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# CRAP NEWSLETTER

August 14, 1965

46 Arch Street, New Haven, Conn.

A MEETING OF JOIN IN CHICAGO DREW UP THE FOLLOWING...

## WELFARE BILL OF RIGHTS

1. Welfare people should be treated like human beings--not like beggars or like someone for a caseworker to push around. Welfare is a right, not a favor.

2. Welfare people should get equal and fair treatment--the way things are now, welfare workers make up rules as they go and don't bother to check to see who gets the raw end of the deal.

3. Welfare people should have the same rights of privacy as other people. Welfare workers have no right to barge into a home at all hours without a warrant and to search through people's private possessions for men's clothing, expensive foods, etc. If someone has committed a crime, let them get a warrant. If not, let them stay out!

4. Welfare people should get prompt attention to their needs. Long waiting periods must end--you can't eat on a waiting period.

5. Welfare people should not be forced to get their relatives' money. It's not the relatives' fault that a person is poor. If the welfare wants the people who cause poverty to pay, why don't they make the rich landlords support people on welfare?

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## WELFARE BILL OF RIGHTS continued

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6. Welfare people should be their own caseworkers. Welfare workers don't know the first thing about what it's like to be poor.

7. Welfare people should get enough for a decent living. Right now they get about half enough to live on, and that's if the caseworker doesn't happen to forget about this year's clothing allowance or something. Extra expenses like carfare and telephone calls to the caseworker should be included in the budget.

8. Welfare people have a right to their checks. Whenever any problems develop, the way it is now people's checks get held up. It gets so that landlords won't rent to welfare people because landlords know that welfare checks never come on time. And when there is a dispute of any kind the welfare person should get the benefit of the doubt until it's settled.

9. Welfare people have a right to a decent food stamp program. The way it is now, you've got to buy so many stamps at one time that poor people on welfare just can't afford to buy the stamps that are supposed to help them. And food stamps should be good for any commodity.

10. Welfare people have a right to organize themselves into a welfare union, a union which fights for all the rights listed here.

from JOIN's newsletter

### People should get rent receipts

--by Princess Redfeather

I would like to warn people about the importance of rent receipts--that was my problem. The landlord being over 70 and having respect for age I never pressed, but expressed a desire for receipts due me. His excuse was always that the receipt book was in the car. At times I would pay the rent for one month at a time without getting a receipt. Sometimes I would make out a receipt and give it to him to sign, and he signed it if he wanted to.

When he demanded the rent I wanted the receipt on advice of an attorney, before I gave him the money in the hand which he refused. On his complaint of \$120 due him June 29 I appeared in Room 809 before Judge Pearson at City Hall. An agent friend of his posed as an attorney until the judge asked to see the notice.

She said that you, Princess Redfeather, received a 5 day notice. No, I never received a 5 day notice. I showed her the notice that requested me to be at Room 809 so that a judgment by default may not be taken against me.

The judge gave me 10 days to move and told me not to pay any more rent.  
(next column)

A few days later the agent said his wife was ill and I could pay him money to stay until August 1.

But a week later my things were on the street. I paid the rent but had no receipt to show the bailiff when he came. So the people from Friendship House and JOIN found me sitting among my belongings. People were sympathetic, offered help, worried about me having food, even children would come and offer help.

### holding my rent

--by Mrs. Elsie Peters

Some of the men on the streets can't get jobs. One man I know hasn't any family and no job. Somebody who was drinking a lot beat him up on the street. He wanted to work but has real bad nerves and something wrong with his back. We helped him out and he's a real nice man. It's a lot of men, if they only had some friends and a job they'd be okay. He has nobody to look to.

The welfare gave him \$20 and they might help him get a job now. They lock these men up but that won't help.

People need to help each other out, like JOIN says.

