Air Force Accused of "Zapping" Protesters

Women peace campers at Greenham Common, England, claim that they are being attacked by the US electronic weapons from within the US airbase there. They believe that some form of electromagnetic wave or other signal is being directed at them and is responsible for a number of illnesses they have suffered over the past year.

Symptoms range from mild headaches and drowsiness to bouts of temporary paralysis and, in one case, an apparent circulatory failure which required emergency treatment. Women have also complained of sharp pains and problems with speech coordination. A team of doctors from the Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons are compiling a report on the condition of the women affected.

The women first noticed a pattern of illnesses emerging in 1984. They discounted food or water poisoning as a cause and started to suspect interference from inside the base. They found that women at different points around the camp appeared to have experienced similar symptoms at the same time, even when they were not in contact with one another.

They believe there is a deliberate intent to make life difficult for them and so drive them away. Some of the worst affected women now find it impossible to stay around Greenham for more than a short period of time.

Electronic weapons are known to have been used by security forces on a number of occasions. The Americans are reported to have used ultrasound to disorient and demoralise their enemies during the Vietnam war and a number of American police forces are believed to have carried out trials with infra-sound generators mounted on the back of trucks. The high intensity, low frequency pressure waves these products are said to cause vomiting, nausea and a range of other disturbances and to induce fits in those who are subject to them.

The Defense Nuclear Agency has operated a laboratory-scale EMP simulator for three months each year. This would have induced fits in those who are subject to them. The Pentagon will have to release a list of all EMP simulators worldwide.

The Defense Nuclear Agency has operated a laboratory-scale EMP simulator for many years to test EMP's effects on the health of animals. It is located on the grounds of the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland.

Lawsuits Challenge Pentagon Research into "Electromagnetic Pulse" and Warn of "H.E.R.O. Effect"

by Mark Rabinowitz

In March 1987, two environmental groups, the Potomac River Association and the Foundation for Economic Trends sued in federal court to stop military research into electromagnetic pulse (EMP) until it complies with environmental laws.

In August, the Pentagon admitted that it had failed to prepare Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) on any of its EMP research projects, except for one being conducted in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay.

The hazards of EMP were vividly demonstrated on July 8, 1962 when the US military detonated a 1.4 megaton (100 times larger than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima) 248 miles above Johnston Island in the Pacific Ocean. In Hawaii, 800 miles away, street lights went out, burglar alarms began ringing, and circuit breakers shut down the power lines. The culprit was EMP, a previously unknown effect of nuclear explosion.

The potential disruption which could be created by EMP is phenomenal. A single nuclear weapon exploded 250 miles above Nebraska could blanket much of the US with EMP, disrupting electronic communications, destroying electrical equipment, and obotomizing computer memories.

The military implications of EMP were disturbing. The effect of detonations above the US would cut off Washington from the missile fields, thus severing the military nervous system from its nuclear muscle. Faced with this predicament—to use nuclear weapons first or not at all—both superpowers are more likely to launch preemptive nuclear strikes while communication systems still function.

The Pentagon began a program in the late 1960s to shield equipment from EMP. Non-nuclear EMP simulators were built to develop shielding techniques, and each branch of the military has several simulators. We do not yet know where all of the military's EMP simulators are located, but if the recent court suit is successful, the Pentagon will have to release a list of all EMP simulators worldwide.

The Defense Nuclear Agency has operated a laboratory-scale EMP simulator for many years to test EMP's effects on the health of animals. It is located on the grounds of the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland.
Q. I am being discharged from active duty. I've been told that my discharge will automatically be upgraded six months after I leave service. Is this true?

No. There is no such thing as an automatic upgrade of a discharge. But persistent rumors to that effect are often heard on military bases.

Sometimes service members are told about an "automatic" upgrade to get them to give up important rights such as a right to a board hearing or legal advice prior to discharge.

Congress has established the Discharge Review Board, which sits for each branch of the armed forces. The Board will hear the case of any discharge except a Bad Conduct Discharge or Dishonorable Discharge issued by a general court-martial. Thus, the board will hear your case if you received a General Discharge under Honorable Conditions or an Other than Honorable Discharge, or a Bad Conduct Discharge awarded by special court-martial.

