

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES, No. 5, May 8, 1969

Present: Hansen, Barnes, DeBerry, Breitman, Novack, Kerry, Ring, Shaw

Visitors: Seigle, B. Barnes, Horowitz

Chairman: Hansen

AGENDA: 1. Afro-American Struggle Resolution
 2. Antiwar Report
 3. GI Civil Liberties Defense Report

1. AFRO-AMERICAN STRUGGLE RESOLUTION

Discussion on Afro-American Struggle draft. Agreed to refer to editing committee of B. Barnes and J. Hansen for incorporation of agreed amendments.

2. ANTIWAR REPORT

Horowitz reported.

The Cleveland Area Peace Action Council, CAPAC, has voted to make itself available to host a possible national antiwar conference around the July 4 weekend. They agreed to send out an initial letter as a feeler and if the response was favorable, issue a call for the conference.

Sidney Peck agreed to co-sign the letter, along with Jerry Gordon, chairman of CAPAC, to be sent to the seven general coalitions which organized the April 5-6 antiwar demonstrations, and to the national Student Mobilization Committee, National Mobilization Committee and the National Action Group (organized by Stuart Meacham of the American Friends Service Committee). A final decision on the letter will be made at the CAPAC meeting on Saturday.

We will attempt to build support for the idea of a broadly-sponsored large antiwar conference, to plan out the next major antiwar actions, and to set up a representative national coordinating body to organize them.

3. GI CIVIL LIBERTIES DEFENSE REPORT

Seigle reported.

The main developments in the legal case at Ft. Jackson are as follows: The number of defendants has been reduced from 8 to 4 and possibly to 3. Two men, Duddie and Mays, had all charges stemming from the March 20 meeting dropped. Three others, Chaparro, Thomas and Pulley have agreed to accept undesirable discharges; Chaparro is out of the Army, Thomas will be discharged soon. There is some question, however whether Pulley will be discharged without first being court-martialed.

Woodfin will face a special court-martial the week of May 12. Cole and Rudder are still in the stockade, and if they are brought before a general court-martial, it will probably not be until sometime in June.

The District Court in Columbia, S.C. denied the petition for a writ of habeas corpus filed by the defense on the grounds that all Army channels had not been exhausted and therefore the federal court lacked jurisdiction to intervene. Subsequent to that decision, the U.S. Court of Military Appeals, the highest military court, denied the appeal without a hearing. The District Court decision was appealed to the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals and is being argued today. It is possible that this court will order the District Court to hear the arguments on their merits. If this is the decision, the District Court arguments will probably be heard sometime during the week of May 12.

Finally, Steve Dash, a YSAer at Ft. Jackson, will appear before a Field Board of Inquiry on May 19 to fight the Army's attempts to give him a less than honorable discharge.

Meeting adjourned.

Report on the Indictment and Defense of 3 Black University of Minnesota Students by Derrel Myers

Background

Afro-American Action Committee, a moderate cultural nationalist group, began negotiations last spring with the U. of M. administration for 500 scholarships for poor white and black high school students. In January this year AAAC stepped up the pressure on the U. after nine months of getting the run-around. They added to their request for scholarships the demands for an autonomous black studies department and for partial financing of a black power conference. On January 13 AAAC members occupied offices in the administration building. The action was peaceful and lasted only 24 hours, ending with partial agreement to their demands. The reactionaries in the press and legislature raised a hue and cry over the action and called for the heads of the leaders. The U. administration defended their action of not calling in police by boasting of preventing unnecessary violence and solving the problem by reasoning with the blacks. They were quick to add that the U. would take disciplinary action against the offenders.

But the grand jury was not satisfied with the liberals' way of smashing the movement and issued indictments against 3 officers of AAAC, charging them with inciting to riot, property damage, and illegal assembly. This action infuriated the liberals who wanted the U. to punish the students without outside interference.

The response was immediate. Everyone saw that the indictments would be seen as vindictive and make martyrs out of the blacks. Minnesota Student Association, Inter-Fraternity Council, Pan-Hellenic League, Council of Religious Advisors, Faculty Senate and prominent campus figures denounced the indictments on the basis that they were poorly timed and interfered with the University's disciplinary system.

