

WATS report: Wednesday, August 5, 1964

West Helena: Bob Blockum

Last night a meeting of businessmen in Helena and W. Helena was organized by a man who works as plumber in the W. Helena courthouse (a Tom). He had organized the meeting in an attempt to kick the SNCC people out of Helena and had hoped they would not attend the meeting. Bob Blockum, Larry Seigel and another SNCC worker went however. Local people talked about experiences they had had with whites both before and after the SNCC people came to town. Then the SNCC's were asked of their experiences and they told of how they've been moving from house to house to avoid danger from the white community. At the meeting the businessmen agreed to form the Citizens of Helena and West Helena Good Will Movement (they were unwilling to put 'civil rights' in the title). Rev. Terkins of Helena was elected chairman. Almost every Negro owning a business (or anything) in Helena or West Helena was present. They are forming a committee to go to Helena and West Helena demanding Negro police and firemen, Negroes to be hired in city hall and in the downtown area, and an end to harassment. If their demands are not met they will threaten to organize a boycott.

Also last night the home of a Mr. Taylor was shot into six times. Taylor is thought to go to the police with information about happenings in the Negro community. Some say that the people who shot into Taylor's house are Negro, but the SNCC people feel they were whites.

Today is the trial of Guy Carter, who beat Prince Shannon and June Corbin in July.

Moss Point: Aileen Strelitz

45 local people and civil rights workers were arrested at a voter registration meeting on the front lawn of the SNCC office in Moss Point yesterday. The meeting had been in session for five minutes when Assistant Dep. sheriff Thomas Palmer came and told them they had 5 minutes to break up the meeting. The meeting continued and 18 helmeted policemen carrying guns, bayonettes and clubs arrived. The group began to sing Freedom songs. 15 minutes later a prison bus, 10 police cars and two motorcycles drove up, bringing the total to 40 police officers. The 45 were loaded onto the bus and taken to the jail, charged with breach of the peace. Bond was set at \$300 cash, \$600 property. Among those arrested were ~~George~~ summer volunteers George Tessaro, 20, Park Ridge, Illinois (U. of Ill.); Roger Barnhill, 23, St. Louis, Mo.; Michigan State; Rev. Charles Miller, 31, an episcopal minister from Flushing, Michigan; and staff workers Eddie Stevenson and Billy MacDonald.

Cleveland: from Karen Haberman

charges were dropped against those who were arrested yesterday.

Greenwood: Judy Richardson 4:20 pm

~~Official Reports~~

unofficial reports from newsmen concerning the three bodies are that Cheney was beaten to death and the Schwerner and Goodman were both beaten and shot.

West Helena: Joe Wright

At the trial of Guy Carter, he was fined \$100 for hitting June Corbin and Prince Shannon. Though they were not previously charged with anything, Corbin was also fined \$25 for disturbing the peace, and Shannon \$50 for disturbing the peace and carrying a knife. Their convictions will be appealed.

Judge Hessler spoke of SNCC repeatedly saying it is a parasite on the community and merely trying to get publicity from the case. He said the workers aren't students or nonviolent, that they coordinate nothing and belong to no committee. He also ordered Larry Seigel out of the courtroom (Seigel was sitting on the Negro side of the segregated courtroom).