

OCTOBER 18 --- NOVEMBER 2, 1964

OCT. 18

JACKSON:

Thirty-five students from Northern schools who volunteered to help in the Freedom Democratic Party's "Freedom Vote" campaign participated in an intensive orientation program today. About 100 more volunteers are expected to join them on Oct. 26. The volunteers will be assigned to the 1st and 2nd Congressional Districts to help organize FDP rallies and conduct the "Freedom Vote" to be held from Oct. 30 to Nov. 2.

OCT. 19

MURKIN:

Mrs. Payne, a local Negro from whom COFO rents its Freedom House, notified police about a threatening phone call she had received. A man who "sounded white" called and asked her if she still rented the house to "those guys." When she replied that she did, he told her, "You'd better get them out or it'll be bombed." The FBI was notified.

McCOMB:

About 200 people attended a meeting of the bombed Society Hill Baptist Church. The meeting was planned to formally hand over a \$1,000 check, raised by nationally-syndicated columnist Drew Pearson, to Rev. Ned Taylor to rebuild the church. Mrs. Alyene Quin spoke about her meeting with President Johnson in Washington where she informed him of the McComb bombings. She said that although state officials have accused her of "having a record a mile long, I haven't bombed anyone, I haven't robbed anyone, I haven't murdered anyone." She concluded: "But the record I do want to be a mile long is the record of registering voters in Pike County." The meeting ended with the singing of "We Shall Overcome." Rev. Taylor gave a benediction for the work of COFO. A Freedom Day, scheduled for tomorrow, was postponed until Oct. 26.

OCT. 20

McCOMB:

Mrs. Alyene Quin, McComb bombing victim, issued a joint statement with COFO about the current trial of the white men accused of the bombings: "We think these people are going to go home free. We think that the bombings in Southwestern Mississippi are going to start all over again and that somebody might be killed."

INDIANOLA:

Clifford Vaughs, 27-year-old Negro COFO worker and photographer from Santa Monica, Calif., was beaten in a Pure Oil Co. gas station just outside of Indianola. Vaughs said the gas station attendant motioned and spoke to another white man at the station when he arrived. The second white man (6 ft, 230 lbs) cursed at Vaughs and demanded: "Are you one of them ((civil rights workers)) or are you a nigger?" A Highway Patrolman at the scene drove away just as Vaughs' interrogator began punching him in the face. The FBI was notified.

BELZONI:

COFO workers William Ware, Robert Bass, Ellis Jackson, and Joe Louis Stigler were bound over to the county grand jury on criminal syndicalism charges. Bond set at \$1,000 a piece. The four have been in jail awaiting trial since Oct. 15.

While in court they were informed additional charges have been filed against them for "malicious mischief" and the "willful destruction of public property." They are accused of throwing food in the jail, singing Freedom songs, and writing slogans on the walls, and are fined \$100 a piece and sentenced to six months in jail. Four other COFO workers in jail with them on similar charges are given similar fines and sentences.

As Ware is escorted out of the courthouse by a highway patrolman, he waves as some COFO workers. The patrolman tears his shirt, pushes him, and strikes him across the nose, upper lip and head with a leather object.

Minneapolis Tribune reporter Dick Cunningham offers to post bond for the eight youths.

OCT. 20 continued

MARKS:

A man who identified himself as a constable threatened COFO workers in Lambert who were registering Negroes in the Freedom Vote campaign. The man asked Dave Harris, a COFO volunteer from Stanford University, what he is doing and then tell him and "them other Freedom Riders" to leave town in five minutes "or else." The alleged constable followed Harris and some fellow COFO volunteers out of town. Before they leave the area however, the constable stops Harris and accuses the COFO workers of planning to attack him in his truck.

TCHULA:

Bruce Gordon, NYC COFO worker who services the COFO radio operation in Mississippi, is fined \$14. for driving 75 mph in a 65 mph zone. Earlier in the evening he was given a ticket for a similar phony charge.

OCT. 21

GREENWOOD:

Greenwood Negroes have been receiving threats reading: "Watch out for Halloween."

MARKS:

Dave Harris and other COFO workers were told by the police to leave town when they tried to register Negroes.

Four white teenagers beat and urinated on Frank Morse, 20, a white volunteer from Stanford, California. He was stopped in his car by the youths who told him, "We want to talk to you about civil rights." The attack followed.

COLUMBUS:

A two-county search begins for four volunteers who were supposed to arrive here at 8:00 pm. At 9:30 they have not yet reported in. When they last spoke to the Columbus office at 8:00 the telephone connection was cut off. It's impossible to reach them again. Volunteers take to the highways in search of the four. Police, highway and local sheriff's offices are contacted. 10:30 p.m. still no answer. SNCC office in Atlanta and the Jackson FBI notified. 11:00 p.m. Search by COFO cars continues throughout back roads which the four sometimes take to avoid harassment by the highway patrol. 11:38 p.m. The four have been found and they are safe. They are in nearby Tupelo. They had asked the phone operator to relay the message that they would call back around midnight. The operator never sent the message.