Opposition to What?

It became immediately clear to us that significant layers could be mobilized in opposition to the indictments, but the first question was on what basis would people act. Would they oppose the indictments in favor of University punishment, or on the basis of poor timing? Our job was to unite and mobilize people around an unqualified opposition to the grand jury action sans the liberal rhetoric about University discipline; to as much as possible, turn the opposition to the indictments into support for the actions and aims of the black struggle. We wanted to avoid the trap of giving backhanded support to the U. administration.

Building a United Action

Connected with the need to mobilize people around a clear opposition to any punishment of AAAC was the problem of uniting all the various people who were responding to the indictments.

We saw all the above groups issue resolutions and statements piecemeally. No group had the perspective or ability to get everyone together. This could quickly die at the stage of resolutions and verbal opposition. SDS called a meeting in their name. Minnesota

Student Association called a meeting to issue a statement. No one had any perspective of building one major action uniting everyone. No one had any perspective.

YSA Intervention

We went to the SDS meeting and proposed to broaden it by calling all the groups together that evening. The evening meeting was attended by 60 people from 15 groups. We pushed for a perspective of building up for a big action. We won. The meeting elected a 5 man steering committee of 2 YSAers, one of our close sympathizers, an independent who agreed with us, and 1 SDSer. We called for another meeting the following night. About 150 people from over 50 groups came to this meeting. YSA proposed a Liberation Week, ending in a march to the courthouse on the day the 3 defendants were being arraigned.

At this meeting AAAC revealed their lack of perspective and reliance on spontaneity by demanding we sit in at the courthouse the following morning. The people at the meeting, although they disagreed with the action, felt obliged to follow AAAC's suggestion. The meeting unanimously endorsed YSA's proposal for Liberation Week and about 60% endorsed AAAC's proposal. We managed to avoid a split by pointing out that the two proposals were not exclusive, and AAAC supported our proposal.

We called another meeting for a few days later to discuss organization and implementation of the proposals. 300 people showed up there. YSA introduced a policy statement around which we could maintain the growing coalition, although there was already tacit agreement that we were fighting for the single demand that the indictments be dropped. This policy statement, representing the whole coalition, carried more authority than the statements of the liberals which opposed the indictments on the basis that the U. should handle discipline. The meeting agreed to a broad steering committee, giving representation to all groups involved.

Two Other Problems

The steering committee at its first meeting was faced with a demand from AAAC that they have veto over everything that happened. Although we had little confidence in AAAC, it was necessary to support the veto on the basis that this was a defense case and the defendants had authority over how they would be defended. AAAC felt a slipping of their authority in the previous week, and were looking for a mechanical way of maintaining the leadership...even though no one was challenging it. They also wanted it, not to keep the liberals in line, but to check us and other radicals. This became clear when they insisted that Boutelle not be allowed to speak during Liberation Week. We had to oppose them on this, but made clear that our motivation was a broad interest and commitment to the defense, and not factional. Although we lost in the formal vote, we gained authority because of the way we handled ourselves. Strangely enough that fight over Boutelle strengthened our relations with AAAC; we showed that we could fight on a principled question of nonexclusion and remain dedicated to the defense of the black struggle.

The result of our work was that we succeeded in building one of the broadest defense movements ever. We managed to minimize the liberal prescription for campus discipline. We mobilized one of the largest demonstrations in this area in direct opposition to the grand jury, the state legislature and city hall.

The effect was to give confidence to an unprecedented number of radicals, including AAAC.

At this point it appears that the D.A. is fishing for legal ways to drop the indictments. It is possible that he will find one or two.

The YSA gained the confidence of hundreds of campus activists by the role we played and the leadership we provided. We now have the edge on SDS as the leading group of campus radicals. They won't make a move now without asking us what we think.

We have just started to recruit from the action. Our next task is to use our newly gained authority to mobilize the campus for a Memorial Day antiwar action. Our work in the Liberation Coalition is aiding us in getting support for the Fort Jackson 8. It looks like the Minnesota Daily will give editorial support to GI CLDC and all the column inches we want. We got the next vice-president and the vice-president of MSA to endorse the case. We will present a motion to MSA at their next assembly. One of the sorority women who worked on the Liberation Coalition steering committee is an endorser!

