

*Washington*

July 5, 1965

**Summary of Incidents: Bogalusa, Louisiana, January 28-July 1, 1965**

Note: This list is not complete; additions from files in our Baton Rouge Office and from Bogalusa files are still coming in. However, the list is accurate with respect to the incidents it describes.

January 28 — Eighteen establishments were tested under the Public Accommodations section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Seven, including Capo's and Dairy Queen, refused service.

Jan. 28 — While CORE worker Bill Yates was waiting in a car outside the Plaza Restaurant, a group of whites gathered around the car. They made insulting remarks, drew their fingers across their throats, and called him a "nigger".

Jan. 28 — A large group of white men started after CORE worker Steve Miller and several other Negro residents of Bogalusa, who had just successfully tested ACME Drug Store. Police intervened before the whites could reach the Negroes.

Jan. 30 — Tacks were found in the driveway of the home of Robert Hicks, vice-president of the Civic and Voters League, who had been giving shelter to the CORE workers. Tacks were also found in the driveway of the Labor Union Hall, where mass meetings had been held.

February 2 — At 12:15 A.M., following a massmeeting related to the store testing, Deputy Sheriff Doyle Holiday and Chief of Police Claxton Knight came to the Hicks residence to report that a mob of 200 white people was forming downtown to lynch Yates and Miller, staying at the Hicks home. The policemen offered to escort the CORE workers out of town. After discussion with Mr. Hicks, the two decided to stay. Holiday and Knight refused to protect them, saying, "We have better things to do than protect people who aren't wanted here." Phone calls from across the country to the Mayor, and the threat that the Negro community would defend the CORE workers prevented any violence. Local telephone operators prevented some calls from the north from reaching Bogalusa.

Feb. 3 — Miller and Yates were followed from one meeting to another by two police cars (meetings were held to discuss testing of public accommodations law). When a car filled with six whites approached them, the police cars disappeared. The two CORE workers were chased at high speeds through the Negro community. At a main intersection, Yates jumped out and ran into a restaurant for help, but was caught by two whites and beaten severely, suffering a broken hand. Miller drove off around the block, as a shot was fired at him and a rock thrown at the car. Another shot was fired at Yates.

Feb. 3 (cont'd) — For the next six hours, the two were besieged in Aubrey's Bar by groups of whites passing by in cars. Reliable reports were made that mobs of whites were forming in downtown areas. Soon after the beating, police arrived and dispersed a crowd of Negroes who had gathered. They did nothing to stop the cars driven by the white men, and they allowed a group of whites to gather on a nearby corner. At sundown the police withdrew; as the night wore on, phones along the block were cut off. At 10:30. Miller and Yates were given a police escort to Baton Rouge. Yates entered a hospital in New Orleans the next day.

Feb. 5 — A Negro man driving in Washington Parish outside Bogalusa was flagged down by a white man with car trouble. When he stopped to offer aid, several white men jumped out of a nearby ditch, beat him and threatened him.

Feb. 14 — A bomb threat was received at the Hicks home. It was not the first. \*

Feb. 15 — Five Negroes were eating dinner at the recently desegregated Landry's when two white persons with clubs entered and told them to get out. As they were leaving, one of the Negro men was assaulted by one of the whites. \*

Later, one Negro boy went to eat at Landry's; one of the white customers put a gun to his head and told him to leave.

Feb. 16 — A Bogalusa telephone operator refused to let the Hicks complete a call to the New Orleans F.B.I. She refused to put through others.

Four Negro boys stopped to get gas in the white part of town. A mob of white teen-agers jumped them and beat all four. Roosevelt Singleton, a midget, was severely kicked around the groin and had to go to a hospital. Several policemen observed the beatings and made no move to stop them. \*

Feb. 19 — A police car followed the car of Joshua Mundy, a militant Negro leader. After eight miles, the policeman stopped him, charged him with speeding, having an improper muffler, and concealing a weapon. The weapon was on the seat in full view. Bond was set at \$500. \*

Feb. 21 — Yates and Miller and another CORE worker Charles Fenton and two Negroes were chased at 110 mph for 29 miles from Bogalusa to Covington.

Feb. 28 — Rowan Burris, Robert Hicks, and his wife were refused service at the restaurant of the Redwood Hotel. Three minutes after they left, a mob of 20-30 whites came to the hotel looking for them.