# Rent Strike on Liberty St.

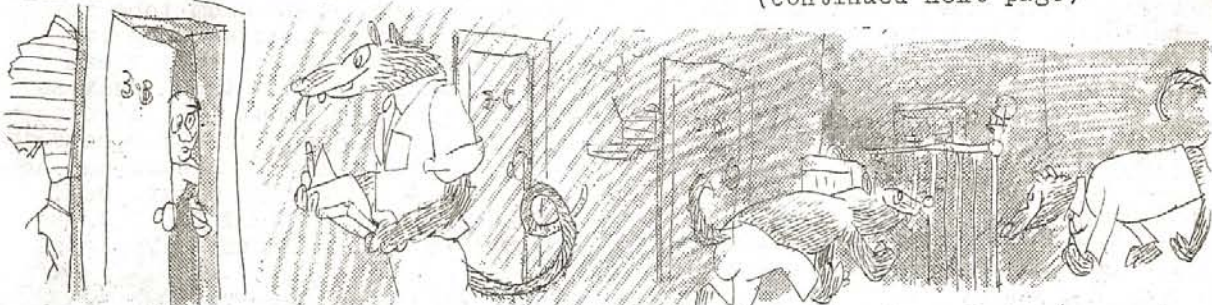
--by Eufizine Bethea

This is what happened on Liberty Street at 147 and 151. First of all it started off with holding the rent back until Bert moved out, and then the other families in the building decided they would hold the rent back until they fixed up the apartment. Out of 10 families nine of them offered \$35 and one offered \$30. On August 2nd Mr. Levine came by for the rent. We all met in Apartment 2, because that's his first stop when he comes into the building. We told him that we were giving him \$35 for those who had 4 rooms for the whole month, and one will be giving him \$30 a month. We offered him \$35, but he would not accept it. He said he could accept it for two weeks, and we did not agree with that. Then he turned around and asked Joe what he think about it, and he said no. Then he turned around and asked Eddie, and Brian and John (from the Hill Neighborhood Union) who were they, from CPI (the local war on poverty). They told him no, they were not from CPI, and Brian spoke up and asked why. Not that it make any difference to him, Levine said. And he asked Mrs. Reed was she going along with it, and she said yes, we have to stick together. He said he would have to go back to the office to find out what the boss said, and he would be back in a few minutes.

The time we saw him was about 2, and he didn't come back until August 3rd about 1:30. When he came, my mother left the door open in order for him to see the peoples in the

apartment so he would know we were waiting on him. He run by the door. He attended several other apartments in the building and he came up to the third floor to Mrs. Taylor's. He came in for the first time and shut the door and went through her house and he wanted to know who was the two guys following him. In the words that he said, "What in the hell did they want out of me?" She told him about the sockets in her apartment wasn't working. He told her to give him a little time and he'd have everything fixed up, all the apartments fixed by next week. Then he asked her did she attend to all the meetings and she said no, but the times she missed at the meetings her sister was there for her. He asked her did she sign up with them, and she said no, her husband. He begged her not to sign up with them. Sweat was popping off his face as big as your thumb-- and scared stiff.

He goes on down and he talks to Mrs. Gattling, and he asked her, "What in the hell are those damn people trying to do to me?" She said she didn't know, she didn't go to any of the meetings. He came back upstairs to go in Apartment 14, the Dawson apartment, and he run into Mrs. Taylor again, and she asked him if he stop downstairs in Apartment 2. He said no, he didn't want to see those damn people again. When he come back down the steps he pass by my mother's door again, he ran out side. Then he goes down to Prince Street, and he stand and look back up this way and my daughter was going  
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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Don't pay rent for Rat ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Hill Union News, continued

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down to Prince Street, and he stand and look back up this way and my daughter was going down the street toward Prince Street. I went after her, and he saw me coming and ran to his car. He also said that we don't have good sense.

He said when we was down south we lived in a worsor house than this, and I told him we did not. All the things wrong put together in this house, we didn't have wrong in the south. At least it wasn't snowing in the windows. I told him we wasn't in the south, we came to the north to make it better. But from the way it looks it isn't better, so far.

The mayor's office called Mrs. Reed and said we would get a letter. The inspectors also came, and they said we need a new building.

We are tinking about picketing his office and home and Gold and Gold office and home. Everyone who thinks this is a good idea, join in and help us picket Wednesday and Thursday. The more people the better it is. We feel that we are no bums, why should we live in a slum.

*Does the city help poor peoples?*

--by Brian Glick

This Wednesday for the first time in the history of New Haven a slum landlord was convicted for violating the city housing code. Bernard Weinstein pleaded guilty to 3 charges of violations in the building he owns at 192 Washington. The law says Weinstein could have been fined \$50 or jailed 30 days for each day each of the violations existed. Of course, he was not sent to jail. He had to pay only \$150 in fines. And \$100 of that was given back to him because he promised to evict the rest of the tenants who live in the building. In effect, the city is paying this landlord \$100 to put his tenants in the street. They say this is because people shouldn't have to live in such terrible conditions. But where will the tenants move? Almost certainly they'll have to go to another slum building.

The \$50 the landlord had to pay probably isn't even half-a-months rent from one of his tenants. Repairing his building certainly

would cost 100 or 200 times the \$50 Weinstein was fined. \$50 a year is a drop in the bucket to pay for breaking a bunch of laws every day without anybody doing anything about it. When the city is that soft on criminals, no landlord in his right mind will bother to fix anything in his building. That's why the tenants at 147-151 Liberty are refusing to pay their landlord more than their apartments really are worth. And that's why they and the Hill Neighborhood Union are picketing their landlord next week.

*I want to talk to the people*

--by C.J.

I've been before Division of Neighborhood Improvement and spoke to them about my house and they didn't seem to do anything. I've also been before the mayor and nothing have been did about it. I've also had the inspectors over--five to 10 inspectors over there. I've got leaks in two bathrooms, 1 upstairs and 1 downstairs, and seems as though they go down theres and talks to Jimmy the Gyp and nothing happen although they been to court 5 time already and nothing has been did about it.

My wife fell and brok her 2 pelvic bones and her neck because of the condition of the house. She's alling, but I mean she can't even do her own house work. Inspectors come down and see the house and they haven't made them do anything yet. And also my daughter was walking across the floor upstairs and she fell through the floor and she also broke her leg. And nothing has been did about the house het. What are they waiting for? Someone to get killed in the house before they do anyting?

