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ATTN: Marvin Rich or Jim Peck

ARREST 55 ON SECOND FREEDOM DAY

Canton, Miss., June 4--May 29, the second Freedom Day in this Mississippi town, was marked by 55 arrests.

Unlike the first Freedom Day, February 28, when some 350 Negroes marched to the courthouse, this time police prohibited marching even by small groups. However, 25 Negroes reached the courthouse by car and succeeded in going through registration procedures. Fifteen policemen armed with nightsticks and shotguns turned back the marchers only 75 yards from Mount Zion Baptist Church where they had assembled under the leadership of Rev. B. Elton Cox, CORE field secretary.

Twelve of the marchers thereupon decided to challenge the police barricade and were promptly arrested, along with two white ministers who were acting as observers and CORE Field Secretary Edward Hollander, who was attempting to take a picture of the arrests.

The other four arrested were not prospective registrants but students who intended to picket the courthouse. Fifteen of them were seized as they left Pleasant Green Baptist Church. The rest were picked up as they got out of cars in front of the courthouse with their placards. One youth, McKinley Hamblein, was beaten by police while being arrested.

That evening, a car returning to Tougaloo College in Jackson was halted by a gang of 15 whites. One of the assailants tried to pull out the driver and strike him with a nightstick. However, after 15 minutes of threats, the car was permitted to proceed. One of its passengers was a Pakistani, Hamid Kiselbasch. The following night, Otha Williams, a highly respected Negro storekeeper, was halted on a dark road by two policemen and beaten. He finally fled into the woods. CORE Task Force Worker, George Raymond, helped him to get safely into town.