Testing of public accommodations continued during the week February 21-28. No establishments, not even those which complied with the public accommodations section of the Civil Rights Act during January, were willing to serve Negroes. Each time a Negro entered an establishment, the manager states that he can neither serve nor protect him. He then makes a phone call and within five minutes a group of white men arrives and forces the Negro to leave. \*

March 4 --A Negro man was fired after applying to the Sullivan Memorial Trade School. His employer had previously warned him that this would happen if he applied. The employer, a sub-contractor for Crown Zellerbach, explained "You brought it on yourself. I'm not going to have any picketing around my place." He was referring to the picketing conducted by the Klan of firms complying with Federal equal opportunity regulations.

*white mobster*  
March 4 -- Rev. H. Bruce Shepherd was halted on the highway by whites. A car of Negroes coming onto the scene dispersed the whites. Reverend Shepherd is one of the six men who invited Brooks Hays to speak in Bogalusa. The Reverend has been warned to leave town or be killed. \*

March 13 -- A Deputy Sheriff stopped Arthur Ray Mingo on a highway, called Mingo to his car, and ordered him to put his hands inside the car. When Mingo obeyed, he was handcuffed. The Deputy and his passengers got out of the car and beat Mingo about the head. The Deputy told Mingo he'd "better not say a damn thing about it." (Mingo had previously complained to the sheriff about the conduct of the same deputy) When Mingo reported the incident to Sheriff Dorman Crowe, Crowe called in the Deputy and told him to behave better.

*medical*  
March 17 -- Royan Burris, a Negro businessman, was returning home from his shop at 1 a.m. when stopped by the parish K-9 Deputies and by three city policemen. They handcuffed his hands behind his back and drove him to the city police station. When Burris got out of his car there the police slapped and tripped him. Inside the station, the police circled Burris, punched him, and pushed him from one man to another. He fell to the floor and one said, "What are you doing down there, nigger?" When the beating ended, Burris asked to be allowed to make a phone call. The police let the phone ring twice, then snatched it from him, saying, "That's your phone call, nigger." His family learned he was in jail only through an anonymous tip. The Community Medical Center refused him service when they learned the cause of his wounds.

March 25 -- The transmitter building of radio station WBOX was fired into during the night. Ralph Blumberg, owner of the radio station, was one of the six men who had invited Brooks Hays to speak in Bogalusa.

*EV*  
March 25 -- Sidney McGee, one of the three Negro men on the Crown Zellerbach "extra board" narrowly missed death in a trap set for him in one of the plant washrooms. A load of scrap iron was rigged to fall on him when he entered. Management investigated only after a long delay after all evidence had been removed.

March 28 -- A young Negro, Jones Radcliff, was jumped and beaten by four white men after attending a Freedom Rally. He struck one of his attackers, and was subsequently given round-the-clock protection by his friends to prevent the whites from "revengeing" his blow.

March 28 -- L. C. Magee's car was forced off the road and into a ditch by a car of whites. Magee's car was overturned. He was on his way home from a Freedom Rally.

March 29 -- During the early morning, a teargas bomb was thrown into the Labor Union Hall of Local 189-A where the Bogalusa Civic and Voters League had just completed a meeting.

March 30 -- Newsmen calling Bogalusa police to check the story of the tear-gas bomb were told the police knew nothing about it. The police had been seen at the hall checking the occurrence and interviewing victims just after the bombing.

April 7 -- As Bill Yates left the Hicks' home in the morning to enter his car, a green truck, with three white men inside, pulled up and blocked him. The truck had been circling the neighborhood for some time. One man got out of the truck and approached Yates with a blackjack. Yates rolled up the window and started the ignition, recognizing the man as the one who had broken his hand in an earlier incident. The man tried to break through the window, but it held, and Yates was able to put the car in reverse and escape. The truck tried to catch up with him but he managed to return to the Hicks' house, where Mrs. Hicks threatened the whites with a pistol. They left.

April 7 -- Klansmen held a meeting in a hall two blocks away from the union hall, where a voters' clinic was in progress. The Klan numbered between 60 and 70 at times. State and federal agencies intervened to prevent violence that night; but they could not stop the burning of a ten-foot cross later that night, or the setting of two black coffins in front of the union hall, with spotlights on them, one of which bore the name Bill Yates.

