

SF Examiner

Balky Pilot's Family Backs Him '100%'

CHULA VISTA (San Diego County) — (AP) — The B52 commander who refused to fly further bombing missions over North Vietnam is a deeply religious man who "did not like any part" of the war, his father and brother say.

"He said what he was doing was just insanity, just foolish," said Tim Heck of his 30 year old brother, Capt. Michael Heck.

"He didn't mind it too much when he was flying C130s, but when he went into the B52s, his whole attitude changed," the younger Heck, 27, a Maxwell (Colusa County) high school teacher, said today.

"He knew he had a duty, there's no doubt about that. But he didn't think his duty could match up to his conscience."

Heck's father, John Heck, a 62 year old real estate broker in this San Diego suburb, said his son had questioned the U.S. role in Vietnam during the past four years.

"He's been very, very much against it ever since they put him in B52s about four years ago," the elder Heck said. "He did not like any part of it."

"I am with him 100 percent. So is his mother. I've been very anti-war — especially this war."

Tim Heck said his brother "didn't have a complete choice about going into the military in the first place. But in 1966 he knew there was a good chance he would be drafted, and he saw officer's candidate school as a way of avoiding the infantry."

Heck said his brother's actions were "pretty drastic, obviously, but not surprising. I don't exactly know what will happen to him, but my wife and I support him 100 percent."

John Heck said his son had married nearly two years ago but had recently been sued for divorce.