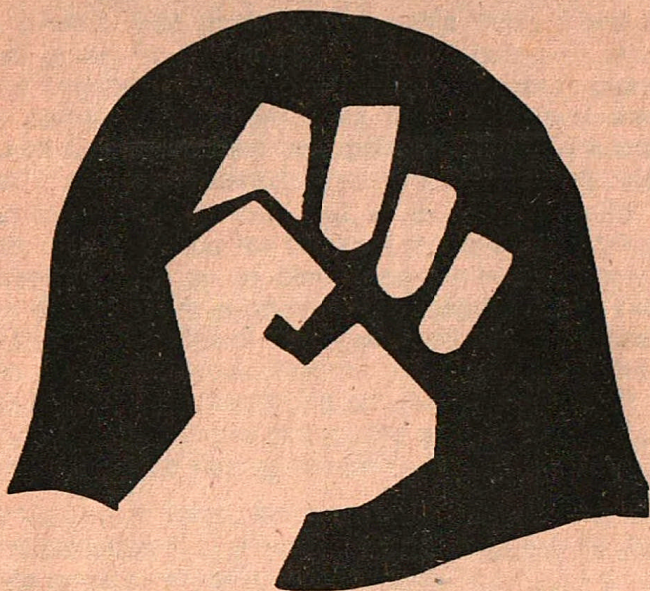


ASK A MARINE



*U.S.M.C. Private David Osborne
Raps on the Collapse of the Armed
Forces, the Fall of the American Empire
and the Rise of People's Power*

*A Speech Made Just Before
Sentencing At His General Court
Martial for Desertion*

Camp Pendleton, March 2, 1971

David Osborne wrote this speech in the Camp Pendleton brig while awaiting trial on a desertion charge. He got the facts and figures from books, magazines, and pamphlets his friends sent him while he was locked up. Ozzie was forced into the Marine Corps by a judge who found Ozzie guilty in juvenile court of a breaking-and-entering job he never did. But instead of sentencing him to a youth prison, he gave Ozzie the choice of three years in prison or four in the Corps. While stationed at Pendleton in 1969, Ozzie became active in political activities and was one of the leaders of the Movement for a Democratic Military (MDM). In January 1970 he split for Canada to continue political work. He was busted while trying to return to the Marine Corps ten months later. The Marines, after finding out he was a political activist, attempted to throw the book at him. But thanks to his own determination and the help of many supporters, Ozzie was released after doing five months in the Camp Pendleton brig. This speech was given at his general court-martial just before sentencing.

The Life of David Osborne

An Introduction

Ya know, when I first started writing this thing I had no idea that this was going to be printed and distributed. It was just a paper I'd put together for my defense at my court martial. But some of my partners in the Bay Area (San Francisco) and thereabouts thought it was together, and printed up about a scadzillion copies while I was still marking time in a six foot by eight foot tiger cage at the Pendleton brig. But all in all, that's cool. I don't mind. I mean, hell, it's good for the soul to have something you've written yourself printed up in black and white. Ya know what I mean? But it does present problems. For instance, now I've got to write this introduction! Check that out. I mean, hell's fire, I ain't never had to write an introduction for nothin' ever before. And I don't even know where to begin. Know what I mean? Shit, even in the books I've read up to this point, I've skipped the introduction because they all seemed boring as shit.

So here I sit, pen in hand, not knowing for sure where to start. Writing an introduction that's not boring. So I guess I'll just write whatever feels good or at least comfortable.

I think I'll start right here on this line . . . yeah, that feels good.

I'm going to do this introduction scientific-like, you dig? What I mean is I'm going to use the scientific principle that for every action there's a reaction. For example, you have a bat in your hand. You swing at an incoming ball and you connect and the ball goes screaming out of the park for a homer. The action in that example is, of course, the swinging of the bat. The reaction is obviously the ball screaming out of the park, and scoring a home run.

A variation of this would be: swinging at an oncoming ball, connecting, and suddenly realizing that you've been holding the bat backasswards all along as the bat cracks down the center and your wrist shatters, and the ball pops up over the catcher's head, over the backstop, and finally crashes through the window of your brand new 1932 Dodge. The action in this example is, of course again, swinging the bat. The reaction is the bat cracking, wrist shattering, ball popping up over the catcher, backstop, and finally breaking the window of your brand new 1932 Dodge.

I've only gone through all this jive so you would fully understand the principle of action-reaction. Because now I'm going to

use this basic principle on a larger scale of life in the good old USA.

Now I was raised up just like everybody else in this country—to salute the flag, praise God, eat apple pie, and kiss the boss's ass while you're taking a break from licking his boots.

Now this little pamphlet I wrote is dedicated to basically saying I think Amerika sucks, and that's a hell of a reaction to saluting the flag, you know what I mean?

So now I'm going to rap a bit about my life in Amerika and try to explain why I'm in the head space I'm in now.

I started out as a child. I'm just a down home country boy, born into a down home working class family. My old man was an electrician and I saw him earn everywhere from \$200 a month to \$800 a month. My old lady worked nights as a bar maid, and I've got no way to tell how much she earned, cause she spent it much



faster than she made it. (My mother prefers to be called a cocktail waitress although she only serves beer, so if you ever run into her, use a little discretion.) Also I have an older sister and a younger brother. As far as I'm concerned they're flipped out of it much further than I have. My sister sits around trying to look rich all the time, and my brother has given up the whole mess at the age of 12 and runs around with a net catching bugs.

I'd learned at an early age that little kids are not about skipping rope and being free. According to my teacher's principles, and my mother and father, little kids are about being seen and not heard. Remember all those parties your parents threw when you were small? You know, they'd dress you in your Sunday finery, then hide you in your room and at exactly 8 o'clock Mom would come get you and parade you into the living room and you put your index finger in your mouth, gave everybody a big smile and then waited about two seconds for a clue from your ol man, then you did a little soft shoe out of the living room and back into your bedroom, and all the folks would talk about how cute you were and so talented, too.

But what you were really about was having your ear to the door waiting for the party to progress to another room so you could slick in and rip off a bottle of wine and some cigarettes. So my reaction to kids are to be seen and not heard was total rejection. I knew I wasn't about being cute and talented. I was about wine and cigarettes and having a good time, but how are they supposed to know what I'm about, if I can't talk to them?

My reaction to their action is that kids are not conversation pieces but are in fact human beings that have feelings and ideas and should at all times be listened to as if they do have something to offer, because they do. For instance, how many times in your life have you seen a racist two-year-old?

One of the bigger reasons that I am the way I am and think the way I think is just from generally watching my parents grow up. For over 30 years now they've busted their ass trying to keep up with the Joneses and in the same process catch up with the Rockefellers. To say the least, it didn't work. They've had to put in a lot of overtime to keep up with the Jones and never ever got anywhere close to the Rockefellers. The system just doesn't work that way. Let me explain. The Rockefellers and other super-rich pigs like him own the factories and plants. We just work in them. The average factory worker produces \$11 worth of goods in an hour, and gets paid \$2.90 an hour. Now Rockefeller owns the products. That's a clean \$8.10 profit. Then he sells it back to the working folks for \$11 out of one of his stores. Of course, he has to put a little of that back into his factory for maintainance but still that's a nice tidy profit you must admit for some asshole who just sits on his ass all day. That's the sweat off our backs that made him that profit, you dig!

Okay, so now, dig my old man working in a factory. The foreman pushing him all day so as to get maximum productivity so Rockefeller can make some more profit. My old man gets angry, but he can't tell his boss to go to hell or he loses his job. And if you don't have a job, how do you pay your car bills, clothing bills, food bills, etc? So he holds his anger until he comes home, then takes it out on the family and makes things miserable for everybody. The same was true of my old lady, and our next door neighbor. Hell, life in Amerika for working people is just down home. God damn miserable.



