

'Inhuman Treatment' Charged by Families of Fort Hood Three

Marlene Tyre

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Last month the Fort Hood Three were convicted and sentenced to prison terms of three years for Mora; and five years for Samas and Johnson. The Fort Hood Three, to perhaps refresh a few memories, are Pvt. Dennis Mora, Pvt. David Samas and PFC James Johnson—the three U. S. soldiers who refused to serve in Vietnam believing that the war is “immoral, unjust and illegal.”

At the present time Samas, Mora, and Johnson are in Ft. Meade, Maryland and are expected to soon be transferred to Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. The sister of Pvt. Dennis Mora, Mrs. Grace Mora Newman, reported, after a visit to her brother, that the three men were being subjected to harsh and inhuman treatment. They have had all library privileges during the week denied and they only can receive letters from their immediate families. They are forced to eat their meals on the floor and are in solitary confinement. They have no speaking privileges whatsoever. Their days are spent standing in their cells—any attempt to do otherwise, to lean against a wall or to sit down, is immediately punished by an extensive push-up routine.

Grace Newman also reported that her brother, and possibly the other two men, were told that it was not too late to “work something out” if they would agree to go to Vietnam at this point.

Meanwhile, the case is not ended. Since the court martial, work on their behalf has been doubled. The defense is seeking either a reversal of the conviction or a modification of the pronounced sentence. A complete reversal, however, appears to be rather unattainable, but there is a chance of a modification or a reduction of the sentence. Presently the case is before Lt. General William Train, court martial convening authority and commander of the first U. S. Army area. He must, within 30 days, either validate the convictions and sentences or modify them on the advice of his legal officers.

If this fails to produce any results, the defense will take the case before the Board of Military Review in the Pentagon. Following this, it will be appealed to the Military Court of Appeals, the equivalent of the Supreme Court in all military cases. If still unsuccessful, and the defense is still unable to get before a court the argument of the illegality of the Vietnamese war, they will attempt to appeal to the Supreme Court.

How the Fort Hood Three Defense Committee will fare depends upon many people. Right now they are in desperate need of funds, rallies, sponsors and leaflet distributors. If you can help them, please contact the Fifth Estate or the Fort Hood Three Defense Committee, 29 Park Row, New York City.

Related

See *Fifth Estate's* Vietnam Resource Page.



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