Community College in New Jersey picketed the armed forces recruiting center in Trenton. They are collecting signatures to request the President free Lieut. William L. Calley Jr.