In short, the action in defense of the black students has opened many new avenues for our work.

873 Broadway
2nd floor south
New York, N.Y. 10003

May 6, 1969

TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND NC MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Two representatives of GENSUIKIN, the Japan Congress Against A and H Bombs which is affiliated with the Japan Socialist Party and SOHYO will be touring the United States in late May and June. The JPS is the major opposition party in Japan, similar to the British Labor Party but further left, and SOHYO is the largest trade union federation in Japan.

Both Fred Halstead, who attended the GENSUIKIN conference last year in Hiroshima, and the Student Mobilization Committee as well as other antiwar groups and individuals in the U.S. have received letters from GENSUIKIN telling of the tour. The letters say that the Japanese who are coming want to speak with antiwar groups and to appear on radio and TV interviews and at mass meetings, demonstrations, etc. Their purpose is to explain to the American people the Japanese opposition movement to the renewal of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty which makes of Japan a military base against Vietnam, and the movement for the removal of U.S. occupation of Okinawa.

SWPers and YSAers active in antiwar groups should cooperate with the SMC in arranging speaking engagements and press conferences, etc. for these Japanese representatives.

It should be possible to arrange a good press conference and some good radio and TV interviews for these Japanese representatives without too much effort, since their visit will be news.

This project should also assist our people working in the antiwar movement to broaden and solidify contacts in the antiwar arena.

In addition, it is important that the U.S. antiwar forces, students, etc. become familiar with the struggle in Japan against the treaty and over Okinawa. This is a direct part of the struggle against the Vietnam war and against U.S. imperialism in Asia and we should do what we can to help. Our aim should also be to encourage coordination of the fall antiwar actions in the U.S. and Japan.

The Japanese will come to the U.S. on about May 20, spend a week in San Francisco and Los Angeles, a week in the midwest and south, and a week on the east coast. A copy of the letter from GENSUIKIN to the SMC has already been sent to SMC groups in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Cleveland, Atlanta, Philadelphia and Boston.

As far as we know there is no group or individual coordinating the tour in the United States. Groups in U.S. cities are writing directly to the Japanese with suggested dates and the Japanese are making up their own schedule.

Comradely,

Fred Halstead
Fred Halstead

THE MILITANT

873 BROADWAY NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003 TELEPHONE 533-6414

May 7, 1969

To All Branch Organizers and Militant Sales Directors

Dear Comrades,

Two months ago at the plenum, we made a decision that we wanted to begin pushing the branch Militant bundles up to the norms that we set following the French campaign last year, now that winter is over. The following chart indicates the progress we have made on this decision so far.

Detroit boosted their bundle $2\frac{1}{2}$ times in the last month, and has now joined the three pace-setting branches: Philadelphia, Chicago and Seattle, all three of which branches maintained their bundles at their high level throughout the winter.

Los Angeles has also dramatically doubled their bundle in the last three weeks. They mounted a campaign to increase their sales, and report that they have had good results and intend to maintain this bundle size.

The national per capita bundle during the post-French campaign period was 7.3 Militants per member. However, at this point, only four branches are meeting this goal. We request that the other branches review their current bundle size, and assess how they can reorganize and expand Militant sales so that they can increase their bundles to the previous norms.

For the interest of the comrades, we are also listing the 12 YSA locals which are ordering the largest Militant bundles. Several of these locals have boosted their bundles recently, and they are setting good examples of the proportionally high bundles that can be sold regularly by a small group of cadre.

Comradely,

Bev Scott
Bev Scott
Business Office

P. S. After I had written the above, I received Chicago's order to raise their bundle by an additional 50 copies. Let's hear from the other branches!

