

On Tuesday morning, April 20, the 4th Army Rifle Matches were delayed for about an hour. GI's from the 1st Division and the 5th Army at Forsyth, working in the pits, refused to put targets up. Somehow a telephone wire mysteriously got out. A colonel stood out in the rain trying to pacify everybody into going back to work. The day before, guys had thrown steel helmets at lifers. This is the result of a situation where over 200 guys have been forced to spend 10-12 hours every day including Sunday, pulling targets up and down. On Tuesday, the rain had started to come down and the immediate thing leading up to this was a demand for some coffee. The day before, guys started at 6 in the morning, were given lousy chow, and many had to walk back from the range in the evening and missed chow altogether. So after all this, the rain made the targets very hard to deal with, and besides, there were many delays. This lit the fuse. Many of the hundreds of guys on the pits at least took their targets down, some started taking them away, and walked around arguing with the lifers, Lts. and the colonel. We say to this - Right On!

Who are the people we are doing this work for? Of the people firing in this match, there are very few EM's and civilians. The vast majority are brass & lifers (including Reserve & Nat. Guard) and "Cops. Many of these pigs are directly training to be crack shots for para-military police forces which are and will be used against the workers and students of this country, including us. A year ago, within less than a month, 6 black working people were killed by the cops in Augusta, Ga., 4 white students were killed by the Nat. Guard at Kent State, Ohio, and two black students were killed by the cops at Jackson State College in Mississippi. No one should think that the cops who were sent here from as far as Minnesota are just taking a week's vacation. While we support this fight against harassment all the way, we also think it's important to understand these political questions about how the Army is used against the people of this and other countries, and how the Army and the whole system need to be smashed and replaced with a system that is BY the people and FOR the people.

On April 13th at 0630 hrs, an incident took place at 49th Ord. Co. at Camp Forsyth. An NCO of that unit, while waking troops, yanked the covers from an enlisted man's bunk in order to wake him up. The EM had worked until 11:00 PM the night before. His only duty responsibility was to report to the Education Center at 0800 for classes. Words were exchanged between the NCO and the EM. The NCO then deliberately tried to provoke a fight, going so far as to purposely step on the EM's cigarettes. When this failed, the NCO then attempted to have charges of insubordination brought against him. Men in the 49th began to gather statements from eyewitnesses. The company CO dropped charges against the EM. When the CO was presented with sworn statements and a request that action be taken against the NCO in accord with the Uniform Code of Military Justice (the one where EM's are guilty till proven guilty), his only reply was "who is going to read the charges?"

Obviously, this isn't an isolated or exceptional case - all of us can recall similar incidents. This type of conduct is standard procedure for intimidating us in Basic Training. In spite of all the double-talk about the "Modern Volunteer Army", we all know it's the same situation - the same army.

In this case, the EM felt very intimidated by the situation and has made no attempt to push the matter further. On the other hand, the fact that the CO had to drop the charges was a small victory for the EM's. Several other threatened Article 15's against other guys were also dropped - partly because there was no basis for the charges, but also because the EM's were fighting back.

In fact a little while before this, in 49th Ord. Co also, 2 white guys were called into the orderly room because they had radical posters in their locker during an inspection. During the hour they were kept there, 6 or 7 black guys stood outside the orderly room supporting them. These and other acts of rebellion, both individual and somewhat organized, have the brass and lifers scared. What scares them the most is that blacks and whites are fighting together. As black and white GI's, we can unite by realizing that we have the same enemy - the Army and the rotten system it supports and protects. Black GI's were the most militant in this instance; and in general, the most militant fighters in the Army, on jobs and in communities are black workers and GI's. We need to follow their example and leadership. The main obstacle to black-white unity is the racist ideas that the Army and the system have pushed on us. While the brass pretends to be concerned about racism, they know that racism is one of the main ways they keep us down and divided. Army racism is not just a question of prejudiced officers and NCO's. It is reflected in the fact that 80% of less-than-honorable discharges are given to black guys, making it almost impossible to get jobs. Also, that almost 30% of the guys forced to the frontlines in Nam are black, when only 11% of the Army is black.

