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# Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

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## Press Release

Tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. in the civil court of Judge Osgood Williams a hearing will be held to determine whether tenants who are too poor to post the bond required by state law in order to ~~eviction proceedings~~ are ~~entitled~~ entitled to a day in court. This hearing tomorrow could have widespread consequences since it ~~could~~ could mean that poor people can seek legal relief from the unjust actions of landlords where presently they are barred simply because they lack the money to put up the required bond.

In the Markham area and other slum areas it could mean the beginning of the end of the ability of slum landlords to victimize poor tenants at will, simply because they lack the ability to seek any legal relief.

Tomorrow's hearing will involve the case of Bessie Reese of 422 Markham who is withholding rent from Joe Shaffer, whom she rents from, because of his long practice of violating the standards provided in the housing code of the City of Atlanta. Miss Reese is one of a group of tenants who decided not to pay Mr. Shaffer any more rent after their houses were condemned by the city last week. This condemnation action can only after attention was focused on Markham Street as a result of the actions of local residents, the Vine City Council, SNCC, and SCLC. Prior to that Mr. Shaffer had been able to completely ignore the housing code. Many of the properties he owns in the area which are in as much violation of the code as the condemned houses have still not been cited by city housing inspectors.

Miss Reese, along with numerous other residents of the Markham area are withholding their rent as a protest not only against the landlord but against the city who for so many years has failed to enforce its own laws. ~~Landlords like Mr. Shaffer~~ Until the recent protests ~~slumlords like Mr. Shaffer~~ slumlords like Mr. Shaffer have been able to operate with complete impunity from the law. The hearing tomorrow

*One Man, One Vote*