BRANCH MILITANT BUNDLES

<u>Branch</u>	<u>Bundle at time of plenum</u>	<u>Current Bundle</u>	<u>Current Per capita</u>
Philadelphia	300	300	11.5
Chicago	300	300	11.5
Seattle	100	100	8.3
Detroit	100	250	8.1
Cleveland	100	175	5.6
Boston	150	200	5.3
Berkeley	250	200	4.8
Minneapolis	150	175	4.7
Los Angeles	175	300	4.6
New York	325	400	3.4
San Francisco	200	150	3.1
Portland	20	10	1.6
San Diego	25	0	0
Current per capita			5.2

<u>YSA Locals</u>	<u>Current bundle</u>
Logan Utah	100
Arizona	75
Antioch	70
Atlanta	60
DeKalb	60
Bloomington	60
Ypsilanti	60
Madison	50
Newark	50
St. Louis	50
Kent	50
Austin	50

Report on Ft. Jackson Case by Larry Seigle, May 2, 1969.

The report on the Ft. Jackson case given to the NEC on April 14 outlined the general tasks and perspectives on the case. The purpose of this report is to bring comrades up to date on the recent developments in the case and with the GI CLDC, and to further clarify some points of our defense policy.

I. Stage of the Legal Proceedings

The Article 32 hearing was completed on April 25. Only four of the Ft. Jackson Eight were brought to the hearing which is required for persons facing a general court-martial. The four were Privates Cole, Rudder, Pulley, and Thomas. For the others this implies a reduction of charges. Pvt. Chaparro elected to ask for a discharge and is out of the Army. The remaining three (Pvts. Woodfin, Duddie, and Mays) face, at the most, a special court-martial, which can give a maximum sentence of six months confinement, or a summary court-martial, which can order a maximum of one month confinement.

The Article 32 hearing officer will submit a recommendation shortly after he receives the transcript of the pre-trial hearing. Then a recommendation is submitted to the Commanding General at Ft. Jackson (Gen. Hollingsworth) who, officially, is responsible for the final decision. Defense lawyers expect to be informed of the decision near the end of May and the court-martial, if it is to be held, will probably occur in June.

This means that there are several weeks during which public pressure can be exerted on the Army to drop the charges. We must operate, however, on the assumption that the men will be brought before a general court-martial.

The petition for a writ of habeus corpus, demanding that the men be released from the stockade immediately, was denied by the U.S. District Court in Columbia, S.C. on April 15. The judge ruled that the federal court didn't have jurisdiction because all of the Army channels had not been exhausted. The defense lawyers have prepared two appeals: One for the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, and one for the Military Court of Appeals in Washington. These appeals are part of the campaign to have the defendants freed from the stockade and from barracks arrest as soon as possible.

The original lawsuit directed against Gen. Hollingsworth and the Secretary of the Army has not yet been responded to by the Army. They have until June 1 to file their answer.

II. The GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee

Since the last report, the GI CLDC has obtained a fairly large and impressive list of national sponsors. A list of prominent sponsors is enclosed. With this initial list, it will be much easier to get additional names. A few things should be kept in mind with regard to sponsor work. The defense committee can not in any way publicize spon-

sors from whom it has not received signed sponsor cards. While contacts can be made over the phone, these must be followed up, and signed cards obtained. These cards should be sent in immediately to the GI CLDC, Box 355, Old Chelsea Station, New York, New York 10011.

The GI CLDC is not interested in building up a large mailing list per se. While it does want the names of all those who are actively interested in the case and are likely to contribute either money or significant time, long lists of names of antiwar activists or interested students should not be sent in, either as sponsors or otherwise. The GI CLDC wants sponsors whose names or affiliations carry some weight, either locally or nationally, such as professors, lawyers, ministers, and politically important individuals. Every name sent in should be identified, and sponsors should be asked how they want to be identified if that is not clear from the way the sponsor cards are filled out.

While we want to continue getting sponsors, the top priority at this stage is raising money. The committee is urgently in need of funds for the Ft. Jackson case. The prominent sponsors already obtained will make fund-raising easier. Possibilities for raising money for this case far outstrip anything that we have been involved in in recent years, and we must take full advantage of these opportunities.

Every local and at-large area should systematically contact antiwar figures, professors, lawyers, etc. for contributions for the GI CLDC. In addition, every area should plan some type of public fund-raising activity, such as a cocktail party, to raise money for the case. Detroit has already sent in \$500 to the GI CLDC.

