

Labor donated

July 1970

NEW BALL GAME

Nixon's expansion of the war into Cambodia means a change in the nature of the war--a change from a war of mobility to a war of lines. It is an attempt to prevent the PAVN from helping their South Vietnamese brothers to defeat American Imperialism by closing off all help from the North. As ARVN forces drive further north within Cambodia, Nixon's plan becomes more and more obvious--he hopes to block off all infiltration with a fortified zone across the DMZ and Southern Laos, relying on the Thais, with U.S. air support, to hold the western flank. That's the only way he can hunt down the liberation forces in South Vietnam and still reduce the number of grunts in Indochina.

What does this mean to you? Well, the war as it is is bad enough. But ask your father how it was in Korea, or your grandfather what WWI was like. What's what Nixon's getting ready for you--two, three, four years with a hundred Hamburger Hills every day. That's what a war of lines is like--cheap for the brass and the bosses, but expensive for us. And we pay in blood.

Can he get away with it? Unless we start doing things right, no will. The movement we've built to resist the war has one deadly defect--it's mostly on campus, strong only among a tiny minority of Americans who could strike and march for years without the bosses losing a dime. We desperately need to get the word to the people who work--the ones who can stop the factories, the trucks, and the trains and close this country down until Nixon gives up.

It won't be easy--it might take years even if we start tomorrow. It won't be fun. But if we let the SMC work its "business as usual" approach and simply hope that as the movement gets bigger it will attract workers--then we'll lose. That approach has been tried for four years in New York City. Did it get the word to UIC construction workers? Nope.

Since Cambodia blew up a lot of people have decided to lobby in Washington, to work for "peace candidates" (like Johnson? Like Nixon?). What's been tried, without a let-up, ever since Woukin Gulf. What about the so-called "doves" in Congress now? Are they serious? Have they tried to impeach Nixon? No, they just want to call him on the carpet, slap his wrist for not telling them what's going on, and take away some of his money. As if he doesn't run the treasury as much as the Pentagon! These bastards don't mind a war, they just don't like a war that "splits the country" and puts them on the spot. If the escalation leads to a declaration of war with North Vietnam every one of these phonies will decide that the constitutional issue has been resolved and line up to lick Nixon's ass.

Newcomers to the anti-war fight are making a determined effort to convince us that "lobbying" and "peace candidates" deserve one more try. Which "peace candidate" would they have us support? Wayne Morse, maybe, traveling strikebreaker who killed the airline mechanics strike? Or Fulbright, the Arkansas racist? Probably Lindsay, who directs the police repression of Harlem and frames up the Panthers. None of these slick liberal doves can be trusted to make peace in Indochina while they make war on working people here at home. They, like Nixon, serve only the rich. But the new wave of activists asks us to support them--they find even the timid anti-war campaigns of the Socialist Workers Party too radical!

GIs have alot of prestige in the anti-war movement, and maybe we can swing the movement around into a strategy that will work. There's no time left for fooling around.

There's one thing left to do, and we should have started doing it years ago. We've got to get our leaflets to the factory gates, argue and explain, explain and argue, again and again, for as long as

it takes. And if we succeed, then we'll be sure that we can stop bleeding for awhile, and our Indo-chinese brothers can take back their country and live in peace.

WORK FOR A GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST THE WAR!
VICTORY FOR THE INDO-CHINESE REVOLUTION!
ALL INDOCHINA MUST GO COMMUNIST!

INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Reflecting rising frustration over the U.S. effort in Vietnam as well as disgust with the "normal" conditions of Army life, there has been an increase in the forms of individual action-dissent and also in attempts to get cop-out discharges. On Jan. 24, 1970, the Guardian reported an increase in the applications for conscientious objector (CO) status at the Oakland Army Terminal as a result of the efforts of the West Coast Counseling Service. Similarly, the Bond is filled with stories about acts of individual dissent by GIs. We would like to raise some objections to GI Movement activity which focuses itself on getting discharges by individual action.

The brass has taught us one useful principle for building our movement: a battle cannot be won by individuals acting alone--they must work as a team. If everyone who wanted a discharge could get it then we would have no problem. But since the brass won't let this happen, those who cop-out as individuals simply add to the burden of those who remain behind. And the GI Movement loses one more person who consciously understands the war. So who benefits in the end? The brass.

This is not to say that GI activists should re-up, but rather that they shouldn't cop-out. After all, what kind of person would volunteer to be a servant for U.S. imperialism when he knows better?

Even the attempt to get out on a cop-out discharge takes its toll whether or not it succeeds. How much respect do guys who try to get out of their part of the drudgery command from other GIs? How much respect do guys with real reasons (e.g., medical) get from other guys in their unit? While we certainly should not be young lifers, we should make sure that we carry our share of the burden.

Some GIs (e.g., the Fort Hood Three) feel that they should refuse to go to Vietnam because of the unjustness of the war. But, if one looks at the overall picture it seems that it would be better to have an anti-war GI fighting the N.I.F. than to have an unconscious victim of the draft out there simply following orders. It would make more sense to have GIs who knew the real story about the war out there spreading the truth and bringing others into the struggle.

Also, because of the brass's intimidation it is improbable (to say the least) that any large number of GIs will simply follow their own consciences and refuse to go. The late draft resistance movement spent valuable time in discovering virtually the same thing. So those who refuse to go will simply be replaced by unconscious and intimidated servants of imperialism.

GIs must begin to develop methods of collective effective action. Individual actions at best get us nowhere and at worst set us back and aid the brass.

DISCLAIMER

G.I. Voice is a GI produced newspaper. The views of G.I. Voice or any of the articles and letters contained herein do not purport to reflect the position of the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense. At the same time the views of the Dept. of the Army or DOD most certainly do not purport to reflect the position of G.I. Voice.
(Disclaimer according to AR360-5 para. 9b(4).)

GI VOICE Editorial Staff:

Leon Day (pvt., U.S. Army, retired)

Free to all G.I.s. Letters and contributions should be mailed to: G.I. Voice, Box 3069 South Austin Station, Austin, Texas.