

We of the Atlanta Project of SNCC can not overlook the suffering and exploitation which is a part of the daily lives of many Negroes.

There are pockets of dilapidated, rodent infested, unheated dwellings scattered throughout the predominate Negro areas of the City. Here live people who are sapped upon by parasitic slum-lords, lying peddlers, cheating insurance men and election day only politicians. A prime example of this is a slum area in the South west part of the city referred to as the Markham area.

Here one particular slum-lord runs a plantation-like system where he is employer, land-lord, grocer, judge and jury over the people who live in his houses. He is seen in the area from five in the morning until well past midnight cruising around in his big green Cadillac terrorizing his serfs.

We have affidavits from people in the area charging this landlord with the following:

Tenants are charged exorbitant late fees such as \$1.00 late fee for every day that their rent is late.

This landlord's system of exploitation is such that one tenant pays \$ 5.00 a month over her rent merely to keep a pet dog in the back yard.

This brutish slum-lord so completely dominates the people's lives that he cashes their welfare checks controls their credit, makes them work off debts, demands where and what they should buy.

He refuses to give rent receipts- when forced to do so- he purposely forgets to date them. People live under the constant threat of evictions because they have no way to prove that they have paid their rent.

The buildings are fire hazards, detrimental to the health of the people living there in.

Some houses have no plumbing, no electricity, foundations are crumbling, cracks and holes are visible in all walls and floors.

This land-lord is no isolated example.

There are many others protected by the powers that be of the

of the City of Atlanta.

There are over 1400 evictions every month in the City. People's homes are broken into by eviction officers who throw their belongings into the streets. Most of these people have no where to go. There are no laws to protect them. No politician or office holder cares to fight for them. An example of the brutish careless way in which evictions are handled is the 444 Markham Street incident.

No longer will the captives of these Center-City Plantations tolerate the oppression and squalor of the dismal quarters in which they have been entombed. They are past the point of questioning their so-called leaders. They are attempting to break the chains of the exploitative cycle. We urge the Summit Leadership Conference to join with us to oppose all who are in any way guilty for the perpetuation of the soul-wrenching concentration-camp like conditions.

We offer four proposals for the immediate improvement of the housing situation here in the City of Atlanta.

1. We demand that Mayor Allen and the City of Atlanta vigorously enforce existing housing codes. At the present time flagrant violations are permitted to go unchecked. This policy of little or no enforcement contributes to the misery already so much a part of these people's lives. We demand that the City of Atlanta stop this illegal and vicious profiteering off of the poor Negroes of Atlanta.
2. We further demand that Mayor Allen and the City of Atlanta make new laws that will make it impossible for any citizen to have to live in dilapidated, unsanitary and poorly heated housing. We know that this can be brought about if the housing codes are raised and if violators punishment be equal to the offense.
3. We Demand that Mayor Allen and the City of Atlanta outlaw the vicious policy of evicting tenants. We believe that the present system adds to the detriment of the majority of those evicted.

It only aggravates their grief and intensifies

their agonies.

4. We believe that every tenant has a right and duty not to contribute to unsafe, unsanitary, ill-heated firetraps. We believe that tenants who refuse to pay rent on these grounds are only protecting their moral and legal rights. We urge the Atlanta Summit Leadership Conference to join with us to force City Officials to recognize rent strikes as a valid and legal protest against intolerable and inhumane conditions.