

Community-PCAUR Fight WSU Toy Police

J.R. Kennedy

1970

People Concerned About Urban Renewal, representing the community that Wayne State has exploited for over ten years, once again marched against the University Feb. 28, demanding free community access to the Matthaei Physical Education Complex.

The Wayne State Department of Public Safety once and for all shed their liberal front and turned on the community people in a fashion that would make the DPOA proud. At no time during the entire demonstration did these Wayne Toy Police wear or display their I.D. badges.

When 50-75 people converged on the Matthaei gymnasium and interrupted a bullshit wrestling match between Wayne and CMU, attempting to use the facilities that are now resting where their homes used to be, the Wayne Toy Police in full riot gear moved against the community children and their parents. The police filed in one of the gym doors and tried to push the people off the floor.

The people responded by resisting these efforts, and began throwing handfuls of gravel on Wayne's \$50,000 gym floor. As the Toy Police backed the kids out the door, some of the crowd began throwing the handfuls of gravel at the windows. Ten or fifteen pigs lined up outside the doors to ward off any further attacks. The community people then stood across the street and began throwing everything they could lay their hands on at the Toy Police and the building. This effort lasted about half an hour as the WSU Police ducked gravel, bricks, bottles, and tin cans thrown by the frustrated community people.

Several plainclothes police circulated in the crowd and one individual, Emmett Evans, started a hassle with a couple of community people. He was immediately surrounded by a group of hostile residents and told to leave.

Evans, a former wrestling coach at WSU, later brought charges against James Brown, a PCAUR leader, for felonious assault. Brown was picked up after the demonstration while leaving a local store on Third street. He was released Sunday afternoon on \$1,000 personal bond.

This was the second time in recent weeks that Brown has been arrested following a PCAUR demonstration. PCAUR spokesmen and other witnesses at the scene stated that, following the arrest, Brown at no time had assaulted anyone and that the arrest stemmed from the Toy Pigs recognition of him as a PCAUR leader.

As the community people began to leave the area to hold a meeting at their office to plan further strategy, the WSU Toy Pigs began following them. The group agreed to stay together, because They understood that if they left the area singly they would be attacked and arrested.

As the main crowd crossed Warren Avenue, leaving the WSU property, three WSU police cars sped past. They then stopped about 30 feet ahead of the crowd and six or seven pigs jumped out of their cars and attacked Ted Brookins, a 15 year old community resident. Brookins was clubbed and dragged into one of the cars. The community people responded as around fifteen people attacked the police cars.

They began throwing rocks and sticks and anything else they could find at the Toy Police. At first the group of pigs considered moving against the people who were charging their cars, but then decided against it and ducked back into their cars and left. Brookins was charged with malicious destruction and released into the custody of his parents.

One of the reasons for the community's militant response and aggressive actions, beside the behavior of the Toy Police, is that the university has been inconsistent and ambiguous in their dealings with the community people. Last Saturday when PCAUR moved against Matthaai they were met with open arms. All facilities were open to them and many local kids swam in the pool and used the gymnasium. This week, however, when the kids attempted to do the same thing, they were met by police lines and riot gear.

The fact that 40 or 50 community kids were allowed to use the facilities last week exploded the theories that the administration has used as excuses to avoid dealing with PCAUR. If the insurance hassles, that they claim were of paramount importance, were realities, how could they allow the kids to use the pool one Saturday and not the next? If staff problems are also as serious a problem as the administration claims, why was the pool actually overstaffed when the community used the pool last week? If "health hazards" are really an issue, why were the facilities opened?

The university must hold a very low opinion of the local residents to assume that they will be insensitive to these inconsistencies. They have failed to realize that such actions will only make PCAUR and other community control organizations struggle harder to get back what belongs to them.

fifth Estate

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