

UNCLAS WA

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(RJT)

(Text) I can't help contributing my efforts to the struggle for an end to the war while my relatives and friends are taking part in the anti-war movement. This was stated by ex-private first class (John Lawery) of the third marine division who crossed over to the south vietnam national front of liberation side last February 22nd twentysecond.

Here is his statement released by the Liberation Press Agency.

I am (John Lawery) born on ^{August} ~~XXXXXX~~ 30th thirtieth 1949 nineteen fortynine in Brooklyn, New York. I was a private first class, service number 2467056 two four six seven zero five six of M Company, Third Battalion, Ninth Regiment, Third Division. I came to South Vietnam in February 1969 nineteen sixtynine, landed in Dan Nang, and then to Quang Tri. I had been in Quang Tri for only two days when my officer sent me on a mopping up operation in the mountains to make up for

the lack of men.

He continued,

I came into the military service voluntarily for I was mistaken in thinking that my act was to demonstrate my devotion, loyalty, and pledge to the American people. But I was deceived and my confidence was abused. I realized this during the mop-up operations in the mountains. While I became sick while marching and my officer beat me and forced me to keep marching up the mountain I asked myself, what are the U.S. troops fighting for in Vietnam and whom are they fighting for? I came to the conclusion that all words from my officers and my government to explain to me about this war are lies. Every day we run into deadly dangers in the bushy jungles while I wish terribly hard that our loved ones (words indistinct) the United States is doing here. We are always to face many difficulties and hardship and have to live in fear (words indistinct) the desperate days in this unfamiliar country.

The statement goes on,

I did attempt to (words indistinct) and oppose it because the big wigs in the White House and the Pentagon have been

driving hundreds of thousands of american boys in the jungles and swamps of Vietnam when they have no knowledge and enthusiasm about getting (words indistinct). I oppose the war in Vietnam because it is the dirtiest war in U.S. history. The U.S. troops are trained in the same way as nazi soldiers blankly obeyed Hitler's orders. The U.S. troops, tanks, and planes destroy the vietnamese crops and homes and kill women through their air raids.

Former private first class (John Lawery) continued:

If I remained silent, put on a uniform, and took a gun with this it would be an ugly sell out of my people and it would drive me to a criminal path. No matter what they say (words indistinct) I will not disclose my confidence and my feelings by becoming a (words indistinct) who are fighting for justice, independence, and true freedom. I decided that the NFL cause is very just and the U.S. government is waging a criminal, illegal, and unjust war of aggression here in South Vietnam. Many of my people in the United States feel this way and most of the countries of the world feel that the U.S. is committing a great crime here in South Vietnam. I think I

to the U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam, while my friends and relatives are actively participating in the anti-war movement and for the restoration of peace here. I could not bluntly take a gun and kill the vietnamese people while the american people world's ~~the people~~ people are struggling against the crimes committed by my government in vietnam.

The statement concluded:

I oppose the war in vietnam not only because it is being in violation of the U.S. Constitution and U.S. obligations under the United Nations Charter but also because it is in violation of the basic interests of the american people. I realize that the just and most honorable way for the United States is the recognition of the National Liberation Front as the genuine representative of the south vietnamese people. The U.S. government must negotiate seriously with the NFL, withdraw all U.S. troops unconditionally from South Vietnam, and let the vietnamese people settle their own affairs themselves.

That was the text of the statement by (John Lawery) a former private first-class of the U.S. marine corps who crossed over to the people's liberation armed forces side last February 22