My reaction to this action is again total rejection, and looking for an alternative is workers' control of the factories they work in. Workers would decide what to produce, how much to produce, and what to produce for and what the working conditions will be. Instead of the boss man and his cronies who are only interested in mass and maximum production so they make a hell of a profit off of our sweat and blood.

So much for that. Another big turning point in my life was school. Like the rest of the kids in school, I thought it was a drag,

and it was. All you hear in school is the teacher saying remember this and remember that, like they're programming a goddamn computer or something. They don't teach you to think, just to remember. They tell you on your first day, the teachers have the answers. Just remember what they say—never do they tell you why that answer is right. It's just right and that's all there is to it. Now repeat after me, pupils: 2 plus 2 equals 4, "i" before "e" except after "c", America is democratic, God loves this country, niggers are all lazy and eat watermelon, commies are trying to take over the world, America is defending the world, the Marine Corps builds men, body, mind and spirit—okay now remember this. We'll have a test on it tomorrow.

And if you ask "why" to any of these questions, you're a wise ass student trying to disrupt the class. And not a person who is interested in what makes the world go around. And my reaction to that was bah, humbug, this is bullshit! And I knew from the jump I could learn more about what made the world go around by just going out in the world for two days, than I could if I stayed in the school for twelve years.

So I became a rebel just about the time I hit high school. It became more obvious in high school, what school was all about as I watched the rich boys, club-footed and uncoordinated make the first string basketball team, football team, etc. And the non-doing rich girls become cheer leaders, etc. The rich kids no matter how dumb they were were channelled into academics and the working folk channelled into vocational stuff no matter how brilliant they were. Each graduation I saw rich kids getting scholarships instead of the down home folk who needed them



So some of us working class folk formed up into gangs that got drunk and we went out and fucked up some rich kids, and went AWOL from school, etc.

Then came the truant officers, the juvenile officers, then probation, jail, foster parents, jail, more foster parents, jail, judges. The judge says you're charged here with vagrancy and skipping school. How do you plead? Guilty or not guilty? Me: Well, I'm not sure, sir. I mean I don't have any money and I did skip schoolJudge: Guilty as charged. Now plead your case. So I laid out my life history and the judge says: Nice story but you are in fact guilty of vagrancy and skipping school—30 days. Me: But sir, isn't this the land where you have freedom of choice, so why do I have to go to school if I don't want to? Judge: Do you know who I am, boy? I am Judge Roscow. If you continue on that line I'll find you guilty of contempt of court. Me: Who the hell are you to judge me?! Judge: Add 5 days to the sentence; sheriff, take that young man out of here before I lose my patience!

More jail—parole—job corps. Then this big bust—I was busted for a B&E I knew nothing about. The Judge finds me guilty, then took a look at me and says: Son, you have a juvenile record long as my arm, but I like you. I think you're bright but just travelling

three young men at a Texas Penitentiary



two guys in processing at boot camp



down the wrong road. So I'm going to give you a choice—3 years in the correctional facility or 4 in the Marine Corps.

Needless to say, I went all the way for four in the Corps. That experience in the Marine Corps alone was the major turning point in my life. I've gone into the Corps in detail in the pamphlet so I won't go into it right now except to say that the Marines is just a replica of American society taken to its highest level of absurdity.

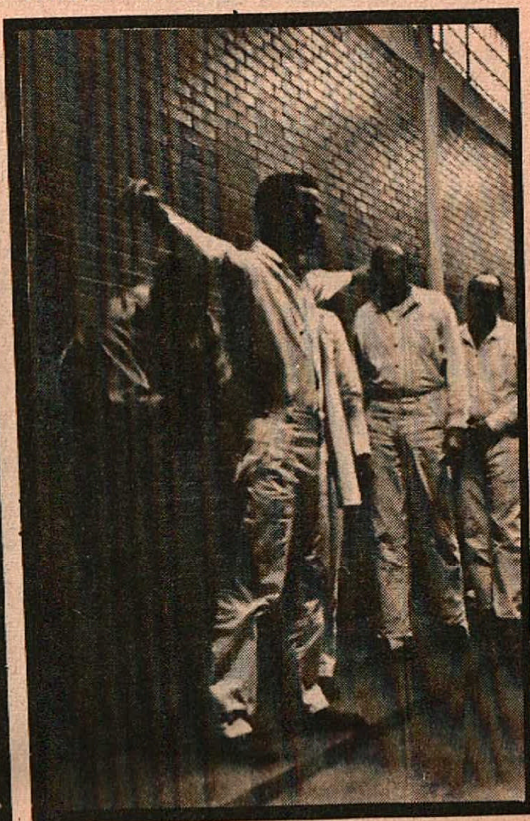
Now you can see why my head space is where it's at right now. A lot of folks have told me since I wrote this pamphlet that I'm a commie, a subversive, and degenerate and an asshole. But that's cool. All I can say to these folks is, well, tell Uncle Sam not to hold his bat backasswards, or Amerika Fix It or Fuck It. Change It Or Lose It.

All power to the people!
Ozzie

basic training, Fort Anywhere, USA



a daily body search at a Texas Penitentiary



Ask a Marine

When I first returned from my 10 month revolutionary tour, I expected to be locked up in the brig. However, my commanding officer did not have my record book, so he just looked at my crime and evidently didn't think it was so bad. He told me I was being charged with Article 86, which is unauthorized absence, and that I would be getting a special court martial which would mean that I could be sentenced to no more than 6, 6, and a kick. That is 6 months in the brig, 6 months forfeiture of 2/3 pay, and a bad conduct discharge. He also told me I would "not" be confined until after my court martial. Well, I knew that that was too good to be true and I was right.

Three weeks later, when my service record book arrived from Washington, I was immediately confined at the brig, because my record book had me marked "subversive." Imagine that, just a young lad of 20, and I constitute a threat to the USMC. And I swear all I have for weapons is a mind, mouth, pen, paper, and an ideology. No tricks up my sleeves either.

The United States Marine Corps didn't know how to deal with the situation. So instead of challenging any part of my Marxist beliefs, they chose to attempt to scare me out of my beliefs by throwing me in the brig.

Now, if the Marine Corps is as righteous as it puts on to be, they should be able to combat my weapons with the same weapons, and God knows they can make more noise, and have more pens and papers than I do. Well, so what's there to be said except they're not as righteous as they put on. I guess the Marine Corps will never realize that the revolution goes on, on either side of the prison walls.

Upon arrival at the brig, all prisoners are assigned to Alpha Company. The sole purpose of Alpha Company is indoctrination. Now the Marine Corps doctrines generally contain and teach that the white-male-American way of life is superior to all others without question. They also teach mindless obedience to orders that uphold that doctrine. I consider these doctrines fascist, so throughout the period of indoctrination, I continually tried to point out how they were fascist.

The indoctrination period ended. We all took their simple test and passed with flying colors. Everyone was placed into the general brig population. That is, everyone but myself.

