

AMERICUS, GEORGIA - SNCC WORKER BEATEN AFTER INTEGRATING RESTAURANT

From John Perdeu, 21, 2369 S. Madison, Denver, Colo. Howard Univ.

Integrated group ate at Hasty House (Meadowbrook Lane, Americus) tonite. Included Perdeu, Robt. Mants, Willie Ricks, Graham Wiggins, two others. When they left the restaurant, a mob of about 20 to 25 to 30 white men who had been slowly gathering as they were inside the restaurant, started to attack the car the SNCC workers climbed into. Everyone got into the car except Perdeu. The driver apparently panicked when the whites started reaching in the windows hitting them, and when one man broke a rear window with a crowbar. The car drove off leaving Perdeu faced with mob.

"As I came out of the door (last) I was met by a sizeable guy who slugged me and knocked me to the ground. He started kicking me in the head. Another joined him kicking me in the head." - Perdeu.

He started walking away and heard a policeman yell Stop. The policeman barely kept the crowd at bay, and called Sargeant Bowens. When the second police car arrived, Perdeu asked for protection, and for a ride to safety. The cop said, "Well, we can't give you a ride in a police car." Both cars then drove off.

Perdeu had asked a policeman to accompany him to pick up the pieces of his eyeglasses which had been knocked off at the first blow. Cop refused.

Started walking into town when a black compact car pulled up and two whites got out and started beating him again. Same pattern - knocked in head and to the ground, kicked in head and back, etc. After that car left, the white 63 plymouth or chrysler (license 31-11450) which played an important role in gathering the thugs together in the first place and circled as he was being beaten, pulled up and two whites got out and started beating him all over again. They tripped him to the ground, kicked in head, etc.

The black compact accosted him again across from the bus station. And again the police appeared - first one car and then the sgt. was called. The cops listened to the whites cursing Perdeu and "casually quieted" them down. The sargeant spoke with the whites and then with Perdeu, implying to Perdeu that Perdeu had assaulted the others, and asking if Perdeu had any witnesses. This time they allowed Perdeu to get in the police car, drove him to station. There they made him wait 10-15 minutes before allowing him to make a phone call. When Perdeu was allowed to use the washroom, Officer T.H. Smith told him, "Clean up the washroom, we don't want any of your damn blood on the washbowl."

A white crowd gathered at the station, came in, and several paraded back to see the damage done to Perdeu. He recognized some of them as having been on the scene when he was being beaten.

Perdeu told the assistant chief of police he wanted to file charges. Cop said he couldn't get the names of assailants until the police report was filed in the morning.

Ricks came and got him from the station.

Perdeu called FBI agent Marion Cheek in Albany, who said he had to check with his chief due to new legislation and that Perdeu would hear from him.

PERDEU WANTS HIS CONGRESSMAN BYRON ROGERS NOTIFIED.

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TIFTON, GEORGIA From Judy Richardson, Greenwood.

Similar scene. John Putnam, local Negro went to drive in restaurant. Counter man motioned him from side window to the front. When he finished receiving order a white man in a group of motorcyclists beat him. SNCCers George Bess and John Washington came to help him. The policeman told them Putnam couldn't take out a warrant unless he knew the man's name - and the cop wasn't about to give it.

In another part of Tifton a group of (report said 1,000 - suggest it might have been several hundred) whites gathered when a Negro placed an order at an eating establishment.

NOTE: Don Harris (in Albany) says it is apparent this will be repeated over and over again. Negroes will be served but mobs of whites will gather to beat people or intimidate them. Wants us first to do some followup with Hasty House and then to think about strategy in such cases.

There is no staff in southwest Georgia with a camera. They would like a photographer, think it may help, for example, in court.

Add: Earlier report from Judy in Greenwood mentioned a GBI agent named Southwell who is reported to have tripped Perdeu or someone else in movement in Americus at police station. Not checked out.

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