

Anti-war GIs March

anon.

1969

WASHINGTON—In August 1968 forty-three GIs at Ft. Hood, Texas refused to go to Chicago for riot duty. Their protest was the first in what has been a long series of anti-war and anti-military protests that have led to the growth of a nation-wide GI movement.

On Nov. 15 the most radical of these GIs assembled to form their own contingent in the anti-war demonstrations.

About 250 GIs from Forts Dix, Jackson, Carson, Knox and Meade marched in brisk formation, arms linked and fists flashing behind a huge SOLDIERS LIBERATION FRONT banner near the head of the march.

Some of the demonstrators were active duty GIs. "I went AWOL to come here," said Mitch Jones, a private at Ft. Jackson, S.C.

"My whole company went AWOL for the demonstration," grinned Spec. 4 Jim Peterson who bused down to Washington with more than 100 anti-war soldiers from Ft. Dix.

The militancy of the GI contingent was a surprise to the Mobe marshals who had made plans for GIs to carry symbolic coffins. Instead they chanted "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh; the NLF is going to win" and "No More Brothers In the Pound, Turn The Guns Around." Many were Vietnam veterans.

At the rally a GI speaker from Colorado Springs drew cheers when he said, "If Nixon doesn't bring the troops home soon they're going to come home by themselves."

And at the GI rally the next day a GI speaker warned the people, "If things don't change fast, they're going to be sorry they taught us how to use M-16s and grenade launchers."

During the march it was easy to see V and fist signs from the soldiers on duty to protect Nixon and his regime.

The week before the Washington march, a full-page ad appeared in the *New York Times* urging people to take part in the march and was signed by 1,365 active-duty servicemen.

At Ft. Hood, GIs from the base led a group of 1,500 marchers through downtown Houston on Nov. 9, demanding a withdrawal of all troops.

In San Francisco a group of National Guardsmen and Reservists have collected thousands of GI signatures on petitions calling for withdrawal. Petitions may be obtained from the GI Association, Box 31387, SF 94131.

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