

Letter From Jim Drake – Linnell and Woodville Rent Protest Committee –  
August 31, 1965

1549 West Olive  
Porterville, California  
31 August 1965

Dear Friends, Marchers and Letter Writers,

Several new developments have occurred in the issue of the tenants of Linnell and Woodville farm labor centers vs. the Tulare County Housing Authority:

1. The letters which you wrote and phone calls which you made helped bring the rent protest matter in Tulare County to a head. With the compassion and precision of a doctor operating with an ax the Health and Building Departments decided to settle the issue by condemning the farm labor centers. This was not exactly the solution to farm workers had in mind. They are now fighting to keep the camps open until alternate housing is made available. Another result has been the promise by Assemblyman Mervin Dymally for a full investigation on the part of the sub-committee on housing of the Industrial Relations Committee. This will take place in September and should point the way toward much needed legislation.
2. Mr. Walter Monasch, the governor's Consultant on Housing and Community Development, attempted to bring the Housing Authority and rent strikers into conciliation. He asked both parties to allow a neutral arbitrator to settle the issue. The tenants agreed to this proposal but the Housing Authority refused.
3. In spite of the fact the camps were condemned, the Housing Authority has filed and served court summons to a number of those who have refused to pay the rent. We now see the Tulare County Housing Authority taking farm workers to court because they have refused to accept a rent increase on condemned public housing. Ironically, the court costs to the Housing Authority are being paid out of the profits already gained from rents paid by the protesting tenants.
4. The expenses to defend the rent protesters will be at a minimum between \$300 and \$400. A major expense is the filing fee in each case. Attorney James Herndon of San Francisco has volunteered to defend the protesters without a fee. However he will have certain expenses which we must cover. We are therefore asking you for a donation for the defense of these tenants. Make checks payable to the Linnell-Woodville Rent Protest Committee and mail to 1549 West Olive, Porterville.

Thank you very much.

James L. Drake  
Linnell-Woodville Rent Protest Committee