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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 1965

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Summary of Events in Jonesboro, Louisiana, March 8 through March 16

Monday--March 8, 1965

Fifty students at Jackson High School in Jonesboro, Louisiana, spontaneously demonstrated for three hours over the rumored dismissal of football coach, physical education instructor, Rev. Kirkpatrick. Rev. Kirkpatrick has been active in civil rights in Jonesboro. The students marched through the corridors for three hours until 3PM when the school closed for the day. Jackson High is the only Negro high school in Jonesboro and has an enrollment of 500 students.

Tuesday--March 9, 1965

Students asked to present their grievances to the school board but their request was refused. (The school board wanted to talk to only six students. The students wanted the grievances presented to the entire student body). 150 students picketed from 9 AM to 3PM. They demanded the return of Rev. Kirkpatrick, the expansion of the academic program, including more teachers, a new gym to replace the old one burned in September, 1964, and the addition of new classrooms.

~~WEDNESDAY~~ THURS. MARCH 11
~~Wednesday March 10, 1965~~

150 students began picketing the school early Wednesday. City and county police arrived at 9AM and stationed themselves around the Negro community, known as the "Quarters." On their arrival the student picket line swelled to 400. The students were joined by several teachers. Soon after this a city fire truck arrived and firemen began unloading its hoses. After some conversation with members of the Negro community the fire officers rolled up the hoses and the truck left the "Quarters." However, the police kept the community blockaded. From 9AM to 3PM all access to the area was cut off though several cars were permitted to leave. An agent of the United States Justice Department, Alexander Ross, was refused entrance through the blockade.

The police arrested four men, all Negroes. One of those arrested, Mr. Ernest Thomsa, was charged with resisting arrest and threatening a police officer. He was placed under \$2500 bond. Mr. Olin Satcher, a teacher at Jackson High, was also arrested. He claimed he was struck by a member of the school board, a Mr. Spiller. He was treated by a doctor and had two stitches taken in his head. He was held in \$2000 bond. Both Mr. Satcher and Mr. Thomas complained of maltreatment by the Jonesboro police. Another Negro, a Mr. Spenser, was threatened by a group of deputized white citizens and arrested for running a road block. He claimed one of the white men had fired a shot, either directly at him or over his head, he was not sure which. Dave Dennis, CORE Southern Program Director and an observer on the scene, described the situation as "uncalled for, illegal, and terroristic in the worst tradition of Southern racial oppression."

The students terminated their demonstration at 3PM and met that evening with a parents' group to plan future joint action.

WED. MARCH 10
~~Thursday~~ March 11, 1965

350 students demonstrated on the high school grounds today without incident. There were neither police nor fire trucks on the scene. A 100% effective boycott was declared and the principal officially closed the school at 2:30.

Friday--March 12, 1965

150 students and parents met, at 8:30 AM, at a skating rink approximately two blocks from Jackson High School. They marched from the rink to the school campus where they held a demonstration for two hours. The group was led by Rev. Kirkpatrick whom the school board denied having fired as physical education instructor.

Saturday and Sunday, March 13 and 14

Students and parents met together and agreed to continue the boycott at Jackson High until the school board agreed to meet with them.

Monday--March 15, 1965

Approximately 250 students continued the demonstration at Jackson High School.

Teachers were in attendance at the school but no classes were held since only a handful of students were present. A sympathy boycott, 75% effective, was held at Hawk Elementary School for Negroes. Jim Draper, representative of the federal Community Relations Service, was at the high school. The police contained the demonstration within the Negro area and left the sherriff and three deputized Negroes in charge. A Negro man identified as Cosetta Jackson was arrested for possession of a concealed weapon and for owning a citizen band radion not registered with the federal government. He was released on Tuesday in \$750 bond.

Tuesday--March 16, 1965

This morning 150 students picketed the school after a mile march through the Negro community. The school board called a special meeting for 4PM to which Negroes were invited. The students and parents, however, refused to attend the meeting because the meeting space, they charged, was too small to hold all those interested in attending the meeting.