The defense committee can provide speakers on the case for local meetings, fund-raising events, demonstrations, etc. Priority in filling speaking engagements will be given to events that include the possibility of raising money for the defense. At the minimum, transportation expenses must be covered by the local areas.

III. Defense Committee Literature

A preliminary brochure on the case is enclosed. Bundles of these will be mailed out this weekend, but only 20,000 have been run. A second brochure with an expanded list of national sponsors is now being prepared and will be printed in much larger quantities in about a week.

Those areas with opportunities for wide distribution of the brochures can have them reproduced locally either on an offset press or with an electronic stencil. If this is done, there should be no changes made in the brochure.

Also enclosed is a list of prominent sponsors which can be used in soliciting support. Additional copies will be mailed out in a day or two. This list will be revised and re-issued when more names are obtained. If local areas need additional copies of this list, it may be reproduced also, but no changes or additions should be made without first checking with the GI CLDC in New York

The defense committee is preparing the following additional material:

- a. a mimeographed fact sheet containing the entire history of the case. This will be ready next week.
- b. a pamphlet on the case and on GIs United. This will not be ready for several weeks.
- c. both a button and a poster are in the works, and will be available soon.

Because of the complex legal nature of this case, no printed material other than simple leaflets should be prepared locally without first checking with the GI CLDC. Whenever possible, material sent out by the GI CLDC should be used or copied.

IV. Local GI CLDC Work

In the previous report, we outlined our approach to local defense work as follows: "It will be possible for comrades to help in establishing local chapters of the GI CLDC, involving broad forces in activity directed at raising funds and getting sponsors for the national GI CLDC. As was done with the Committee to Aid the Bloomington Students in local areas, these groups may want to sit down and plan out a course of action, although there is no need to establish any type of membership organization with regular business meetings. It is crucial, however, that these local groups understand that they are not to function as defense committees for local cases that may arise, or as a local counseling service for GIs. Their only function will be to provide support to the national defense committee in the cases that the national defense committee is handling. This support will be in the form of money, sponsors, and publicity."

Some elaboration on this point might be helpful. It must be clear to all concerned that the local defense committees will not become involved in any way with any cases except those taken on by the GI CLDC nationally. They are not local affiliates that make independent decisions in the name of the GI CLDC, and in the name of the national list of sponsors.

If any cases develop in local areas which comrades think should be interest to the GI CLDC, comrades should contact Larry Seigle in the YSA National Office before any local action is taken. If a local case should develop which, for one reason or another the national GI CLDC cannot handle, the defense must be carried out by some other organization - either by the local antiwar movement directly, or by a committee established for that particular case.

Secondly, GI CLDC should not become tied up in activities that can be carried out more efficiently by other groups such as the Student Mobilization Committee. Rallies, demonstrations, etc. in support of the Ft. Jackson case should be organized by established antiwar groups such as the SMC. While there is no reason why such public actions cannot be co-sponsored by the GI CLDC in local areas, the work of organizing them should be done through the SMC. In no case should work with the GI CLDC be seen as a substitute for the task of building the SMC through action.

Reports have not yet been received from some areas in response to our last report. Local plans for our campaign to build the GI CLDC should be sent as soon as possible to the YSA National Office, along with the names and phone numbers of the comrades in charge of this area of work.

Comrades should also be conscious of sending in local newspaper clippings about any GI cases, and in particular the Ft. Jackson case.

- Organize meetings and conduct demonstrations in support of Ft. Jackson GIs. Speakers on the case can be obtained by writing to the GI CLDC.
- Express support to the GIs at Fort Jackson directly. Mail can be sent to the GIs in care of the GI CLDC office in New York, and it will be forwarded.

STATEMENT OF AIMS OF THE GI CIVIL LIBERTIES DEFENSE COMMITTEE

The purpose of the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee is to defend the rights of American citizens in uniform to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and association, and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. It supports the right of GIs to use these and all other constitutionally guaranteed liberties to express their opinions on public affairs and political issues, including the war in Vietnam.

It extends this support by obtaining legal counsel for GIs whose rights are violated and by publicizing their cases.

