

# “I Was Just Doing My Job”

Chris Singer

One of the hazards of youthful ferment seems to be paranoia. Second is pessimism. “Everybody’s against us, and things are going to just get worse.”

This is a story that won’t relieve those feelings.

A military court, on January 12, in Munich, Germany, has acquitted an Army sergeant of the charge of mistreating stockade prisoners. Sgt. Wesley A. Williams a 24-year-old Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, man was exonerated after his lawyer pleaded that he only carried out lawful orders.

Williams had been ordered by his commandant, Maj. William B. Moore, to give newly arriving prisoners a “welcoming party”—with a three-foot plastic hose. He was cautioned to leave no marks on the prisoners.

“When I first entered the army I was instructed to obey orders,” Williams testified. He explained that beatings were procedural at the military prison: “It was part of ‘my on-the-job training...the sergeant supervisors showed me how.”

If you’re radical-paranoid-pessimistic enough you may have already placed the stockade—Dachau, the site of the Nazi death camp.

Major Moore told the court: “He (Williams) has done a good job for me and I appreciate it.”

Williams was, after all, following orders. Soldiers are supposed to follow orders; especially soldiers stationed at a U.S. Ariby stockade located at Dachau.

For those of you who remember Belle Isle (or those who were held there) during the rebellion of July, 1967, or for those of you who have read of the occupation of Wilmington, Delaware, this story may not be therapeutic for your paranoia; but don’t let it get you down.

Don’t worry—it can’t happen here.

F.T.A.

# fifth Estate

Chris Singer  
"I Was Just Doing My Job"

<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/71-january-23-february-5-1969/i-was-just-doing-my-job>  
Fifth Estate #71, January 23-February 5, 1969

**[fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net](https://fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net)**