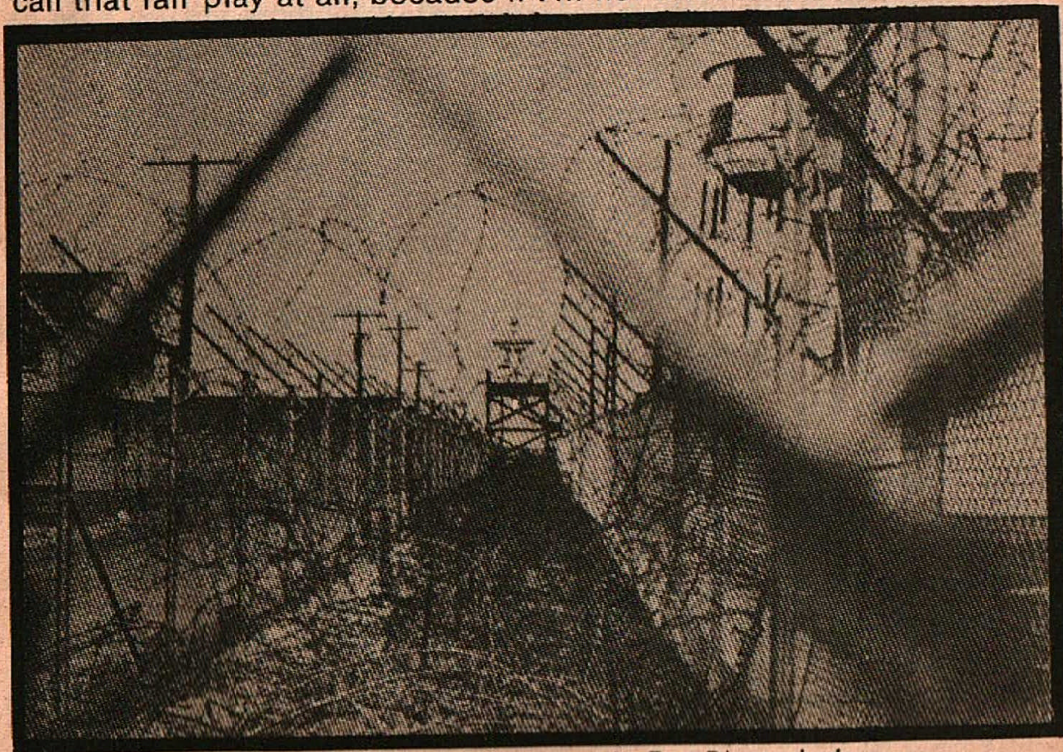
The day everyone got placed into the general population, I got a temporary release to go down to base legal. This is what I learned from them: 1) I am not being charged with unauthorized absence. I am being charged with desertion. 2) I am not getting a special court martial. I am getting a general court martial. That's the big baby. I can get up to 3 years (By the way, the desertion charge has been dropped due to lack of evidence. Now the max I can get is one year).

Then after I had been bombarded by all of this fine news at base legal I got back to Alpha Company. The turnkey told me to pack up my gear and move to cell 6 because I had been reclassified a 900. Now a 900 classification is an escape risk—this status is usually reserved for (a) a person who has previously escaped from the brig, or (b) a person who has attempted to escape. I don't fit into either of those categories.

When you're a 900 it means that you never get out of Alpha Company. You stay in a cell at all times except to go to chow and recreation call and on the weekends, visitors' call. At no time will I be able to associate with over five other prisoners who are all 900's.

Just like that they made me a 900 without an explanation for the big why, but the big why wasn't really a question anyway. The brig power structure did not think that I was thoroughly enough indoctrinated with their philosophy to be in contact with the general brig population.

Now if you look at these tactics you'll find that they are transparent. This way I'll be permanently stopped from mixing with and spreading revolutionary ideas inside the general brig population. The only place I can go to from here is solitary confinement and somehow I can't call that fair play at all, because if I'm not mistaken the Constitution



This is a shot of the fence around the Fort Dix stockade.

guarantees me the right to freedom of beliefs without harassment or intimidation. **And, by God, if making me a maximum security prisoner for no other reason than my beliefs isn't harassment and intimidation, then I don't know what is!** (I have been solitarily confined.)

I've been accused of the crime of desertion of which I'm not guilty. But even if I was, this so-called crime carries a maximum sentence of three years. For these reasons, combined with my beliefs, Amerika has made me a maximum security prisoner.

Lt. Calley is charged with the mass murder of an entire Vietnamese village and even had eye-witnesses state that they saw Calley personally fire his weapon into the crowd of people. The crime he is accused of carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment or death. Yet this man, Lt. Calley, who is facing these charges and is the possible reason for the entire My Lai massacre **is not** a maximum security prisoner in any brig or stockade; in fact, this man is not even in any brig or stockade. In fact, the Army let this man go snow-skiing in Colorado.

In September of 1969, the permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the U.S. Senate began hearings on the activities of Major Gen. Carl C. Turner and First Sgt. Major of the Army William O. Wooldridge. It was alleged that they were part of a military mafia that was ripping off millions of dollars of **enlisted men's money** from the service clubs. Wooldridge had also allegedly been smuggling tax free liquor back to the states in Gen. Creighton Abram's private plane. So far, the only punishment meted out has been the rescinding of Wooldridge's distinguished service medal.

Am I getting my point across? America, right or wrong? If you really think America is just plain right then I can only advise you to hold on to your seat, because you're either going to have a radical change of ideas, or you're going to be awful mad before this statement is over. Because later on, I am going to try to expose America for what it is.

For the people's general information I would like to say that we in the brig are pretty well together. Most of us know we're political prisoners in some way and the people in power at the brig don't get over on us too easy.

The solidarity between third world people in the brig is surprisingly good. They know who the real enemy is. The white brothers? Well, we're still pretty well divided, and therefore, basically conquered. But some of us are together, and those of us who are, talk to each other and learn that we've been shafted in pretty much the same way. The black brothers in the brig feel especially resentful of whites. But when we get it together to understand that the military is using racism as a divide-and-conquer tactic, we get along real well, each of us playing the role of the pupil and each of us playing the role of the teacher. Each of us learning from one another's experiences, learning the true meaning of the words love and unity and developing a hate for our common oppressor—the ruling class of this country and their tools. And that is what America calls a communist threat.

America teaches us to hate and fear the yellow race, teaches us to call the yellow people gooks, slants, Charlie, "the yellow peril" all through institutionalized racism and American chauvinism. As far as I'm concerned, the "yellow peril" is the Amerikan ruling class' greatest scare tactic. It's a joke. No, it isn't even a joke. It's a fascist funny.



The Vietnamese are hardly the first Asian people to suffer under the white man's fear of the "yellow peril." When the U.S. declared war against Japan, Japanese-Americans were forced into "relocation centers" in several Pacific and Southwest states. The girl on the right wears a tag which tells her camp assignment.

Every time the American ruling class decides to protect or gain more economic control of another weaker, poor, underdeveloped nation, our newspapers, which the rich ruling class conveniently monopolizes, run headlines like: "Reds Attack Timbuktoo! Ask for American Aid."

It is a necessity for the American ruling class to exploit China as the "yellow peril" so they have an excuse to send young American servicemen to foreign countries to fight and die so the ruling class can satisfy their own greedy creepin' imperialist needs in the name of democracy.

I am saying the "yellow peril" is non-existent. However, I will not deny the communist threat. The communist threat is real all right. But the threat does not come from any foreign country, and the only thing communism threatens is the ruling class.

The further capitalism develops, the greater the chances of the communist revolution. And it develops from inside American borders, not outside, and it develops from the American people. It constitutes people getting together and learning the true meaning of love and unity. It constitutes poor whites realizing their oppression is not caused by black people. It constitutes black people realizing their oppression is

used by poor whites. It constitutes men realizing their oppression caused by women, and further, realizing why we are the oppressed women. It constitutes working people realizing their oppression caused by long hairs, and long hairs realizing their oppression caused by working people. It constitutes peons in the armed realizing their oppression is not caused by other peons. It constitutes people stopping the fight going on amongst themselves and going to work together to identify the real enemy to be fought. When we do this, people find out, as myself and many other brothers and sisters have, that the real enemy is the small elite ruling class in this country. Even though they are a small minority, the rich own and control the entire means of production. It is this small minority that profits from and thrives off the oppression, exploitation, labors, and division of all people.