Also from Six Corner Intersection down Columbus Avenue seem tobe a freeway. The cops be setting in Jimmy the Gyp's office when these race drivers pass and they don't say anytying to them about it. I've seen it myself. We have asked for patrolmen to patrol Columbus Avenue and no body seem to have make a move yet. What are wewaiting for? Our kids to get killed by one of these maniacs?



# from Oakland's Peralta Improvement League

EDITORIAL

As many of you know who were at the first public meeting of the Peralta Improvement League (PIL), it was decided that our tenant organization should continue, even after the fence issue is all over. There are many problems here at Peralta Villa which we can solve for ourselves if we band together. Individuals can complain about something, but the only way to be heard is to organize.

PIL believes that tenants in low-cost housing are people, just like anybody else. We don't lose any of our human rights because we live in Housing. In America we are guaranteed these rights. But there are always those who try to take our rights away from us. Do you want Public Housing, or do you want a Concentration Camp?

## FREEDOM NOW!

All over American people are fighting for Freedom Now! The only way to get it and to keep it is to stand together and let our voice be heard. The management of Peralta Villa likes to think we are little children. But we are not little children, we are adult human beings and we can make our responsible decisions.

The War on Poverty Law says that poor people must have a say in what the anti-poverty program does. Did you know the workers destroying our yards and fences were paid by the War on Poverty. Did you have anything to say about it? This was wrong and against the law. We have written to Washington DC to tell them about it. We need your ideas and help if we are going to win our freedom at Peralta Villa. All the decisions about what we do will be made by tenants only. Why don't you come and give your ideas!

This newsletter will come out every week. It is our newsletter. Whatever you want printed, will be. We are all reporters for it. Send in announcements and articles that you want printed. Drop them in the mailbox at 1125 Poplar, or phone 444-2825.

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\* LET THE PEOPLE DECIDE! \*  
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## Smear tactics + Violence Used

The Steering Committee of PIL reports that one or two tenants who oppose the work of PIL are having a smear campaign against it and its members. They are making charges of everything from "communist" to "Goofballs." Because all of their accusations are false, the Steering Committee is warning them of a possible suit for slander.

Two SNCC workers from Mississippi, who spoke to the Committee Sunday night said that this happens everywhere! Every Civil Rights worker in the South has been called a Communist, an agitator, and so on.

The same person in charge of the smear campaign, has also been extremely violent. This individual hit some of our picket line people with a large stick the other day. The same person smashed all the windows and door glass in a neighbor's house Saturday night. Do not be scared by these people or their name-calling. Wherever there is change there are people who fight it in these ways.

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the following leaflet was distributed in Oakland at AGE, a big discount house.

Paul Godkin, President of AGE, is chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Oakland Housing Authority. He is responsible for tearing down our backyard fences and gardens without asking us. We are residents of public housing who demand our rights. WE HAVE EVEN BEEN DENIED A FAIR HEARING. This week the commissioners went back on their pledge to hold a special meeting for us.

Tell the people inside that we deserve a full hearing.

PERALTA IMPROVEMENT LEAGUE.

WE WANT AN ANSWER from the PRESIDENT of A.G.E.

# Boston Profile Research Project

The Boston Profile Research Project was conceived as a serious attempt to bring to bear the interests and skills of the academic community on the problems facing the Students for a Democratic Society's action for social change. Only through participation in action-oriented research can they continue to develop their professional skills while contributing significantly to the success of the movement.

The Dudley Street Action Center, the SDS community organizing project in the Roxbury -North Dorchester area, urgently requires a basic analysis of the economic, social, and political structure of Boston. Such a study, or series of studies would serve as a guideline in determining those sectors of the community most receptive to change and in developing cohesive programs and channels for constructive activity. We need also to determine the extent to which particular social and economic phenomena are basic to the continuance of social stratification as it exists, or are merely superficial manifestations of a breakdown of fundamental forms within the community. Such analysis must then be both action-oriented and pragmatic.

## RESEARCH ON MANY LEVELS

Research will take place on many levels and represent varying degrees of sophistication, including basic long-term projects on city structure, review of existing literature and compilation of pertinent studies for use by researchers and community organizers, as well as small projects with limited goals, such as statistical and descriptive profiles of various parts of community life. We propose to divide our research group into task forces on

- A) HOUSING
- B) EDUCATION
- C) MEDICAL CARE AND SERVICES
- D) WELFARE SERVICES
- E) CONSUMER GOODS AND SERVICES
- F) CITY SERVICES
- G) UNEMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- H) CRIME AND POLICE

This research must not remain isolated from the working community. Every effort will be made to bring researchers into direct contact with community people and community organizers, with a view toward bringing them a better understanding of neighborhood problems and community orientation.