This procedure is not automatic, however, and the board enforces a "presumption of regularity" in evaluating the paper record, so if you are attacking what is in your records, you will have a much greater chance of success if you can bring forward an eyewitness or written statements upholding your view of events.

In addition, the board may be interested in knowing how you have conducted yourself since you were discharged. It is usually helpful to document your post-discharge employment and record, such as contacts with the Discharge Review Board. Thus, an application for a discharge upgrade...
Egendorf's refusal to make moral judgments, he falls into an abyss of self-pity and self-compassion. The story of Vietnam veteran Lt. Ellen Nesbitt, who was discharged from the Air National Guard for being gay, serves as a poignant reminder of the complexities of life and the impact of war on individuals and society.

**Book Review**

_TREATISE ON DELAYED STRUGGLE by Vietnam Vet a Mixed Bag_  
by Tricia Critchfield

Ellen Nesbitt, a gay lieutenant in New York's Air National Guard, has won at least a temporary victory in her fight to remain in the service. For the past two years, her attorneys Louis Font, Tod Ensign, and cooperating attorney Sharon Miriam Ben-Shalom be reinstated to her position as member of the 247th Guardian to an alien land in a state of utter shock and confusion.

While it is impossible to generalize about the experiences and reactions of the some 3 million men and women who served in Vietnam, what happened to me was hardly unique. In its heyday, Vietnam Veterans Against the War attracted thousands of ex-soldiers, and now they are still "have not finished with Vietnam" and the duplicity and hypocrisy way, he illuminates the incredible insanity the downward spiral traveled by so many disappoint me. Alternating between perceptiveness of that instant. In the light of such seeing, the thereness of all emerges freely, joyously, as awesome and wondrous, as shimmering open. With that "ennobling act," Egendorf heals himself—and dismisses all question of right and wrong. But someone was responsible for all that waste and misery. A whole lot of people, in fact. And it is an empty and perhaps even irresponsible gesture to forgive those who do not seek forgiveness, have not sought forgiveness and are even now preparing to hurl another generation of Americans into Central America, the Philippines or God-only-knows where else.

Certainly, I agree wholeheartedly with Egendorf's insistence that Vietnam veterans must ultimately accept responsibility for their own lives. But, unlike him, I also insist that the other actors in the tragedy of Vietnam accept responsibility for their lives and actions. Given the nature and outcome of the war, such an insistence may well preclude ever reaching any national consensus about the war and where we as a nation should go from here. But if consensus means getting in line with Ronald Reagan and the "new patriotism," I for one can certainly live without it.

To his credit, Egendorf has no use for the current trends in American policy and popular opinion. But his alternative—a utopian fantasy in which we will transform the world by proclaiming "a human century as prologue to a new millennium," when all of us will place "ourselves and our national institutions in service to humanity"—is pure gossamer, a desperate attempt to offer hope in the face of hard-core reality. In "Healing From the War," veterans and nonveterans still struggling with the trauma of Vietnam are not likely to find much of practical value.

W.D. Ehrhart

**Air Force Officer Resists Ouster**

Ellen Nesbitt, a gay lieutenant in New York's Air National Guard, has won at least a temporary victory in her fight to remain in the service. For the past two years, her attorneys Louis Font, Tod Ensign, and cooperating attorney Sharon Flood have been fighting the Air Guard's attempts to discharge Lt. Nesbitt solely because she is an acknowledged homosexual.

In July, 1987, Ellen's attorneys filed a federal lawsuit in the Eastern District of New York's Long Island, seeking a court order mandating that the Air Guard provide Nesbitt with an administrative board hearing where she can defend herself against their involuntary discharge action.

In early October, just before the oral arguments on their motion were to take place before Judge Jacob Mishler, the Air Guard agreed to indefinitely postpone any discharge action. Since then, government attorneys have apparently been discussing the legality of denying Lt. Nesbitt her due-process rights to a public hearing.