Our "superiors" say that all this harassment is necessary for an Armed Forces to remain an effective fighting force. We disagree. To show how a revolutionary Army differs from this, the following is from an article by Mao Tse-tung titled Period of the Second Revolutionary War. The report explains advantages the communist Red Army has in its struggle against the White Army of the Kuomintang (the army representing the landlords and the old rulers).

Apart from the role played by the Party, the reason why the Red Army can sustain itself without collapse in spite of such a poor standard of material life and such encessant engagements, is its practice of democracy. The officers do not beat the men; officers and men receive equal treatment; soldiers enjoy freedom of assembly and speech; cumbersome formalities and ceremonies are done away with; and the account books are open to the inspection of all. The soldiers handle the messing arrangement and, out of the daily five cents for oil, salt, firewood and vegetables, can even save a little sum of pocket money...All these measures are very satisfactory to the soldiers. The newly captured soldiers in particular feel that our army and the army of the Kuomintang are worlds apart. They feel that, though in material life they are worse off in the Red Army than in the White Army, spiritually they are liberated. The fact that the same soldier who was not very brave in the enemy army yesterday becomes very brave in the Red Army, shows precisely the impact of democracy.

The chinese Red Army was not only democratic but effective - it overthrew the oppressive landlords and other bosses and made a revolution in the most populous country on earth. Why couldn't this kind of democracy work in this Army? The main reason is that the U.S. Army is against the interests of the people, both the American people and people of other countries. This is true, regardless of whether it's a mercenary "volunteer" army or a drafted army. In this country, the army has been used to break strikes, such as the post-office strike a year ago; so-called "riot-control" for which Ft. Riley units are constantly on alert, is an attack on people militantly fighting for jobs, better schools and housing, and other demands. In Vietnam, working-class GI's are sent to die to support a corrupt dictatorship and American business who want to exploit Vietnamese workers by paying them \$1.40 a day or less and maintain American imperialist there.

many GI's are totally opposed to the Vietnam war. ~~They~~ ~~are~~ ~~opposed~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~war~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~best~~ ~~don't~~ ~~want~~ ~~to~~ ~~fight~~ ~~it~~ ~~either~~. The only way the Army can get guys to fight in Nam is by giving us the choice between that and jail, and by trying to intimidate us, making us afraid to fight the Army. Another way this harassment works can be seen well here at Ft. Riley. By harassing us ~~as~~ ~~ag~~ ~~tu~~ ~~and~~ ~~making~~ ~~the~~ ~~har~~ ~~per~~ ~~ty~~ ~~int~~ ~~oler~~ ~~able~~, the brass get a lot of guys to 1049 for Nam just to escape the harassment. So this is one way that the brass need this harassment to get us to fight their wars.

We feel that the various small struggles like the ones mentioned are good. While it's necessary to struggle for reforms, this will never be enough. It's necessary to totally smash the bosses' capitalist system by revolution and replace it with socialism - a system where workers and other oppressed people run the society and create real democracy - but also keep down the old ruling class so that it doesn't come back into power. Progressive Labor Party is a revolutionary communist party trying to build such a revolution. We feel that such a party is necessary to give leadership and unite all sections of people oppressed by the system - workers, GI's, students, unemployed, women, men, housewives, high school students, all races - Black, Brown, white, yellow and red people.

We feel it's necessary to build a revolutionary movement inside the Army, which can unite with movements of workers and students. We can begin with such things as fights against racism in our companies and organizing fights around court-martials. For those who are oriented toward building a counter-culture, consider that such a culture must grow out of struggling for change.

The colonel at the range on Tuesday pacified a lot of people by saying they would get off earlier if they went back to work. Similarly, the brass and lifers always say, "Just don't make trouble and you'll get out of the Army." Only when we realize that we're in trouble anyway, like trouble finding a job when we get out, and that the trouble is caused by the system, then we'll clearly see the necessity of organizing and fighting back..

We need to organize discussion groups, seriously rap with a lot of people, turn our platoons into schools for revolution where we can learn from each other. Going out and getting drunk is no way to deal with our problems. Also, getting high can be just as much a way of trying to escape the Army rather than fighting it.

If you're interested in getting together, write -

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