

[1965]

STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE
8 1/2 RAYMOND STREET, NW
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

SELMA, ALABAMA--Monday, March 8----The Medical Committee for Human Rights had four ambulances ready to aid injured marchers on Sunday, but were held up from crossing the bridge by Police Commissioner Wilson Baker and State Troopers for 15 to 30 minutes. Dr. Alfred Moldovan of New York City pleaded with Baker to let the ambulances pass. Baker said: "I can't do this. It's a state matter." (Dr. Moldovan said: "even in war time, the Red Cross can go over to help the wounded, but in Alabama they don't even respect the elementary human decencies.") Today the Medical Committee plans to hold briefing sessions for students about how to protect themselves against tear gas and night-sticks.

45 Negro students at Selma University walked out of school at 11 AM and were followed by 25 more who left about 2:30 PM. The students went to Brown's Chapel and drew up plans for a Student Government at school and the right to participate in the movement without reprisals. The students then marched back to the school.

At Good Samaritan Hospital, John Lewis still is being treated for a head injury.

Annie Pearl Avery and George Bess were chased out of Selma by a State Trooper. They were told to "get the hell out of town." They were followed by the troopers half way to Montgomery.

In other parts of the country demonstrations sprang up in protest to the Selma brutality:

Washington, DC--Frank, Jean, and Dale Smith attempted a sit-in today at Attorney General Katzenbach's office. A picket of the Justice Department was held all afternoon, 3 - 6 PM. At 4, representatives of SCLC, SNCC, NAG (Nonviolent Action Group, from Howard U.), NAACP, CORE, and FDP were supposed to have met with Katzenbach. Lester McKinnie represented SNCC.

Boston, Mass.--Harvard students are planning a picket and march to protest the Selma brutality.

San Jose, Calif.--Friends of SNCC is preparing press statements and further demonstrations.

Atlanta, Ga.--60 Morehouse and Atlanta University Students picketed the Federal Building here morning and afternoon.

New York City--NY SNCC Office planned another sit-in today at the Foley Square Courthouse, the site of the U.S. Attorney's office. Tomorrow, Tuesday, a march will be held, starting from both 42nd Street and 125th Street; the marchers will meet and picket the FBI building.

St. Louis, Mo.--40 students and members of local groups picketed the Federal Building between 6 and 7 PM, and they plan to return tomorrow.

SELMA, ALABAMA--Tuesday, March 9--12:30 PM People gathering outside Brown's Chapel heard statements by Jim Farmer and John Lewis (just released from the hospital). When John appeared he was greeted by spontaneous applause. He pointed out that the only requirement for being eligible to vote in the Black Belt should be age and residence. He said further: "The march is legitimate, injunction or no injunction. Whatever we do depends on what the people want to do."

Earlier this morning telegrams were sent to the FCC in Atlanta protesting the jamming of broadcasting between SNCC citizens band radio cars and headquarters.

2:30 PM--(John Lewis)--People are assembling at the church ready to march. An injunction was issued by Federal Judge Johnson against the march (the injunction named only 3 people: John Lewis, Mrs. Amelia Boynton and Hosea Williams of SCLC).

(Reports from Judy Richardson, SNCC office in Selma)

3:15--The march will begin in about 10 minutes. It will be led by Ralph Abernathy, James Farmer, James Forman and Martin Luther King. The crowd of marchers is estimated at 3,000. The place is swarming with state troopers who have blocked the bridge leading out of town.

3:30--The march started about 5 minutes ago. There are 21 white ministers leading the line in addition to Abernathy, Farmer, Forman and King. Between 300 and 400 ministers from all over the country are marching with the group plus some 50 white Alabamians, most of whom are members of the Alabama Committee on Human Relations. Negroes from Marion, Anniston, Birmingham, Montgomery and from the campuses of Selma U., Tuskegee, and other colleges were marching also. Some Selma school-kids, carrying knapsacks and bed rolls carried picket signs. One read: "No Freedom Without Equality." Another, "Tear Gas is Nazism." The crowd is estimated at 1,500 to 2,000. About 7 Freedom Democratic Party members from Mississippi also joined the crowd, including Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer of Ruleville, Miss., Rev. Ed King of Tougaloo, Miss., Mrs. Susie Ruffin of Laurel, Miss., and Mrs. Hazel Palmer of Jackson, Miss.

Negroes and whites are running down the streets trying to see what is happening. State police are trying to disperse them, but are more concerned with the marchers. 250 troopers are at the end of the bridge waiting for the marchers.

4:15--All people are across the bridge.

4:19--People have been turned back. They were able to get across the bridge but were stopped by state police. Then they knelt down in prayer. Now they're on their way back to town.

(report from Lafayette Surney) --People marched to the bridge. At the bridge a Federal Marshal read to the people the injunction forbidding the march. The people continued across the bridge--a human barricade. The trooper told the people they couldn't continue the march. He said: "This march is not going to go on. This is not conducive to the safety of the public." King answered: "We would like to continue this march to Montgomery. We want to call attention to the governor of the denial of voting rights of Negroes, police brutality; and we also want to talk to him about our right to march."