Marine Corps and all Amerikan Armed Forces including the armed forces are nothing more than a tool for or a direct representative of the ruling class. They are its domestic repressive apparatus and its part of an imperialist apparatus. The armed forces make all people who are not its uniform an enemy of the people.

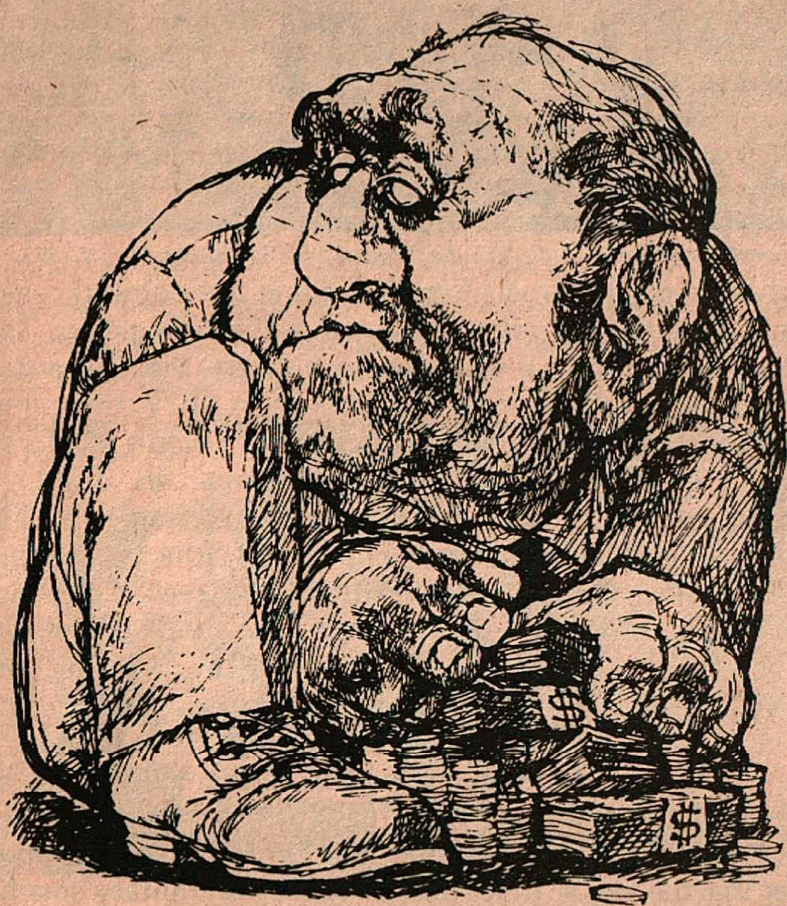
I would define what I mean by repressive apparatus and imperialist apparatus. I hope you'll realize that sitting in a jail cell, I do not have access to any research material and can't give you many direct examples or places. But, for instance, say the workers in any given factory without the aid of unions or without them, get together and demand higher wages, better working conditions, more safety precautions, and so on. If they are militant enough, an end to the employer's policies that discriminate both against black and other non-white people and women, paying them less and giving them lower-status jobs, and even a change in what they produce and the manner of production.

Now the employer class or the ruling class as I prefer to call them, is going to look at these demands through a purely profit point of view. If they meet the workers' demands for higher wages, the ruling class will not make as much profit and to improve working conditions would add safety equipment costs lots of money. **So what if an employee killed every once in a while—funerals are cheaper than safety equipment anyhow.** Then they'll look at the demand to end discriminatory policies and they'll say now that's going a little bit too far. If we met that demand, we couldn't make black and third world people and women work for half wages anymore. Then, Christ, look at all the profits we'd be losing.

Then they'll look at the workers' demand for a voice in what they produce and the manner of production and say, damn, if we met that demand, the workers may want to produce things we couldn't make as much profit off of. In fact, they may even want to produce things that the entire society would profit and benefit from. Christ, they might even want everybody's living conditions up to ours. Then we'd really be in a bind. Why, we'd lose our God image and we would have to settle for being equal human beings. No, that would never do. And besides,

it our factories quit producing automatic weapons and such rot, we wouldn't be able to profit off the war in Vietnam!

So the owner of this particular means of production delivers his ultimatum in 24¢ words and a bunch of double talk, and in essence says hell no, I won't even consider your demands. So the workers, realizing where part of their power lies, walk out of the factory and go on strike.



Now our ruling class buddy is in a real hum. With all the workers on strike, he's not producing anything at all, and in fact, he's losing money hand over fist. Now, fully realizing his predicament, he gets on his phone to the White House and says: *"Listen here, Mr. President, all my slaves are out on strike and I'm not making any money. You know my other ruling class buddies have bought a lot of stock in this corporation and if we get together and shut down our factories for a few days, you know this land of the free and home of the brave is going to be in a real hum. So I suggest you find a way to convince my slaves to return to their jobs."* Within 24 hours, the police force falls out in riot gear to try and persuade the people to return to work by flashing some fancy law which dictates compulsory arbitration. If the police force can't handle the situation, then they call out the armed forces, with rifles and bayonets and tear gas, to teach all of us common laborers where our place is at.



Fights between strikers and soldiers in the Pennsylvania Railroad strike of 1877.

It is at this time the Armed Forces become the domestic enemy of the people and the repressive apparatus of the ruling class. There is. Check it out. Here's a few examples where the military was used to physically smash working class strikes: in 1877, the military quashed the Pennsylvania Railroad Strike in Illinois, Colorado, New Mexico, Missouri, Maryland, Pennsylvania; in 1892, the military broke up a steel workers strike in Pennsylvania—the steel plants belonged to Andrew Carnegie; in 1903, the military was again used to break up a miner's strike at Cripple Creek, Colorado — these mines belonged to John D. Rockefeller; in 1936, the military attempted to break up a GM workers strike in Flint, Michigan with 7mm Howitzers — but the workers won anyway because they refused to be pushed any further, and because GM was afraid of the damage that would be done to their plant if the Howitzers were used; in 1941, the military was used to squash a North American Aviation workers strike in Inglewood, California — Inglewood was placed under martial law at that time; in 1955, the military smashed strike of workers from Perfect Circle Corporation in New Castle, Indiana.

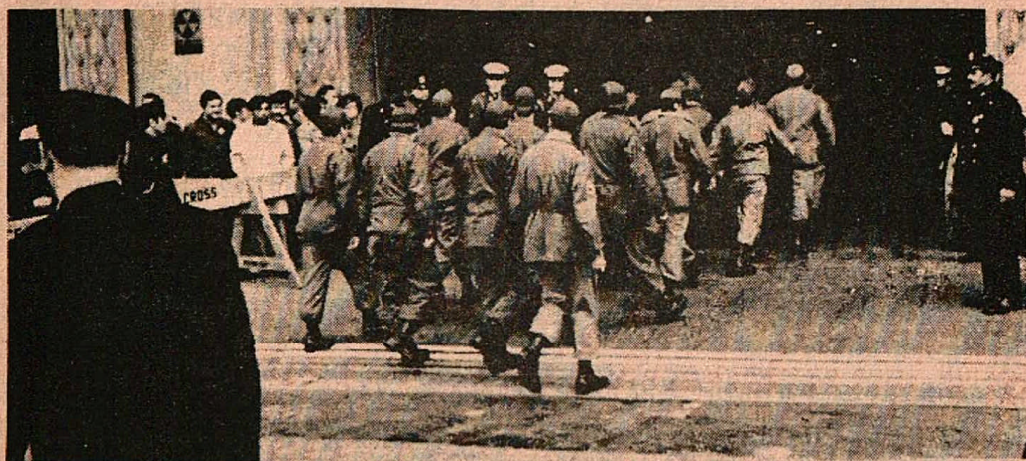
These are just a few of the times that the military was used to physically squash working class strikes. While you're out running as free as America allows you to be, go back in history and find for yourself how many times the military has been used to squash working class strikes, student strikes, using Kent State and Augusta, Georgia as prime examples, civil rights demonstrations, peace demonstrations, and Black Panther Headquarters, etc.

