

To all Organizers, NCers, and At-largers:

We are mounting an all-out campaign in defense of Pvt. Edwin Glover and Pfc. Walter Kos. It is important to mobilize immediate nation-wide support for these two GI comrades and to build an on-going broad base for the work of the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee.

The persecution of Ed Glover at Fort Benning, Georgia is the most serious case of political harassment within the Army that we have yet seen. We must build the kind of massive pressure that can force the brass to get off his back. The attack on Pfc. Walter Kos at Fort Bragg, North Carolina makes slightly less gruesome reading, but it is no less clearly a violation of his constitutional and legal rights. His court-martial will undoubtedly be held on short notice, and we cannot wait for its scheduling to move into action. The enclosed fact sheets outline developments in both cases. (See also recent articles in the Militant.)

Some of the defense activities which can and should be initiated right away are:

1. Send telegrams of protest to the Commanding Generals of Fort Bragg and Fort Benning and to the Judge Advocate's Office, Department of the Army, Pentagon, demanding that all charges against Kos and Glover be dropped and illegal harassment cease immediately.
2. Urge antiwar committees to take up the cases, organize defense meetings, get out the facts on these two GIs, and send protest telegrams.
3. Get out a leaflet on the two cases for use on campuses and in any leafletting of GIs. Enclosed is a copy of a GI CLDC leaflet which we have used recently.
4. Encourage prominent people in your area (antiwar leaders, professors, liberal politicians, etc.) to send telegrams of protest. Or, if that is a little strong for them, to send letters to the Secretary of the Army, Stanley Resor, referring to the Glover and Kos cases, asking for an explanation, suggesting that immediate investigation of the circumstances seems called for, etc.
5. Circulate petitions supporting Glover's and Kos' rights to freedom of speech, press, and association, and demanding that unconstitutional action against them stop. Send Kos petitions to the Commanding General at Fort Bragg and Glover petitions to the Commanding General at Fort Benning.
6. Try to get articles on the cases and defense actions in the local press -- campus, underground, or otherwise.
7. Write directly to Ed and Walter, expressing solidarity and running through what is being done in your area on their behalf. We are at least as interested in keeping up the morale of our GI comrades as the Army is in breaking their spirit and isolating them. Addresses: Pvt. Edwin Glover, US 56504531, C Co., 4th Btn, 69 Armor Div, 197 Bgde, Ft. Benning, Ga., 31905; and Pfc. Walter Kos, US 54968464, 5th Evacuation Hosp. (SMBL), Ft. Bragg, N.C., 28307.
8. Solicit endorsements and contributions for the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee. You will be getting a bundle of sponsor cards in a few days. The GI CLDC will be putting out another fund appeal letter soon. If you know people that it should be sent to, please send in the list immediately.

9. Important: Send copies of everything (telegrams, petitions, articles, leaflets, etc.) and reports on your defense activities to the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee, Box 355, Old Chelsea Station, New York, N.Y., 10011. (You don't need to send separate telegrams, just xerox copies or the texts, by regular mail.)

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the importance of moving quickly and aggressively on this defense work -- not only for the sake of the GIs now under attack but for all antiwar soldiers.

Comradely,

Mary Alice Waters

Mary-Alice Waters
National Chairman

GI CIVIL LIBERTIES DEFENSE COMMITTEE
Box 355, Old Chelsea Station
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Fact Sheet: The Case of Pvt. Edwin Glover

The protracted harassment and illegal punishment inflicted upon Pvt. Edwin Glover at Fort Benning, Georgia, involve a most serious violation of GI rights. Even his physical health and safety are in jeopardy: Glover has a severe, painful back ailment, and the persecution of him has included strenuous extra labor such as moving rocks and swinging a pick, forced standing at "parade rest" for long periods, two beatings, and a denial of prompt access to adequate medical attention.

Glover, an antiwar activist and a socialist, was confined to his company area from September 21 until October 24. The Army brought no charges against him, even though military regulations stipulate that restrictions must never last more than two weeks without formal charges being filed. During this period, Glover was required to sign in at his headquarters every hour. For five days (October 17-23) he was forced to sleep in the orderly room so that he could be under constant surveillance.

Glover was physically attacked on two different occasions over the weekend of October 19-20. A rumor circulates on base that anyone who can beat up Glover will obtain a three-day pass, and at least one of the soldiers who assaulted the antiwar GI was rewarded with such a pass.

For three weeks Glover received mail only from his parents; all other communications apparently "disappeared" in the base mail room. Letters which Glover has mailed out airmail have taken as long as a week and a half to reach their destination. He still has a telegram waiting for him at the base's central post office, which he has not been able to obtain because of his restrictions.