OCT. 22

INDIANOLA:

The insurance was cancelled for the Baptist Grove church last night. A mass meeting was held there earlier in the week.

A small plane buzzes the Freedom School and drops a flare. On the next pass it drops something that explodes. Four more passes are made. No apparent damage. A car full of whites 100 yards away from the school drives off following the explosion. Police notified.

MERIDIAN:

A Freedom Day is scheduled to attempt to register large numbers of Negroes to vote. Mrs. Fannie Lee Chaney, mother of the slain civil rights worker, James Chaney, will lead a line of Negroes at the Meridian courthouse.

HATTIESBURG:

New York City Councilman Paul O'Dwyer is scheduled to speak at a FDP meeting at the Mt. Zion Church tonight.

MARKS:

Rumor heard that a body of a young Negro was fished out of the river near Ruleville earlier this week. A COFO worker learns that the body was cut up. Undertaker refuses to say anything except that the body was that of an old man, not a young man. Victim's last name learned: Bennet.

OCT. 23

MARKS:

COFO learns that embalmer's original report on body says it was cut.

McCOMB:

A sheriff confiscates film from girl volunteer who tried to take picture of a "Colored" sign above washroom in courthouse.

A repairman is stopped by white men from fixing a COFO car yesterday.

Three civil rights workers arrested today on charges of "operating a food handling establishment without a license." They are released on \$100. bond.

Nine more white volunteers and a Negro minister are arrested on a similar charge. The 13 learn that police and sanitation inspectors claim that the COFO Freedom House is subject to licensing regulations because it is a public establishment. COFO claims that the Freedom House is not used either for the public sale or distribution of food. A \$100 bond is set for each defendant and trial is scheduled for Oct. 26. Drew Pearson provides the bond money.

Rev. Paul Long, white Presbyterian minister from Rochester, N.Y. working with the McComb COFO office is arrested for "distributing leaflets without a permit." He is released on \$50. bond.

The thirteen arrested for food handling are transferred from the McComb city jail to the county jail in Magnolia.

McComb Circuit Court judge W.H. Watkins, Jr., suspends sentences for the nine men who pleaded guilty to racial bombings in the McComb area. He said the men were "provoked by outsiders who come into your community... who are unwelcome and they have been ...people of low morality and unhygienic..." In explaining the light sentence he says that he considered that the men "came from good families."

COFO sends press release protesting the sentence by Judge Watkins. It reads: "what provocation justifies the bombings of the homes of innocent people?...no one can doubt that had the homes belonged to white families the sentence would have been very different."

Throughout the country, including Mississippi, outraged citizens protest the light sentence. The "liberal" Greenville Delta Democrat-Times of Greenville, Miss. says editorially: "Such light punishment cannot serve as a deterrent to potential perpetrators of similar offenses in the future... Judge Watkins' judicial action in this instance is more astounding than any other sentences handed down from a Mississippi bench within our memory."

One encouraging note: many citizens, white as well as Negro, including the 'heroic' editor of the white McComb Enterprise-Journal, J.O. Emmerich, collected reward money to help apprehend the nine offenders.

Oct. 24

JACKSON:

Four Freedom Vote volunteers and a local teen-ager are arrested passing out leaflets urging people to vote for the Freedom Democratic Party. Later in the day two more volunteers are arrested on similar charges.

MCCOMB:

A Freedom Day is scheduled for Oct. 26.

TCHULA:

Shots are fired into the home of Hartman Turnbow at 2:45 am. He was a FDP delegate to Atlantic City. Luckily, no one is injured but bullets shatter glasses on a shelf and lodge in the walls.

RULEVILLE:

A rock shatters a window in James King's restaurant. He has been the only Negro merchant in town who would post FDP posters in his window. Five cars circle his home later that day.

INDIANOLA:

About 15 polling places will be set up for the Freedom Vote. COFO workers are encouraged.

A Negro woman tells COFO that a plane dropped a flare near her house and shortly afterwards a car hurled an explosive device nearby.

MCCOMB:

10,000 copies of a special STUDENT VOICE edition on the Freedom Vote is awaited eagerly. Literature is desperately needed.

ITTA BENA:

A cafe owned by Mrs. Willie Barnett is burned. She placed signs from the FDP in her window and promised the use of her cafe as a polling place. The fire station is across the street from her cafe but they don't respond to her call. Fifteen minutes later after almost the entire inside of the place has been gutted, the fireman arrive. The barber shop next door is also gutted. A COFO worker measures the distance from the station to the cafe: 83 walking paces. No evidence of arson is uncovered.

