

The Student Voice

[Undated]

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Last Wednesday night after mass meeting SNCC worker, Faith Holsaert, was arrested with another SNCC worker, Don Harris and two others. The next day Miss Holsaert managed to slip a note out to Sherrod describing the incidents which followed her arrest. She said that she was brought into the police office with about ten police men present. The arresting officer, Ronnie Mathis, threatened to take her clothes off, made propositions to her, and fondled her. In the note Miss Holsaert said, "He (Mathis) asked who wanted to search me... Then they started asking me about my sister and finally asked if she were as well built as I.

"One of them ran his hand over my breast. They threatened to strip me. There were ten officers in the office with me. Later, about 4 pm a man poked me in my head and asked if I were pregnant, my name, did I go with colored boys, and would I cooperate with him 'if he came into the cell'".

Also last Wednesday night, SNCC worker, Ralph Allen was driving to the home of Mrs. Cora Jeinks in East Albany where he planned to spend the night. He was stopped just west of the Flint River Bridge by the Albany City Police who checked his license and registration. While they were questioning him, two deputy sheriffs drove up in a county police car. The deputies began following him after the police let him go. As he made the corner from Broad Ave onto Hobson street, Allen was cut off by the deputies. They told him to get out of the car and to give them his license. Then, they told him to put his hands on top of their car and they went to search him. Allen asked them if he was under arrest and kept his hands at his sides. But when he asked them this one of them began slapping him 'side his head. Three times the man slapped him cursing the whole time. Then he told Allen that he was under arrest for driving over the center line. The only center line past the underpass on Broad Ave. is a broken line which can lawfully be crossed at any time.

Saturday-- The proud Black youth of Albany were walking through Harlem. They walked with heads held high past the grey line of drunks and wineheads, past the blaring rhythm of the bearded man's guitar, past an Albany Saturday night about to pour itself onto the streets. Their feet paced firmly and directly through the shuffling feet and the dancing feet. Single file they marched, not to get arrested, merely to be seen together and to show that Albany Negroes can still stick together. And all of Harlem poised on tip-toe at the brink of a Saturday night. Some joined the line, some stared transfixed, and some--God rest their souls--laughed. But the line went on, single file in a straight trickle. Down Jackson to Oglethorpe, right on Oglethorpe to Washington, left on Washington and left again on Broad. A boss line of proud kids.

But as the line rounded the corner of Broad and Washington, there stood Pritchett. Without a question, without a word or a nod of warning -- "Arrest them all!" he said. And cops appeared from everywhere. The students had planned not to get arrested. Many of them had tests and graduation exercises coming up the next week. If Pritchett had asked them to turn around they would have. But they had no warning. They were driven up against the buildings. The whole block was blocked off and every Negro--the students who were in line, those who broke from the line in fear, bystanders, and even some Negro shoppers were herded together and driven across the street to Freedom Alley.

But as the students realized what was happening they took stock and began to sing. WE SHALL OVERCOME, WE SHALL OVERCOME --they sang their way to jail... still proud in defiance of segregation and tyranny.

REV. WELLS, MRS. GAINES, MRS. CHRISTIAN, JONI RABANOWITZ, FAITH HOLSAERT, JOYCE BARRETT, PRATHIA HALL, JACK CHATFIELD, DON HARRIS, MRS. NEWSOME, AND SIX OTHERS PLUS FIFTY-THREE ARRESTED SATURDAY ARE IN JAIL TO STAY UNTIL WE JOIN THEM. THE SNCC KIDS AND THOSE WHO WERE JAILED WITH REV. WELLS BEGAN FASTING TODAY. THEY WILL NOT EAT UNTIL ALBANY IS STRAIGHT. LET US STAND WITH THEM. LET US SUPPORT OUR LEADERS AND POINT THEM TO ACTION. LET US JOIN THEM IN JAIL!!!