

Meeting , December 23, 1963, 9:00 p.m., 1834 9th St., N.W., Washington, D.C.

Persons interested in a proposed unemployment demonstration in Washington, on or about February 1, 1964

Bill Mahoney, presiding, summarized, for the benefit of those who were attending for the first time, the statement which was read at the last meeting.

Allen Weinstein of CORE asked for a clarification of parts 2,3, and 4 of the Proposal. Are these activities to be carried out simultaneously? How many people are to be involved?

Bill Mahoney answered that all will march together, and then the participants will divide into teams for other activities.

Mahoney also mentioned the visit of 40 unemployed Kentucky miners to Washington on January 7,8, and 9. They will visit the offices of the United Mine Workers, Kentucky Congressmen, the President, etc.. If talks, lobbying, etc. do not produce satisfactory results, they will use direct action, and we plan to assist them. He said that if we want to educate the unemployed as to their rights and the government's obligations to them, we must work with the unemployed.

Proposals: (by Paul Detrich and William Mahoney)

That a food and clothing warehouse be set up in Washington so that the unemployed may obtain emergency supplies.

That we maintain a picket line to be run against firms in the District who voted against the minimum wage law, and who pay less than the proposed minimum.

It was mentioned that we may join the demonstrations of the miners, and also help to organize the workers at Bergmann's Laundry. Tonight we should discuss mobilization, and the assignment of people to organization of mobilization in specific areas and fields. In early mobilization we must find issues that dramatize the issue, especially to the people we are trying to reach. Examples: evictions; low wages. We must work to end evictions; no one should be out on the street; if society has no answer to where a person should be except on the street, then there is something wrong with society, and it must make some changes.

Allen Weinstein objected that , after we have stopped evictions - what then? What kind of follow-up can we make? How will the people pay the rent the next month, and the next? He suggests the setting up of a bureau to take charge of the problems of evictions.

Bill Mahoney suggested that we form a committee of persons prepared to act in eviction cases. We want to awaken the community to the plight of the unemployed. The publicity on these actions would help to do this.

Allen Weinstein noted that we have put a housefull of evictees back in their quarters, and gotten a ten-day "Christmas moratorium" on evictions, and asked just who besides ourselves has heard about it?

Paul Detrich noted that everything goes back to the need for jobs. Therefore, action on evictions goes back to mobilizing for employment, and direct action on evictions cause dislocation of government forces, and makes these re-evaluate their positions.

Allen Weinstein said that his objections were based on the fact that we have not been reaching enough people.

Bill Mahoney mentioned the possibility of a rent-strike. He also said that what we want to deal with is the problem of poverty, and referred the points in the memorandum which propose the involvement of the unemployed in action on evictions and in the setting up and maintaining of a picket-line to demonstrate at firms which pay low wages.

Paul Deitrich proposed that if an evicted family should be getting welfare, their belongings should be taken to the Department of Welfare and deposited in their offices; if the head of the family should be getting unemployment compensation, then take their belongings to the Department of Employment.

Bill Mahoney suggested that we discuss the plight of the tenants - that is, sub-tenants - of Billy King.

Allen Weinstein reported that Billy King made false statements to the real estate agent, and suggested that an affidavit be drawn up on any action, immediately after it is completed, signed by witnesses, and notarized, with a notation of the time of the signing, so that it will not be said later that we made up a statement to cover his statements.

Mrs. B suggested that an inventory of broken items be made before the articles are taken back into a house, so that when the owners report articles broken by the evicting Marshal's employees, it cannot be said that such articles were broken by the people who put the furniture back into the house. She also suggested that we invite the press to cover these actions.

It was objected that the press brings the police, and that real-estate agencies are newspaper advertizers, and would put pressure on the papers either to kill the stories or to slant them in favor of the real estate people or property owners. It was agreed, however, that special friends in the press may be contacted. For instance, the "Afro" could cover an action and take pictures, and Sue Cronk might be invited to interview some of the women evictees.

Paul Deitrich suggested that the volunteers be divided into teams, ~~briefed~~ briefed, and sent out to cover perhaps two evictions each.

There was an objection that we may run into trouble doing these things.

Bill Mahoney agreed, adding that we could well run into Marshalls with guns, as a 16-year-old boy recently did.

Paul Deitrich added that what we want is to create the maximum dislocation of the government agencies, in order to force them to re-evaluate their programs.

Bill Mahoney suggested that on the morning of an eviction, the neighbors of an evictee family be invited in for coffee and doughnuts, and to sit down and talk - on the furniture that is scheduled to be put out of the house.

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He explained further that the use of volunteers in eviction actions leads to mobilization of the unemployed.

Mrs. B reported that the sub-tenants in the houses leased by Billy King were frightened and would be hard to organize (They are afraid that King would raise the rent)

Paul Deitrich suggested that we picket King's barbershop and his home.

Mrs. B said that it probably wouldn't do much good to picket his home, but that picketing his shop probably would hurt his business. She also said that King employs a number of young men, supposedly to clean, paint, ~~shampoo, wash, and iron~~ collect rent, deliver messages, etc.. They probably also act as spies, and intimidate the tenants. Mrs. B reported that the last time she paid King, he didn't want to give her a receipt, saying that he would send it later. When she refused to pay unless he have her a receipt at the same time, he produced one. She reports that King is due in court on Thursday on the case of his non-payment of the rent on her building. When Bill Mahoney suggested that we collect the rent from the tenants in her building and make repairs to the building with the money, ~~HE~~ Mrs. B said that King would not be above destroying the repairs for spite. To this Mahoney replied that we should keep a photographer handy and get pictures of any such irrational actions, and have King locked up if he acts in this way.

Mr. C asked if anyone has seen any of the rental contracts. It was explained that none of the sub-tenants has a contract, but pays by the week, as in a rooming-house. Mrs. B, for instance, pays \$17 per week for one room, with no cooking facilities and no bathroom. She asks how we are to get the tenants of the other houses to act. Bill Mahoney replied that if we can get the tenants of this one house to move, it will show the others that it can be done.

Paul Deitrich asked if all in the house would act if we had a lawyer, and the rent were placed in the hands of some prominent persons for safe-keeping. Mrs. B said this probably would work.

Allen Weinstein suggested that the principal tenancy be changed from King to one of the residents of the house. The owner has agreed that if King has not paid in full by Jan. 31, he will transfer the lease to the occupants and press charges against King. Bill Mahoney objected that this would only create another middleman, and that this should be used as a last-ditch measure only. It was pointed out, however, that a resident middleman is at least preferable to an absentee one. Mrs. E asked if anyone has contacted the Health Department. Mrs. B replied that she plans to do that. Bill Mahoney suggested that the Health Department should see all the houses, and that they be supplied with pictures, as well. Mrs. B suggested that pictures of her house, if published, would shake-up King. Mrs. B and Bill Mahoney will try to go to the Health Department tomorrow. Mrs. B reported that the areas of the house in the worst condition are the bathroom, steps, hall, the back room, and several other rooms. She said that the tenants want "to get Billy King out of the picture completely."

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said that this could launch an exposé of the entire slum-lord situation.

The next meeting will be at the CORE office on Friday, Dec. 27