

News from  
 STUDENT NON-VIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE - Sunflower County  
 Ruleville Community Center  
 Box 275, Ruleville, Mississippi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### DREW POLICE ARREST 25 MORE

Drew, Mississippi. July 16. The Drew police yesterday arrested 25 more civil rights workers and local Negroes, bringing to 32 the number arrested in the past three days. The police induced a church deacon and a vacant lot owner to order an open-air voter registration rally in Drew off their property and the police arrested the 25 participants in the rally when they had to move into the street.

At 5:45 p.m. yesterday, Drew Chief of Police Curtis Floyd brought James Gresham, Negro from Drew and deacon of the Holly Springs Baptist Church, to the Church property and prodded Gresham as he told the mass meeting of 100 persons that they could not use the church property. The group moved to an adjoining vacant lot, where SNCC project director Charles McLaurin told the rally they needed to gain the vote to solve the problems the Negroes face. At 6:00 Chief Floyd again appeared, this time with an elderly white woman who identified herself as the lot owner and ordered the rally off the property. When the rally moved into the street, thirty persons were marched to the Drew City Jail. Approximately twenty persons attempted to join the arrested group, but were turned back by the police.

At the Drew jail, approximately five minors were released and twenty-five persons were detained. They were moved at dusk, the two white girls to the Indianola County Jail and the men and Negro girls and women to the Moorhead County Penal Farm. This morning the Negro girls and women were moved to the Indianola County Jail.

At 11 a.m. this morning the twenty-five were booked on charges of obstructing the sidewalks; McLaurin was also charged with disturbing the peace. Bond ranged from \$110 to \$500; the total for the group was \$4860. Maynard Omerberg of Los Angeles was the attorney for 24 of the 25 defendants. The trial was continued until 10 a.m. July 23 and the defendants remained in jail.

Besides McLaurin, other SNCC persons arrested were: Christopher Hexter of New Haven, Connecticut, James Dann of Los Angeles, Jeffrey Sacher of New York City, Gretchen Schwarz of Sunnyvale, California, Ellen Siegel of Boston, Charles Scattergood of Arlington, Virginia, George Winter of Ione, California, and Michael Yarrow of Philadelphia. Six Ruleville Negroes were in the group: Linda Maria, Bettye Louise Surnoy, Ore Doss, Fred Brown, Paul Jackson, and John Clark Edwards. Ten Drew Negroes were arrested: Walter Van, Jr., Henry Lee Hardy, Golden Davis, Lenora Scott, Bertha Williams, Pauline Moore, Mary Harvey, Nelson Andrews, Horace Davis, and Florine Johnson.

Attorney Omerberg talked with the arrested persons this morning and there were no complaints of maltreatment. However, the Superintendent of the Moorhead Penal Farm told Omerberg that "there are all kinds of people on the farm and I can not insure their safety."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BOND POSTED FOR 24

Indianola, Mississippi, July 17. 24 SNCC workers and local Negroes were released from the Indianola County Jail and the Sunflower County Penal Farm at Moorhead today when \$4860 bond was posted. The twenty four were arrested July 15 on charges of obstructed the sidewalk when they participated in a Drew, Mississippi, voter registration rally.

The bail was raised from parents and friends of the SNCC workers in jail and in Ruleville.

The group is scheduled to go on trial on July 23; however, Attorney Maynard Omerberg is petitioning the Federal District Court to take the jurisdiction on the case from the local courts.

None of the persons arrested had any complaints about maltreatment, but the group did complain about bad conditions, especially those imprisoned at the County Farm. Christopher Hexter of New Haven, Connecticut stated, "There were lice, bugs, mosquitoes, chiggers, bugs, rat droppings, and urine-soaked mattresses." The Negro men (the group was segregated) stated that a snake and rats were seen in their cell.

One of the arrested SNCC workers, Jeffrey Sachar of New York City, received a call from Senator Kenneth Keating's office at 10 a.m. this morning. As he told the Senator's office of the conditions, the jailer paced back and forth shouting, "You're a liar, you're a liar." He told Sachar that none of them would ever receive another telephone call. Sachar asked, "What if Senator Keating tries to call me again." The jailer replied, "I don't care if any of those Northern Senators call you. They're as bad as a bunch of niggers." After the call, the jailer cut down the ventilation in the cells.