

[1965, Feb. 6]

White Community- fact sheet (1964)

Feb. 27: The Madison County Herald headlined an article on the re-organization of the White Citizens' Council: "Citizens Council Reorganized Here; Racial Demonstration Discounted" (sub-headline: United Front Sought Against Agitators; Preparation for Friday). It stated that more than 300 people crowded the County Courthouse in Canton on Feb. 25. Rev. Eual Samples (pastor of the First Methodist Church) gave an invocation, and Gus Noble explained the reasons for the reorganization: "One, or four, outsiders have come into our city and have seriously disrupted our economic system. Only a part of our business section is directly affected now but any other segment, or all of our business, may be under attack tomorrow. It is time for us to present a unified front towards this illegal threat." D.R. Yandell, head of the original CC for 10 years, gave the principal speech and read from the recommendations of the 42-man ~~steering~~ Steering Committee of the Council. "He challenged his listeners, 'Stand up and be counted as a white man.' At the close of his strongly worded talk, Mr. Yandell said, 'This meeting is adjourned.'" The MCH said that the crowd "flooded up to the front table to take out memberships in the Canton White Citizens Council." Finally, the paper described

***the steering committee of the council: Gus Noble, chairman; **N.S.** Tom Maynor, secretary; W.S.Cain, Tom Riddell, Jr., Nelson Cauthen, R.L.Goza /City Attorney/, L.S.Matthews /mayor/, A.B.Mansell, Jr. /prs. of the board of supervisors- turned down Agriculture Dep't.'s offer of surplus food/, J.R.Fancher /lawyer for James Brown- see fact sheet on intimidation/, Ed Henry, James Cain, Rev. Eual Samples, Jeff Pace, W.A.Sims, Jimmie Stewart, Frank E. Allen /Canton Exchange bank official/, W.B. Brannan, Herman Mosby, Ott Noble, Shelby Smith, Dr. C.H. Heywood, Homer Chapman, D.R. Yandell, Hermit Jones, Charlie Riddell, Grady Morgan, James T. Conner, James Stewart, Sam Hailey, Billy Ledbetter, James Traywick, James Williamson, Lester Penn, Jr., J.D.Raspberry, Dr. John Durfey, Bob May, Emmett Ross, Sam Latimer, Jr., Robert Cox, Jack Cauthen /County High Sheriff/, D.M. Allen /School Superintendent/, Henry Johnson, Bill Noble /Deputy Sheriff/, and Dan Thompson /Chief of police in Canton/.

March 26: The MCH ran a series of editorials by Editor Mullen, who was selling the paper to one Taylor. Mullen mentioned that "Dr. Silver has contributed much to the life of Ole Miss during the more than a quarter of a century he has been teaching there." Mr. Mullen stated, interestingly enough that "Three months ago, December 26, 1963, had anyone asked us where we expected to spend the remainder of our years and be laid to rest we would have unhesitatingly said Canton, Mississippi." He also, in another editorial, entitled "The Flight of the Young...", commented upon the fact that Mississippi youth, white as well as Negro, because of "...the strife and bitterness that has not only risen between the two races but between acquaintances of his own white race." His comment upon the situation: "Truly an eroding influence that darkens our future."