Toward this end it raises funds and solicits the endorsement and support of all those who uphold the constitutional rights of American servicemen.

----- Clip and Send to -----

GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee
Box 355, Old Chelsea Station
New York, New York 10011

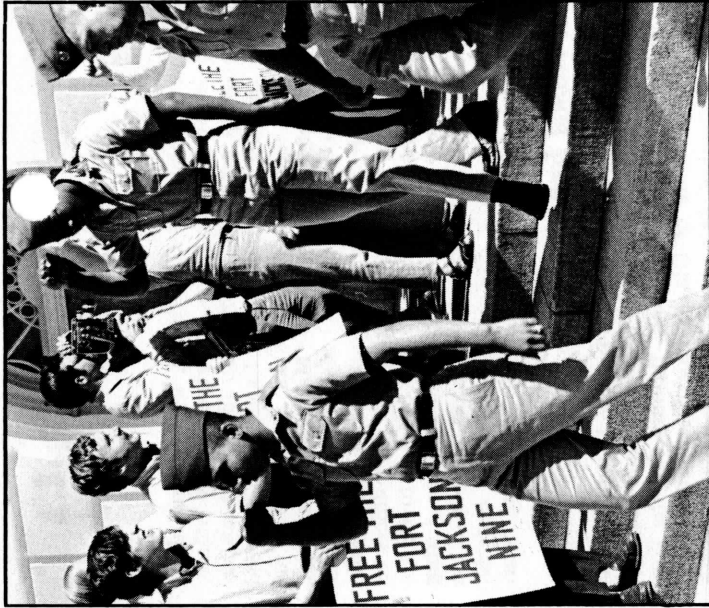
- I support the constitutional rights of American GIs. Please add my name as a sponsor of the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee. I understand that sponsorship does not necessarily denote agreement with the political views of any of the defendants.
- Please send me copies of this brochure at \$2/100.
- Enclosed is \$ to help cover expenses of the GI CLDC.
- Name
Address
City State Zip
Telephone

SPONSORS OF THE GI CIVIL LIBERTIES DEFENSE COMMITTEE

(partial list)

Organizations listed for identification only. Sponsorship does not imply agreement with the political views of any of the defendants.

- | | |
|---|--|
| Prof. Carl Barus
Swarthmore College | Sandra Levinson
New York Editor of
Ramparts |
| Nettie E. Bell | Bob Lucas
Black Liberation
Alliance, Chicago |
| Prof. Fred J. Carrier
Villanova University | Howard N. Meyer
Writer |
| William C. Davidson
Resist | Mrs. Warren Miller
George Novack
Author |
| Allen Fleishman
Nat'l Lawyers Guild | Rev. Ed Riddick
SCLC |
| Maurice Geary
Mich. Civil Rights
Commission | Irving Sarnoff
Chmn., Peace Action
Council of Southern
California |
| Maxwell Geismar
Prof. Marvin E.
Gettleman | Prof. Ernest A. Smith
Hunter College, CUNY |
| Author of Vietnam
Rev. David M. Gracie | Dr. Benjamin Spock
Paul M. Sweezy
Monthly Review |
| Episcopal Peace
Fellowship, Phila.
Terence Hallinan
Attorney | Ehel Taylor
Women Strike for
Peace |
| Chairman Fred Hampton
Illinois Black Panther
Party | Lyn Wells
SSOC-SDS |
| Prof. George Jones, Jr.
Gustavus Adolphus
College | Prof. David White
Macalester College |
| Prof. Donald Kalish
UCLA | Prof. Mary Arnold
Twining
Georgia State College |
| C. Clark Kissinger
Guardian | Prof. Maurice Zeitlin
University of
Wisconsin |
| Prof. Sue Larson
Barnard College | |
| Prof. Eleanor Leacock
Polytechnic Institute
of Brooklyn | |



THE CASE OF GIs UNITED AGAINST THE WAR IN VIETNAM FT. JACKSON, S. C.