The officer repeated his order. Dr. King said the ministers would lead the group in prayer and about 8 ministers and one rabbi spoke. Mrs. Paul Douglas, wife of the senator from Illinois, walked to the front of the group and cheering broke out. She spoke briefly to Forman and King.

After the prayers the officer told all the state troopers to move off the highway. There was a short, quiet pause, and then Rev. King told the group to turn around and go back to the church. The group started singing. They looked at the state troopers while they sang freedom songs; the troopers heard them singing: "We love all state troopers...."

SELMA, ALABAMA---11:30 (Faye Bellamy and Louise Marshall)--Three of the northern ministers have been beaten by local whites--one of them is hurt badly. Their names are James Reeb, from Boston, who has been taken to the Birmingham University Hospital with a fractured skull (the nurse told us he was in critical condition) Hurluf Miller from Boston, and Clark Olsen from San Francisco. Rev. Miller accompanied Rev. Reeb to the hospital. He (Miller) wasn't injured badly but he was beaten in the head and had his glasses broken.

About half an hour ago some white men attacked the medical wagon. It's probably the same gang that attacked the ministers.

Tonight there were two different mass meetings where there about 2,000 people altogether.

Wednesday, March 10

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA--Rev. Reeb of Boston is in very critical condition and is not expected to live.

SELMA--10 AM (Faye Bellamy)--A march is planned today to the courthouse. The mayor of Selma has reportedly said he would not allow the march. Police Commissioner Baker said: "We will stand up to the people if they try."

MONTGOMERY-- (Erving LaBland)--There will be a march to the capital today at 1 PM. Students from Tuskegee, Alabama State, Carver High School and represen-

tatives from the Montgomery Improvement Association will participate in the march. It's being sponsored by the Tuskegee Institute Action League. A permit to hold the march was granted by the mayor. About six or eight blocks from the church are 28 squad cars; 11 state troopers are at the State House.

SELMA--3:30 PM (Faye Bellamy)--Demonstrators are still standing in the street about 2 or 3 blocks from the court house. They were stopped by Police Commissioner Baker when the march first started one and a half hours ago. When they were first stopped, the students turned around and went back one block. Baker came around another street in front of the marchers. People began holding hands. They have been standing there for over an hour. There are reports that some of them have been beaten.

SELMA--4:00 PM (Charlie Horowitz)--Seven teenagers were injured today after they had attempted to march to the courthouse here. The state troopers were using billy clubs and pushed them as they were marching backward. Baker told them: "Go back to the church." The students yelled: "Freedom!" "Freedom!"

Courtland Cox of SNCC tried to tell the students to go back to the church to decide what to do and then come back again, but while he was doing this state troopers kept a line across the street and on the sidewalk of Jeff Davis Street and shoved the kids who were marching backward arm-in-arm. Casey Hayden, SNCC staffer, was pulled from the line by a state trooper, had her camera taken away and was joshed up and then pushed back in line. Negro and white ministers who were on hand were shoved with billy clubs in their necks, shoulders and arms and were pushed backward. The seven kids who were injured were bruised on their arms and kneed, legs and shoulders, when they fell down.

Two doctors from the Medical Committee have been taken in for questioning by the sheriff and told they couldn't practice medicine in the state of Alabama or they would be arrested. One of the doctors, Jack Geiger, asked if some people were injured would he not be allowed to treat them--like last night when the ministers were beaten. The sheriff said: "If you touch someone as a doctor, we have to arrest you." Then the two doctors were released. Both of them said they would continue to help anyone who was injured.

MONTGOMERY-- 4:20 (Cliff Vaughn)-- "We have been here since 1:30 and we're planning to stay all night. We're mobilizing forces to bring food and blankets over for all night."

MONTGOMERY (Willie Emma Scott--via Selma)--Troopers are telling the people they can go to the rest rooms, but after they go the troopers aren't letting them back into line. Ben Clark, one of the demonstrators, organized a group of students to sit in at an intersection in the middle of the street. He was asked to get up but they didn't get up. Police tried to run over their feet, but they drew their feet up. The police left. Clark was kicked by a policeman who took him to a cab stand and then let him go. People will sit in at the courthouse until they are able to see the Governor.

7:00 PM--(Robert Fletcher)--The Demonstrators held a meeting a short time ago, and the people decided that in protest against not being allowed to leave and come back, and not being allowed to bring doctors or food in, they will stay all night and hunger strike. Bit by bit participants have been leaving the demonstration.

7:45 PM (Sandy Leigh)--Fred Meely, who works in the Holly Springs (Miss.) project, was arrested. The story is not clear, but we think he apparently ran toward the barricade around the demonstrators (he was outside), was knocked down by police, and taken to the city jail. He is charged with disorderly conduct and his bail is \$200.00.

Thursday, March 11

2:00 AM--MONTGOMERY (Larry Fox)-- About 150 people are still in front of the capitol. They are standing up now because the grass is wet. Their permit expired an hour ago, and they are still surrounded by state troopers and city police, but they have been left alone.