Restrictions were temporarily lifted on October 25, after Glover's civilian counsel, Rowland Watts of the Workers Defense League, sent a telegram to the Adjutant General of the Army in Washington. The next day, however, Glover was assigned to a week's extra "training." (This educational bonus consisted of building bunkers and raking leaves.) At the same time, his pass was pulled, as were those of other soldiers in his battalion; those of GIs in Glover's company are still pulled.

On October 28, Glover finally succeeded in seeing the Inspector General about the Army's tampering with his mail. His superiors retaliated by forcing him to stand at "parade rest" for 45 minutes. Now he is the only soldier in the company who has to stand at parade rest while waiting to see the first sergeant.

Tight restrictions were reimposed on October 30, when Glover was charged with "dereliction of duty" for failing to fill out Form 2404 on a malfunctioning jeep which he had returned to the motor pool the day before. Glover did not know this form was required; in any case, Army regulations stipulate that it can only be completed after a qualified mechanic has examined the vehicle, which sometimes takes a few days. Glover has now filled out the form and submitted it.

He was offered an Article 15 (non-judicial disciplinary punishment) on the charge, but refused on the grounds that it would be an admission of guilt. The company commander then recommended to the 197th Brigade Commander that he be given a special court-martial, carrying a possible penalty of six months at hard labor in the stockade.

More work details were added to Glover's already heavy assignment, and he was threatened with yet another court-martial, for wearing an "improper uniform." Because of the stringent restrictions upon him, Glover had not even been able to

do his laundry for several weeks. Finally he borrowed a clean uniform from a friend. Glover says that it is fairly common for soldiers to appear in a uniform without a name tag or with the wrong one; he has never heard of anyone else being disciplined for it.

His extra duties have involved working several extra hours a day during the week and as many as six extra hours on Sunday. Much of this work is clearly manufactured especially for the antiwar GI. On Friday, November 1, he had to move a pile of rocks, only to be ordered the next day to move it back to the original position.

Most of the extra detail involves strenuous shoveling and moving dirt and rocks; often he has to wield a heavy pick. Glover suffers from a bad back (curvature of the spine due to weak ligaments), and Army doctors have been forced to prescribe strong pain killers for him. In spite of the medication and the exercises recommended by doctors at Fort Benning's Martin Army Hospital, the pain has not been eliminated.

Every attempt has been made to isolate Glover from friends and allies on base. Several of his closest friends have been court-martialed, and one of them is in the stockade. About a dozen have been transferred out of Fort Benning, most of them to Vietnam. Normally the processing of soldiers to Vietnam takes over a month, but with Glover's friends it was accomplished in a few days. Everyone in the battalion has been warned not to talk to the antiwar GI.

Glover, who is 21 and registered to vote in Robbinsdale, Minnesota, asked to see a notary public so that he could submit his military ballot and exercise for the first time his constitutional right to vote. His first sergeant replied, "Bullshit, you've got army work to do."

The seriousness of these developments and the extraordinary difficulty of communications with Fort Benning made it necessary for the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee to send someone from New York to Georgia on November 3, to talk directly with Ed Glover and verify the full story of his case.

On November 5, Watts called Captain Fygi in the Judge Advocate's Office at the Pentagon to demand that an investigation be made of the treatment of his client. The next day Fygi informed him that inquiries had been made, and that according to his findings there had been no transgression of accepted procedures of military justice in Glover's case. Although the attorney assured him that the information received by the Pentagon was in conflict with the facts in almost every particular, Fygi indicated that the investigation was satisfactory and finished as far as he was concerned.

On November 7, Watts telephoned the brigade commander, as convener of his client's court-martial, to establish a date for the trial. He vigorously protested the continued extreme harassment of Glover, pointing out that the young GI's physical and mental well-being were clearly threatened. The attorney was shifted from one Fort Benning officer to another; somewhere in the course of the morning's telephone calls, charges against Glover were dropped.

Theoretically there should be no restrictions against Glover at this point, and there is nothing for which he can legally be punished. It must be clear by now, however, that constant vigilance is necessary on the part of Glover's supporters and all defenders of civil liberties, to insure that Fort Benning officers do not seek retaliation and repeat the cycle of harassment and victimization.

GI CIVIL LIBERTIES DEFENSE COMMITTEE
Box 355; Old Chelsea Station
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Fact Sheet: The Case of Pfc. Walter Kos

Army attempts to silence an antiwar GI at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, bring out the fundamental question of the constitutional rights of American soldiers. Pfc. Walter Kos was on August 28th served with a direct order limiting his rights of free speech and press, and he now faces court-martial for a provoked violation of this unlawful order.

