



ALAN McSURELY

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Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Founded McSurely & Dorosin; McSurely, Dorosin & Osment; and now McSurely & Turner, Civil Rights Lawyers to re-orient new lawyers to anti-racism law, as practiced by McSurely's lawyers, Mort Stavis, Arthur Kinoy and William Kunstler in the 1960's. With his partners, he helped working people win more than \$3 million in employment cases, while helping rebuild the fractured Anti-Racism Movement in N.C.. Successfully represented UNC police officer Keith Edwards, UNC Housekeepers and Groundskeepers, the Occaneechi Band of Saponi Nation, Chapel Hill Black Public Works Association, two victims of police homicides; DOT-7; Minority Contractors of N.C.; Chatham Black Parents and Students and Chatham Deputy Dan Phillips; among others. Won three Supreme Court cases to expand N.C. Constitutional rights.

NAACP 1990-Present: Led legal redress committee of Chapel Hill-Carrboro Branch and, from 2005 to present, on leadership committee for the NAACP State Conference, led by Re. Dr. William J. Barber. Received NAACP's highest national honor for civil rights lawyers, the *William Robert Ming Award*, from Pres. Julian Bond at Milwaukee Convention in August, 2005.

PERSONAL INFORMATION: Father of 7, Grandfather of 7. **EDUCATION:** B.A., UNC-CH, 1959; M.A. *Counseling Psychology*, GWU, 1971; J.D., NCCU, 1987. **WRITING:** *Organizer's Workbook*; *Dialectics of Decentralization*; scores of leaflets, pamphlets, community newsletters, and other popular education pieces.

WORK EXPERIENCE: *Letter Carrier* in D.C. area for 7 years and elected shop steward for Letter Carriers Union and editor of its newsletter; *Juvenile Court Counselor*, Fairfax County, Virginia in early 1960's; in 1964 appointed *Director of anti-poverty program in D.C. suburbs* and set up community action, Headstart, and Neighborhood Youth Corps programs in 6 Virginia and Maryland counties; in 1966 made *Training Director for Neighborhood Youth in D.C.* and helped organized 20 adult and 20 youth Neighborhood Planning Councils that still are active. *Teacher of 7th grade math* in Prince George's County, *teacher of 6th and 7th grade* at Walden School in NYC; (organized AFT Union there); *Associate Professor at Antioch College in D.C.*, teaching social psychology, radical education theories, and journalism from 1972-78.

Formative Legal Experiences

In 1967, with Margaret Herring, moved to Eastern Kentucky as part of the Black Power strategy to win white working class people to the anti-racist/anti-poverty/antiwar Movements. The Republican candidate for Lt. Governor, who was also the local prosecutor, seized all their papers and charged them with “sedition” a few months before his November election. Stavis, Kinoy, and Kunstler, having just formed the Center for Constitutional Rights, sued the prosecutor and the state, alleging the Kentucky sedition law was unconstitutional. Two months before the election, the McSurelys won!

That fall the McSurelys received two invitations to go to Washington. Sen. John McClellan sent a man to meet the Republican Lt. Governor candidate, who secretly turned over to the Senator 234 copies of the McSurelys’ private papers, which became the basis of a Senate subpoena demanding they bring the documents to D.C. A few weeks later, Dr. Martin Luther King asked McSurely to help mobilize an Appalachian contingent to the Poor People’s Campaign King was planning for D.C. in the Spring of the 1968 election year, hoping the Appalachians’ participation would symbolize the evolution of the civil rights movement into a broad-based human rights movement.

On April 4 1968, Dr. King was murdered. The Poor People’s Campaign went forward, and McSurely helped organize and transport 150 Appalachians to D.C. -- joining Black, Brown, Yellow and Red Peoples. After two weeks of anti-racism and anti-poverty demonstrations, the government violently tore down Resurrection City and drove the 3,000 working people out of D.C. The ultra-right reaction to the spectre of poor and working people of all colors helped Nixon win by a whisker in November and, six weeks later, on 13 December 1968, assassins threw 8 sticks of dynamite at the McSurelys’ bedroom at 1 a.m. Glass shards sprayed over them and their infant son, Victor, but they miraculously escaped. The assassins were never caught.

A few months later in March, 1969, the McSurelys refused to comply with Sen. McClellan’s subpoena at a Senate Hearing, and instead served him with an anti-racism lawsuit they had filed that morning in the D.C. District Court. They were convicted of Contempt of Sen. McClellan, but the D.C. Court of Appeals reversed the conviction, finding that their constitutional rights had been violated. The lawsuit they had filed against McClellan and the Pike County prosecutor finally was tried in D.C. District Court in 1982. The jury award paid for McSurely’s law school and the start-up financing of his anti-racism law practice in 1988, when he was 51. See *In Our Defense*, a book by Caroline Kennedy and Ellen Alterman.