April 1: In a report for NCC, Frazer A. Thompson talked some about his experiences with the White community. Some of his most important observations follow. He interviewed Sheriff Cauthen, Mr. Herrington Rimmer, Father Moran, Rev. Richard Harbison, and Phil Mullins. ".../Mr. Rimmer/ describes himself as one of the two men in the community (Editor Mullins the other) who honestly believe the negro has been ill-treated and has a just grievance." "To me...Father Moran stated that 'Negroes are immoral, uneducated, with no ambition. Just look at the way they live... everyone of them with a TV and a fine car. Only ten percent of them are married...There are five kinds of law in Canton-between Negro and Negro, white and white, Negro and white and white and Negro...' /Richard Harbison:/ "I hadn't intended to go to the White Citizen's meeting, but Phil Mullins encouraged me to go, to get the pulse of the community. I did, too! These people are determined not to give an inch. They are 100% united. Until last week (prior to the February 25 meeting) Canton's relations with the Negro were on a personal, individualistic basis. Now we find them united, and we don't know what to do about it... Eleven of the forty-five leading members of the White Citizen's Council are in the Presbyterian Church." /Phil Mullins:/ "My father and I have preached better treatment for the Negro for years, to no avail. They listen and read, but do not follow. We had a White Citizen's Council organized in 1954, but since then it has been dormant, until Tuesday. Every business has been forced to sign up, even me. There is no question by what the Negro has not gotten his fair shake. And the whites are not going to give up their privileges...This voter registration push isn't going to succeed either. The State of Mississippi has frankly seen to that in its registration law. What is really effective is the Economic Boycott. And the retail merchants have lost 50% of their Easter business. Some of them are already saying we've just got to come to terms, but the majority won't listen..."

June 18: The MCH, under its new editor, editorialized against Freedom Days, marches, and agitators in general: "Such 'marches' are staged, and we use the word 'staged' advisedly, by imported trained agitators..." "If rights were really the ~~point~~ point in question marchers would as soon walk singly or in pairs as they are permitted to do in Canton, as to 'march' in groups. Such "groups" are far closer to 'mobs' than to marchers...the object sought is disorder not rights; mob violence, not justice." On the same day, Phil Mullins wrote from Arkansas said, "'The voter registration leaders have created serious economic dislocations in this community, which are hurting both Negroes and whites, and they are risking even more- they are risking violence. On the other hand...reasonable leaders in the white community cannot deny that the local government has not given the Negro community a number of things which they would have gotten had the Negroes the power of the ballot...Unless the adamant stand on both sides is moderated somewhat, this conflict is rapidly approaching the point of no return..."

At the end of the year, Gus Noble sent out a letter to "Fellow White Citizens" which is reproduced below:

"The year 1964 will long be remembered in Canton, Mississippi, This was the year when some of the Negro people of this area, along with paid outside agitators, tried to take Canton away from the white men and women who organized, established, built and paid for it and who govern, own, control and support it with the great majority of the taxes paid. The year 1964 will long be remembered in Canton because it was in this year that the white people of the city and county organized more strongly and with greater effort than ever before. We have experienced only a small portion of the socialistic campaigns that will be fought in Canton in the months and years to come. Outside groups have promised to bring thousands of agitators to our state this summer. Canton is one of the 25 towns listed by the agitators as demonstration centers. THE WHITE CITIZENS OF CANTON MUST BE UNIFIED TO SAVE CANTON FROM MASS CONFUSION LEADING TO RACE MIXING. Organization is the key to victory! The Canton Citizens Council is the gathering place for those white men and women who are determined to keep the white people in all governmental positions and in complete control of our way of life. The five-point action program of the Citizens Council is: 1. Prevent race-mixing 2. Avoid violence 3. Maintain and restore legal segregation 4. Defend states' rights 5. Reverse the "Black Monday" decision. The Citizens Council needs your support and suggestions. If you have any suggestions or questions please contact any members of the Steering Committee of the Canton Citizens' Council. Thank you for your support and continued effort to keep Canton, Madison County and Mississippi in the hands of white men and women. Sincerely, Gus Noble
PRESIDENT."

The last listing available of the police forces in the County, excluding the Highway Patrol, constables and JP's, is as follows:
Sheriff: Jack S. Cauthen; deputies: Sam Leddy, James Chavers, Bobby Gordon, Carl Holley, Hervey Evans, Leon Hawkins, Cecil Brown, S.B.Lacey, E.G.Watkins.
Chief of Police: Dan C. Thompson; policemen: John Chance, Frank Langford, Gene Chapman, Russell Cook, Herman Goolsby, Clinton Jolly, Allen ~~Hybert~~ Halbert, Merle Squires, Wayne Sullivan, Tommy James.

An as yet unreliable source disclosed that there is also an "auxiliary police" unit, trained and equipped by the Highway Patrol and an additional 16 deputies that we know nothing about.

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