

WATS REPORT SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 1964

NMG

McCOMB (DAVID GERBER/Grogan) 12:30 pm

The First Freedom Day to take place in southwest Miss. has been announced for Tues., August 18. It will take place at the Pike C. Courthouse, Magnolia, Miss. in the vicinity of McComb. The protest will involve an attempt by large numbers of Negroes to register to vote. Out of 35,063, 43.9% are Negro. Only 207 Negroes are registered to vote or 3% of those of voting age. This is in contrast to the 9,989 white that are registered which is 82.1% of whites over 21.

This announcement followed the bombing of the Burglund Supermarket, a prominent Negro business establishment, two blocks from the McComb Freedom House. The explosion occurred at 12:15 am Sat. The blast was the sixth in a series of bombings over the past 2 months. Three churches have been burned and the McComb COFO freedom house and the home of Charles Bryant, active in the local NAACP were also bombed.

COFO staff indicated that this incident is part of an intensified campaign of violence and intimidation. On Tues. nite, 2 crosses were burned on the lawn of local white residents--the third since Jan. The City Council last week passed an ordinance prohibiting all leafleting and also increased the maximum misdemeanor penalty to \$300 and/or 90 days in jail. At the bombing last night, two arrests were made. At 1:45 am, McComb police arrested Clinton Hopson, Negro law student assigned to the COFO project, for allegedly obstructing an officer. He is now free on bond of \$52.52. At 3:00 am, Roy Lee, local Negro active in voter registration campaign, was arrested on charges of inciting to riot, disturbing the peace, and trying to do bodily harm to a police officer. He is still in jail. The original bond was set at \$900.

The past several months have seen a substantial increase in KKK activities in southwest Miss. This and the increasing tempo of violence as the summer is ending has prompted COFO staff to file a specific request for protection with the FBI and the JD. They are requesting the presence of Federal officials at next Tuesday's freedom day.

POLICE RAID: At 1:00 am Aug. 16, about 24 policemen conducted a raid on the McComb freedom houses, which are adjacent to one another. One house is owned by Mrs. Cotton, the other by Mr. McNulty. Police held warrants issued to Pike C. sheriff, R.R. Warren. They were allegedly searching for illegal liquor and stills. Police, however, asked questions about where the female project workers were living and read most papers and documents they could get their hands on. The raid involved five cars and members of the McComb city police, the Pike County Sheriff office, and the Miss. Highway Patrol. Workers had returned from an evening of canvassing taverns and restaurants in the McComb area. They were announcing the rally to be held Sunday aft. at 2 PM and the Freedom Day. The raid lasted approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.

McComb wants the fullest possible publicity on the Tuesday Freedom Day. Greenwood will be working with them on that angle. Also would like the Atlanta office to call them every 3 or 4 hours to make periodic checks, beginning at 6am Monday morn. The Freedom Day is a direct and spontaneous result of the incidences that have occurred in McComb during the last two or three days.

Albany: Don Harris lead

There was a mass meeting tonight in connection with the shooting of Wilbur Jones. After the mass meeting there was rioting between about 8:45 and 10:30pm. About 150-200 Negroes were involved. Stores which were owned by whites in the Harlem section of the Negro community were broken into and looted. The Trailways bus station and ~~the~~ a liquor store received considerable damage. Windows were broken out of stores. Police ~~which~~ are going through the Negro community with shot-guns, but they were unable to catch up with any of the rioting and looting to prevent it. One fireman is in the hospital as a result of the riots. A car with five or six whites drove by the periphery of Negro community was shot at.

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A cross was burned in Cordale, Georgia on Friday night in front of the Rib Shai, a local eatery in the Negro community.

Thomasville:

~~Several~~ SNCC workers George Bess and Ernie MacMillan and Hiram Thompson and local election worker were picked up but released today while distributing leaflets. They were all subpoenaed to appear in court on Monday for violating the city leafletting ordinance. ~~It~~ It is believed that bond/will be no more than \$75 each. or fines

~~Ricks~~

Americus:

Bond on Ricks' contributing charge is \$212.

~~Several~~ JACKSON: 4:20 am (Mike Waddell/Grogan)

Unverified: those in car who beat Hocker near COFO office may be the same ones that shot at Steve Smith and companions.

A Negro boy, Willie Gines, 18, was shot, and taken to the emergency ward of the U. Hospital. He was shot near the Jackson State College (about 5 or 6 blocks from COFO office) He was not known to be associated with COFO. Condition unknown.

A cross burning took place in front of Millsaps College. It happened at 11:00 pm. Also a cross-burning in front of Sun & Sands, local motel where or affiliated people. ^{5:00}UPI reports 16 reports of cross-burnings in southeast Louisiana, also at 11 pm. A Jackson FBI agent reported the cross burning in front of Sun & Sands.

Meridian: Rudy Lombard was stopped by police in regards to his CB radio. The cop wanted to know if he could pick up police broadcasts. There is a city ordinance in Meridian in regards to interference with police broadcasts.

Robko