The Armed Forces has also been known to break working class strikes in other than physical methods. They have broken these strikes through economic repression as well, and as of right now, the military is in the process of breaking the lettuce workers' strike right here in California, and I do have the facts on that. Here they are.

Bud Antle is one of the largest lettuce growers in the U.S. He farms 43,000 acres of lettuce in Arizona and California. He ships 11,000 rail cars of lettuce per year and nets between \$20-\$30 million per year. His partner is Dow Chemical (the napalm man again) who makes all the chemicals, fertilizers and styrofoam containers. The average wage of lettuce workers is \$2051 per year. The average life span because of the poisonous chemicals used to make the crops grow faster is only 49 years. Now, this is where the military comes in.

Before the strike, the military purchased only 10% of its lettuce from Antle. Now that the strike and boycott is on, they buy between 30-60% from them. Between the months of July and September (1970) alone, the military purchased \$750,000 worth of lettuce from Antle. The market price for his lettuce is 12¢ per lb., but for some reason the military pays 16.06¢ per lb. Well, there it is, the cold hard facts. If that isn't economic repression, I don't know what is.

Now when I first joined the Marine Corps I took an oath where I stated I swear to protect the people of the United States against all enemies, both foreign and domestic.



GIs during the mail strike of 1971.

I believe wholeheartedly in that oath. It has been many years since America has been invaded by an foreign enemy and I don't see any possibility of that happening in the near future, so that left for me only the domestic enemy to worry about. Now it must be obvious by the facts that I have just presented that the Marine Corps is part of that great domestic enemy. I felt at that time, as I do now, that the domestic enemy must be combatted. Also at the time, I felt I could not combat the domestic enemy while wearing its uniform, so I simply took off that uniform and left Camp Pendleton, to get my head together and decide the best possible method I could use to combat my enemy upon my return. It is true I did not request permission to leave, but I would consider it very stupid indeed to ask the domestic enemy if I could leave, so I could turn around and combat the domestic enemy.

I cannot consider what I did an unauthorized absence. I can only consider what I did the very first constructive move I ever made to help the American people rid itself of a very powerful and ruthless enemy and uphold the oath that I swore to uphold.

O.K., I've done my best to explain what I mean by repressive apparatus. So now in my own words I will try to explain what I mean by imperialist apparatus.

The ruling class has the U.S. all blocked off in private property grid squares. You could compare it to a monopoly board after an hour and a half of play. They own and control damn near everything. And if anybody tries a short cut or a detour, they go directly to jail, they do not pass go, or collect \$200.

So, they say, "Well, we've got everything pretty well under control here. I guess what we need is some more territory and some more people to enslave, so we'll go on down to the Pentagon with our business partner generals and see what poor underdeveloped nations are left."

I say business partner generals because in 1959 and 1960, a House of Representatives Committee exposed that all the Brass' Semper Fi attitude was a bunch of nonsense, also showing us where the true loyalty of the brass is really at.

Boeing Aircraft—the No. 1 supplier of war goods had 61 retired officers on its payroll, 5 of whom were generals or the equivalent.

General Dynamics—the No. 2 war goods producer, had 186 retired officers, 27 of whom were generals or the equivalent.

Lockheed Aircraft—had 171 retired officers. Again, 27 were generals or flag rank.

General MacArthur went to work for Remington Rand at \$100,000 a year. Continental Can gave General Clay \$108,000 a year. Lesser generals have it rough. They only receive \$75,000 a year.

In 1969, Congressional hearings chaired by Senator Proxmire disclosed that more than 2,000 former high ranking army officers are now employed by war industries.

Anyway, so the ruling class slides on down to the Pentagon and finds out Vietnam is still poor and underdeveloped, but rich in tin and tungsten. They know the Vietnamese people just kicked the French out, but France wasn't much of a military power anyway. So the Pentagon sends their CIA men off to Vietnam to drill the Vietnamese people on how swell capitalism is and make it profitable for the likes of Ngo Dinh Diem to rise to power in South Vietnam without the process of elections. Ngo Dinh Diem was known as the whirling dervish because he always was and had to be the puppet for whichever imperialist power held military control of the Vietnamese nation. When France first took control of Vietnam he represented the French. When they were run out by the Japanese, he immediately denounced the French and became the puppet for the Japanese and when France returned and assumed

control over Vietnam, he once again represented them.

And after their defeat by hard fighting Vietnamese, the U.S. picked him up, dusted him off, and propped him up again. Ngo Dinh Diem was immediately succeeded by the now standing Thieu-Ky regime. Thieu and Ky have the historical record of fighting for the Nazis during World War II. In fact, they are both overt fascists. Ky has one idol. And this is a direct quote from him: "I've got but one idol. He is Adolf Hitler. Vietnam needs 1, 2, many Hitlers."

This quote was followed by a similar one from Lyndon Johnson: "I hope young Americans will show the same fanaticism fighting for our system as young Nazis did during World War II."

Anyway, these are the kind of men that we're fighting for in Vietnam—opportunists and fascists. They ask for American aid. The headlines scream "Yellow Peril Strikes V.N.—U.S. To Send Military Advisors."

At that time the ruling class got over on the people and got young people like me to die for them, and make Rockefeller and the oil barons happy, and in the process keep Dow Chemical and the war producing gang fat on profits.

Check it out. Each time the death toll in Vietnam rises, no matter who's dying, Americans or Vietnamese, Mr. Dow makes beaucoup money. And Mr. Dow just doesn't care about the death toll at all. Here's why. Dow Chemical sells 25 million pounds of napalm to the U.S. military forces in Vietnam per month. Besides Vietnam, Mr. Dow, Rockefeller, and the rest of the American ruling class has economic control in over 109 countries of the world.



The U.S. government has the historical record of invading 109 countries of the world and assuming some economic and political control over them. U.S. imperialism generally follows this pattern. First we place our puppets in power and they preach "democracy". Then our advisors and invasion forces come. Then we kill, maim, and destroy and say we hate violence. Then we bomb and burn and call it progress.

We occupy countries by using shock troops for the search and destroy missions. Then we pacify the population through fear tactics, fear of death, fear that you may be killed or that your loved ones may be killed and maybe the entire village or town massacred.

Then when we've achieved the desired level of pacification—that is, when the people of that country are too afraid to rebel any longer and have been forced to accept our ways, our culture, and the capitalist system in general, that's generally called Americanization, or maybe Vietnamization—then comes the process of taking these pacified people and using them to build standing armies and police forces to assume the duties and carry out the same kind of fear tactics that the U.S. Armed Forces were previously used for.

This pattern has occurred over and over again since 1798 until now. In Tripoli 1801, in Canada 1812, in Cuba 1822, in Mexico 1836, in Ryukyus/Bonin Islands/Okinawa 1853, in China 1854 and 1900, in Dominican Republic 1903, in the Panama Canal 1903, In Russia 1920, in Cuba 1933, and in Vietnam 1964.