JACKSON:

Two carloads of new Freedom Vote volunteers are stopped by the police. No arrests are made but police copy down their names. Then the harassment begins. Police demand of Edward Ziff, 22, of Princeton University: "What are you doing here?" "Why didn't you stay where you came from?"

Volunteer Fred Heinze is arrested for allegedly going through a red light and is separated from Leon Phipps, another volunteer who is sitting in Heinze's car. Phipps returns the car to headquarters. The two youths explain that they were going for the

waiting for the light to change, when police asked Heinze for his driver's license and then arrested him. He was fined \$51.----

NATCHEZ: Two local volunteers went into city park and were told by policeman that "if you don't get out of here with all these white folks and children, I'll lock you up for trespassing." They left.

OCT.26

PASCAGOULA: Two NYC volunteers are arrested on charges of driving with improper licenses and plates. They tell police that they have not been in the state for 30 days yet and that they can prove it but the police answer: "tell it to the judge."

McCOMB: The first carload of people who went to the courthouse to register to vote are arrested, charged with contempt of court. They were met by police and plainclothesmen who read them a court order closing the registrar's office. Later in the day a total of 33 persons are arrested including seven ministers from the National Council of Churches, a NYC rabbi, COFO people and local Negro citizens. Bond is set at \$100 each. The Negro community raises bail for nine. Among those freed on bail are Rev. Daniel Ross, 94, and his wife, 78.

Eighteen people decide to remain in jail although bond money is available for them. They feel it is necessary to demonstrate to the nation once again that the Federal government is not involved as much as it must be to prevent local officials from harassing voter registration.

INDIANOLA: Bob Newell, 19, a student from the Calif. Polytech. Instit. is beaten by whites as he helps local Negroes to register. A six footer, weighing at least 200 pounds, pummelled Newell in front of the Sunflower County Courthouse.

COLUMBUS: A NYC volunteer, Howard Shulman, 29, is arrested while talking to Negroes in a grocery store. He is searched and carried into jail. Police refuse to disclose the charges but say he is being held for "investigation."

BATESVILLE: Fire-crackers are exploded in front of the COFO office by Whites passing by in a car.

OCT.27

SUNFLOWER: A tear gas bomb is thrown into the home of Mrs. Anna Mae King. Robert Smith, 14 year old Local Negro working with COFO, suffered a large gash in his leg caused by flying glass. House is used by COFO.

INDIANOLA: A former Baptist school now used by COFO as a Freedom School is burned. Firemen were at the scene watching the blaze. When COFO workers were trying to get into the building they were stopped and the firemen were heard to say: "Well, we might as well put it out." Mimeograph machine, short-wave radio, telephone, office supplies and some books in the school were destroyed. Fire damage confined to old office part of the building. Firemen have boarded up the building and will not allow COFO people to examine the area.

CANTON: Bob Williams, white Mississippian and COFO staff worker, is charged with improper license plates and overloading. His truck, carrying supplies to COFO projects, is impounded and he is fined \$54. Bob comments: "I wasn't doin' a damn thing wrong!"

NATCHEZ: Four white men are charged with assault and battery with intent to kill for beating two civil rights workers last year. The two victims, George Greene, Negro, and Bruce Payne, white, were attacked in a Port Gibson gas station on Nov. 30. They were later shot at three times in their car near Fayette by some other whites.

MILESTON:

The MFDP has decided to challenge the seating of four Mississippi legislators in the US Congress. The decision was made in a state-wide meeting of the MFDP in the newly dedicated Mileston Community Center. The move was triggered by the refusal of the state to except petitions by 1000 voters asking that MFDP candidates be placed on the official ballot for the November 3 election.

RULEVILLE:

A Negro restaurant owner who put LBJ-Hubert Humphrey campaign posters in his cafe window is harrassed by police and local whites. A police car and paddy wagon pull up in front of his cafe last night and a white man got out and took pictures of the posters. Two nights ago a rock was thrown through his window.

COLUMBUS:

Howard Shulman, arrested yesterday, is formally charged with "disorderly conduct" and "distributing leaflets without a permit". Bond set at \$200 on each count.

McCOMB:

Fourteen more arrests here bring the total of arrests to 36 in the last two days. Local Negroes, accompanied by COFO workers and Minister volunteers, were arrested in the Courthouse parking lot as they were about to enter the courthouse to attempt to register to vote. They were met in the lot by Highway Patrolmen, the Sheriff and several deputies, and a plainclothesman who read a court order ordering the registrar to close his office and appear in court in his capacity as County Clerk. They were arrested for "trespassing" and are being held on \$100 bond each.

The arrested have refused bail and intend to stay in jail. Jesse Harris, McComb project director, speaking in their behalf, said, "the peop in jail now are there as a protest against such a system and its laws. They will remain in jail in the hope that their being there will expose the kind of justice under which confessed bombers go free and Negro citizens, claiming their rights, are imprisoned."

