

G.I. Unit in Britain Assails Vietnam War

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LONDON, May 31—A thousand United States servicemen stationed in Britain announced their opposition to the Vietnam war today. It was the largest antiwar protest among American military personnel stationed here.

In petitions handed in to the United States Embassy, the men, mostly Air Force personnel from half a dozen bases,

"We the undersigned members of the U. S. Air Force and Navy, stationed in England, are opposed to the American war in Indochina. Because Vietnamization is increasing the Air Force and Navy role in the war, it is more important than ever before that we voice our opposition."

The protest was part of a growing antiwar and underground movement among Air Force enlisted men here, spurred by American students at Oxford, Cambridge and the London School of Economics.

In the last nine months an underground military newspaper called P.E.A.C.E. (People Emerging Against Corrupt Establishments) and heavily supported by Vanessa Redgrave, the actress, has received wide circulation at bases.

25,000 at British Bases

There are more than 25,000 United States military men in Britain, including 22,000 Air

Force men, 3,000 Navy men and about 300 Army men. Some key bases are near universities, where students have helped organize the servicemen and distributed the newspaper.

For the protest about 300 off-duty men in civilian clothes gathered at the sun-drenched Speakers' Corner of Hyde Park for a brief, quiet rally.

"We're protesting because there are ugly things happening over there and we think the United States should leave now," said Capt. Thomas Culver of Westfield, N. J., a member of the staff judge advocate's office at Lakeanheath Air Force Base.

"I was in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968," said he captain, who is being discharged soon after six years. "It's a terrible war."

The protestors, who wore white armbands emblazoned with a helmet and clenched fist, marched silently in separate groups of five and six to the embassy, a mile away, and submitted the petitions to duty officers. Because of the Whit-sun holiday, for which banks and stores were closed, the

streets were empty and the embassy had a small staff.

The men emphasized that the protest was not a demonstration, which is illegal for American servicemen in foreign countries. They said that the petitions, addressed to the President and Congress, were legal under regulations that state that military personnel may petition or present grievances to members of Congress without fear of reprisal.

At the South Ruislip air station, headquarters of the Third Air Force, Col. David Stiles, a command spokesman, said: It's been a long-standing rule that men don't become involved in National policy, especially in a foreign country. It's against Air Force policy to demonstrate."

He said it was a matter of interpretation whether the airmen had participated in a demonstration.

A 24-year-old staff sergeant, John McCoy of Xenia, Ohio, said: "We're just doing this because we think it's right and the only thing that has to be done to stop the killing. We're doing it because it's legal and in bounds."



Associated Press

ANTIWAR PROTEST IN LONDON: Off-duty American Air Force members, wearing white bands with P.E.A.C.E. insignia, marching toward the U.S. Embassy at Grosvenor Square.