

June 27

23 arrests
142 days in jail

I am the mother of Miss Joe Ann Christian. My daughter was beaten last week with the aid of Chief Laurie Pritchett. I am asking that you investigate this. I am afraid that they will hurt my daughter again.

My name is Mrs. Dessie Mae Christian, and my husband's name is James Christian. We live at 534 Holloway. Joe was born January 21, 1948. She is 15 years old and in the 11th grade. She was born here in Albany and hasn't lived any other place outside the city.

She is leader of the students who work for freedom. She has been arrested in demonstrations, and the police know her. They have said many bad things about our family because we believe in freedom and all of us have been to jail. I believe the police hurt her because she is a leader and they want to scare her and make her stop working with SNCC.

On Wednesday, June 19, she was walking downtown with a group of girls, in an orderly manner. They were stopped by 2 police and asked where they were going and what they were doing downtown. She said, "we are just walking." And he replied, "You don't have any business downtown." They turned and were coming home and they were stopped a third time. He told them they were all under arrest and they lay down on the ground.

She was dragged by one foot and one hand and was picked up and dropped twice in the street. Inside the jail, she was deopped two more times. Chief Pritchett grabbed her by the hair, and threw her across the jail. She was thrown down some steps, and then they stomped on her leg. Then they dropped her again in the cell, and they banged the steel door on her. They say she kicked a police officer -- but the way they threw her around she could have bumped anything.

[Now she is over in jail in Camilla Georgia in the state prison. They have her in solitary confinement and have taken all the lightbulbs out of her cell. All the children arrested with her have been released two and three days ago. She has been there 8 days today. She works on voter registration and has been working hards since we started 2 years ago for freedom. She has been in jail 12 times so far. Now they will not set a bond for Joe.

When can I have my baby back? How can I be sure they won't beat her again? Why do you let these things happen? Me and other people here want to believe that the government will do something to help but you let these things go on. Please help my baby.