In the context of longer-range plans for SDS policy, intensive study of various aspects of general city structure are called for. This would include

- A) POLITICAL STRUCTURE. Pattern of power and influence. Historical perspective. Relation to business and ethnic communities.
- B) ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE. Crime Commission. School Committee. Unions. War on Poverty. Police. Boston Redevelopment Authority. ACSD. Urban Renewal Authority
- C) VOLUNTARY INSTITUTIONS. Churches. Education institutions. Cooperative institutions. Foundations; their influence and activity.
- D) DEMOGRAPHY

Much of this analysis acquires deeper meaning when effected in conjunction with similar work in other cities. Lines of communication will be set up to facilitate this.

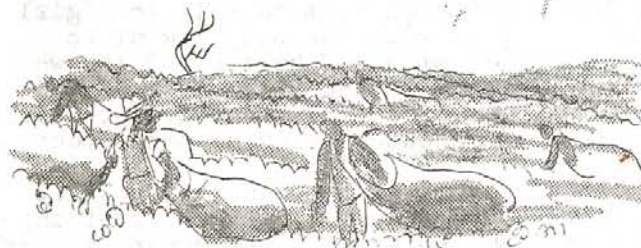
No doubt the above prospectus appears pragmatic and close to home. This, however, should not disguise the truly unique and potentially revolutionary nature of this program. Ours is an attempt to redirect a large portion of intellectual activity into more fertile fields, to sensitize the

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creative forces of the academic community to potentialities for change within the context of a grass-roots movement. Efforts will be focused on producing professional work, with studies to be published in journals and periodicals. Later we hope to form a quarterly dedicated to studies relevant to our work, in cooperation with projects in other areas. We also look forward to compiling a comprehensive profile of Boston after 2 or 3 years of research. A number of grants will likely be available within a year for those interested in full-time research.

Research will not remain, however, divorced from other SDS activity. A handbook for community organizers and student groups and a series of pamphlets studies on city problems are contemplated, to be used for tooling up SDS policy-making and general student education. Lastly, the Research Project will be coordinated with university seminars beginning in the fall  
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For more information, write to SDS, 241 River Street, Cambridge, Mass. Also any comments on the relevance such a research project would have for your community organizing would be welcome. Send them to the newsletter.



The following leaflet was passed out and posted in McComb, Miss in July 1965. It was written by a group of Negroes in the community who met together after learning a classmate of theirs, John D. Shaw, had been killed in action in Vietnam. Shaw, who was 23 years old, had participated in the 1961 demonstrations in McComb. Criticism of the group eventually reached the floor of the US Senate.

"Here are 5 reasons why Negroes should not be in any War fighting for America:

1. No Mississippi Negroes should be fighting in Viet Nam for the White Man's freedom, until all the Negro People are free in Mississippi.
2. Negro boys should not honor the draft here in Mississippi. Mothers should encourage their sons not to go.
3. We will gain respect and dignity as a race only by forcing the United States government and the Mississippi Government to come with guns, dogs and trucks to take our sons away to fight and be killed protecting Miss, Ala, Georgia, and Louisiana.
4. No one has a right to ask us to risk our lives and kill other Colored People in Santo Domingo and Viet Nam, so that the White American can get richer. We will be looked upon as traitors by all the Colored People of the world if the Negro people continue to fight and die without a cause.
5. Last week a white soldier from N.J. was discharged from the Army because he refused to fight in Viet Nam he went on a hunger strike. Negro boys can do the same thing. We can write and ask our sons if they know what they are fighting for. If he answers Freedom, tell him that's what we are fighting for here in Mississippi. And if he says Democracy tell him the truth--we don't know anything about Communism, Socialism, and all that, but we do know that Negroes have caught hell here under this American Democracy."

# Views of the Congress of UNREPRESENTED PEOPLE

## From a New Haven Freedom Schooler:

Dear People of America,

We went to Washington Thursday for a convention of unrepresented people and to picket the White House. On Friday we went to the White House and picketed. Some of the people walked in line and some of us were in the civil disobedience group so they could get arrested. The reason I was picketing was because I wanted the war in Vietnam to be stopped and I didn't think Johnson (the president) has any right to send United States troops to Vietnam to fight a war that cannot be won. I was also picketing for the civil rights movement.

We went to the Washington monument because they were settin up workshops on Saturday. One workshop was on South Africa. A student from South Africa was talking about the living conditions in South Africa and apartheid. That means segregation and that if you did not go along with the South African government you were put in exile. And that if you were laid off and didn't find a job within 48 hours you were arrested because you were not contributing to your country. I think that if a person does not go along with the government then he does not have to contribute anything and if the government says you have no rights within the country, then you shouldn't contribute to it.

Then some of the kids in the Freedom School went to talk to a girl from Mississippi, Gwen. And she talked about when the people went to march on Jackson, Miss., that they were arrested and beaten and thrown into jail. Me and a couple of other frieids from the New Haven Freedom School talked to some girls from Harlem and we talked about parents, about what their freedom school was teaching and about the living conditions in Harlem and New Haven.

On Sunday, we, the people of the United States of America, picketed in front of the White House to protest the war in Vietnam. At first the picket line was dull, but then the groups from New Haven and Harlem started to sing freedom songs and the march livened up, and then the cops got mad because we were singing. Then we marched back to the Washington Monument singing and clapping. Then we circled the monument and sang We Shall Overcome, and then dispersed.

