

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

LIBRARY BARS SNCC WORKERS

Indianola, Mississippi. July 9. The Indianola Public Library acted quickly this week to prevent white Student non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) summer volunteers from using its facilities. Three SNCC workers used the library on July 7, but when one of them returned this afternoon he was met with the sign "The facilities of this library are reserved exclusively for the citizens of Beat 3 and the City of Indianola."

David Gerber, 21, a Harvard graduate from Chevy Chase, Maryland, was told by an unidentified white librarian that the library board had called an emergency meeting after SNCC workers used the facilities and the board established a new policy. (The same librarian told SNCC workers on July 7 that "In Africa they eat their missionaries). Gerber commented about the librarian, "She seemed a little upset and nervous; I don't think she has slept very well since she's seen us."

Gerber stated this afternoon that he felt something constructive may have come from the incident. He asked the librarian, "Are these facilities reserved for all Indianola citizens?" She replied, "Yes. Are you going to get one (Negro)?" Gerber seemed to think that they had capitulated to integration as a lesser evil than admitting SNCC workers.

SNCC INVADES CITIZEN COUNCIL BIRTHPLACE

Indianola, Mississippi. July 9. Against a background of a churning thunderstorm and a fiery display of lightning, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) held its first mass meeting in Indianola, the birthplace and spiritual home of the White Citizens' Council. Approximately 150 attended the voter registration rally on the steps of Bryant Chapel at 6 PM; 75-100 stayed and sang freedom songs when the rain began a half hour later.

Charles McLaurin, 23, Negro SNCC worker from Jackson, Mississippi, urged the Indianola Negroes to go down to the Courthouse to register to vote. McLaurin got the most rousing response from the audience when he said "You need to vote to get Officer Sharp off your back." Ernest Sharp is a white Indianola City Police Officer; SNCC workers received yesterday three reports that he had warned local Negroes not to talk with voter registration people. Sharp was directing traffic in front of the Church as McLaurin criticized him. Three Indianola policemen kept traffic moving and the sidewalks clear as the rally was held.

SNCC workers have canvassed Indianola for three days this week. Twelve Negroes have gone to the Courthouse to register this week.