The above dates were secured from the U.S. Congressional Record of Proceedings and Debates of the 91st Congress, First Session, Vol. 113, No. 103. I chose the ones that I thought were most important. There were 109 in all. It should be noted that the Record has important omissions, the most important being the U.S. wars against the Indians. However, even with those omissions it is clear to see that since 1798, not one single day has gone by that there weren't U.S. Armed Forces in someone else's country and the Congressional Record itself says that over 90% of those countries we invaded were to either establish or protect American interests and that only means one thing to me: imperialism.

An imperialist isn't a nice thing to be because it makes you the enemy of the people the world over. Besides I don't know of even one GI that owns any business, factory, or plant in any foreign country. In fact, I don't know of any GI that owns a business, factory, or plant in this country. In fact, I don't know of many GIs that are too fond of the super rich who do own those businesses, factories, and plants.

But that doesn't seem to bother the heavy brass because they don't so much as bat an eye as they send black, third world, and poor white people to their deaths in a rich man's war.

How about the rich themselves? How many Rockefellers, Whitneys, Firestones and Mellons have died protecting their own foreign interests in their own war? I haven't heard of any of them getting killed. Their

sons are too busy getting 2-S deferments and learning how to run Daddy's financial empire which profits off the third world and poor white death toll in Vietnam.

After all this, the brass sit back and award each other medals and call themselves heroes. That's a warped definition of heroism, the way I see it.



The real heroes are the masses of people, the hundreds of thousands who watered the ground with their blood to stop Hitler at the gates of Stalingrad. Those people are the heroes. The one million Algerians who died to free their nation. The Vietnamese people who stormed the seemingly impregnable French defenses. The African guerilla fighters who have liberated huge areas of their homelands from the Portuguese colonialists. The Cuban rebels who successfully defeated the Batista regime. The Chinese people— $\frac{1}{4}$ of humanity—who rid themselves of

100 years of Western dominance. The black and third world people in America whose rebellions have shaken more than 200 major U.S. cities. They are the real heroes. And without sounding like I'm patting myself on the shoulders, American GIs struggling against seemingly never-ending obstacles.

The days of GIs fighting Vietnam are coming to an end. GIs are getting hip to the rich man's games. We are beginning to realize that **dead is a long time** and that if we have to die, we want it to be fighting to end our servitude, not strengthen it.



General Westmoreland with South Vietnamese puppet generals

Let me give you a few more reasons why the mutinies that have already occurred in Vietnam and at home will repeat themselves.

How much faith do you have in former Nazi officers? Evidently the American ruling class has plenty, because General Van Keilsmanegg, who was one of the chief engineers of Hitler's death machine, is now the commander of all NATO forces in central Europe. And he has direct authority over 200,000 American and British GIs. That's the kind of fascist that has life and death control over us.

But just because the rest of our brass didn't belong to Hitler's Army doesn't make them any less inhuman. For example, at Con Thieu, the 3rd Marine Division had been under heavy shelling for three weeks and the men were near rebellion. A N.Y. Times reporter interviewed their commanding general about this in his headquarters 60 miles behind the lines. The General said: *"Hell, you kick them in the butt, shake them up a little and they'll be alright."*

Another example: A different N.Y. Times reporter attended a briefing session in 1968 where a Brigadier General said, *"I'm happy to say the Army's casualties finally caught up with the Marines last week,"* The astonished reporter said, *"You don't mean you're happy?"* "Sure," the General replied, *"The Army should be doing its job, too."*

I'm sure everyone remembers the assault on Hamburger Hill which resulted in more than 300 dead GIs. Then when the hill was finally taken the brass ordered the GIs to abandon it. The NLF promptly moved right back up and a General was quoted as saying, *"I'm prepared to go back up and take it again."* All I can say is go right ahead General, by yourself.

Not only are we denied our human rights to live by our own beliefs, but our beliefs are systematically molded and formed to be ultra-right wing through the process of censorship and intimidation. For example, if you go to the PX to purchase books or to the base library, you'll find beaucoup "Playboy" magazines, but you won't find any stuff on women's liberation. You'll find lots of anti-communist literature, but you won't find even one pro-communist book there. You'll find the kind of book which says, look at me, I'm a Negro, and I made it. But don't ever expect to find H. Rap Brown's *Die Nigger Die* or Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice*.

It's true, we can go into town and buy these books. But if a lifer should catch you reading one, just stand by because you just opened yourself up to all kinds of harassment and you'll be out there busting heavies from sunup 'til sundown again.

Also we have no say about who our leaders are. All we know is that we go to the unit the Marine Corps assigns us to. This dude steps out of his plush office and says, "I'm your commanding officer." If we asked him how he's our commanding officer, we would receive a confused. "Well, I came from a rich home which sent me to college where I went to ROTC. Then the government gave me a screen test, told me I was a man among men, and made me your commanding officer." It's a fact that ROTC produces 50% of the Armed Forces Officers—25,000 of the now 50,000.

So, we are screwed around again. Our leaders are appointed to us. We don't know the man from Adam. We have no way of knowing whether we can have faith in him or trust him, yet we are forced to show respect for this man, whether he deserves it or not. Every time we peons see an officer, we **must** salute him and call him "sir". If we



On't, it's back to the brig for us. And right off hand, I'd say that's the way they did it in the Nazi army, too!

The U.S. Government tries to conceal all of this in a cloud of anti-Communism. They've gone as far as inventing the domino theory. The theory that Mao Tse-Tung's liberation forces winning over the Kuomintang and the establishment of Red China set off a chain reaction of all Southeast Asian peoples turning towards revolution and insurrection with Communist China setting the shining example of how it's done.

It doesn't make any sense at all to me. Considering the fact that the whole Vietnamese people defeated France in 1946 and became an independent nation and elected Ho Chi Minh who was a well-known and vibrant nationalist and communist as their leader and president. This all happened in 1946—Red China did not even exist until 1949. That kind of upsets the domino theory.

If you think being a tool of the ruling class and the enemy of the rest of the people isn't enough reason to sit down and cry, I'll give you a few more reasons. We'll go into the machinery of the Marine Corps itself. Now, as a civilian, if a cop or anybody comes up to you and orders you to go break up a strike or fight the war in Vietnam, you can tell them to go jump in a lake, swine. But if you're a peon in the military and the man orders you to break up a strike or fight their war in Vietnam and you even imply he should jump in the lake, and then strut on home, you will wind up in the slams charged with disobedience to a direct order, desertion with intent to shirk important duty, and disrespect to your so-called superior.

As a peon you have no way to challenge any order except through some two-bit system called request mast. And before you can request mast you must first comply with the order. Say your superior orders



you to jump off a cliff. You simply jump off the cliff, and when you hit bottom, fill out a request mast form and drop it in the nearest bitch box. Simple as that! Then, if you're lucky enough to see whoever you requested to see, the most that will happen is he'll console you and tell you, 'It's alright, I understand.' But according to Article 5,000,036 of the UCMJ your superior had every right to tell you to jump off that cliff. And then if it's a really serious offense, which can't be passed over so easy, they'll call in the officer who gave you the absurd order, slap his hand, and tell him not to do it again. Then, this same officer will come back to your unit still being your superior and have blood in his eyes and you know you can just stand by. Because you're going to busting heavies from sunup 'til sundown until one of you happens to get transferred to another unit. And if you should happen to get a bit angry at him and refuse to follow his orders you can count on dancing to the jail house rock because you're going to the brig.

As General Chapman said himself, "I can think of no organization which is less democratic than the Marine Corps, and for good reason, If we lack discipline, we can disintegrate into *brutalization on the battlefield*. *Combat deaths will rise*, and frankly, you can't begin to impart a sense of discipline on the battlefield."

