

CAMP POLITICAL STATEMENT

PRESENT PRACTICE:

The Chicago Area Military Project (CAMP) is an independent radical organization made up of men and women living and working in the Chicago Area. We operate to:

- 1) Counsel and give legal support to active duty GIs and reservists seeking discharges or other assistance in their struggle against the military machine from within; and to develop political consciousness (as well as practical understanding) both in our counseling and in written analyses and "how to do it" memos.
- 2) Support and build the GI Movement
 - A) Foster inter-project and inter-organizer communication by publishing a monthly news and analysis newsletter of the GI movement (CAMP NEWS).
 - B) Assist in establishing projects and developing local resources in the midwest; provide training to establish active and competent counseling programs; provide and train lawyers where local lawyers are not available.
 - C) Provide literature focusing on legal self-defense and offenses and political education.
- 3)
- 3) Develop civilian consciousness and support for the GI Movement among people in the Chicago area.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND PRIORITIES:

The military is essential to capitalism. It functions to enforce capitalist domination over working class and poor people in this country and to defend American imperialism throughout the world.

American working class and poor people fill the ranks of the military. They are forced to enlist or drafted into service. The military reinforces class distinctions and teaches obedience and acceptance of powerlessness. This buttresses the structure and mechanisms of American society.

In addition to its military force, capitalism holds power by fostering racism, sexism, and destructive competitiveness. These divide people so that they fight among themselves instead of against their real enemy, the ruling class. CAMP understands the need for revolutionary socialism in the United States. Socialism will be attained when working class and poor people and "progressive" members of the middle class unite against their true enemies and seize control of society's resources in order to utilize them according to the needs of the people. Since the ruling class protects its position with violence, we must be prepared for armed struggle.

Education concerning popular control of resources and decision-making is essential. We also must exemplify the society for which we are struggling by resisting racism, sexism, egoism, competitive individualism and escapism.* We must move toward an understanding of collective work, collective living, and collective struggle.

It is important to build a movement in the armed forces with this perspective:

- 1) The oppression of enlisted men and women by the military makes them a source of revolutionary potential.
- 2) A strong GI movement can effectively stop the military from performing its duties for capitalism.
- 3) GIs will learn collective struggle against "the man" and his system through real experience of such struggle in the GI movement. Radical GIs will take revolutionary analysis back to the industrial society to which they will return.
- 4) The GI movement could form the basis for a people's militia.

TASKS:

- 1) Counseling usually deals with the immediate needs of individuals within the military; however, counseling must be politicized. Some possibilities are: use of political literature, encouraging offensive actions against brass harassment (such as Art. 138s), demonstrating the effectiveness of collective action, collective counseling, and collective self-defense.
- 2) Reservists and National Guardsmen, although they do not face the day-to-day harassment of active-duty GIs, are a source of revolutionary potential. Political education and disruption of these ranks will be increasingly important because these forces are the troops that will most likely be used to quell domestic disturbances and scab on strikes and worker's struggles.
- 3) Liberalization policies in the military (VOLAR) are attempting to coopt and pacify GI resistance. Encouragement of drug use must also be understood for its pacifying effects. Means must be found to expose these policies for what they are and to defeat them.
- 4) Institutional racism, sexism, and classism must be understood and confronted.
- 5) The increase of technological warfare demands new forms of resistance.
- 6) Research must be done on the internal workings, programs, and history of the military. This information should be available to the GI Movement.
- 7) We must write and distribute a history of the GI Movement.
- 8) A national GI paper is needed to reach more potential GI activists with news and political analysis to which the entire GI movement can provide input.
- 9) It is crucial that GIs and civilians relate productively to each other in areas of military dependents, labor struggles, and community organizing.
- 10) We must understand the struggles of revolutionary people throughout the world, learn from their examples, and assist them in their struggles.

*and jargonism