In the meantime, Ellen continues to perform her duties as member of the 247th Combat Communications Squadron at Roslyn, New York. Attorney Font observed: "The fact that Ellen continues to receive the highest evaluation for her job performance points up the absurdity of the Pentagon's draconian rules which require the discharge of homosexuals regardless of their fitness to serve."

In a related case, a federal appeals court in Chicago recently ordered that Sgt. Miriam Ben-Shalom be reinstated to her Army Reserve unit in Milwaukee. Ms. Ben-Shalom has waged an eleven year fight to be returned to duty after the Army involuntarily discharged her in 1976. In 1980, a federal court in Wisconsin ruled that she should not have been discharged since Army regulations at the time allowed a discharge only for homosexual acts and tendencies and not simply for statements about sexual preference. The appeals court also ordered that the Army insure that no one in the military retaliate against the gay activist while she serves the eleven remaining months on her original Reserve contract.

The ruling may not directly affect Lt. Nesbitt's case since the military has tightened its regulations to cover those who merely acknowledge being homosexual and discharges under these regulations have withstood court challenges.

Lt. Ellen Nesbitt

—courtesy Present Tense
ON GUARD

World's Radiation Victims Get Together for the First Time

by Tod Ensign

Nearly 300 anti-nuke organizers and scientists from over 20 countries gathered in New York City Sept. 26-Oct. 3 for the First Global Radiation Victims Conference. The eight day conference dealt with a broad range of radiation-related subjects, from the worldwide effects of Chernobyl's fallout to the impact of nuclear production and testing on indigenous people.

Activists from Malaysia, Samiland, and the Marshall Islands joined delegates from the U.S., Western Europe, and Japan to exchange information and develop strategies for abolishing nuclear weapons and reactors. The largest delegation was sent by the Japanese Congress Against Nuclear Bombs (Gensuikin) which has branches throughout that country.

The Soviet Bloc countries were invited but did not attend. Kitty Tucker, conference co-chair explained that within the Warsaw Pact countries, nuclear protest has been focused almost exclusively on eliminating weapons; nuclear power has remained unchallenged. Apparently, "glasnost" doesn't extend to public discussions of Chernobyl and other nuclear disasters within the U.S.S.R.

Some workshops featured testimony by different groups of nuclear victims, from the 'hibakusha' bomb victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to indigenous people contaminated and sickened by uranium mining and processing in the U.S. Southwest and in the Pacific. Other panels featured detailed scientific presentations on radiation-exposure standards, educating medical personnel on the hazards of diagnostic X-rays, and preliminary estimates of health damage due to the Chernobyl disaster.

Dr. Ernest Sternglass, a radiological physicist at the University of Pittsburgh, presented some startling data on health effects due to the relatively-low doses of Chernobyl fallout that reached the U.S. using government mortality statistics, he discovered corruption of this type has not been focused almost exclusively on eliminating weapons; nuclear power has remained unchallenged. Apparently, "glasnost" doesn't extend to public discussions of Chernobyl and other nuclear disasters within the U.S.S.R.

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But, it's about time people who speak out about this do it. Activist Tom LeBlanc, a Native American active with the Indigenous Peoples Uranium Forum in San Francisco, also questioned the emphasis on academic presentations by scientific experts. "Indigenous people also have much to teach others in terms of alternative and traditional medicines, and a non-exploitative relationship to the environment," LeBlanc observed. He called for more communication and trust among the diverse groups.

Kitty Tucker, a conference organizer, attributed many of the logistical shortcomings to the failure of the larger anti-nuke groups, such as SANE-Freeze, Greenpeace, and the Mobilization for Survival to pitch in. "They all made a lot of promises, but delivered nothing," she stated bitterly.

It appears that a permanent coordinating body will emerge to coordinate and plan for additional international conferences in the future.

For more info: Health and Energy Institute
236 Massachusetts Ave NE, #506
Washington, DC 20002(202) 543-1070.
Brian Willson Returns to the Barricades

by Stephen Babb

"You don’t allow your brothers and sisters to be killed in your name," says Brian Willson, summing up his motive for activism. Willson is the Vietnam veteran who lost both his legs in a Sept. 1 protest at the Concord Naval Weapons station. Willson and other activists were on the tracks to prevent US military shipments to Central America.

