February 22, 1964

Pine Bluff: Iris
Gregory got out of jail yesterday, primarily, he says, to contact the
justice department about jail conditions in Pine Bluff. He called
Robert Kennedy twice yesterday and Burke Marshall is now on his way
to Pine Bluff to investigate. Kennedy called the FBI last night and
FBI agents visited the county jail and interviewed the sheriff, but
didn't go into the jail itself. (more below re conditions)

Several whites (the Arkansas Council for Human Relations and FB Commercial)
believe that Faubus is using the Pine Bluff situation as a campaign issue.
They feel he is trying to consolidate white votes and keep them away
from Winthrop Rockefeller who has thrown his hat into ring for Republican
nomination EHM for governor. The Pine Bluff Commercial ran an editorial
saying: "If the Faubus administration seeks to use Pine Bluff and its
troubles for political gains they will find the responsible people
overwhelmingly in the majority."

There is a group of local white mediators pressuring the governor.
Ekhkhhhh Circuit court Judge Smith pressured Sheriff Horton and
Ray's EHM has been ordered closed for 72 hours. Negotiations are
supposed to go on during this time. Mediators are concerned with
stopping demonstrations from spreading to the city. They are also
concerned with squelching violence, especially by "white agitators."
Through their negotiations the hospital coffee shop has been
opened and steps are being taken to open the board of the hospital to
Negroes. Negotiations are on with the Holiday Inn and Pines Hotel.
They feel that there will be no trouble integrating these places.

Faubus contends that the situation in Pine Bluff is "threatening"
and he has said, "We don't intend to let any group of demonstrators
take over any place of business or the streets of my town in Arkansas."
State troopers have been mobilised Ekhkhhhhhh around Pine Bluff
and are on riot call. Faubus has also said that "white integrationists
and Negroes have fought to inflame others. All were attempts to
inflame a riotous situation." The Pine Bluff Commercial contradicted
him however stating, "the assailants have been known segregationist
militants. The Negro demonstrators have not fought back."

It is probably important also that Sheriff Horton is up for reelection
this year.

Yesterday Gregory had a press conference where he discussed jail conditions.
He said, "The health department mad would have to clean that place up
and disinfect it before he could go in there to condemn it." It
of solitary confinement (he was in for 2½ days, seemingly for no reason)
he said, "It's like somebody's secret torture chamber." Hansen is
still in solitary (3½ days) but will be banded out with the others
today. Hansen is sick; he has been on a hunger strike—no water, no
medical attention. They have refused to let him see a lawyer.

A 72 hour moratorium has been called (they need a rest) during negotiations
Feb. 22, 1964, cont'd

Ftine Bluff cont'd

The office has been told that Watson, owner of Ray's, was convinced to integrate until Governor Furbush intervened.

There was a student meeting at ANM yesterday: they voted to form a committee to see how they could participate. They said, "We blame SSCO for instigating trouble". They're to have a meeting this morning. NB: the President of the college is now back in Fine Bluff--while he was away the student body of 2600 had voted to demonstrate.

Ben Grinage and Gregory will be having another press conference today. So far they have gotten very good coverage from the FB Commercial and the Arkansas Gazette. Gregory has made the jail conditions the focus of his discussion. Grinage has said that if something wasn't done to take care of the whole situation that federal intervention would be necessary.

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Hattiesburg; Sandy Leigh

They are having mass demonstrations today for 'anniversary of Freedom Day'--one month today. Four mass meetings last night were well attended.