

"HAVE RATS-WON'T PAY"

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pg. 1_A

Glenville Tenants Stage Rent Strike

"HAVE RATS - WON'T PAY"



HAVE RAT PROBLEMS—Above are part of the tenants at the 935 Lakeview Rd. apartment building who went on a "rent strike" last week. They are, seated left to right: Mesdames Daisy Worth, Lillie Foster, Rosie Banks, Ruth Jones, Rosie Barron; standing Victoria Wesley, Annie Skinner, Betty Hicks and Ophaline McAdoo. The women made their complaint to the Health Department last Wednesday.

(Staff Photo By Len Watkins)

By LEN WATKINS

Complaining that kitten-size rats get into bed with their children, into the stoves eating food and that roaches are "all over the place"

the tenants at 935 Lakeview Rd., last week went on a "rent strike":

Sixteen women in the 22-unit apartment building made their joint complaint to the City Health Department last Wednesday.

J.D. Becker, Health Department supervisor, immediately issued an order to the owner of the building, Lou Stern, to get rid of the rodents, roaches, put lids on the garbage

(Continued on Page 7-A)

GLENVILLE TENANTS STRIKE

(Continued from Page 1A)

THE TENANTS went on the rent strike after making numerous complaints to the owner, they revealed.

"We have told him (Mr. Stern.) many times to do something about the rats and roaches and other conditions of this place," Mrs. Ophaline McAdoo, told the Call

& Post in an interview.

"The rats have eaten holes in the walls and in blankets and clothes," she said, "and roaches run about freely while propagating in refrigerators, bathrooms and various other places." ***

STERN DENIES that he has done nothing to alter the situation and says the tenants "are looking for an excuse not to pay their rent."

He stated that for the past eight months about 90 per cent of his tenants have been delinquent.

The tenants deny this, saying they have always paid their rent on time.

"There's only been one tenant who has been a month behind in his rent," Mrs. Ruth Jones, custodian and rent collector said. "The reason he was behind was because he did not have a job."

TENANTS SAID the complaint was made when Stern started putting "undesirable" rat poison around in the multiple dwelling unit that would "kill the children" or "babies."

Stern said he had had the exterminator distributed in the basement and that the people protested and insisted that he go no further. He did this, the owner said, and the tenants still complained.

The mixture he was using, called "Warfarin", was reported to be "extremely harmful to children"; the women said. There are about 40 children, ages ten months to 16 years, living in the building, Mrs. Jones estimated.

THE WOMEN also stated that they were told by a man from the General Pest Control Co., that the mixture was very harmful to humans. Becker also said this, the tenants revealed, but later "changed his story."

JOHN GEDION, owner of General Pest Control Co., said there was some misunderstanding. He stated that the mixture used in the basement, and which he wanted to use in the other rooms, was not "very harmful" to humans "unless an excessive amount is taken internally."

Gedion said his company did not put the stuff down "because the tenants protested". He said it was one of the best types of rat exterminators, but "if the people didn't want to use it he would not use it against their will."

STERN SAYS he has the building checked "very frequently" and that he will do "everything possible" to make conditions better there.

The tenants claim that the owner "has been saying that over and over" but has "done nothing."

AS OF MONDAY, five tenants had been served eviction notices. The others are waiting for theirs, they said, "because we are not going to pay any more of this high rent until this place is exterminated."

One of the women getting an eviction notice, Mrs. Victoria Wesley, is scheduled to appear in court Thursday, September 7. Her husband, Richard, has been laid off his job, she revealed, for some three weeks. He was employed at the American Monorail Co.

Mrs. Wesley said Stern accuses her of being the "ring leader" in the rent strike.