Dressed in slacks, a T-shirt expressing solidarity with Salvadoran refugees and his ever-present St. Louis Cardinals cap, Willson was relaxed and animated during our interview. Willson spends several hours a day learning to walk on his artificial legs. He still experiences a good deal of pain—not only from his legs, but also from a fractured wrist and other injuries. A small indentation on his forehead is a reminder that the train also literally split his skull open. Willson has recovered rapidly. He seems to have pulled through by sheer force of will.

Willson came from a very conservative family. "I was incredibly straight... on the right, an all-American boy who was literally born on the Fourth of July," he says. At college in 1964, he was the campus campaign manager for GOP presidential candidate Barry Goldwater. In 1969, at age 28, he began serving in Vietnam. "It was a watershed experience," he says. "I had a shocking awakening when I realized that most of what I had learned growing up was a lie."

But Willson is quick to point out that Vietnam was only one step. He arrived at his current positions through a gradual process, not one-time "conversion." After Vietnam he became a lawyer and worked to support causes such as prison reform, advocacy for mental patients and veterans' rights. He first visited Nicaragua in 1986—17 years after going to Vietnam.

Willson spent two months living with a family in Esteli. Shortly after he arrived, the contras attacked several nearby communities, killing 11 civilians. The incident left Willson shaken and angry, and instilled in him an almost unbearable sense of urgency about stopping the carnage. He remembers telling the family, "That's my money out there. We're killing people for a lie. I've been through it before and this time I've got to stop it."

After returning from Nicaragua Willson says he "couldn't just go about my business." He gave up his career as a lawyer and became a full-time activist. From that moment to the present he has been constantly engaged in political action beginning with last fall's Veterans Fast for Life. He then organized Veterans' Peace Action Teams which have held marches and stationed observers in Nicaraguan war zones. Most recently, he has led the Nuremberg Actions campaign, which originated the Sept. 1 Concord protest.

Willson was instrumental in shaping the committee's strategy, which now includes an around-the-clock vigil at the Concord tracks. While the campaign's immediate goal is to stop the arms flow from Concord to Central America, it raises much deeper issues. Willson says the group wants people in the US to recognize that "the lives of people in the third world are worth no less than their own." The campaign urges people to "take responsibility for US actions abroad—actions taken in our name but without our consent—that do violence to those people," Willson explains. He argues that what is needed is "a nonviolent revolution in the first world. If we don't do it, we're not going to survive."

NEEDED: INTENSE PRESSURE

Willson points out that citizens actually have an obligation under international law to restrain themselves from engaging in criminal conduct. The legal basis for this, Willson argues, is the Nuremberg Protocols, a body of conventions agreed to by most of the world in the wake of the post-World War 2 Nazi trials.

Willson believes the Nuremberg Actions Campaign's approach—pressing the US to only way to change US policy toward Central America. "The answer isn't in Washington," he says. There has been "a long history of bipartisan support for a policy of covert terrorism" toward Central America, he notes. The two major parties agree the US has a right to intervene in the internal affairs of other countries. The Republicans, he says, opt for "flagrant military aggression, and the Democrats prefer more insidious political meddling."

Willson feels strongly that "we won't see a major policy shift in Washington without a consciousness change on the part of the American people" and the application of intense public pressure. What is needed, he says, is "a major, sustained, day-by-day resistance" exemplified by the round-the-clock vigil at Concord by some 1100 protesters.

Witnesses describe the incident in which Willson lost his legs as a deliberate attack. Willson says he never imagined that the munitions train would fail to stop. He thought it was as "a normal, relatively low-risk compared, for example, to the Veterans Peace Action Team march through a Nicaraguan war zone he took part in last spring. "I couldn't believe it when I woke up in the hospital and they told me what had happened," he recalls.

To those who claim he should have foreseen what happened to him, Willson replies, "I'm sorry, but I don't expect to be marred for exercising my First Amendment right of dissent. I refuse to expect or accept it and I won't expect it when I go back to the tracks." To those who dismiss him as a "fanatic," Willson stresses the irony of a situation where "if you go off to war, 10,000,000 miles away, and you may be killed yourself, you're considered a hero, but if you put your life on the line for something you believe in, for peace, you're considered a masochist and a weirdo."

