

Freedom Democratic Party
507 1/2 North Farish St.,
Jackson,
Mississippi.

NEWS RELEASE

June 17th.
948-4038.

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[1965]

FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY SUMMER VOLUNTEERS GO ON A HUNGER STRIKE.

A number of White girls, arrested during the demonstrations in Jackson since Monday, have gone on a hunger strike in the Jackson City jail.

This was revealed today by Civil Rights lawyers who have visited the FDP summer volunteers. Letters, brought out by the lawyers, also speak of the hunger strike and conditions at the jail.

So far about fifty White girls are being kept at the City jail. They were separated from the main body of demonstrators after processing at the State Fairground.

Several of the volunteers say they are not eating in protest at their segregation, and are asking that they be transferred back to the Stockades.

Below are some extracts from the letters :

From a letter by Marjorie Hahne, 276 Divisadero, San Francisco.
Dated "Thursday"

"...Now about jail. We sleep on bare, filthy mattresses; the cockroaches prowl the walls and the floor, they punish us for singing by shutting the air vents so that it is hot, humid and ventless.... In case you can't tell, I'm in very good shape spiritually. I'm getting a little weak and light-headed from fasting (2 days now), but the kids are great and the songs are terrific...."

From Nancy Sours, COFO worker to her father, Harold Sours in Oakton, Va.

".....Then when we they tried to take us out (from the Fairgrounds) we refused and they g dragged us out again by our g feet. Everything you heard about the Jackson police is true .. they are brutal people. There have been alot of beatings and, as a matter of fact, one of the girls in my cell has five stitches in her forehead- one of the charming local police hit her for no reason. There was a woman there (at the Fairground) yesterday who is 3 months pregnant and she got beaten. She's very sick and they won't even bring her to hospital..."

From Jo Liana Green, 56, Divisadero, San Francisco:

"....Tuesday noon everybody (approx) in the "white" jail started fasting - we want to go to the fairgrounds where the Negro demonstrators are being held. We are also protesting by banging and singing.. I think I'll probably lose a little weight (we expect to be in jail for 2 weeks)..."

From a Miss Weld to Mr. Jeremy Weld, Box 197, Maine, New York.

".....Gov. Johnson decided to call a special session of the State Legislature to take steps to make some sort of an arrangement so that no matter what kind of a C.R. bill Pres. Johnson passes, there will still be enough loopholes so that they can prevent registration. The march and the picketing was to protest the above facts.... (At the jail) they took our pocketbooks and everything, even our glasses. I pleaded that I was nearly blind, but they took them all the same. Since then, I keep bumping into walls etc..... The food is awful but it doesn't really matter because we are on a hunger strike - because they segregated us."

From Vivianne Green, 1725 Shirley Drive, Pleasant Hill, California

".....Yesterday noon we started fasting in protest at the arrest (illegal - they said - we needed a Jackson City permit to demonstrate and we already have the constitution of the U.S., the only permit necessary) - we also resent the fact that all us white girls are in a relatively comfortable jail, and the rest of the people in the Movement are stuck in the unventilated barns at the local fairgrounds, where the brutality rate increases..."

From Elinor Lerner, Vicksburg COFO, to Vicksburg COFO project:
dated "Wednesday"

".....They took 4 away yesterday to solitary. We raised so much hell about it, that they called the lawyers and let them out. We are sort of persona non grata to Captain Ray. We are not going to get any more toilet paper because we used it to make a sign .."We want to go to the Fairground too", and hung it up outside the ~~xxx~~ cell....8.40: They have turned really nice.. they have brought some toilet paper and candy. Everything gets dulled by lack of food and jail..."

From Margia Quigles, 13908 Salada Road, La Mirada, California:

".....Well, I have learned an amazing amount about Mississippi justice since we arrived in Miss. The police are annoyingly sadistic. After they were arrested they took us to a big barn like building on the fairgrounds and made us stand there (maybe 3 hrs),, and drove us into a more and more compact mass until people were fainting from the heat and the crush. Periodically they charge at us with their billy clubs...X This is one of the greatest things that ever happened to me. I really feel free here in jail. I am doing what I want to do and I am with friends..."