Then we gathered at the Washington Monument on Monday to march on Congress. When we got there there was a line of cops on the wall waiting for us to come across. Then we sat on the sidewalk and read the declaration of peace with the people of Vietnam. On the way to Congress some people from the Nazi organization threw paint at Staughton Lynd and Dave Dellinger. And they were arrested later. Then we sat on the sidewalk for about half an hour. When we started to march

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## *View from New Haven, cont'd*

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into Congress we were arrested and some of us were beaten. I saw some people being beaten and thrown into paddy wagons and I thought in America people had the right to picket without violence, and I thought that if Johnson had thought about the people of America that he would have called the police away. And that was the first time I ever seen people being beaten for nothing and I always thought that if you did something not against the law that it was all right to do.

I think the war in Vietnam should not be foughten. I think that the war in Vietnam is just like the civil rights movement because both sides are fighting for the rights of men. The people who are fighting for the rights of men in the United States of America are the Negroes and some of the whites. Maybe in Vietnam the Communists are fighting for the rights of men--but how could they because they are communists. I think that the Americans in Vietnam are not fighting for the rights of men because if they were they would not kill women and children to prove a point, but instead they should be trying to win over the peoples support.

I think that a Negro has no right to fight in Vietnam because he is fighting his own people--his colored brothers in Vietnam. And why should he kill them to come back here and still have no rights?

My trip to Washington has learned me something about people and our government and how it works. And I think that in order to be a better nation we will have to change some of our ways of governing people and change our foreign policy.

---by Chuckie Jenkins

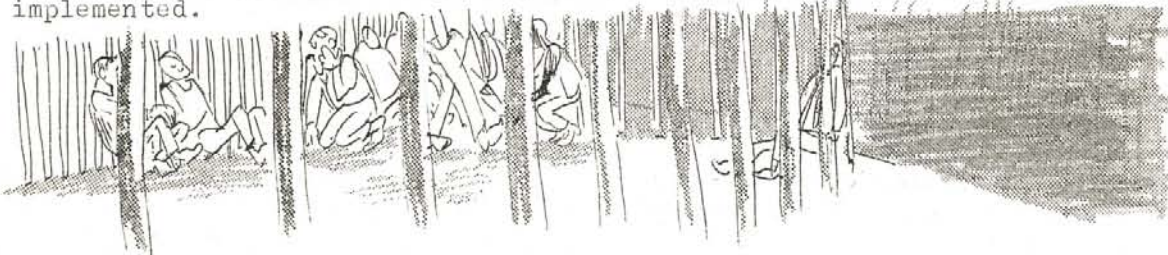
## *From the imprisoned demonstrators!*

We are the imprisoned members of the Assembly of Unrepresented People. We assembled on August 9th to non-violently declare peace with the people of Vietnam and to protest our nation's role there. We were then as now united under the one political intent of making a public demonstration protesting that role. We feel that our human and constitutional rights were violated by our arrests as we approached the steps of the Capitol to non-violently assemble and voice our protest and our declaration of peace.

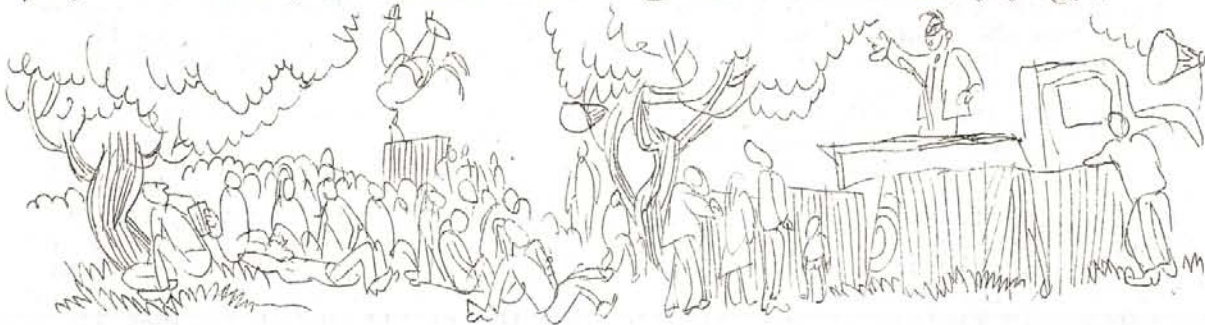
Thus united and thus imprisoned in the jails of Washington, DC, we make the following demands:

1. We demand the release of all participants, male and female, from discriminatory control areas where they are segregated from the main body of arrested participants.
2. We demand the withdrawal of an unfounded assault charge against Tom Cedergren.
3. Since we do not believe in discriminatory sanctions based on leadership of a protest, and furthermore since we assembled as individuals without elected or self-declared leaders, we demand that the discriminatory charges placed against the alleged leaders be dropped.
4. Since we all assembled with the same intent of political protest based on human and legal rights, we demand a standardization of sanctions brought against all participants of the Assembly of Unrepresented People.

