

Minutes - Fort Hood Three Defense Committee Executive Committee meeting
of January 10, 1967

Present - Carl Griffler, Manuel Magana, Ivanhoe Donaldson, Nora Eisenburg, Ricky Eisenburg, Dan Seeger, Mrs. Agnes Johnson, Rev. Richard Leonard, Mike Stein, Paul Eidsvik, Fred Halstead, Lee D'Lugin, Stanley Faulkner, Irving Beinin, Francis Goldin, Joe Mora, Eric Weinberger

Requesting to be excused - Ralph DiGia, Dave Dellinger, Prof. Stanley Diamond. - A.J. Muste is out of the country.

1. Background to the case - short history of the defense committee and the case so far. Discussion. Report on the Fort Hood Three demonstration at Ft. Leavenworth.
2. Report on legal situation - by Stanley Faulkner - Briefs are now being prepared for the appeal of the court-martials to the Board of Military Review. The Board is expected to hear the appeal in March or April. If unsuccessful, the case will then be appealed to the Court of Military Appeals, and then to the U.S. Supreme Court. The civil actions (request for an injunction, etc.) are now moot. There was discussion of legal technicalities and of the expected timetable for the appeals.
3. Finances - Eric Weinberger reported that we are now approximately \$2000 in debt. Some bills are pressing (printing and telephone) and little money is coming in. Approximately \$1500 has been raised specifically for the N.Y. TIMES ad. The committee's fixed operating expenses tend to be \$600 - \$800 per week. There was discussion of the financial situation and a number of suggestions were made about raising funds -- including regular letters to FH3 and other mailing lists, fund raising parties, speaking engagements for Grace and others, placing of small ads in "left" and peace press across the country, and the establishment of a fund raising committee. No action was taken.
4. N.Y. TIMES ad - Of \$7000 needed for full-page ad, \$1500 has been raised and \$2000 more is promised. The possibility of obtaining the balance is now diminishing. It was decided that we should place during the first week of February the largest ad financially possible at that time.
5. Explanation of executive committee and steering committee - discussion of how the steering committee had functioned in the past. It was agreed that the executive committee would be responsible for policy decisions and would meet approximately once a month. The executive committee would elect a smaller steering committee that would meet approximately weekly to guide the week to week work of the committee.
6. Discussion of future activity - The discussion was opened by Irving Beinin with a series of general perspectives for the committee. He proposed that because of the importance of the Fort Hood case the committee should be more than a defense committee, that it should become an organizing focus for the movement as a whole. In particular it should focus on the antidraft movement and seek to become an organizing center for that movement. He proposed the following specific campaigns: 1) Place the N.Y. TIMES ad, hoping that it would be picked up and reproduced in smaller local papers across the country. 2) national speaking and organizing tours aimed at establishing a network of local committees across the country. 3) a national petition campaign.

~~Mike Stein proposed the following additions to Irving's proposals.~~

1) that the petition say three things -- We support the act of the Fort Hood Three, We demand that they be freed, and We are not in favor of having Americans sent to fight in Vietnam. 2) that we initiate a small meeting of national youth leaders sometime in the end of February to discuss actions (such as lobbying, etc., around the upcoming Congressional discussion of the selective service act) to abolish the draft, and to perhaps call for a national union of 500-1000 draft resisters. 3) to plan for a mass national anti-draft conference and the establishment of a national network of anti-draft committees.

There was extensive discussion of these and other proposals, as well as of the general perspectives of the committee and the role the committee should attempt to play. (It was suggested and generally

agreed that the committee should use members of the families, soldiers who have returned from Vietnam, and other speakers to speak, raise funds, and get signatures in community areas to build a community-based opposition to the war and support for the Fort Hood Three.)

Disagreement was expressed in the following areas:

Several members of the committee expressed their opinion that one unique thing about this case is its ability to appeal to G.I.'s, and that this is a different matter from student anti-draft activities -- that while each of these is important they perhaps cannot be effectively combined in the same case, and that in any case the obvious emphasis for this committee should be the appeal to G.I.'s

The opinion was also expressed by several members that the Fort Hood Committee is a defense committee and should concentrate its efforts on freeing the men, rather than changing its role to become a general anti-war and anti-draft committee. These members also felt that because of the committee's financial situation and its position within the movement, we do not have the facilities to undertake major antiwar and antidraft programs but should concentrate instead on raising money for legal fees, family travel, etc., handling correspondence, getting out literature, and doing propaganda work about the case itself. They felt that the support the committee would receive by functioning in this way would actually be greater and more effective than it would by attempting large antidraft actions upon which the whole movement might not agree.

Supporters of the proposals expressed the opinions that the antidraft movement is a rising movement and in order to make its greatest impact the Fort Hood committee should attempt to link up with it. They felt that the Fort Hood case is implicitly an antidraft case and that its impact is such that it should not restrict its activities to just those of a defense committee, but should attempt to develop the type of programs that would have the greatest impact upon the movement. They felt that the Fort Hood committee should assume a leadership role within the movement as a whole.

ACTIONS TAKEN: (The hour being late, those present at time of vote were - Carl, Eric, Mike, Joe, Nora, Ricky, Lee, Manuel, Agnes, Paul, and Fred)

There was general agreement on the following motions: 1) that the committee should go ahead with the petition campaign, with the petition drafted along the line of the three points: We demand that the Ft. Hood Three be freed; We support their act; We oppose sending anyone to fight in Vietnam. 2) That the committee should proceed to organize national speaking tours and local FH3 committees.

There was not general agreement on the following motions: 1) That the Staff be authorized to initiate a national meeting of youth and peace leaders to discuss a campaign to abolish the draft in connection with the upcoming Congressional debate of the selective service act. 2) That this conference should be a step toward a mass national antidraft conference possibly connected with the spring antiwar mobilization, and that the Fort Hood Three Committee initiate and help plan this mass conference to consider all questions relating to the draft and action against the draft.

These last two motions were approved with Paul Eidsvik and Fred Halstead voting no.

7. It was agreed that the steering committee should continue as previously for the time being: (Carl, Mike, Ricky, Nora, Irving, Ralph, Eric, Paul, Fred, A.J., and Dave D., and members of the families.) Its next meeting will be Tuesday, Jan. 17, 6:00 p.m., at 29 Park Row.