

# Law and Protesters Vie in Chicago Court

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CHICAGO, Sept. 5 — The first of the convention demonstrators to be brought to trial in magistrates' court found themselves in the old, harshly lit halls where rumpled bailiffs enjoy the easy life that comes to those who carry their precincts for the Daley organization.

The accused, long-haired and young, stood and sat in these corridors which you can imagine being mopped down with Lysol by late-night charwomen, the last of the immigrant waves that once filled this city. The accused were expressions of fear, defiance, intimidation and a lack of concern that adolescents sometimes display when brought up against the formal and

threatening mechanisms of society.

The accused are like the juveniles who used to pack the tenth floor rooms of Boy's Court before there was a new politics, in the days when you slipped the bailiff a five spot to get your case moved up on the docket and your parents' precinct captain could do more for you than any lawyer.

They're like Linda Homburg. Linda is a 21-year-old senior from George Washington University. Her father is an engineer who lives at 8806 Manchester in Silver Spring, Md., not the kind of people who know See CHICAGO, A4, Col. 4

## CHICAGO, From A1

how to make out in a Chicago Magistrate's court.

She stood reading her paperback book yesterday, not quite understanding the procedures she was an involuntary party of. Her case was in the hands of one of the dozens of lawyers who have come forward to defend the hundreds of people who were arrested during convention week.

"They stopped us because the little light over the rear license plate of our car was off," Linda said, explaining the circumstances of her arrest. "They saw us getting their badge numbers and names and that sort of incited one old policeman. So they frisked us and took all eight of us to the station where they harassed us. They kept calling us 'dirty hippies.' They had us in this room and they'd come in and honk horns at us and throw powder at us. It wasn't tear gas or Mace or anything like that. I don't know what it was or why they were doing it."

Linda said that four of

the others in the car were VISTA volunteers and the rest students at the Universities of Virginia and Illinois and Boston University.

A few feet from Linda was Reuben. He had braces on his teeth and was a high school senior from Philadelphia who insisted he was 17 though he looked four years younger. His mother verified his age. She and Reuben's father, a salesman, had broken off their San Francisco vacation to fly here after their son had been arrested for "mob action."

Their lawyer, a member of one of Chicago's most respected law firms, looked out of place in the institutional grime. He was ready to argue the case and get Reuben off, but Richard Elrod, the assistant corporation counsel, was having none of it. He wanted to keep Reuben in the city because, he said, the grand jury was looking the boy's way.

So Reuben's case was continued. Outside in the cor-

ridor his mother asked a reporter, "Please don't put his last name in the papers. It might make it worse for him." Inside, Elrod picked his teeth and waited for the next case to be called, a disorderly conduct rap involving two boys accused of calling a cop "a pig" at 4:30 in the morning in front of the Sherman House Hotel.

The first boy was an 18-year-old freshman at the University of Southern Illinois. He lives with his father, an aeronautical engineer, in East Alton, Ill. The boy said he was from out of town and didn't know where the Sherman Hotel is, but Elrod said he was a man, not a boy, and an unreliable witness.

"How many people had you talked to before your arrest?" Elrod asked in the best cross-examination style of a TV heavy.

"Objection!" said the boys' lawyer.

"Sustained," said the judge.

"Did you have any weapons, guns, bricks or bottles?"

"Objection!"

"Sustained."

"I'm showing he's a liar," Elrod complained.

"You can't impeach a wit-

ness on a collateral issue," the judge explained to the bunch of people standing in front of his bench.

The judge was very good to the defense. All the rulings went in favor of the two culprits except the big one. The judge found them guilty. He said he was very sympathetic, said he was sorry to do it because they'd have a life-long criminal record and never be able to pass a security clearance and work for the Government, but he said he had to because he had to believe the policeman who said they had called him a pig.

Elrod wanted the maximum sentence of \$500 fines on each. The judge thought that was a bit thick and fined one \$50 and the other \$100.

One didn't have the money so they took him off to jail. The Illinois boy got his freedom.

The kids left the courtroom and stood in the corridor angry and silent.

Then later, on the street, as they left, they watched a cop pull up and park his civilian car in front of a fireplug.

"Law," one of the kids said as they kept on walking.