

## Jersey P.O.W. Says Experience Made Him a 'Better Man'

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Lieut. George T. Coker, of the Navy, who spent six and a half years in North Vietnamese prison camps, said here yesterday that he was a "better man" for his experience.

The 30-year-old lieutenant said at a news conference at St. Albans Hospital: "I changed for the better. I had time to think, to get to know myself better. I became more mature, I think I became a better man." Lieutenant Coker left the hospital in Queens about noon yesterday to visit his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Coker in Linden, N. J. He is single.

The lieutenant said he did not think draft evaders and deserters who fled the country should be allowed to return.

"If a man wishes to abandon his country and not serve, he can exercise that right and leave," Lieutenant Coker said. "But he can't come back and take part in the pleasures men have died to protect."

He would not discuss conditions in North Vietnamese prisons, saying it might "endanger" those still being held.

"I was delayed five days beyond my scheduled departure date," he said, "I do not want to do anything to cause any anxiety for the prisoners still held or endanger their security."

He also refused to comment on reports of prisoners who allegedly made broadcasts for the Communists or worked with them in other ways.