On the evening of March 20, 1969, at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, a group of over 100 enlisted men gathered together after dinner to discuss the war in Vietnam. The meeting was called by members of GIs United Against the War in Vietnam, a group of antiwar GIs who have been actively arguing against the war at Ft. Jackson. GIs United is predominately black and Puerto Rican in composition, but it includes many white soldiers as well.

The March 20 meeting was one of a series of meetings held by GIs United, dating back to February, 1969. These meetings have been held with the knowledge, and therefore implicit approval, of the Army officials at Fort Jackson. Officers were present at the March 20 meeting, and, aside from criticizing the dress and haircuts of the antiwar GIs, they did not interfere with the meeting.

But the following day Army officials arrested four

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----- Clip and Send to -----

GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee
Box 355, Old Chelsea Station
New York, New York 10011

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Enclosed is \$ to help cover expenses of the GI CLDC.

Name
Address
City State Zip
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- | | |
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Commission | Irving Sarnoff
Chmn., Peace Action
Council of Southern
California |
| Maxwell Geismar
Prof. Marvin E.
Gettleman | Prof. Ernest A. Smith
Hunter College, CUNY |
| Author of <i>Vietnam</i>
Rev. David M. Gracie | Dr. Benjamin Spock
Paul M. Sweezy
<i>Monthly Review</i> |
| Episcopal Peace
Fellowship, Phila.
Terence Hallinan
Attorney | Ethel Taylor
Women Strike for
Peace |
| Chairman Fred Hampton
Illinois Black Panther
Party | Lyn Wells
SSOC-SDS |
| Prof. George Jones, Jr.
Gustavus Adolphus
College | Prof. David White
Macalester College |
| Prof. Donald Kalish
UCLA | Prof. Mary Arnold
Twining
Georgia State College |
| C. Clark Kissinger
<i>Guardian</i> | Prof. Maurice Zeitlin
University of
Wisconsin |
| Prof. Sue Larson
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Polytechnic Institute
of Brooklyn | |



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GIs Fight for their Rights under the U.S. Constitution

of the members of GIs United, and charged them with breach of the peace, disrespected to an officer, disobeying an order, holding an illegal demonstration, and breaking restriction. Later, five additional GIs were placed under barracks arrest. All of the charges refer to the evening of March 20. The Army now claims that the peaceful meeting was in reality a "demonstration" (which would make it a violation of Army regulations), and that the soldiers refused to disperse after they were ordered to do so. No orders to disperse were given at any time during the meeting. Moreover, there was no "breach of the peace" because the meeting was perfectly orderly, and broke up of its own accord after about an hour.

A Political Frame-Up

Why is the Army trying so hard to imprison these antiwar GIs? The answer lies in the fact that GIs United has been vigorously fighting for the constitutional rights of GIs as citizens to discuss the war in Vietnam. As a result, much national publicity has been focused on Ft. Jackson. The Army, in its own clumsy, authoritarian manner, has responded to this situation by trying to railroad these GIs into the stockade.

GIs United began last February to circulate a petition addressed to Gen. James Hollingsworth, the Commanding General at Fort Jackson, asking him to make facilities available for an open meeting on the base at which the GIs could "hold a peaceful, legal meeting open to any enlisted man or officer at Fort Jackson. We desire only to exercise the rights guaranteed to us as citizens and soldiers by the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution." Several hundred signatures were obtained on this petition. But when the GIs tried to present it, Army officials refused to accept it because, said the official spokesman, it represented "collective bargaining."

In response to this blatant denial of their rights, ten members of GIs United, through their attorneys Leonard Boudin of New York, David Rein of Washington, Howard Moore of Atlanta, and Thomas Broadwater of Columbia, S. C., filed suit in the U. S. District Court for the District of South Carolina. The suit asks for a declaratory judgment by the court that the plaintiffs and all other GIs at Fort Jackson have the right to hold meetings on or off post to discuss matters of concern to them, including the war in Vietnam, and that they have the right to circulate petitions for redress of grievances. The suit further asks for a court order directing the Commanding General to grant facilities for a meeting at which GIs could discuss public issues. It also requests the

court to enjoin the Army from harassing and attempting to intimidate the GIs who are trying to exercise their First Amendment rights. This suit, if victorious, will have Army-wide effect.