The moral of the story is that the peons have no voice in the functioning of the Marine Corps. We have no say about whether we're used as strikebreakers or cannon fodder for the ruling class.

The brass also make no exception for anyone's beliefs, be they moral, religious, or political, and when a human being is forced not to live by his own beliefs, that person becomes less than a human. He or she becomes a slave or tool for their own oppressor. Am I right or am I wrong?



Officers are completely segregated from the enlisted man. Most officers know nothing at all about being an enlisted man. Officers sleep in plush apartment rooms, while all peons sleep in barren barracks. Peons are regimented to chow at a crowded mess hall, fed out of tin trays, fed slop, rushed in and out, scarcely with enough time to chew the food—let alone try to enjoy it—thereby developing the appetite of a hog and the manners of a pig. While officers in comparison, eat in a bourgeois atmosphere, with clean table cloths, glass plates, eat meals that were prepared with the utmost care, and are allowed to stroll in and out as they see fit. Officers don't even use the same heads as enlisted men, but you can bet your life they don't clean and maintain their own heads. The cleaning and the maintenance of the officers' private sink and toilet facilities is a job for the lowly peon.

What I'm saying is that the peons do all the dirty work and all the fighting. We are the backbone of the Armed Forces, while the officers just lay back and reap all the benefits. As long as officers are completely segregated from the enlisted men, they cannot understand the problems and oppressions of the EM, he will be completely alienated from them and cannot possibly be a competent leader of these same men, let alone a respected leader.

Two scenes of GIs forced to suppress uprisings in the black communities of Newark, N.J. (l) and Detroit (r). Both photos are from 1967.



I also mentioned using the Armed Forces to break up civil rights demonstrations. Anyone outside the military would probably think that the Marine Corps itself could not be a racist institution. Well, don't kid yourself. There's more racism at the administrative level aboard Camp Pendleton than there is in all of Alabama. I don't even want to start reciting racist incidents aboard base here. Save me the trouble of interpretation and ask any black man on base about racism. All I'll volunteer on this topic is that the Armed Forces are great practitioners of divide and conquer. And the fact is that **blacks and chicanos are given the most dangerous assignments and proportionately suffer the highest casualty rates.**

Alright, so a few of us are lucky enough to make it through a full week of "corps" life and the weekend rolls around so all of us are going into town to lay back and get loaded, and try to forget about the Marine Corps for the weekend. But, oh no! That's too much to ask for! Oh, you can go into town alright. And if you've got any bread you might even get loaded, but forget about the Marine Corps? Never, because just when things start happening and you start snoopin' and poopin' like you did back on the block, you can count on the MP's rolling up to you and shouting, "Hey, Marine! Where's your belt?" or "Your shirt doesn't have a collar on it, the cuffs on your pants are frayed, and you didn't shave before you left base," or some petty violation of their many rules. Then they write you out a ticket for mutilated clothing or whatever and send you back to base to right your wrong. Believe me, that kind of petty harassment just blows your whole trip.

Alright, we're back on base and we're going through another week with the fascist military. Some time during that week you screw up and break one of their 75,000 rules and boom! You're in the brig awaiting trial.

As a civilian you could bail yourself out if you have the bread or happen to get a liberal enough judge who gives you an OR (lets you out on your own recognizance). But when you're a peon in the military, there is no bail and no OR. You're just behind bars and there to stay



until your court date rolls around. And the legal machinery of the Armed Forces moves slow, oh so slow. For example, I have been confined at the Camp Pendleton Brig since the 25th of November awaiting trial (13 weeks), not to mention the eight days I spent at the Seattle Naval Brig. Not only does the legal machinery grind slow, it grinds just as fine! It grinds out an astonishing 95% conviction rate. I'll try to shed some light on how they are able to get a 95% conviction rate.

First of all, because of the apathy that is shown towards the American serviceman, most of these court proceedings take place with the GI facing the wrath of the brass alone. Number two—take a look at the

Uniform Code of Military Injustice and see how it underwrites the Constitution. And number three—did you ever hear the old fairy tale about being tried by a group of your own peers? Well, just peep my jury! Do you see any privates over three there? That's all that need be said about that.

No enlisted man holding the rank of PFC or below has ever in the history of the Armed Forces sat on a court martial panel. Despite the fact that more than 90% of those court martialed are PFC's or lower.

Now you must think damn, if GIs put up with all of that crap, they must get paid a lot. Oh, we do. We get paid royally. An E-1 private gets paid 12¢ an hour, \$134 per month, and \$1560 per year. While in comparison an O-10 four-star general gets paid \$2990 per month, \$36,000 per year. Check that! A general makes more per month than a private makes in one year.

As you may suspect if you have adhered to my statement at all, I am not the first person to ever go UA from here. In fact, even the desertion rate is quite high. Between the years 1967-68, 190,000 GIs either deserted or went AWOL. In the years following, 1969-70, that figure more than doubled, meaning that more than 380,000 men deserted in the last two years.

Also, the desertion rate in Vietnam is 10 per day, with many of these people defecting to the N.L.F.

Considering these facts, it has become clear to me that if the military is to survive with anyone in it rather than the power-tripping egotistical lifers that are in it now, then the military has to change radically.

1. The military must be completely voluntary. By that I mean all GIs must be free to leave the military at the time of their own choosing.

2. It is self-evident that GIs must have a voice in the functioning of the Armed Forces. Until the time we have gained political and economic power, we will remain in complete servitude. **Therefore, all GIs must have the right to collective bargaining.**

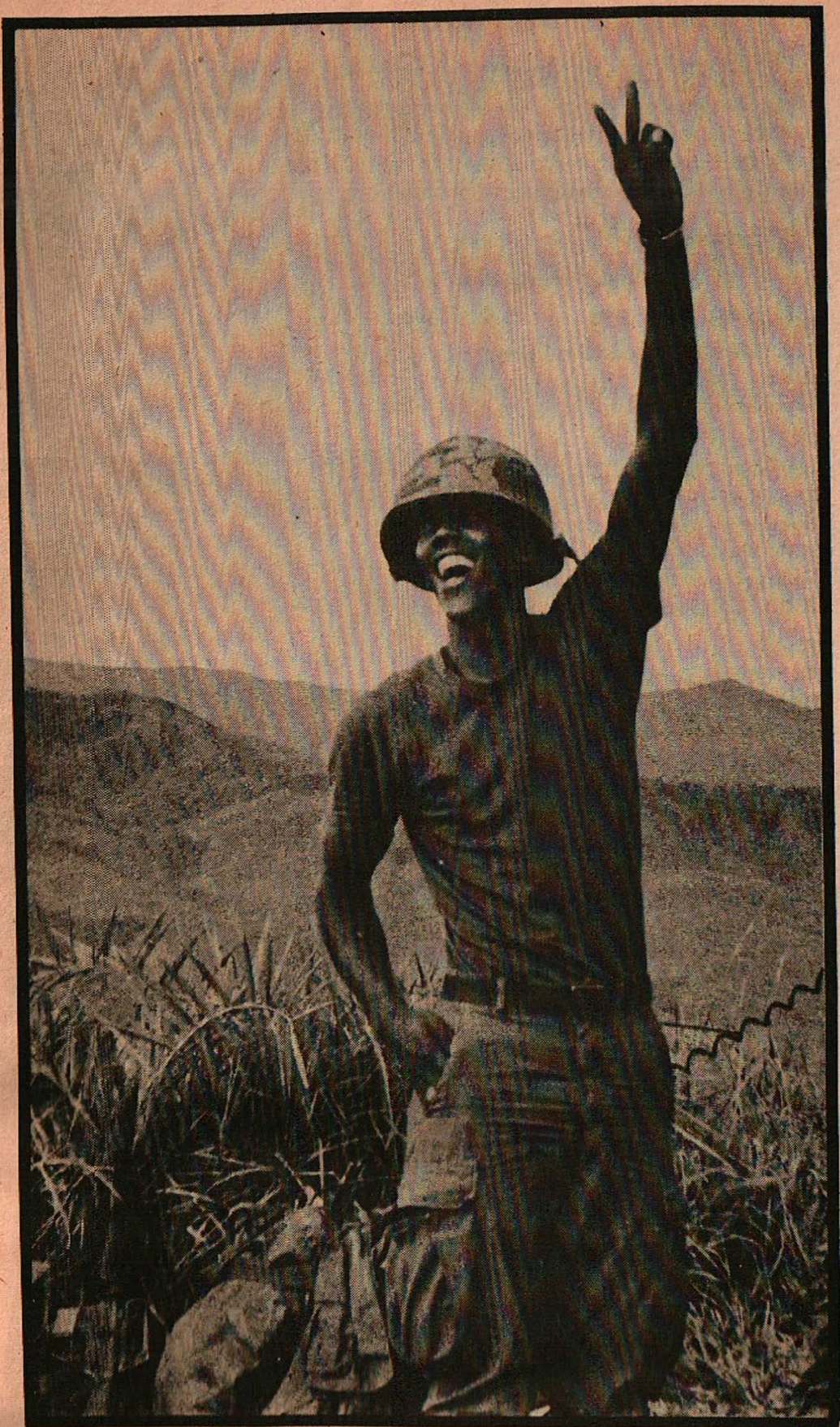
3. All human and constitutional rights must be returned to the American serviceman.

