

RULEVILLE POLICE ARREST SEGREGATIONIST

Ruleville, Mississippi. July 5. Ruleville Police arrested last night a local white segregationist who came to the SNCC-sponsored Ruleville Community Center to talk with summer volunteers. The white, a Mr. Kent of Ruleville, carried on a cordial dialogue with SNCC workers an hour and a half; he was then picked up by the local police.

At approximately midnight last night, two Ruleville police came to the community center and ordered Kent to leave. Kent told the police that he did not want to leave and the police told him "Better get in your car and go home or come to the jail with us." Kent replied, "Well, I'm not going to go just because you say I should." The police then arrested him. SNCC workers indicated to the police that Kent was creating no disturbance, that he was welcome at the center just like any Mississippian, and that Kent was defending the white Southern viewpoint. The police said they were following "orders".

After the arrest, SNCC volunteers called Mayor Charles Durrough of Ruleville to protest and complained to the Memphis FBI because of the unwarranted police action.

At 12:30 this afternoon, SNCC workers called Mayor Durrough and were informed that a drunk and disorderly charge had been lodged against Kent. The Mayor refused to divulge the names of the arresting officers and stated "We know you've been working on him (Kent)."

John Harris, 20, SNCC Negro staff worker from Birmingham, Alabama, commented, "Some may wonder why we call Mississippi a police state; last night is a striking example of the dangers of arrogant and unwarranted police action. The Mississippi repression not only restricts Negroes and civil rights workers, but also boomerangs against white segregationists who simply want to talk."

Ruleville, Mississippi. July 7. Robert Kent of Ruleville was fined \$18 on a disorderly conduct charge this morning. He pleaded novo contender to the charge, which stemmed from an incident at the Ruleville Community Center on July 4. The trial took place in Ruleville City Court and was presided over by Mayor Charles Durrough of Ruleville.