Of the ten plaintiffs who instituted the suit, five are among those facing courts-martial; one other was given a punitive transfer to Fort Bragg; and one is being threatened with a less than honorable discharge.

In short, the Army is responding to the fight by GIs for their constitutional rights with a crude frame-up in an attempt to silence all antiwar or civil libertarian voices of dissent within its ranks. That is why the GIs are now facing courts-martial.

The McCarthyite procedures which the Army is following were made even clearer when it was disclosed that one of the GIs originally arrested was, in fact, operating "in the interest of the command." In other words, as a spy and agent-provocateur within the ranks of GIs United. The fact that this agent, who went by the name of John Huffman, was present at meetings where defense strategy was discussed by the GIs with their attorneys, severely compromises the Army's case. Charges against this man were, of course, dropped. The "Fort Jackson Nine" became the "Fort Jackson Eight."

A Question Of Fundamental Rights

The basic issues involved in the case of the Fort Jackson GIs are simple, but they are fundamental questions of civil liberties that affect all Americans.

Both the lawsuit against the Army and the frame-up directed against the men deal directly with the same issue: are soldiers, who are citizens in uniform, protected by the U. S. Constitution, and in particular the First Amendment to the Constitution? Do GIs have the same right to discuss and take positions on the war in Vietnam and other issues of public concern as do citizens fortunate enough not to have been drafted?

Can the Army really expect that, with the entire country divided about the correctness of America's policy in Vietnam, with millions of Americans demonstrating against the war, with Senators and Congressmen daily expressing opinions pro and con, the very men who are asked to fight that war will not have an opinion on the question? And don't they have the right to express that opinion even though they are members of the armed forces?

Writing in the April 20, 1969, issue of *The New York Times*, Ben A. Franklin clearly exposes the Army's frame-up attempt: "A classic case approaches a climax this week at Fort Jackson, S. C. By harassing, restricting and arresting on dubious charges the leaders of an interracial militant enlisted group

there called GIs United Against the War in Vietnam, Fort Jackson's brass has produced a cause celebre out of all proportion to the known facts. It has also brought about two court actions, directed by capable and contentious civilian legal counsel, which may give a merely fractious episode lasting effect.

"The Fort Jackson lawsuits, if they are upheld, will give the courts a clear opening to declare that American enlisted men do, indeed, have the same right to oppose by all lawful, orderly means the course chosen by their Government and military leaders. . . ."

The Fort Jackson GIs need all the help they can get, from all those who believe that soldiers, as citizens, have the same rights as civilians to discuss the war in Vietnam.

Support for the GIs, both in their lawsuit against the Army and in their courts-martial, is being handled by the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee. The GI CLDC was established in the fall of 1968 to help defend GIs whose constitutional rights are infringed upon by the Armed Forces. The GI CLDC has organized the support for the Fort Jackson case from the beginning. It has obtained the legal counsel mentioned above for the suit against the Army; and the same team of lawyers has agreed to handle the defense of the GIs who have been framed-up. In addition to arranging legal counsel, the GI CLDC has undertaken an aggressive and successful campaign to get the word out about the situation at Fort Jackson. As a result of its efforts, national attention has been directed to the constitutional fight of GIs United at Fort Jackson.

The GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee urges all Americans to come to the support of these GIs in their fight for their civil liberties.

What You Can Do

- Send a donation to the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee to help cover the extremely high expenses involved in this case. Send to: GI CLDC, Box 355, Old Chelsea Station, N. Y., N. Y. 10011.

- Send letters of protest to Gen. James Hollingsworth, Commanding General, Fort Jackson, S. C., and to Stanley Resor, Secretary of the Army, Washington, D. C. Copies of all messages should be sent to the GI CLDC. Urge prominent people in your area to send similar messages. Get messages of support from lawyers, professors, trade unionists, black and Puerto Rican leaders, etc.

- Become a sponsor of the GI CLDC, and urge others to do so also. (Use coupon on this brochure.)

GI CIVIL LIBERTIES DEFENSE COMMITTEE
Box 355, Old Chelsea Station
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2 May, 1969

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