4. All GIs must be free to determine our own destiny—we must be allowed to live by our own beliefs, be they moral, religious, or political.

5. All censorship and intimidation must end. This would benefit people still developing their own beliefs.

6. We GIs must elect our own officers from within our ranks. An immediate end to officer segregation and special officer privilege. All mandatory saluting and sirring must end. Respect can only be earned on a human relating to human basis.

7. The Armed Forces must stop its present practice of representing only the rich. The Armed Forces must be used to serve the American working people as a whole.



8. **All pre-trial confinement without bail must end.**
9. **An immediate end to the present NJP and court martial system, as they are a sham of both justice and democracy. A trial by a group of one's peers must become a reality. All cases must be subject to immediate review by a board of civilians.**
10. **End all racism everywhere.**
11. **Free all political prisoners.**
12. **Keep MPs out of our civilian lives.**
13. **Meet the federal minimum wage law.**
14. **Get the hell out of Vietnam.**

As you can see, that transitional 14 point platform I just read off is revolutionary but is simple and truly democratic. It would irradicate a great percentage of what's wrong with the military today. It would in essence make the military a people's army. A people's army whose only function is to serve the people as a whole. It would become a military that belongs to all of the people.

However, I don't expect the military to ever meet those 14 points. Because the problems in the military are a reflection of the capitalist society as a whole. And the people in power, the American ruling class are benefitting greatly from our oppression. Their power depends on our blind obedience to their orders. They have the power now and are not about to give it up.

Also, the lifers and brass are afraid of a democratic military. It would undermine everything they get off on—privilege, power, position, the piggish satisfaction gained from continual saluting and sirring, and beyond all of this, the great pay differential and the many material benefits they have in contrast to the rotten and regimented life style of the GI.

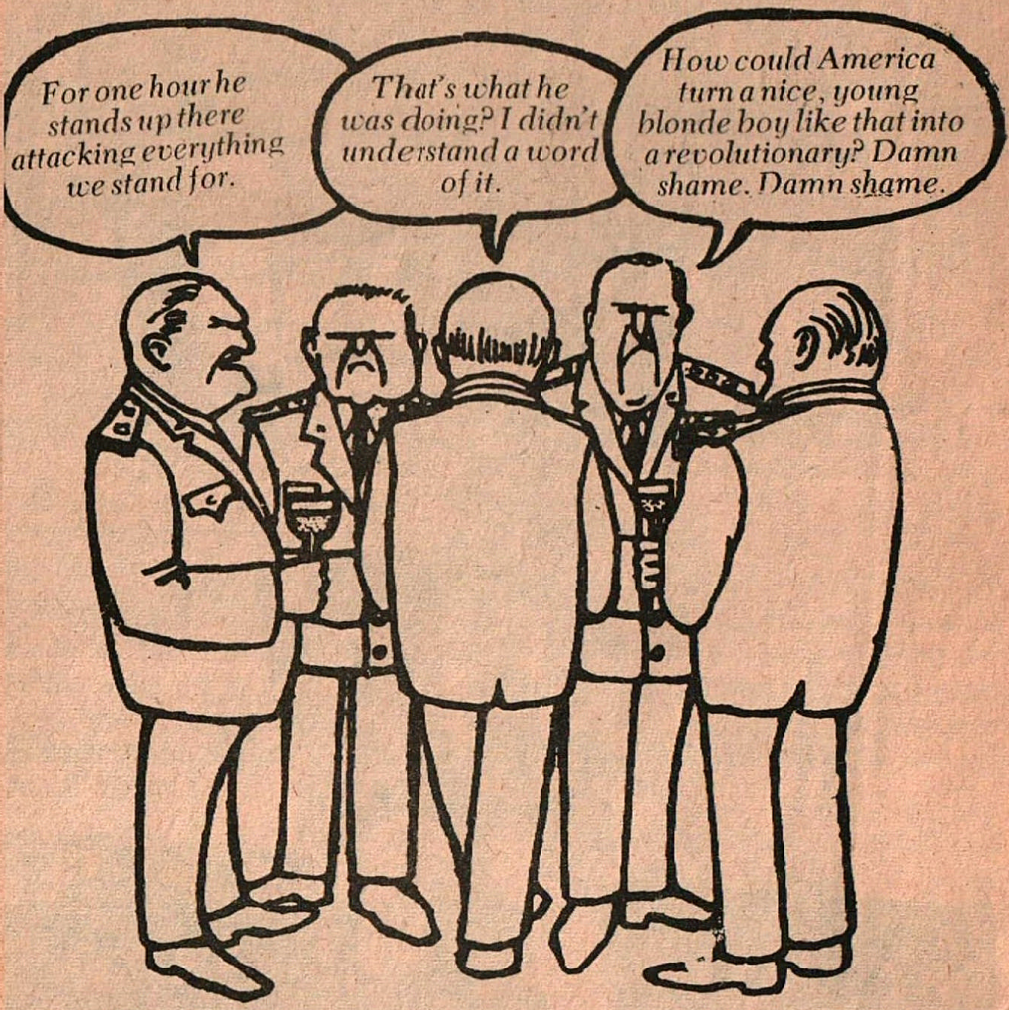
At the present time, we GIs have no control over our own destiny at all. Any officer can give us orders ranging from, "Get your hands out of your pockets," to "Open fire" on your brothers and sisters who are striking or demonstrating, to "Go over to Vietnam," and kill Vietnamese men, women, and children.

These conditions leave me two choices. I can either go along with the program, shout America right or wrong and try not to rock the boat, thereby becoming a tool of my own oppression and oppression of people the world over, or I can stand up and speak my mind and find people whom I know will go along with me to end this oppression. I have chosen to do the latter. **America, I am what you made me. I am a revolutionary.**

Now the only question in my mind is—is the military interested in irradicating the contradictions in the military, or are they interested only in ridding themselves of the GIs who speak out against these injustices?

Ask
a Marine





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ulthead, 968 Valencia, San Francisco, California 94110.**