Until these demands are met, over 40 individuals of this assembly imprisoned at the District of Columbia Jail are refusing all food. If these demands are not immediately met, further planned actions will be implemented.



# From New Haven staff member



--by Liz Blum

## Some Afterthoughts about the Assembly of Unrepresented People

Having worked in a Freedom School in New Haven this summer, I went to the Assembly in Washington with ten Freedom Schoolers because I expected that there would be community people from other parts of the country and other freedom schoolers. Naturally my first priority was that this should be a valuable experience for them. However, I was disappointed because there really were no workshops on Saturday and Sunday that would have been appropriate for high school age freedom schoolers from the north. ( I think that Jake had requested that a freedom school-high school workshop be set up, but there was none in fact). After attending a workshop on South Africa in which most lost interest after an hour, Jake and I managed to set up a workshop with freedom schoolers from Harlem, a few from Mississippi and teenagers connected with the New Brunswick project (CAP), and several New York High School Friends of SNCC. They talked with a woman who has headed the Laurel, Mississippi SNCC project for the past year and learned more about Mississippi and then they exchanged experiences with the other freedom schoolers.

This was the only workshop or activity during those two days that was capable of sustaining their interest. On Sunday, due, I suspect, to the failure of the workshops and the arrest of some thirty-five people Sunday morning in front of the White House, there was mass picketing there in the afternoon followed by a march back to the Washington Monument afterwards. The kids were enthusiastic about this because I think that they had fun singing on the picket line and were excited by a near-confrontation with police. There were two large, fairly successful workshops on Sunday: one on Vietnam and one for community people which was attended principally by people from Mississippi and New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The march and the assembly and the arrests on Monday were by far the best part of the trip to Washington for the freedom schoolers. It was the first time that most had witnessed mass arrests (and political ones) and such a great amount of unprovoked violence by the police. It was a tremendously

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# Afterthoughts on Washington, cont'd.

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emotional experience for them (most of the girls cried at the sight of the arrests and later they all cussed out the cops--they were particularly disturbed by the number of Negro cops there and noticed that whenever cops were sent to keep us in line it was always Negro ones). Of course the all wanted to be arrested when they saw all of the others, but we explained that we did not have enough money to bail everyone out and that we were responsible to their parents. A few days afterward, I showed a movie called "The Inheritance" in freedom school. It is about the history of the labor movement and has many scenes which were reminiscent of the assembly arrests in Washington. Most of the freedom school people liked the film a lot and exclaimed after that that, "The labor movement was very similar to the civil rights movement."

While I was extremely satisfied with the outcome of the demonstration on Monday, the rest of the assembly did not fulfill my expectations. I had hoped that there would be a larger number of community people there, but I found that the constituency was made up mainly of student peace people and SNCC-dropouts and some southern field workers. I feel that the assembly failed to represent poor people who, we all know, are just as unrepresented as people who oppose the war in Vietnam. If another assembly is planned, I would really like to see a greater effort to include community people and activities that interest them. I myself was rather glad that the community people who were supposed to come from New Haven did not come (the car broke down) because I think that they might have been very disappointed and overwhelmed by peace activity. The peace activity was excellent, but I think that if such an assembly is going to put most of its energy into peace activity, a greater effort should have been made to include people from other constituencies and involve them in this as well, e.g. Women Strike for Peace and suburban housewives who, I suspect, would be very willing to do grass-roots community work on Vietnam if approached.

As far as my work in the community is concerned, I think that the best part of the assembly was that it gave me an opportunity to get much closer to the people I have been working with in the Freedom School and it got some new people involved. Also, it dissipated some of my apprehensions about the discussions on Vietnam that had been held in freedom school because I now feel that all of the people who went to Washington are firmly opposed to the war for pretty sound reasons.



Many people have written or asked about the New Haven Freedom School and how we organized it and what kind of activities we have here. Jake and I will try to include an article on this for the next issue of the Newsletter.

# Vietnam in Poor Black & White Communities

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--by Sharon Jeffrey, Cleveland

The Cleveland Project was fortunate this past week because Nancy Gitlin, who recently spent a week in Indonesia discussing the war with 6 women from North Viet Nam and 4 women from South Viet Nam, spent 2 days with us. We viewed this as an excellent opportunity to talk seriously about the war with people in the community, and with testing people's reactions to the war. Thus we set up gatherings in peoples' homes on both sides of town, Negro and White.

People in the white community were contacted the day before and asked if they would like to talk with Nancy. We said that Nancy had become disgusted with the limited information about the war presented by the government and mass media. Consequently, she along with other women from the United States decided to go to that part of the world and talk to women who are involved in the war. People were generally interested, although not overly enthusiastic. Three small get-togethers and one large meeting were set up.

Unfortunately, the morning meeting was cancelled because of out of town guests. This woman is a hard working West Virginian who has known us for some time but who has been reluctant to attend meetings. She may have volunteered because this offered an opportunity to get together with her neighbors in a situation where she won't have to commit herself to any future activity.

