The Army vs. Jerry Brown

Fifth Estate Collective

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"My impression is that they are going to court-martial me."

Spec. 4 Jerry Brown told the Fifth Estate that he thinks the army is looking for any possible grounds to begin proceedings against him for his exposure of the illegal physical examinations being given at Ft. Wayne.

Brown was a medical technician at the Detroit induction center until two weeks ago when he was ordered to Ft. Benjamin Harrison, Ind. The transfer came after he had made public his charges that a conscious policy existed at Ft. Wayne to rush men through the incorrectly administered physicals in order to induct as many men as possible in the shortest amount of time.

Maj. Clyde Edwards, base commander admitted that the transfer was due to Brown's charges.

Further substantiation of Brown's charges came in the straight media, when it was learned that Spec. 4 James G. Sparks of Detroit had been inducted through Ft. Wayne and put on active duty although he had an 18-inch steel rod in his leg from an auto accident. Sparks had been ordered for duty in Vietnam, but the order was canceled amidst the growing publicity.

At Ft. Benjamin Harrison, the Army is in the process of trying to make Jerry Brown the scapegoat for its own illegal practices. On May 26, Brown was interviewed by a Maj. Bresser from the Fifth Army

investigation staff in Chicago.

He told Brown that although he didn't believe the charges of irregularities, that he was making an inspection trip to Ft. Wayne to see for himself. The major also told Brown that he knew the GI was involved with anti-war groups and read him his rights under Article 31 of the military code.

Brown refused to answer any of Bresser's questions and his attorney, Dennis James, sent a note of protest to the 5th Army for holding an interrogation without a lawyer present.

While he was waiting to be interrogated by Bresser, Brown saw on an officer's desk a 24-page xeroxed copy of the Fifth Estate marked "obscene literature." Brown has been distributing papers at the base.

Back at Ft. Wayne Army men are running in and out trying to sweep away the mess Maj. Edwards and medical officer Capt. Floyd have created. This paper has learned that a colonel from Fifth Army headquarters visited the fort and that the GIs he interviewed backed up Brown's claims about the way physicals are given. The colonel's response was to give the men at the base a direct order not to make statements to anyone other than Army personnel.

Brown does not seem particularly upset at the prospect of a court-martial even though he has only eight months left to serve. "If they do bring charges against me, they'll just be exposing themselves that much more," he said.

Since his arrival at Ft. Benjamin Harrison, Brown has been busy organizing a GIs for Peace group similar to the one at Ft. Wayne. "I've had good response from the men and most of the ones I've talked to are sympathetic to what I've done," he said. Brown said some of the newly formed groups' activities may include organizing the South Vietnamese officers training at the base.

Brown spoke at the Memorial Day anti-war rally in Kennedy Square. He was greeted with applause as he explained what he is involved in and finished by saying, "As soon as the public finds out about the Army, the military machine will be crushed."

A June 6 demonstration was held at Ft. Wayne by about 50 persons demanding that fair physicals be given, that Brown be returned to Detroit and that the war in Indochina be ended.

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