

THE VOICE OF THE MOVEMENT

The Freedom Voice of the Fifth Congressional District (COFO)

507 Mobile Street, Hattiesburg, Mississippi 582-9993

JUNE 17, 1965

MEAN POLICEMEN AND NASTY JAILS IN JACKSON

A group from Hattiesburg have demonstrated in Jackson and some have come back to tell this story:

With TV camera men near, the police ordered the demonstrators into garbage trucks and paddy wagons. To get air, the tarpaulin cover was torn on the garbage truck during the rough and jerky ride to the fair grounds.

With no TV men there, the police, swearing and threatening ordered the prisoners out of the trucks. They made the prisoners stand crowded together in a building for showing horses for two hours not allowing them to go to the toilet. Then names and ages were taken; the men and women were separated and the white women were taken to the city jail. The Negro women were forced to sit on the dirty floor. An evening meal of spoiled bologna and bread and lumpy powdered milk was served. Mattresses which "smelled like pig" were brought. Two people shared a single mattress.

On Tuesday the group was forced to get up at 5:00 A.M. and stack the mattresses. Breakfast was hard grits, molasses, and powdered milk.

A woman three months pregnant and other sick women were taken to the hospital where their prescriptions were not filled, two patients were given shots from the same needle and where generally they received lousy treatment. They were returned to the fair grounds Tuesday night about 8:00. Prescriptions were filled late Tuesday night.

The prisoners agreed to sing until 9:30 and then go all at once and get their mattresses, and this was done. On both, Monday and Tuesday night the policemen at the four doors kept banging on doors and chairs with their clubs and walked across the sleeping prisoners stepping on some of them.

Your Movement Offices:

Freedom Democratic Party (FDP) 421 E. 6th St. (2-9901)
COFO 507 Mobile Street (2-9993)
Delta Ministry 522 Mobile Street (4-7720)

Tuesday night the police accused the pregnant woman of pretending to be sick and hit her back so hard that a large swelling was caused. They also kicked her in the stomach and stepped on her. On Wednesday morning a large lady was ill and a group of six policemen tried to force her to get up. She struck one of them, and he tore off her clothes. It is believed that she was taken to the city jail.

Wednesday morning the building was swept for the first time and a shower was put in. Then the TV men came in. A lawyer was with the TV men and he was asked to get the pregnant woman out. She could not walk at this time out. She was taken from the fair grounds Wednesday afternoon.

Pork and beans, tomatoes and bread, and powdered milk were served for lunch.

Wednesday evening some Hattiesburg prisoners were released in their parents' custody. As they left the fair grounds, the parent was shown a whip and asked if he wanted to whip his child. If he did not use the whip, he was asked if he was proud of his child's behavior. One father paid no attention and was allowed to leave, but one mother was forced to beat her son or have him beaten by the police.

Free swinging clubs were present all the time except when TV men were around. One white girl was hit so hard on the forehead that she bled, a young Negro woman from Hattiesburg was clubbed over the head on Wednesday afternoon, and most of the prisoners were hit, kicked, or stepped on.

Two Negro girls who were arrested by accident turned informers carrying stories of what the other prisoners did and said to the policemen, the policemen gave these girls \$10.00 and cigarettes on Tuesday. One of these girls was a sister of the Negro policeman who was at the fair grounds. He was the only policeman who did not carry a club. It is not known if his gun was loaded.

A Negro police woman came "to help" the prisoners, but when she tried to help those who were sick, she was ordered to sit down by a white policeman. Her only help was bringing in a few cigarettes.

IN MEMORIAM: JAMES CHANEY,
MICHAEL SCHWERNER, ANDREW GOODMAN. JUNE 21, 1964

You are invited to walk on June 21, 1965 from the COFO office in Philadelphia to Mt. Zion Church, the scene of the church burning the young men went to investigate. The walk is about 12 miles and will begin at 7:00 A.M. Monday, June 21. For more information contact the F.D.P. Office (2-9901) or the COFO Office (2-9993).