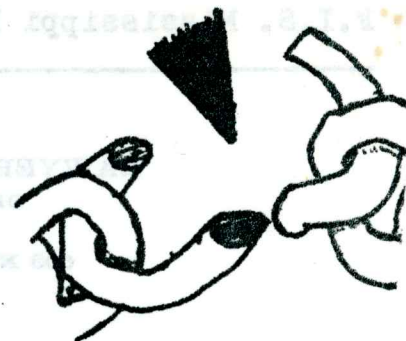




MISSISSIPPI NEWSLETTER



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Burial & Boycott in JACKSON

About 1,000 people filled the Masonic Temple auditorium in Jackson Thursday for the funeral of Ben Brown. Ben was murdered last Thursday by police who shot into crowds on Lynch Street during demonstrations. Speakers included Owen Brooks of Delta Ministry; Lawrence Guyot of FDP, Charles Evers of the NAACP; Ken Dean of the Mississippi Council on Human Relations; Al Bronstein of the Lawyers Constitutional Defense Committee; and Curtis Hayes, who worked with Ben in the Delta Ministry. They spoke of the guilt that the white and black communities share for what they have done and not done. Dean called upon white men to "confess the sins they have committed against God and their brothers." Hayes spoke of all the funerals he had been to in Mississippi for Black men. He said, "It is time to take action to see that there are no more funerals!"

In the evening, a community meeting declared a boycott of all white stores in Jackson, especially on Capitol Street. Committees were set up to get every organization in the area to send a representative to a meeting at 4:30 P.M. Sunday to coordinate the boycott.

Rev. Harry Bowie explained that Black men are beginning to use the "only weapon the white man has left in their hands: bricks, bottles, and God knows, maybe guns next." He said that men who fought in the American Revolutionary War in 1775 were called heroes, great men. We are told today that men who fight oppression have dignity, stand strong and tall, and are to be admired. But the same white man is telling us in our struggle to go slow and easy. He said, "I hope nobody in Jackson will rest until the killer of Ben Brown is taken off the police force and punished as a murderer."

Willie Ricks of the Student NonViolent Coordinating Committee was cheered when he said that "the hunk that comes to kill me better be ready to meet his Jesus. I'm not going to march to any Capitol building. I'm going for power. You need to get your stuff and get ready."

Rap Brown, new chairman of SNCC, said that "Lynchem Johnson has become a 2-gun cracker: killing in Vietnam and in Jackson.... If Black men can die defending their motherland, they can die defending their mother, brothers, sisters, wives. Self-defense is not against the law of nature or of man." Organizing to get things changed is hard work, he said, "but so is working in the field and so is maid work for \$2 a day."

**LAWYERS CONSTITUTIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEE
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May 16, 1967

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We have been retained by Mrs. Ollie Mae Brown and Mrs. Margaret Brown, the mother and wife of Benjamin Brown, to investigate his killing and the possibility of a lawsuit. The investigation would be to determine whether Benjamin Brown was deprived under color of law of his constitutional rights, privileges and immunities, in this case his right not to be summarily punished by being killed without cause.

It is sad that the white community in Jackson, particularly as expressed by certain news media, is so insecure and prejudiced that they discount the killing of a Negro youth and immediately rationalize it by assuming and claiming that it was justified. Mrs. Brown has told me that she brought up her sons to respect the law, but the law does not respect Negroes, and his oldest brother, talking of Ben's civil rights activities, said that he worked in all those rough places in the Delta and got killed where he was born.

Contrary to some published reports, Benjamin Brown was not a criminal and it appears that his previous arrests were all for civil rights activities. Our investigation at this time indicates that he was not charging the police lines or attacking the barriers. According to eyewitnesses, Mr. Brown had come out of a restaurant on Lynch Street, where he had gone to eat, a few seconds before he was shot in the back; that he was on the sidewalk and the people skirmishing with the police were in the street; that he was not involved in any demonstration during the brief period prior to his having been killed, and that a number of police officers aimed and shot their guns directly at Negroes, rather than over their heads. The names of certain of these officers who have been identified have been furnished to appropriate law enforcement officials.

It should be noted that the police did not fire guns at the mob of white students who were rioting at Southern Mississippi U. last week, nor did the U. S. Marshals fire their guns at the mob of white students who rioted at Ole Miss in 1962 even though there was greater provocation.

Alvin J. Bronstein

around the state

The Civic League of Simpson County announces that Rev. George W. Logan of Magee is running for Justice of the Peace in Beat 1, Post 2.

Rev. L.C. Coleman writes to say he is running for Road Supervisor of Beat 3 in Quitman County. Citizenship classes and a voter registration drive are being held by F.D.P.

In Clay County, the F.D.P. is supporting these candidates so far: Mel Randle for Beat 2 Supervisor; Butler Hall for Beat 1 constable; Henry Randle for Beat 3 constable.

