

Nervous Brass Hit Anti-War GIs

Fifth Estate Collective

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FT. JACKSON, S.C.—Military hearings began April 22 at this Southern Army base into the cases of eight anti-war GIs being harassed by the post brass.

The eight are all members of GIs United Against the War in Vietnam, an on-post organization of mostly black and Puerto Rican soldiers, who have been circulating an anti-war petition and holding regular discussions on the war since late January.

The eight activists were arrested following an anti-war meeting on the barracks lawn the evening of March 20 where over 100 troops attended. (See Fifth Estate, April 3, 1969).

The Army's hearings which will probably last for about a week, will review all the evidence and recommend steps to be taken against the men.

Pvts. Joe Cole, Andrew Pulley, Jose Rudder and Delmar Thomas are still in the stockade and Pvts. Curtis Mays, Dominick Duddie, Thomas Woodin and Edilberto Chaparro are under barracks arrest.

Their attorneys, led by David Rein and Leonard Boudin, are seeking their release from confinement through a habeas corpus petition filed in Federal Court.

The suit also asked that the Army be ordered to produce an Army agent and informer, John Huffman, and all the recordings and notes he made at meetings of GIs United and of conversations he had with the accused soldiers.

The attorneys have challenged the legality of pre-trial confinement through military channels as well.

In a letter to the Secretary of the Army, David Rein on behalf of all the defense counsel suggests that Col. Thomas Maertens, commanding officer of the 4th Combat Support Training Brigade, is liable under Article 97 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice which provides that any person "who, except as provided by law, apprehends, arrests or confines any person shall be punished as a court martial may direct."

Meanwhile, support for the Fort

Jackson Eight is pouring in from around the country.

Telegrams and messages have been received from student groups such as the Harvard striking students and the Black Student Union at San Francisco State, from professors and attorneys, from anti-war leaders, and from other active duty GIs.

Over 5000 signatures have been collected on petitions demanding the release of the Fort Jackson Eight.

In a related development, GIs at Fort Bragg, North Carolina have announced the formation of their own GIs United Against the War in Vietnam.

They have adopted the Statement of Arms issued by GIs United in February and have declared their full support for the struggle of the Fort Jackson group.

Fort Bragg GIs United have already sent a sheaf of signed support petitions to the Commanding General at Fort Jackson and are beginning to circulate a petition demanding a meeting on their own post,

The Fort Bragg group, like that at Fort Jackson, has a majority of Afro-American and Puerto Rican soldiers; one difference, however, is that many of the Fort Bragg anti-war GIs have recently returned from a tour of duty in Vietnam.

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