

A.C.L.U. Wins \$12-Million Suit Over Antiwar Arrests at Capitol

NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times

JAN 17 1975

WASHINGTON, Jan. 16 — The American Civil Liberties Union won a \$12-million damage suit against the District of Columbia today for what a jury said was the false arrest and infringement of rights of 1,200 antiwar demonstrators on the steps of the Capitol in 1971.

The award by a jury in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia was thought to be one of the largest ever in a civil liberties suit.

A spokesman for the corporation counsel for the District of Columbia said the decision would be appealed.

Under the jury verdict, each of the demonstrators—mostly college students then—is en-

titled to an average award of \$10,000, although the amount varies from one individual to another because of different lengths of confinement.

The A.C.L.U. now has the task of finding those who were arrested. They are scattered and some have new addresses.

The complaints adjudicated today stemmed from a police action May 5, 1971, when some 3,000 demonstrators were invited by Democratic Representatives Ronald V. Dellums of California and Bella S. Abzug of Brooklyn to visit the Capitol.

The police moved in and arrested more than 1,200 of the demonstrators when they refused to move along as commanded. President Nixon later

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A. WEISS (therapist) . . . you made me
What I am today—ALIVE and often grate-
ful. I shall prevail! NANCY.—Advt.

A. C. L. U. WINS \$12-MILLION SUIT

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praised the action of the Metropolitan Police Department and said that charges that the mass arrests had violated constitutional rights were "exaggerated."

"Frankly I was startled at the size of the award," said Warren K. Kaplan of the law firm of Melrod, Redman & Gartlan an attorney for the A.C.L.U.

The judgment entitles each of approximately 1,200 complainants to \$7,500 for violation of First Amendment rights. In addition, some can get from \$180 to \$1,800 for violation of Fourth Amendment rights for false arrest. Others are entitled to \$300 to \$1,200 for false imprisonment.

Each of the complainants was awarded \$500 for treatment labeled as "cruel and unusual punishment," violating the Eighth Amendment. Eight were awarded \$3,000 each for malicious prosecution in connection with an earlier case that was dismissed by the court. All other complainants were awarded \$50 each for malicious prosecution.

In addition, the court said that each person arrested was entitled to a refund of the \$10 posted as collateral at the time of arrest.

Dellums a Complainant

Representative Dellums was addressing the crowd when the authorities began to make arrests. Mr. Dellums, one of the complainants in the case called Dellums V. Powell, was awarded \$7,500. He was not arrested, but complained that he had been deprived of his free speech when the authorities took away his audience.

James M. Powell, commander

of the Capital Police at the time, was a party to the case, along with Jerry W. Wilson, who was then Metropolitan Chief of Police.

Earlier in the case, the Government gave the A.C.L.U. the names and addresses of those arrested. A spokesman for the union said yesterday that the names "are safe under lock and key." About "30 to 40 per cent" of those arrested were thought to be students at the time, the spokesman said.

Florence Isbell of the A.C.L.U. said that any person who feels entitled to some part of the award may write her at the union office at 3000 Connecticut Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20008.

The arguments in the case lasted for six weeks before Judge William B. Bryant. The civil jury of three men and three women was equally divided between whites and blacks.

The decision was reached this afternoon, following deliberations since noon yesterday.

"I think the verdict reflected the jury's appreciation of the personal rights involved in this matter," said Mr. Kaplan. "I was impressed that 75 per cent of the award was for First Amendment rights."

The First Amendment to the Constitution, as it pertains to this case, guarantees citizens freedom of speech, assembly and the privilege to petition the Government.

The fourth Amendment forbids illegal searches and seizures. The Eighth Amendment forbids excessive bail, fines and "cruel and unusual punishments."

\$1,660 Corona Bank Holdup

The East New York Savings Bank at 58-14 99th Street in Corona, Queens, was robbed yesterday of \$1,660 by a man in his late teens who handed a teller a threatening note.