

Ask Dr. Dice

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Hopefully last in Dr. Dice's "plagiarized from the headlines" series, here is a most disturbing story from examiner.com:

Rightfully so, attention after the recent mass shooting in Alabama focused on the trail of blood left by Michael McLendon, a former police officer on a rampage. But several Reuters photos taken after the incident, showing Army troops from nearby Fort Rucker patrolling the streets of Samson, Alabama, are starting to draw attention. The use of military personnel in a police role often raises concerns given their different missions and training. The practice is also, despite loosening of statutes in recent years, almost certainly illegal under federal law.

Passed in the wake of Reconstruction, when formerly rebellious regions of the country chafed under military occupation, the Posse Comitatus Act reads:

"Whoever, except in cases and under circumstances expressly authorized by the Constitution or Act of Congress, willfully uses any part of the Army or the Air Force as a posse comitatus or otherwise to execute the laws shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years, or both." The motivation for the law is clear. Military personnel are trained and equipped to wage war against an enemy. Police are trained to maintain order and keep the peace among their neighbors. The two roles don't interchange very well – as has been amply demonstrated by the carnage resulting in recent years from increased police use of military tactics. The Posse Comitatus law was specifically crafted to prevent the federal government from exercising direct, armed control over states and localities. As such, it doesn't apply to the National Guard, unless those state troops are federalized and placed under the command of the Army.

If you have a question for the doctor, email ask-dr-dice@mit.edu.

Musical Challenge!

Samantha Palazzolo

Email the title of the following song to sampp@mit.edu and *possibly* win a prize!

Capo 1

Cm Cm7 Bb/C Cm7 Bb/C Cm7 Cm Ab/C

Cm

WOOO!!! SPRING BREAK!!!!