

STUDENT NON-VIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE -- Sunflower-Bolivar  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEGRO FIRED FOR HOUSING RIGHTS WORKERS

Ruleville, Mississippi. July 1, 1964. Mr. Willie Purnell, Negro from Ruleville, was fired from his job yesterday because he housed two white Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) summer volunteers for a week. Mr. Purnell, who has only one leg, was employed by Jack Machell of "Jack's Place" in Ruleville to do general cleanup work at 50¢ an hour.

The two students, Jeffrey Sachar, 21, a student at Reed College, and James Dann, 23, a student at UCLA, were part of the SNCC campaign to register Negro voters in Sunflower and Bolivar Counties. The two civil rights workers had moved to another residence when the firing took place.

Mr. Purnell reported that when he went to work at 5:30 am. on June 30, he was told by Lester Crowe, white manager of the cafe, "You're through. Sorry, but Mr. Jack told me not to let you work anymore." Crowe went on to explain that the reason for the firing was that he was participating in "the civil rights business."

The SNCC group has referred the case to Mr. John Rosenberg, lawyer in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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