

Mills and Senator Long and a few other people, a minority of people, got together and made a deal, and the deal that they made was to put all of those punitive features right back in. And we have had the same thing happen again, where the Senate has again knocked out some of the worst features and again these same people have gotten together and made the deals.

Now, we think the American people, certainly the poor people, want to know what is going on behind those closed doors. We want to get democracy in this country out into the open and aboveboard and begin to make the processes work for all the people. Our organization is committed to that, that there be democracy for all people, not just the few who are able to get into the closed meeting to make the deal, but for all people. We hope that Mrs. Griffiths as a member of the Ways and Means Committee, who is sympathetic and interested in these issues, will be willing to attend the meeting that we hope to have on Monday. We hope to have Congressman Mills and other members of the Ways and Means Committee who are willing to meet with us on Monday to discuss these issues on what we can do about this bill and what we can do about moving the Ways and Means Committee, which holds the power, toward repealing of these terrible amendments and toward an adequate income maintenance system.

Representative BOLLING. Could I comment on that?

I congratulate you on the effort and I would look very closely at the beginning caucus of the Democratic Party when it decides who are going to be the chairmen—if we are again in the majority—the chairmen of what committees, not limiting it to just one, what the proportion as between one party and the other party is going to be, and what members go on the Ways and Means Committee to fill vacancies. I make no criticism of what you are doing because I am all for it. But the point I am making is that the fundamental decisions that skew the committee are made while nobody is looking, not even the Congressmen. They are made suddenly and quickly at a caucus and the result is that everybody thereafter can claim—I could if I wanted to—that there is nothing I can do about what comes out of the Ways and Means Committee because that was set the day that we organized and put the members on and divided the committee up. No disagreement, just one step further.

Mr. WILEY. I might say, Congressman, I have lived in great despair of that seniority system in Congress and the way it operates so that nobody is willing to challenge a Wilbur Mills.

Representative BOLLING. I will have to send you a book. My time is up, I have to stop. But I will send a book on that very subject.

Representative GRIFFITHS. I would like to ask, Mrs. Sanders, how widespread is your organization?

Mrs. SANDERS. It is 30 States and some 60 cities that we have been able to organize recipients in, which is a movement far bigger than the civil rights movement ever was. It has done more organizing of poor people and has more total participation of poor people than the poverty programs ever have.

Mr. WILEY. One thing I want to say is that even now, the organization has only been in existence since August as a formal organization.