



DEFENSE FOR THE ELDERLY

A frightened old man enters the office of Legal Services for the Elderly. Winter is impending and MLG&W has threatened to "pull the juice" because his son is delinquent on an unrelated utility bill. The old man wants help. Immediately, the facts are ascertained and the staff plots a strategy. MLG&W is contacted and the problem is explored. After twenty minutes of discussion and hassling, a MLG&W official apologizes for the mistake and inconvenience. The utilities will not be shut off. A year ago the old man may have spent a long winter in a cold apartment simply because he was legally voiceless. However, now this man and other poor senior citizens have an advocate, Legal Services for the Elderly.

Since its creation in June the Elderly Project has handled over four hundred cases. This is a mere fraction of the 40,000 persons, aged 55 and over, who are below the poverty level and eligible for legal services from the Project.

The concept of legal services for senior citizens is based on the premise that the elderly are a distinct, often discriminated against, class with distinctive legal problems. Horror stories about the societal treatment of the elderly are numerous and graphic: inhuman conditions in nursing homes, consumer fraud which often deprives senior citizens of their homes and meager savings, stingy insurance

and pension plans, con-artist schemes which prey on the aged, filial indifference, and the unpenetrable bureaucratic morass of federal and state social benefit programs. Despite the existence of these and other legal problems, the legal profession in Memphis has often failed in its duty to make counsel available to the elderly poor to help remedy the legal woes of senior citizens.

Memphis and Shelby County Legal Services Association recognized the need for a project to effectively deal with the legal problems of the elderly poor. In January of 1975 the Association asked the Shelby County Quarterly Court for funding for the project. The Court was convinced and appropriated \$200,000 of its federal revenue sharing money for the two year project.

The Project has attempted to creatively and aggressively reach and represent the poor senior citizens of Shelby County. The legal problems of the elderly are often complicated by the fact that many seniors have a mobility problem caused by illness, age or poverty. Cognizant of this problem, the Project's staff has developed a system for identifying eligible clients and delivering services directly to potential recipients. By utilizing eight outreach centers in areas where old folks live and congregate and home visitations for the home-ridden, the Project has managed to provide legal

advice and representation for citizens who would have remained alone, friendless, and unassisted by counsel.

The staff of the program is under the supervision of managing attorney, Jon Sasser. Sasser is assisted by two staff attorneys, three paralegals, two clerical workers, a seniors' aide and three law students. The staff has handled all types of cases — from a divorce for an old man to representing a woman before a Social Security tribunal. Special cases are being handled by the staff: a class action on behalf of excluded pension applicants for arbitrary and unreasonable denial of benefits; an action to compel skilled nursing homes to comply with state and federal regulations.

Education and consciousness-raising are an integral part of the Project. Seminars and workshops have been held by the Project, in such areas as crimes against senior citizens and legal problems of the elderly.

Another major goal of the Elderly Project is to reform unequitable and antiquated laws which serve to penalize and victimize senior citizens. Recently, the staff prepared a package of proposals for legislative action by the General Assembly, including a simplification of probate law and procedure, a Patients' Bill of Rights and an increase in the property tax exemption for senior citizens.

Legal Services for the Elderly is a public resource performing valuable services on behalf of their clients and all elderly citizens of Shelby County. Senior Citizens now have aggressive advocates. This advocacy should be used when poor senior citizens are in need of legal help.

EDITOR'S NOTE-If you or someone you know needs the assistance of Legal Services for the Elderly, call 527-4571 for additional information.

Rolling indefinitely at a flooded furrow's breadth, never touching,
Beneath the crude wheel of paralleled mounds of cotton stubble,
The lank-legged spokes gallop lower South,
Pressing eye-to-age, -to-ruin, -to-patient waiting—
A white-washed, windblown, wooden order—
To the knowledged, wrinkled poise of obdurate, straightforward trees,
Companions to askewed manor shanties;

Down to a weighty, loosely bridled stoop in the River—
Keeping a fatherly but victorious hand on a fallen, rotting barge—
A silent partner to a row of empty levy benches
Ignoring the brittle, saturated solitude of their antithesis:
The leaveless, fiber-mouthed desert of a driftwood, floodland West.

Inward, about the small towns,
In a sedate shade and a proud, immaculate sunlight,
As stable as an anchored image of the real in an illusion—
In space, in time, interminable—
A tiny, haughty, white-haired lady,
Cocooned in an elastic eggshell of black,
(In her slacks and sweater, a trembling, fragile dancer
So much observant of her wornout dance)
Grips a graceful horsewhip and the lengthy straying reins
On two waist-high ebony dogs—a curly egotist and a strutter of a wet,
dull devotion—
Which shone like sweating backs.