April 8 -- Three carloads of white men drove by the Hicks home early in the morning, shooting into it. During the day, CORE canvassers, mostly volunteers from the University of Kansas, were followed by four carloads of Klansmen, until they were withdrawn and brought back to the union hall. Meanwhile, the Klan held a lengthy rally, of about 200 persons, two blocks from the hall.

CORE's National Director James Farmer addressed a crowd of about 500 people at Central High School. More than 100 city and state policemen were on hand. At one point, they turned back 32 carloads of Klansmen who attempted to approach the school. The cars of two Negro men had acid poured on them; no other incidents.

April 9 -- A march to City Hall led by Mr. Farmer was halted because of inadequate police protection. One white bystander had seized Farmer by the shirt; a group of whites tried to attack the photographers, and a Negro was placed in a hospital after being hit by a 2-by-4.

A march was completed in the afternoon without incident.

April 14 -- 25 white people gathered around the Negroes picketing J. C. Penny, and the two auxiliary police present left the scene.

April 15 -- Charles Williams was arrested while picketing, for disturbing the peace and for vagrancy. A white counter-picket had hit Williams with a stick, but a policeman who had not seen the incident was persuaded to arrest Williams. He was taken to the city police station, where he saw six hooded men in a room behind an open door marked "Private." One of the men approached Williams in the booking room and said to him, "You black son of a bitch, pull off the damn cap." Williams noticed a law-enforcement organization insignia on the shoulder of the man's shirt; it was either a state trooper's or a sheriff's insignia. No violence took place.

April 15 - About 10:30 p.m., some sort of fire-bomb was thrown into a Negro home on the edge of town. Several Kansas University students, working with CORE during their Easter vacation, had been spending their nights there. The Fire Department was called three times, and refused to come; local people put out the fire.

April 16 - A Negro teen-ager waiting to join a picket line in front of a store was hit by a counter-picket with a sign-stick. The boy was hit again when he turned to face the person who hit him. Medical treatment was needed.

April 17 - A Negro woman was arrested while sitting in her car, 12:30 a.m. She had been helping with voter registration canvassing in the city.

April 19 - City and state police at the picketing covered their badge numbers. Pickets were withdrawn when this was noticed at 11 a.m., but returned in the afternoon.

May 10 - Picketing took place in the morning without police protection. A store owner took a sign from a picketer and destroyed it; he repeated this when another sign was made.

May 11 - CORE worker was slapped while photographing the picketing in front of a Columbia Road store. He was beaten severely the next day in the same situation. City police and state troopers made no effort to intervene until considerable damage had been done.

*medical* May 31 - Two pickets were attacked by twenty-five whites and beaten badly. They were treated at Bogalusa's Charity Hospital, financed by the city, where the doctors cursed them and called them "niggers."

New Orleans Channel 6 T.V. men were forced to leave town by white *Peers* residents.

June 2 - Mrs. Olivia Robertson, arrested May 29 for disturbing the peace, was arrested again, for resisting arrest on the previous occasion.

June 2 - O' Neal Moore, one of the two Negro deputy sheriffs on the Washington Parish force, was shot and killed from a passing car while patrolling with Creed Rogers, the other Negro Deputy. Mr. Rogers was wounded by the gunfire and remained hospitalized several weeks.

*medical* June 3 - Andrew Smith, injured Saturday when knocked down during the Columbia Road picketing, was refused treatment at Bogalusa's Charity Hospital. He was driven to New Orleans for treatment; his arm had become infected.

June 22 - CORE worker Michael Jones was arrested for interfering with an officer and for vagrancy. At the time of his arrest he was making a call from a phone-booth, one half-block from the nearest police officer, and had \$27 in his possession.

June 30 - Sixty white people used sling-shots and marbles to harass forty Negro pickets at the Plaza shopping center. The police were called, but they stated that no men were available for protection of the pickets at the shopping center.

June 28 - The hearing on the suit filed against seven state and local law enforcement officers began today. Tonight, the home of Fletcher Anderson was shot into. Mr. Anderson is a plaintiff and a witness in the case.

*Witness  
intimidated*

July 1 - While Robert Hicks was in New Orleans for the hearing, a babysitter at his home received an anonymous phone call threatening the life of Mr. Hicks and the life of every other witness. Mr. Hicks is a plaintiff and a witness in the case.