John Beecher, correspondent for the San Francisco Chronicle, found a cigarette burning on a neatly arranged pile of crumpled papers. A small hole was burned through the vehicle.

Municipal Court Judge Charles Case today found COFO and the 13 difendents, arrested Oct 23, guilty of operating a food handling establishment without a license. A \$100 fine was levied against COFO. The judge ordered that no more food could be prepared in the Freedom House until the proper licenses were secured. COFO's motion for dismissal of the case because of the lack of definition of "food handling establishment" was denied by judge Case, who claimed the outcome of the trial would clear up the ambiguity.

Oct. 28

COLUMBUS:

Norman Chastain, white Freedom Vote volunteer from San Francisco, is arrested for driving with "improper license" and "improper tags." He is out of jail on \$32 bond.

Oct. 29

INDIANOLA:

Club swinging police broke up an FDP rally at the site of the fire damaged Freedom School. Prior to attacking the crowd of some 230 people police arrested Fred Winn and George Winter, white Freedom Vote volunteers from Sausalito and Ione, California, for failing to extinguish a coal oil lantern used to illuminate the outdoor meeting. Mrs Lovie Brown, loca Negro whose legs are amputated to the knee, was clubbed to the ground when she failed to disperse "in a hurry" as ordered. Mary Williams, 42 year old local Negro, was clubbed across the forehead and then arrested for assault and battery. Mrs Oscar Giles, local FDP delegate and a speaker at the rally, reports that police attacked the crowd without giving any previous order to disperse. Upon the attack the crowd proceeded to disperse in an orderly manner. A total of 13 people were arrested, including 11 local Negroes.

PHILADELPHIA:

John Finley, local Negro highschool student, was shot in the arm last night by two unidentified whites. Finley had testified at a Grand Jury investigation into the murder of the three civil rights workers this summer.

GLENDORA:

Two female Freedom Vote workers threatened by a gun waving policeman in a cafe. He told them he didn't want them in town. He went on to curse them and said "we still have grenades and we'll use them"

OCT. 30

MERIDIAN:

Four Freedom Vote volunteers from Oberlin College and a COFO staff member were arrested while distributing LBJ campaign leaflets. The five whites were charged with "distributing leaflets without a permit." Bond is \$50 each.

IUKA:

Negro Freedom Vote worker Clifford Trice, of Tupelo, arrested for "reckless driving" as he was delivering ballots and campaign materials to Freedom Vote polling places. Trice reports that police tried to break into the trunk of the car to examine the material but stopped in their effort when he told them the car was from a rental agency.

BELZONI:

White Freedom Vote volunteer Richard Simpson and Miss Lucile Lee, 11 year old local Negro, arrested while canvassing for votes door-to-door. Simpson charged with "contributing to the delinquency of a minor." Miss Lee released in the custody of her parents after being held for several hours.

CURTIS:

Benjamin Graham and Gordon Williamson, Freedom Vote volunteers, placed under "citizens arrest" by a local plantation owner and another armed white while canvassing for votes. They were taken to the Panola County Jail and charged with "trespassing." Bond for the two set at \$200 each.

GULFPORT:

Negro Freedom Vote worker Dick Flowers arrested for "reckless driving" while checking mechanics of various polling places in Gulfport. Flowers reports that at the time of the arrest he was traveling 17 mph through a school zone.

OCT. 31

RIPLEY:

The Antioch Baptist Church, 7 miles south of here, was burned to the ground early this morning. The church, site of an FDP rally last night attended by about 230 people, has long been used as for civil right activities. It was to be used as a polling place for the Freedom Vote.

BELZONI:

Police Chief Nicholson this morning tried to get 11 year old Lucille Lee to sign a complaint against Richard Simpson, arrested with Miss Lee yesterday. Miss Lee reports she refused to co-operate.

Local Negro youths report the police chief has threatened them with arrests and beatings if they continue to work for the Freedom Vote.

GREENWOOD:

Police entered the Blake's Cafe, Freedom Vote polling place, and tore down campaign posters. Police also enter the Town Club, in the Negro Baptisttown section of the city with a search warrant for liquor, and thoroughly search the cafe. They had previously entered the cafe and tore down campaign posters.

WEST POINT:

Two white volunteers and a local Negro arrested for "exhibiting printed matter without a permit." At the time of the arrest Robert Gilman, of Bethesda, Maryland, Eddie Brooks, of Chicago, Illinois, and John Bell, of West Point, were waiting in a car for another white volunteer, Edward Ziff, a Princeton University student, who was delivering Freedom Vote ballots and ballot boxes to a polling place. Ziff was also arrested and charged with driving with "improper tags" and an "improper drivers' license."