Willson describes the Sandinista revolution as "a beacon of hope for the third and first world alike." This is why he has chosen to focus his energy on it, he says. But he adds that US intervention is jeopardizing the sovereignty of a number of other countries equally deserving of solidarity. He notes that the US has supplied everything from tanks to the Contras in El Salvador, Guatemala and Angola—where there are some 20,000 amputees, mostly victims of mines planted by US-funded rebels. Willson plans to go on speaking tours in these countries as well as in Scandinavia and the USSR.

Brian Willson appears ready to confront whatever occurs. He cites El Salvador with indestructible optimism. "After all," he says, "I survived being hit by a train; I mean, what are they going to do next? I feel more at peace with myself now than I've ever felt before."

"Every person has a track," he adds, "and a place on it to take a stand." —Brian Willson

Body Count

Continued from page 1

His grip when he slipped in the river. Lee's body was recovered two days later.

The conclusion of Maj. Michael Anderson, Baxter's superior, was that the Lieutenant's actions showed not only "disobedience," but also "wanton disregard" for Lee's life. Anderson recommended Baxter's court-martial.

The release of the incident report by Eva Lee, Craig's mother, acquired with the aid of "On Guard," is the first official explanation of Lee's death offered by the military. Ms. Lee, who lives in New Haven, Conn., first learned of her son's death not from the Army but from a local television news report.

With the help of Nathan Campbell, a reporter for The New Haven Inquirer, Ms. Lee enlisted the office of Cong. Bruce Morrison (D-Conn.) to inquire into the accident. The congressman agreed to provide information, the failure to return Craig's dog tags, and the refusal of a funeral director to allow family members to positively identify Craig's body, led them to consider the possibility that something was being covered up.

Both Morrison's office and the Lee family still wonder what else Craig, who was a fluent Spanish speaker and a member of the National Spanish Honor Society, might have been doing in Honduras. Lee's accident came at the same time a memo was made public indicating that U.S. troops had engaged in combat with Sandinista troops inside Nicaragua at least once in 1984.

During the past four years there have been various other reports of U.S. troops participating in combat and combat support missions inside Nicaragua and elsewhere in Central America. During one 18 month period between 1983 and 1984, 13 members of an elite helicopter unit, Task Force 160th, died in reported training missions. Members of the 160th, whose motto is "Death Waits in the Dark," had told family members that dressed in civilian clothes and without identification, they would fly night missions into Central America. According to a congressional investigator, sources inside the military were close to confirming these reports when a newspaper story scared them off.

In December of 1984 two Navy SEALs died when they reportedly wandered into demolitions set by members of their own unit during a log clearing mission in Northern Honduras. But a former member of the unit says he conducted reconnaissance missions in Nicaragua with one of the SEALs. Contradictions in the Navy accident reports led to an investigation by the office of Sen. James Sasser (D-Tenn), into the possibility that these deaths might not have happened in Honduras at all, that they may have been cases of so-called "bodywashing,"--that the deaths may have actually occurred in Nicaragua and staged in Honduras.

Daniel Cobos, an Air Force cryptologic linguist who has applied for status as a Conscientious Objector, has said that he flew intelligence missions over Nicaragua as recently as April, 1987.

The involvement of American troops in Nicaragua, which would have been a violation of the Boland Amendment between 1984 and 1986, and concerns of family members of those who have died in Central America was not addressed during the Iran-contra investigations. And as the talk turns from war to peace in the region, interest in their story diminishes even further.

Eva Lee says that even now, having read the accident reports, she still wants to know what Craig was doing in Honduras in the first place.

"They send my son, a fluent Spanish speaker, on a supposed training mission in Honduras and he can't swim and he drowns in a river," she says. "But you tell me, aren't there any rivers in the United States?"

Brian Willson and wife, Holley Rauen in his hospital room.
Collection Number: AG1977

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PUBLISHER:
Publisher: Historical Papers Research Archive
Location: Johannesburg
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