

May 22, 1962

JACKSON, Miss.---Mrs. Diane Nash Bevel attempted again today to surrender herself to serve a two-year sentence on charges of contributing to delinquency of minors.

Again Hinds County Judge Russel Moore delayed a showdown on her stand.

He told her that under his present understanding of the law she cannot abandon appeal until she has a trial in his court in which she has already filed appeal.

He said his calendar would not allow him time for her appeal trial until sometime in the next term of court which starts the third week in June.

Thus for the third time in less than a month the state of Mississippi appeared reluctant to jail this young woman who has made up her mind to serve her sentence unless what she calls the "unjust and untrue" charges against her are dropped.

Mrs. Bevel, who is expecting a baby in September, is on the staff of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. She was formerly a student leader in Nashville and is now married to the Rev. James Bevel, who works for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Mississippi.

Last summer she came to Jackson to conduct workshops on the philosophy of nonviolence among Jackson young people, preparing them to take Freedom Rides. It was after this that she was charged with contributing to delinquency.

She was convicted in City Court in November, sentenced to two years and a \$2000 fine, which she appealed to County Court.

In late April, however, she decided to abandon her appeal. She stated publicly that she had reached the conclusion that her philosophy of nonviolence precluded cooperation with the courts of Mississippi, which she considers evil.

First she went to the sheriff of Hinds County on April 27 and attempted to surrender. He said he did not have a warrant for her and she would have to see the judge.

On April 30, she went to County Court to notify Judge Moore of her desire to surrender. But he sentenced her to 10 days in jail for contempt of court because she refused to move from a segregated part of the courtroom and refused to let her discuss the matter of the two-year sentence. He told her to come back May 14 and talk about that.

Mrs. Bevel served her 10 days, was released and was informed by her attorneys that her return to court was postponed until May 21.

On May 21, she appeared again but was informed by her attorneys that the proceedings on this day would not pertain to her desired surrender but to a motion asking that her \$2000 bond be reinstated. The court said she had forfeited her bond because she had really been due in court in February, a date Mrs. Bevel said she was not notified of.

She agreed to the hearing to reinstate the bond, she said, in order to be in a position to retrieve this money, posted by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, when she went to jail and not give it to the state of Mississippi. The judge took the bond matter under advisement.

Mrs. Bevel then asked him if she could make a statement. He said he would talk to her and her attorney in his private chambers.