AROUND THE COUNTRY, demonstrations continued over the Selma situation:

Los Angeles--About 100 people went to the Federal Building. Marshals wouldn't let them in, so they blocked all exits, including the Post Office, for several hours. Finally the Post Office workers were deputized, and began beating up and arresting people. When the workers began to stomp on girl demonstrators, local guys began to beat them up, and a small riot ensued. 29 people were arrested, charged with a felony.

Then they had a rally. Someone announced that Katzenbach had just said in Washington that it was illegal to demonstrate on federal property. 100 more people were arrested. People lay down in front of buses being used to take people to jail. One boy was seriously hurt; we don't know whether he was run over or beaten. About 100 people altogether were brutally arrested, beaten, dragged, stepped on.

San Francisco--2,000-3,000 participated in a demonstration at the Federal Building called by the Longshoremens Union.

Boston--There was a sit-in at Senator Saltonstall's office, until he made a statement about Selma.

IN CANADA--four hundred to five hundred students from the University of Toronto marched to the U.S. Consulate today. 30 students entered the building and demanded to see the Consul. Police dragged them out. Students from U.T., MacMaster University and Carlton University sent petitions and telegrams yesterday to LBJ demanding the arrest of Sheriff Clark and protesting federal inaction.

Thursday, March 11 (continued)

SELMA--1:30 PM--300-400 people are still standing in the street, singing. They have been there since yesterday.

WASHINGTON, DC--2 PM--Twenty students from the High School Friends of SNCC group in Washington are sitting in at the White House.

MONTGOMERY--3:30 PM--There was an open conflict in the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church between representatives of SCLC and SNCC. It came to a head when the Chairman of the Church Board told the people congregated inside (about 500) to leave because he had given permission only to Martin Luther King to use the church, and if the people left the church in two's and three's they wouldn't be arrested.

There was an exchange between James Forman, Executive Secretary of SNCC, and James Bevel, SCLC Staff--Bevel telling the people not to demonstrate and Forman telling them that he was "going out there (to demonstrate at the State House) if I have to go alone. Anybody who wants to come with me can do so." Then Forman left the church, followed by about 80% of the students and people in the church. When they were outside the church, city policemen (about 50) told the kids they could leave, but the kids were attacked by state troopers (about 75). They had run the kids back up on the steps of the church and were beating them with billy clubs.

On the way to the Capitol James Forman was arrested along with Stu House, George Bess, Bill Hall, Bill Ware and 160 others.

When Forman tried to cross the police line, the police grabbed him and he went limp. The police jumped on him. He was trying to cross over to where the students were standing in a double line on one side of the sidewalk, arms linked and very orderly. The policemen were standing all around the kids. Forman got up again, went limp again, and then was dragged in the street over to the sidewalk. He was charged with disorderly conduct.

Some of the kids who were beaten are hurt pretty badly and needed medical attention. For about an hour no doctors were allowed in the church to treat the beaten students.

6:40PM (James Forman, speaking from Montgomery Jail)- Four of us left the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and walked down the center pavement. Then a captain and a lieutenant of the state troopers came down and said we couldn't congregate there. We told him we were just standing there waiting for some people to arrive. They said we would have to move on back down toward the church. We started walking back down and the lieutenant, of course, kept urging us to move much faster. Then we raised the question with them of whose property was this, because yesterday the city police were responsible for that particular area...This lieutenant would never give us his name...he kept pushing on us ordering us to walk across the street...We decided to walk toward the Dexter Avenue Church and crossed the street. Then the City police ran out and said we had to go back up the street to our left. So then we said well, you know, the state troopers say we have to go this way; the city police say we have to go that way. One of the guys...pushed me over...and then we stood on the curb there. The city policeman came over...the captain of the city police came up and said, "arrest the people." At that point four of us went limp and were dragged for about 50 feet to the police wagon.

In the meantime something had happened across the street where the police had a cordon of officers....they started using their billy clubs on some of the people...one of the young men with us was severely beaten over the head...Then they brought us to the city jail."

BIRMINGHAM--6:55-- Rev. James Reeb dies.

PM

WASHINGTON, DC--9:00/Students who sat in at the White House were released..They were sitting in a foyer and would have blocked the entrance of foreign d'plomats who were coming to LBJ's reception tonight. White House officials prevented press coverage of the incident. The students were removed in private automobiles but about the time of their removal three police paddy wagons pulled away from the White House --empty.

DETROIT, MICH.---300 Detroit citizens left by train today for Washington. The group was organized by the Council of Churches and will lobby in Washington from 10 AM to 5 PM, March 12. Half of them will go to the Justice Department and half will visit their Congressmen.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.---People sat in at the U.S. Attorney's office and were carried out on stretchers. No one was arrested.

IOWA---On Wednesday the resolution introduced in the State House of Representatives calling for federal protection and guarantees of the right to vote passed. It will also be introduced in the State Senate.