

# Philadelphia Citizens Asks Rights Guarantee

PHILADELPHIA — The U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals, which is now headed by Judge William Hastie, learned here last week that there are apparently misunderstandings a-plenty about the purposes and motives of Negro and civil rights leaders and groups.

This fact developed in Federal Court here last week before the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed a suit which arose over a charge that the Philadelphia Police Department has misused its power and denied the civil rights of citizens under Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo.

The Court said that it would give Community Legal Services which brought the suit time to further amend its petition for an injunction and indicated it might consider hearing testimony on such a plea if the new reasons for such a suit warranted it.

The suit asked that the Federal Court appoint an "overseer" for the Philadelphia Police Department to see that the civil rights of citizens are respected.

The police Commissioner is accused of personally leading the heavy police contingent which violently quelled a 3,500 Negro student demonstration on Nov. 17 at the School Board Administration Building.

Civil rights leaders and many witnesses claim that the student protest was surely but perfectly orderly, until Rizzo and his police contingent began violently breaking it up.

One of the principals in the suit, William Mathis, chairman of the Philadelphia Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), has been enjoined in a companion Philadelphia

Common Pleas Court injunction, along with Walter Palmer, head of the Black Unity Movement, from organizing demonstrations during school hours.

Mathis testimony at the Federal Court hearing implied that he "could care less about the injunction and that he certainly was not guilty of organizing the 150 student demonstrations in question.

Mathis said that for several years he has been of the opinion that demonstrations and picketing are not accomplish anything in the civil rights movement and are ineffective and passe.

He pointed out that several leaders of CORE and a few other Negro organizations throughout the nation say that they feel the same way about such demonstrations. CORE's national chairman Floyd B. McKissick has made such statements.

Another of the misunderstandings which was analyzed during the Federal Court hearing was whether the Community Legal Services, Inc. project which is program funded with federal, state and local anti-poverty funds was properly empowered to bring the suit in behalf of financially poor injured students against Police Commissioner Rizzo, an agent of the city government which finances the program.

Opponents of Community Legal Services bringing the suit contended that the poverty agency's legal action was virtually a demand for Police Commissioner Rizzo's ouster. Some Negro civil rights leaders have actually demanded that Rizzo be removed due to his handling of numerous racial riots and

incidents.

However, Mrs. Lou Foret, attorney for Community Legal Services, told the Federal Court that the suit she filed was never intended to oust Police Commissioner Rizzo.

She said her clients, the financially poor Negro children who were injured by police in the demonstration and their parents were merely asking the Federal Court to appoint a temporary receiver to institute "certain improvements" in the Philadelphia Police Department which would guarantee that all of the rights of citizens would be respected.

Apr 13, 1968

Pittsburgh Courier

"Philly Holds CORE Leader, 3 More in School Protest"

NO AUTHOR GIVEN

PHILADELPHIA -- Four Philadelphia leaders, one of them, William Mathis, Philadelphia leader of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) have been held for court on charges growing out of the rioting which resulted when police broke up a protest by some 5,500 students at the School Board Administration Building here last Nov 17.

Held for court at the two hour magistrate's hearing at the Police Administration Building in addition to Mathis, were the Rev. E. Marshall Bevins, pastor of St. Mary's Church of the Annunciation, Richard L. Traylor, educational director of Kolt (?) Goods Local 190 and youth leader, Byron Edwards, 18

All were permitted to remain free on bail pending the action of the grand jury.

The four are the last of 57 persons who were arrested during the battling between police led personally by Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo. Many were fined and others discharged in prior hearings. Six, including Walter Palmer, director of the Black Peoples Unity Movement, were exonerated on March 17 when the District Attorney's office dropped charges against them.

During the Nov 17 riot, 20 persons were injured. The Rev. Mc. Bevins is charged with assault and battery in the alleged "striking of a police officer." The minister says he was pushed by the movement of the crowd onto the police officer as the latter was dragging off a young female demonstrator.

Mathis is charged with inciting to riot. His attorney, Oscar N. Gaskins said Bevin merely exhorted the crowd not to move from where they were.

The prosecutor said: "His actions probably started as a deep foil (?) protest against grievances, but he got carried away in irresponsible action." My heart goes out to him.

**Feb. 24, 1969**

**Daily Pennsylvanian**

"College Hall sit-in ends; community committee forms"

NO AUTHOR GIVEN

A cheering crowd of over 800 demonstrators ended their six-day College Hall sit-in Sunday night after accepting a set of six proposals by the trustees.

An agreement was reached at the Sunday negotiating session between the trustees and student representatives that the proposals were contingent upon the demonstrators' leaving the building before this morning.

"We have won more than any other college movement in history," exclaimed Ira Harkavy, head of the student negotiating team.

"The University has become human, at least partially, for the first time," said Herman Wrice, president of the Young Great Society and a spokesman for the community.