

February 21, 1964

Pine Bluff: Iris

Last night at about 8:30pm about 23 went to demonstrate at Ray's Barbeque, including a nene and kkkkkk eleven year old boy and girl. Fifteen minutes after the demonstration began, Ray's closed. There was some information about Silly Murchison, kkkkkk Pine Bluff, being arrested for wearing a SNCC pin. There is still no information about this.

Even when Ray's was closed they kept kkkkkk about 27 people on hand. One waitress remained in the restaurant and at about 2:30am it reopened. All off the demonstrators went out. Several carloads of whites drove up and went into the restaurant. One man had a rifle with a scope. Ten minutes after the demonstrators started picketing the owner walked out identifying himself. He carried a 12 guage shotgun. Another man was with him carrying a 38 revolver. The kkkkkk owner said, "I am the owner. This is private property. Why do you want to integrate me? If you come up on the sidewalk I'll shoot you." He spoke to one of the demonstrators saying, "I'll shoot you and one of you fellows catch his head. I'm a mental patient, I've killed kkkkkk 1000 Japs. The sheriff knows about it (meaning the sheriff knows about him being out with the gun.) God didn't mean for it to be like this."

He lowered his gun at the demonstrators as though he was going to shoot them and Ben Grinage, who was across the road, yelled for them to stay there and not to move. They all stood. The kkkkkk owner then said, "Is that the leader?" When Ben said yes he asked where he was / Ben said here, and the kkkkkk kkkkkk the owner shot at him, missing. He then said, "why don't you come over here instead of putting these young kids here." Ben said something about 'I don't think you have the guts to shoot' and started walking over, but several people kept him back. Ben contends that he would not have shot him. After this incident they brought the demonstrators in.

During the first and second demonstrations they had no police protection. Before the 2nd demonstration they called the sheriff requesting protection and he said, "what are you getting me out of bed for? What do want me to do? Why do you want to eat at this time of night?" After Ben was shot at they called again and spoke with the Deputy Sheriff who is the jailer. He refused to say whether or not any police protection would be given. Ben asked him 10 or 12 times. The deputy finally hung up after saying "you don't have any business out there."

The office believes the evening events were calculated, opening early in the am with no police protection, no witnesses, etc. They also feel that the manager has been getting orders from Little Rock (from Peubus) (white community sources have told them this). They believe that officials will let the owner and local police get away with as much brutality as possible.

Ben went onto t e AMEN campus last night at about 3am to get students out after

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out after the incidents at Ray's. The President of the college kicked Ben off the campus. He is trying hard to control the situation and keep students from demonstrating. Today there will be a meeting on campus with the student body and the President and Ben will speak.

The office fears that there might be increasing violence because they think that Negroes might start coming out with guns.