

Army-Officer Critic Of Brass on Way Out

By Phil Galley

Special to The Washington Post

ATLANTA, Sept. 2 — The top re-enlistment officer for the third Army—which won a recent award for its high re-enlistment rate—has been transferred to another job because "his views are not compatible with the job of persuading young men to stay in the Army."

But Lt. Col. Anthony Herbert said he will not have the job gone. "I've been told I must retire in February," he said.

Herbert is a highly decorated combat veteran who has accused several superior officers of war crimes in Vietnam, said. It's humorous. This is just the latest case of harassment."

Herbert said he was told Wednesday that he was being transferred to a new job as assistant industrial operations officer. "An Army officer should not even be in that job," he said. "Normally this job is filled by a civilian. The unions should raise hell."

An Army spokesman at Ft. McPherson confirmed the transfer and explained, "The role he (Herbert) has established for himself as an Army critic is not compatible with the job of persuading young men to stay in the Army. His new job is more in keeping with his attitude."

Recently, the Third Army received a special award for having the highest re-enlistment rate in the Continental Army for the 1970 fiscal year—the year Herbert held the re-enlistment post. During the special ceremony at which the award was presented, Herbert was relegated to the back row and was not allowed to participate in the program. Normally, according to Herbert, the re-enlistment officer is the one who accepts the award.

"Before the ceremony started," Herbert said, "one officer asked me why I didn't wear my medals and I told him that I just don't put them on my uniform anymore."

Herbert two years ago accused two of his superior officers of dereliction of duty and covering up alleged atrocities in Vietnam. Since then, he has accused the Army of dragging

its feet in investigating the charges and has been critical of Gen. William Westmoreland, the Army Chief of Staff.

Herbert said the Army also told him that he must retire in February after 20 years of service.

"The letter I received said the decision was based on three things: education, decorations and assignments," Herbert said. "I have a master's degree in science and will finish my work for a PhD in psychology next year. I've been to 23 military schools and have 41 combat decorations. As far as assignments, I've held practically every assignment in the Army from enlisted man to where I am now."

He added, "they told me they had an abundance of better qualified officers ahead of me. If they have that many people who are more qualified than I, well, I feel like the country's in good hands."