The second gathering was at the home of an enthusiastic Southerner, with whom we had talked only twice. There were 5 people, including one man who had fought in Korea. He was very vocal, consequently dominated most of the conversation. He had been to Korea, he understands what war is all about. It is awful, awful, killing children and women, but that's war, and that has to be ugly. He was bitter that the war in Viet Nam, like the one in Korea, is an undeclared war. Consequently, soldiers are not granted all their rights even though they fight, get wounded and killed. The women were particularly interested in what it was like over there: "How hot is it? What do they eat? How do they dress?"



Since we had a few minutes to spare until the next gathering, we decided to visit a really great contact. She's been active in a new area where she had initiated and circulated petitions to remove a condemned house. Originally from the south, she has lived in this area for 10 years. Her husband has steady work, and they own their own home. In prior conversations she had stated that she was against all wars because they are morally wrong. When one of her sons received his draft notice the other day, he had decided to get married. Nancy had hardly begun, when the woman in a raised voice declared that if our government had decided it was necessary to fight in Viet Nam, then that is what we must do. The United States fights only those wars which are just and moral. When we described that the US was supporting a dictator in South Viet Nam, she got very angry. The United States would not support anybody who didn't represent democracy. She could not believe that the US would support a man who had not been elected by the people. Democracy is elections. She asked for our proof, implying that the newspapers and TV didn't report such facts, and therefore, it must not be true. When we

(continued next page)

# Vietnam + the Communities, cont'd <sup>p. 13</sup>

showed her the pictures of the atrocities, she said that these were tactics Communists use to get the people to go against the government. She wouldn't fall for such stuff. By this time things were very tense. We had to leave, unfortunately, because of the next scheduled event. A couple of days later we were told by another friend that she said she had thrown us out of her house because we were communist.

The next gathering was at the SDS house where there were 3 people from the community plus SDS. Nancy had hardly begun her presentation when an elderly gentleman spoke up saying: "Yes, I agree with your position on the war, but what I want to talk about is how we stop the war." He had been a C.O. in World War II. He is another person with whom we have contact but don't have a program that interests him.

Nancy visited a woman who has been working hard to get a condemned house torn down and a playground in its place. She and her husband are recent arrivals from Appalachia. She responded rather coolly. She was in the midst of having serious doubts about us being communist.

## WELFARE GROUP'S RESPONSE

The evening meeting was a regularly scheduled meeting of Citizens United for Adequate Welfare (CUAW). This is a mixed group, although predominately Negro. There were others from the white side at the meeting which was held in the SDS house. It was a large group and discussion got pretty hot, and debate raged. There were several forms of response. One from a white man who didn't believe a word of what Nancy said and attempted, poorly, to give counter-information. Since he was rather loud he dominated much of the discussion period. The second form of response came from a woman who viewed the war through economics. The US had economic reasons for being there and we needed to fight to protect those interests. The third form of response came from the majority of women who were not sure about the war and who asked a lot of questions resulting from what they heard the war was all about from the TV and newspapers.

## NEGRO RESPONSE

The second day was spent on the Negro side of town. The first get-together was poor in that the one man there, who had fought in the Pacific, took up most of the time talking about his experiences.

The rest of the afternoon Nancy went around with project people to visit individuals who had responded favorably to the project, but who had not been interested in the specific activities. One was a gentleman who was very articulate and outspoken against the war. The second was a very quiet woman. She asked a few questions, but mostly listened.

In the evening about 14 women gathered in a living room to hear Nancy. This was the first situation where there were no men, until halfway when 2 entered. Nancy's presentation was excellent. She described in story form the history of Viet Nam and US involvement now. The women listened carefully and asked many good questions. Most of the questions stemmed from what they thought the war was all about, such as: "Didn't the South Viet Nam government invite the US in, and if this is so why shouldn't we help a country when they ask us to?" Unfortunately the tone of the meeting changed when the men arrived. One of them had fought in Korea and stated what all the other soldiers of the past two days had. (continued next page)



# The communities + Vietnam, cont'd

## IMPRESSIONS

I discovered that very few people understood anything about the war. They did not know which side of Viet Nam the US was fighting on, they were unfamiliar with the phrase Viet Cong, they did not know about the series of dictators in South Vietnam, let alone the role of the US government in supporting these people. Most indicated that they didn't read the newspapers about the war. Nevertheless, most all people asked: "Why is the United States over there?"

Most people did have general impressions about why the United States fights wars. People, particularly on the white side, felt if the US was involved in a war, then it must be for good reasons. The United States is a just and good nation and when it fights war it is for moral reasons. The country just won't fight a war that supported a dictator or anything like that. People also believed that the reason we were fighting was to prevent communism. There were all degrees of fervor supporting this, but it was the most predominant theme. Given that the government fought only just wars and war to prevent the spread of communism it was wrong, particularly on the white side, to question the role of the US in this war.