Their surges and restraints jerked and rode onward,
Over concrete sidepaths and the broken limbs of a prev' night's storm:
Unightly, gutted hurdles, before the upright, brightheld faces
Of an uncertain genteel position:
Half concealed mansions in the overgrowth like the finest Grecian statues,
Behind the oaks, the elms and maples,
And the keen thickness of perfection's print, the shelter-soothing magnolias,
Columned beside dainty flowers at their tattered, dust-weed weakest—
The harsh winter trial before the bloom.

Yet, may there not have been the motion—
Different names tagged to a place:
Like the cry from the girl of blinded parents,
"Now, least one of us can see":
They knelt with wandering hands upon the floor,
Heard and felt with their tongues' varied nodes
To absorb another local vision of the shared;
Their explanations screamed from every mouth,
Explored and drunk over and enough,
Make it all seem justified.

Compelled by the Judge, the Poem, and the Warrior,
On the final Northern freeze,
The seeds are enshrined—with the care of a finger, immortalized;
Accurate, the charge is grasped and slipped into the scabbard,
As tens of thousands of sagacious revolutions inaudibly saddle:

South on 61- Memphis to Greenville



G. D. M.

*The educated, precisioned grind of the steady Mississippi
levels its defeating might;*

The embryo through its ugly forms becomes its best;

The villains metamorphize into mentors;

The regents' rocky megalopolis meticulously shatters;

*And the Vacators, the Mercies and the Critics take their toll,
In decay, the excluded and the sure.*

FREE BUS CATHEDRAL DAY

Free bus service by MTA buses will operate from downtown to St. Mary's Cathedral this coming Tuesday, October 28, during Cathedral Celebration Day. The buses will leave the Union Avenue side of the Peabody Hotel every half hour from 11 to 2 o'clock, with stops at Third and Madison and Third and Jefferson. For the return trip, free buses will leave from the front of the cathedral at 20 minute intervals from 11:20 to 2:20 p.m.

CELEBRATION DAY SCHEDULE

Tours ——— 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m. &
2:30 p.m.

Brunch ——— 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Memphis Harp Ensemble — 11:30 a.m.

Organ Recitals — 11:45 a.m. & 2 p.m.

Cathedral Players in

"The Apple Tree" ——— 1 p.m.

String Concert with Organ — 1:45 p.m.

English Tea ——— 2 to 4 p.m.

In addition to these events, there will be a Cathedral Outdoor Market. Artists and craftsmen will sell their products, and there will be potted plants, breads, cheeses, apples and cold drinks sold.

Again, St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral is located at 700 Poplar. Everyone is invited to this Celebration Day between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

earthly delights

DOWNTOWN EXHIBITS

First National Bank Building

October—Paintings by Carol Sims and Stella Enrich-Brownstein*

Sterick Building

October—Photographs by Stephanie Harrover*

National Bank of Commerce

October—Paintings by Clementine de Roode and Patti Bradford*

FILMS

Lyceum Film Theatre

October 28—"Min and Bill"—First National Bank Auditorium—7:30 p.m.

Center Film Society

October 31—"No Blade of Grass"—UT Student Activity Center Auditorium—7:30 p.m.

LECTURES—REVIEWS—DIALOGUE

The American Issues Forum

October 28—"Freedom of Speech, Assembly and Religion"—discussion by Dr. James A. Wax, Rabbi, Temple Israel—First National Bank Auditorium—12:15 p.m.*

October 30—"Freedom of Speech, Assembly and Religion"—Cossitt-Goodwyn Library*

Trinity Lutheran Book Reviews

October 29—Rev. Paul R. Martens, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, reviews Psalms/Now by Brandt/Corita*

DOWNTOWN ACTIVITIES

Oktoberfest

October 24—Chicago Free St. Theatre (12 & 7:30 p.m.)*

Playhouse on the Square (3 p.m.)*

Street party (9:30 p.m.)*—Madison between 3rd & 2nd

*FREE

CIVIC CENTER COMMUNITY CULINARY CLUB

Serving from 11:30 to 1:15

First Presbyterian Church, 166 Poplar Avenue

PRICE: \$1.50 per serving, including drink

MENU FOR OCTOBER 23 – NOVEMBER 3

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23

Fried Chicken, Cream Corn, Squash, Rolls

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24

Meat Loaf, Whipped Potatoes, Turnip Greens, Corn Bread

MONDAY, OCTOBER 27

Roast Beef, Whipped Potatoes, Green Beans, Rolls

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28

Beef Stew, Salad, Corn Bread

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29

Spaghetti, Cole Slaw, French Bread

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30

Fried Chicken, Rice & Gravy, Squash or Green Beans, Rolls

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31

Ham, Black eyed Peas, Corn, Corn Bread



166 Poplar
Memphis, Tenn. 38103

*Second-class
postage paid at
Memphis, Tennessee*