The Ebony Lounge in West Point, which has been operating for some time to benefit the F.D.P., is being remodelled. It will be a night club and jazz spot for the Black community.

Milton Todes of Gulfport will run for Beat 2 constable of Harrison County.

Sunflower County reports at least 700 people have registered to vote in the past few weeks.

Mr. Leander Monroe of Port Gibson, a self-employed painter, is running for Constable in Beat 1 of Claiborne County. He has filed the necessary papers to run in the Democratic primary.

A cooperative grocery store is being opened in Claiborne County. It is one result of a boycott Negroes have had on local white stores.

It is reported that Negroes will support a white man for sheriff in Claiborne, one of the counties organized by Charles Evers of the NAACP.

HINDS COUNTY

Four Negroes won the FDP pre-primary in Beat 2 of Hinds County last Saturday. Voters cast ballots in three places.

Negro Lofton Mason got 175 votes for Supervisor to 29 for the man now supervisor, and 24 and 14 for two other whites.

L.C. Leach, a member of the county CAP board and an insurance agent, got 229 votes for J.P. The present white J.P. got 12.

Sterling Robinson, a construction worker, got 206 votes for constable to 29 for his opponent, who is now police chief in Edwards.

Alfred Rhodes was the only candidate for state representative. He got 223 votes. Rhodes will run for Post 5, Hinds County.

All the candidates will run as Independents in the November 7 general election.

White candidates have tried hard to get the Negro vote in this Beat, where Negroes trying for Congress last year got more votes than whites. It is reported that one white offered money in exchange for votes.

A Negro lady said, "No sense voting for white folks because there's no chance in the world they'd ever vote for colored folks, leastwise not in my lifetime."

Beat 4 of Hinds County will have a convention Saturday, May 27 to prepare for its pre-primary on June 3. Candidates include Mr. Jesse Montgomery for Supervisor and Mr. Henry Hatches for Constable.

KEEP
NEWS
COMING

to F.I.S.
Box 120
Tougaloo,
Miss. 39174

Dear Lord,

How much can I take!
seeing my son lying on
the pavement with a
bullet in his back,
spine smash all up,
What can I say!

Dear Lord,

My heart is broken into
millions of little pieces,
each piece representing
each little black child
who has to go through a wall
of prejudice as he grow up.
Oh! Lord, I watch
my son grow year by year;
I remembered his first step
and his first word.
I remember praying for him
each night while he was
in jail

I remember when I pray
for his safety,
but now he is over
in Jordan,
sometime I wonder,
how far is heaven.
Amen.

IN Memorial of Benjamin
Brown



BLACK

Mother

Burden

by Carolyn
Greene
Jackson, Miss.

Students Take ACTION

Students on several campuses in the South have rebelled lately against old-fashioned rules, low educational standards, unfair administration policies, and other campus and community issues.

At Tougaloo College near Jackson, two students were judged guilty by the administration of taking college property without permission. The student body president was told she could not take part in graduation exercises because she had taken the responsibility of getting the school bus into Jackson to carry students back to campus from Jackson State demonstrations. The student who drove the bus was put on probation for next fall by the Disciplinary Review Committee. The Committee is an administration-faculty-student group that usually handles only appeals from students who are not satisfied with decisions of the Student Judiciary Committee.

Students felt that "original jurisdiction" had been taken from the student judges by the administration. That is, that students should hear these cases first, as they do all other cases. But the administration said this was "too serious" a matter for students to handle.

So students decided to interrupt the workings of the college and boycott classes until a satisfactory solution could be worked out. They stopped all transportation on and off the campus, had sit-ins and picket lines, and talked many times with the administration. Finally Wednesday, after 24 hours of demonstrations, the administration and a student steering committee worked out a compromise. All judgments made so far would be thrown out; the Student Judiciary Committee would hear the cases; their decision could be reviewed by the Disciplinary Review Committee. However, this automatic review would not apply to other cases, unless students appealed their cases from the student judges. Student leaders say the protest is off unless the administration acts in bad faith again.

White students at Mississippi Southern University also held demonstrations last week over campus issues. They protested censorship of the student newspaper, the firing of professors who didn't agree with the administration's views, unfair housing rules, bad food, strict rules of student conduct and dress. About 20 students were expelled after hundreds demonstrated and were met by police action. According to some reports, several students were held by police without bond and not told of their right to a lawyer. Some were given 22 days in jail and a \$50. fine when they pleaded guilty before a J.P., before they had seen a lawyer. Those who did not plead guilty had to pay \$1,000 appeal bonds. A 20-member complaints committee, approved by the college president, is holding meetings to discuss student grievances. Some students apparently will still be expelled for taking action to improve their situation.

At Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas, arrests were made Tuesday after students threw rocks and bottles and shot at police from dormitories. They were angry about arrests made earlier in the day at community demonstrations at a dump they consider a health hazard. Hundreds of police arrived on the Negro campus and many stormed the dormitories. One policeman was killed and three people were shot.