

Congress are going to have to look at the details of how this place is organized, because the ball game is lost before anybody comes to bat. The ball game is lost when the Congress organizes itself on the first day. And unless the people who, like me and like you, are concerned about action—and what you have proposed is constructive action—begin to look at how the power is exercised here, those of us who agree are going to be powerless to see that we even debate these issues, much less act on them.

I apologize for turning it around a little bit, but I so heartily agree with what you have said, and in the constructiveness of your program at a time when many people are turning to what is really a modern-day form of anarchy, that I wanted to share with you a very deep and strong conviction that the only way we can modernize the United States of America in its dealing with its problems is to face the fact that this Congress organizes itself in a way that is suitable perhaps to 1850 and not even this century.

Mr. WILEY. Thank you very much for that statement. I would just like to comment that we of the Welfare Rights Organization have recognized that problem and we recognize that Chairman Wilbur Mills of that committee represents the center of reaction and holds the key to the power of that committee. As a result, we have been pursuing Congressman Mills and have been keeping him under a poor people's surveillance. We expect to be, if Congressman Mills is not willing to act responsibly. We have asked Congressman Mills to call his committee together and allow the poor people of this country to be heard and to allow the issue of repeal of this bill and what this bill is going to mean to welfare recipients and other poor people, and what is happening in the welfare system, to allow that issue to be debated and to be opened up and that the Ways and Means Committee be the forum for that discussion.

To date Congressman Mills has refused to even ask the committee to come together to have that opportunity.

I have written a letter and I have made several phone calls to Congressman Mills, asking if at least he and interested members of the committee would meet with the leadership of the Welfare Rights Organization and other people from the poor people's campaign who are interested in discussing these issues. We have invited them to meet with us on Monday, and we are going to go down and see what their response is. We will have a response if they do not have a response, but we expect to press this action and try to get this debate before the American people. Because we believe that there are many people like us, Congressman Bolling and Congresswoman Griffiths, and many others who want an opportunity to be heard, who want an opportunity to try to right some of these wrongs and the injustices that this welfare system has perpetrated.

And the fact that this welfare law was written behind closed doors, with no opportunity for public discussion once these were brought up, the fact that the closed rule is used on the floor of the House so that there is no opportunity for Congress really to get on the record as opposing these welfare amendments, because they have to vote the whole social security package, either up or down—the fact that even after the Senate knocked out the worst features, Congressman