## DIFFERENT REACTIONS BY WHITES AND NEGROES

It is difficult to make any generalizations about the different responses between Negroes and white. One day with each was not enough time. The result of one visit to a white woman was that she severed relations with us because of that communist woman we brought into her home. There was no one in the Negro community who thought we were communist because of our position on the war. Whites also believed more strongly that the United States was a good nation that acted always morally. If Negroes would state similar remarks, we made the analogy between the Negro sharecropper in Mississippi who wants to vote and the people, Viet Cong, in Viet Nam who want to run their own nation. This struck an immediate cord, and even the most ardent arguers changed their tone. Unfortunately, we did not have an equally powerful example to use with Cleveland whites. Whites do not have experiences where the government has basically mistreated them, or we haven't discovered it, and thus there is no reason for them to question the government.

## DISTRUST JOHNSON

Alot of people, particularly whites, have misgivings about the police or local government, but THE government (Federal) somehow is honest, moral, and good. Many people did, however, distrust Johnson. They felt he may not make the right decision about the direction of the war. They wished Kennedy was still alive. He never would have gotten the nation into such a war. Look what he did in Cuba, he prevented the Communists from staying in Cuba without causing a minor or major war.

Perhaps a more important distinction is between men and women. Women were generally more responsive to the horror of war, and more open to questioning US involvement in the war. Unfortunately, we never had a situation where there were only women. It would have been interesting to see if the women would have reached conclusions about doing something to end the war.

By the end of the 2 days I was thoroughly exhausted mentally and emotionally. In spite of the overall general depression I felt about the reactions to the war, it had been a valuable experience for other reasons. We learned alot more about the people we're working with and about our society. This was discouraging. It also was valuable because organizing around playgrounds and condemned houses all the time can get monotonous. Nancy's presence allowed for serious discussion about another important issue with people in the community. It furthermore provided a program for people with whom we have good relations but who were not interested in specific actions of getting a playground, etc. Most of these people responded favorably.

# Correspondence from Canada

p. 15

FROM: Bill Mountain, Student Neestow Partnership Project, 206 McIntyre St, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

I am writing you on behalf of SNPP, an independent project of university who are living with Indian and Metis people in the province of Saskatchewan this summer. Our project will continue over the coming academic year in the City of Regina where we will work mainly with Indian High School students.

Ten copies of your newsletter will enable me to mail one to each of our fieldworkers and have one for our office

## EXERPTS FROM SNPP'S BULLETIN

The circumstances of Indian people in the southern and northern parts of the province differ considerably. In the south, farming is the basis of the economy, whereas in the north, most Indian people still make their living by hunting, trapping and fishing. However, organization or the lack of it, seems to be critical in both areas. It appears that Indian fishermen in the north get much better prices for their catch if they market through co-operatives. In the south, unsuccessful use of land for cattle and grain farming has contributed much to the impoverishment of Indian people in recent years. In the 1940s and 50s, numerous southern reserves had prosperous community farms. Most of these farms seem to have failed and their reserve funds were quickly used up after the white farm managers of the IAB (Indian Affairs Branch) were withdrawn from reserves in the early 50s. The explanation that these farms failed because Indian people were not capable of running them themselves seems to make sense only when viewed in the light of IAB mismanagement. That is, an inadequate elective system for band councillors and chiefs was instituted when farm managers were withdrawn to give partial self-government to the reserves. But this seems to have been done with no transition period that would allow the people on reserves the time to gain the experience, skills and knowledge necessary for operating within even partial democratic procedures or for handling the managerial and financial aspect of farming. The Indian people still have few opportunities for experience in these matters and continue under the same inadequate system of supposed partial self-government today.

## INADEQUATE MEDICAL FACILITIES

During our meeting several incidents of the inadequate medical facilities provided for Indian people were recounted. One person present had received such bad treatment by doctors employed by Indian Affairs that he decided to make personal payments into the provincial medicare scheme. At one point his doctor gave him a prescription which he had filled by a regular pharmacist who gave him a small bottle of white medicine. He then took the same prescription to the Indian Affairs medical services and was given a similar bottle of pink medicine. Upon examination the pink medicine was found to be 75% water. Stories such as this one are numerous among the Indian people particularly in the Prince Albert area.



# a plea -

p. 16



Both pictures in this issue are of the New Haven project's Freedom School. As shown above, the kids decided to march for a better playground\*\*\*Photos by Henry Wilhelm and John Phillips.

FROM: ERAP Newsletter  
New Haven Project  
46 Arch Street  
New Haven, Conn.

The Southern Courier, a new weekly newspaper for the South being published in Atlanta, Ga., needs, "aspiring journalists who want to work for a civil rights newspaper at \$20.00 weekly (every week, too), who are either 4-F, married, or have completed their army service." If interested, get in touch with Ellen Lake, c/o Southern Courier, 68 Electric Ave NW, Atlanta, Georgia.

## The ERAP NEWSLETTER

helps to maintain contact among community organizations associated in some way with Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and its Economic Research and Action Project (ERAP). It also contains news of many other community projects which it can contact.

For the moment it is compiled by the New Haven Project, 46 Arch Street, New Haven. Community projects receive it free. Others may subscribe for \$4.00 per year.

THIRD CLASS MAIL

THIRD CLASS MAIL