

REPORT: ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Attempts to prevent the use of Parker's School for voter registration meetings.

Parker's School is on rt. #309, ~~xxxxxx~~ on a hill right across from Mathews' Store, about three miles north of rt. #4.

It is on land owned by Rev. W. Echols, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ who has been very active in encouraging his neighbors to register to vote, and in asking people to sign the Freedom Registration forms.

The building was put up in 1939, as a National Youth Administration project. According to Rev. Echols, the material was supplied by the Federal government, but transportation for the material was paid for by local Negroes around the ~~area~~ area. It was actually built by Negro parents, and its upkeep was paid for by them. The County of Marshall, according to Rev. Echols, has contributed practically nothing to the building, and did not improve the property at all.

From the time of construction to three or four years ago, the building was used as a Negro school by the ~~County of Marshall~~ County Board of Education. Rev. Echols said he never gave a deed to the County for the School, and just ~~xxx~~ let them use the building.

When the County schools were consolidated, three or four years ago, Rev. Echols assumed that he had the responsibility for it, and decided that it should be used as a community center for the people. This was agreed to by the Sup't of Schools, Mr. Appleton, but no formal papers were signed. In fact, as far as I can determine, there's never been any papers on it.

About three weeks ago, Rev. Echols agreed to let the Mississippi Freedom Project use the building for whatever it wanted, freedom schools, mass meeting, precinct meeting, etc. This was a great break for the project, as we had been denied full use of two other churches: Smith Grove wouldn't let us use the church at all, except for attending services, and Coxley Chapel wouldn't let us use the building for a freedom school, or for a precinct meeting.

The notice went out that the precinct meeting would take place on the 27th.

On the morning of the 27th, Alvin Pam, U.Z. Currey, James Mosley, Mr. Jones, and myself, were canvassing around Chulahoma. We spoke to a Mrs. Wooten, who was visiting a family below Raymond Thomas. She said that Mr. Johnson Mathews, a bus driver for the County Schools, was spreading the rumour that the precinct had been called off.

We checked with Rev. Echols. He said that Mathews had told him that Mr. Appleton had said that if a precinct meeting was held at the school, he would sell the building.

Mr. W.H. French, the Chairman of the Board of Ed. in Byhalia, for Marshall County Schools, had told Mathews to tell Echols that if a meeting was held in Parker's School, "we'll either sell it or burn it down." However, Rev. Echols said that he still wanted the meeting