The case now pending is only the latest episode in a series of military efforts to intimidate this soldier. Kos was stationed in Germany last spring at the time of the murder of Martin Luther King. He helped to circulate a letter to President Johnson expressing GI reaction to the assassination, and a petition requesting that his company comply with the presidential request to observe a "Day of Mourning" on Sunday, April 7th. He and his fellow GIs were told that they had no right to submit such a petition and letter; and Kos was suddenly pulled out of his company in Germany and reassigned to the United States.

Kos' introduction to Fort Bragg was not very auspicious. He was held under armed guard for several days while the authorities waited for his records to arrive from Germany. (He had refused to answer certain parts of the Army "security" questionnaire on the grounds that they were unconstitutional and had asked to know what his rights were with regard to being fingerprinted.) The Army refused to tell him why or under whose authority he was being held as a criminal or to reveal whether it was legal for him to be so held without being arrested.

When he was released from custody, Kos began to discuss the war and his own political beliefs with Fort Bragg soldiers. Kos is a socialist: he is a member of the Young Socialist Alliance and a supporter of the presidential campaign of Socialist Workers Party candidate Fred Halstead.

Kos found that many of his fellow soldiers were interested in his literature and in the GI antiwar newspapers he received, and he shared his books and papers with them.

On August 15th, Kos entered into a discussion of the war with a group of basic trainees who had just arrived on base. He gave the new GIs a number of copies of Veterans' Stars and Stripes, an antiwar newspaper written by and for GIs and veterans. Kos' papers were grabbed by a sergeant and he was taken into custody, but he was released after having been questioned and held overnight.

On August 28th, Kos received the following direct written order from his commanding officer: "You are hereby directed to refrain from distributing or causing to be distributed, any publication not authorized by the Department of the Army on any part of the Fort Bragg Military Reservation, Fort Bragg, North Carolina." Kos was required to acknowledge receipt by signing the order.

On the morning of September 8th, an Army specialist 5 asked Kos for a copy of Vietnam GI. There are a number of witnesses to attest the fact that this request was made at the instigation of a sergeant. Kos handing the GI the copy of the antiwar newspaper that he was holding. The Army says that this act was a violation of their direct order.

Kos was notified on September 12th that he was to be confined to company area for an indefinite period pending court-martial for giving the Vietnam GI to the specialist 5. His activities were strictly circumscribed: he had to check in every hour on the hour when he was not in bed; for a time he was not allowed to make or receive telephone calls.

On September 13th Kos was told that he faced court-martial for disobeying an order, and he was later informed that the trial would be by special court-martial, carrying a maximum penalty of six months at hard labor in the stockade. No formal charges were filed against him, however, and the Army refused to assign him a lawyer. At one point, he was told that the case was still in "preliminary stages" and that he "didn't need a lawyer."

Kos feels that, aside from the unconstitutional nature of the charge, the way in which the case is being handled constitutes a clear violation of his civil liberties.

The Army case against Walter Kos went through all of the following developments during one day, Wednesday, September 25th. In the morning, the GI was introduced to his prosecutor, Captain Hatcher and his army defense attorney, Captain Hyde. He was finally served with official charges and was told that his court-martial had been set for Saturday, September 28th -- in other words, three days hence. At two o'clock in the afternoon, restrictions limiting Kos to the company area were lifted, although he was still restricted to the Fort Bragg post. At three o'clock, Captain Hyde informed Kos that the authorities had changed their minds about the court-martial, that the charges against him were being dismissed, and that the case would be "started all over again." Kos was soon told, however, that his court-martial had been rescheduled for Monday, September 30th, or Tuesday, October 1st. Kos then heard nothing more from his accusers until October 9th when his first sergeant told him that the restriction limiting him to the Fort Bragg post was lifted.

On October 19th Kos was approached by a Major Brown and told that Brown was to be his summary court-martial officer. Major Brown asked Kos to decide by October 23rd how he wished to be tried and gave the GI the choice of either a special court-martial or a summary court-martial. The maximum sentence for a special court is greater than in a summary court.

Although Kos feels that he is innocent of any offence, and is being tried because he exercised his constitutional rights of freedom of speech and of the press, he has decided to accept a special court-martial because of the very slight defense advantages over a summary court. At the present time no date has been set for his trial, but it will probably take place during the second or third week of November (over two months after the "crime" was committed -- handing a newspaper to the GI who requested it.)

Pfc. Kos is being defended by Rowland Watts, the eminent civil liberties attorney and president of the Workers Defense League. Mr. Watts is investigating the legal and constitutional questions involved in the denial of Pfc. Kos' first amendment rights, and is seeking to ascertain the exact status of the Army case against their antiwar critic.

For further information, write to the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee, Box 355, Old Chelsea Station, New York, New York, 10011. (Telephone: 212-2434775) Statements of support and financial contributions to help defray the legal costs of this case are most welcome.