

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 RAYMOND STREET, N.W., ATLANTA 14, GEORGIA • 680-0331

702 Wall Street
McComb, Mississippi
39648

(601) 684-9414

COPY OF AFFIDAVIT

{ STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
{ COUNTY OF PIKE
{ CITY OF McCOMB

Mrs. Willie Dillon
Whitestown

At about 12:55 a.m., Friday morning, August 28, 1964, there was a big explosion outside. It woke up everyone in the house who was asleep: Linda, age 14, Willie jr., age 12, and myself. My husband, Willie, had been working on the car that belongs to C.O.F.O. and was in the bathroom shaving and getting ready for bed when the explosion occurred.

However, our neighbors heard a car pull away fast, though we heard nothing. We did not call the police ourselves. They were called from Burgland by someone. They arrived at about 1:45 a.m. They were Highway Patrolman Bobby Felder, who had seen me attempt to register and who asked most of the questions, F.B.I. agent Ford, Sheriff Warren, Chief Guy, and Deputy Sheriff Beardon, who had also seen me try to register down at the Magnolia Courthouse.

For a little while, they seemed interested in the bombing. They looked at the scorched hole in the lawn, and Patrolman Felder took away the unexploded sticks. I think there were about nine sticks that did not go off. I believe only the cap went off. If all of them had gone off, there would have been a tremendous damage to the house. Our children could have been badly hurt or killed. But they weren't interested in the bombing for long, about twenty minutes I'd say. They all dropped it as soon as they found out the car belonged to C.O.F.O.

Either Chief Guy or Sheriff Warren asked what had my husband been doing before the bombing. He said he had been working on the green Buick near the house. Felder asked, "Who's car is that?" My husband said it belonged to C.O.F.O. Then Felder and Agent Ford and Warren all started in on him real fast. They wanted to know who owned the car. My husband said he didn't know exactly who it was that owned it. All of them said he was lying, trying to protect us. My husband repeated that he didn't homestly know. Warren and Agent Ford asked us both if we would take a lie detector test. We said we would not. "Why not?" they asked. We said, because we have not done anything. I think it was the F.B.I. Agent, Ford, who said, "If you haven't done anything, why are you afraid to take it?" All the time they were referring back to the car and how there wasn't any dew on it, how the tires were warm, and all. I think that my husband tried it out after working on it.

"One Man, One Vote"



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They were all looking inside the car, everywhere. They didn't ask our permission to search the car and they didn't have a search warrant. They took a letter out of it from the owner and took it off. There was some C.O.F.O. literature on a chair by the porch which one of them read.

Sheriff Warren said to us, "If you don't cooperate with us more than C.O.F.O. more than that is going to happen to you." He meant more than the bombing.

Either Warren or Felder said, "The C.O.F.O.'s might have thrown it." Then Sheriff Warren, Chief Guy, Felder, and Agent Ford got together and talked among themselves. They saw we weren't going to take the lie detector test. So Warren came up and said, "You are under arrest for opening a garage without a license and tampering with the electricity and then you'll have to take the test."

Then they took my husband off and left me alone with the children. We had been seeing cars stopping out front with white people in them practically every night, so my husband had fixed up a light on the porch and attached it onto the electricity line going to the house. It gave us a little protection to have our lawn lighted up. He hadn't rigged it up in an illegal way. I know because that very same night, they were there. They called an electricity man to come out and check the light, and he said it wasn't doing any harm. Frank Watson heard him say it.

When it comes to the car, about a month ago, a policeman asked my husband to repair his private car, a Rambler station wagon. My husband did the work. He was never paid. The policeman didn't ask about any license to operate a garage then.

The next day, still Friday, August 28, I had a lot of trouble seeing my husband. They said the trial was at 3:00 p.m. down at the Magnolia Courthouse. But then they moved it up to 2:30 p.m. and had it here in McComb. We were driving back and forth, and it was all over when we got there; I never could get to see him. He tried everything to get to my husband, but they kept him out. By him, I mean the C.O.F.O. lawyer from Jackson, Frank Jones.

When I saw him, finally, in the Pike County jail, it was all over. He had been tried without a lawyer and had pleaded guilty. They sentenced him to nine months in jail, six for the garage and three for the electricity, and they had fined him \$600.00, \$500 for the garage and \$100.00 for the electricity. I asked him why he pleaded guilty, and he said he couldn't think of anything else to do.

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On my way in to see my husband, I saw Lawyer Reeves. I think his first name is Bob. I asked him if my husband could get a suspended sentence. He said to ask him if he's ready to talk. He wanted to get hii to say that C.O.F.O. did the bombing.

Sometime after 5:00 p.m. I went by McComb Scrap Iron Company where my husband worked, to tell Mr. Virgil Hickman what happened. Mr. Hickman is my husband's boss. He said yes, that he had heard about it, that the police had come by. He said he was going to have to replace my husband, and there was a man coming tomorrow. We talked about it, and he said it was because my husband had been taking part in C.O.F.O.. Then he said you know it is, as if he was in the same fix that I was. Then he said, "Now you get a lawyer and try to do something."

On Sunday, August 28, I spoke with the F.B.I. agent, the same one who was here the night of the bombing. He talked the same way, like we did it.

Then I called the F.B.I. office in Jackson from the C.O.F.O. office and told them everything. They said they would get someone on it. Then I called Mr. Doar in the Justice Department in Washin ton, D.C., but he wasn't in, so I spoke with Mr. MacIntyre and told him everything. He seemed interested and said he would look into it.

My children could have been killed by that bomb. Now they have my husband in jail for nine months and fixed it so he won't have a job.

"One Man, One Vote