

Armed Assault on Anti-war GIs

Liberation News Service

1970

OCEANSIDE, Cal. (LNS)—A little after mid-night on April 29 about 25 active duty Marines from Camp Pendleton and civilian GI organizers were gathered in the staff house of the Movement for a Democratic Military (MDM) here. They talked in small groups about two successful meetings that had been held earlier that evening.

At about 12:10 am, night riders directed a long burst of automatic weapons fire from a passing car at the house. Inside, people hit the floor, scrambling to defense positions. When the shooting was over, Pfc. Jesse Woodward was lying wounded, hit by a .45 caliber bullet.

Most of the other Marines had already left and those present were either on the civilian staff or on the central committee of MDM.

The reason for the attack is not difficult to find. In its five months of existence, MDM has attacked the military more and more strongly at its weakest point: its cannon fodder, its common soldier.

MDM was formed last November by Marines from Camp Pendleton and Sailors from the San Diego Naval complex. It has since spread to military bases all over California.

In the preamble to its demands MDM states: "...We are dedicated to using every means at our disposal to bring about a prompt end to the war in Vietnam, the exploitation of our brothers and sisters abroad, and the repression—both physical and economic—of those in our own land. We feel that by remaining silent, the serviceman has contributed to the denial of this deep-founded right of himself and of people everywhere to live free from intimidation and oppression. We have been silent for a long time. We will be silent no longer."

Through its paper, *Attitude Check*, MDM reaches about 8,000 Marines all over the country.

MDM has not gone unnoticed by the pig. All over Camp Pendleton daily harangues by lifers and officers tell of the evils of "MDM Communism". Every MDM leader is under courts martial for such offenses as being three minutes AWOL and for distributing *Attitude Check*.

Its offices, like those of almost all the GI organizing projects, have been subject to almost constant police and terrorist surveillance and harassment.

The most recent shooting incident ranks with the bombing of the coffeehouse at Ft. Dix, N.J. as one of the most extreme incidents in the long line of busts, raids and threats that have been used to try to intimidate the GI movement.

MDM has decided not to be scared off by gun-toting terrorists. It has called for a rally in Oceanside to protest the shooting and to step up its organizing efforts on the base to counteract the fear and to build on the anger created by the shooting of one of MDM's best speakers.

Nationwide military demonstrations took place during nine days in May culminating on May 16 (Armed Forces Day) when civilians and GI's from all over Southern California converged on Oceanside to celebrate People's Armed Forces Day.

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