

McComb (Lee Garrett/ERIN) 7:15 pm

McComb's first Freedom Day was a great success. 32 people went down to the courthouse to take the test and 29 actually took the test. There was no violence and the police were very cooperative. This proved that people can go down to the courthouse even in McComb. They plan to have Freedom Week now, and if any thing should happen the rest of the week ~~xxxxxxx~~ SNCC can say the only reason that the police cooperated today was because the national press was there to observe.

(CORRECTION: the people were not taking the test, they were filling out the application forms.)

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1964

NMC

GREENWOOD: (D. Zellner/Travis)

BATESVILLE: Mike Wood, Rev. Middleton, Doug Sorenson, Jim Kates were driving SNCC Plymouth, license plate 54B464 Panola C. There was a car sitting in the middle of the highway with lights focused on the SNCC car. They swerved to miss it and ran into another car that was sitting on the side of the road. Rev. Middleton was the only person that was injured. He bumped his head on the windshield and received a bloody nose. He is now in the hospital being examined. Both cars involved in the accident were damaged.

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SHAW News Release for Student Voice

The Shaw MSU (Mississippi Student Union) integrated the public library. Three members of the MSU entered the town library today and successfully registered to become members. After being shown around the one-room building, by the city and county librarian, the students, James Johnson, Jr., Eddie Short, and Willie Wright, checked out recent novels and books on sports, radio and electronics. After 20 minutes, James Johnson left the library followed by four policemen. Ten minutes later the others left with two volunteers. The volunteers were Meryl Fahnstock and Grace Norton. They were followed by more policemen while Sheriff Capps and other groups of policemen and a number of bystanders watched with appalled confused expressions.

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MCCOMB: Dave Gerber/Grogan) 1:20 am

Marshall Gann was returning from Magnolia where he had left the first three registrants about 10:45 am. He was tailed all the way by a green and white pickup truck when in the McComb area he stopped at a stoplight and saw two or three men running toward the car in his rear view mirror. As the light changed he floorboarded the car and was pursued for a time on foot and then by truck. Using the two-way radio he arranged for a car to be waiting at the freedom house to pursue the car and get the license plate number. At the freedom house one of the men riding in the truck hurled a coke bottle at one of the workers, Pat Walker, Negro CORE worker, who was standing on the lawn. The bottle missed. The truck had no license plates.

ATTEMPTED BURNING MARKS FREEDOM DAY EVE

At approximately 1:30 am there was an attempt to burn the house of a local resident whose daughter is active in the movement. Mrs. Verna Brown of Wilson St. in the Whitestown section smelled smoke and found a gasoline jug burning under the house. She disposed of the bomb. There was slight damage. No arrests have been made but the FBI and local police have been informed. This is the latest of incidents in a series of violence.

WATS REPORT, AUGUST 18, TUESDAY

MMG

INDIANOLA: via Jackson (Jerry Womack/Grogan) 4:45 am

Twenty-five white citizens showed up for the show, "In White America" Indianola people think most of the group were members of the White Citizens' Council. The sheriff came and said that there would be no trouble. Also, about 8 or 10 helmeted policemen arrived in two cars. A group of workers was followed from Ruleville to Indianola by a white pickup truck, license no. Sunflower 8-978.

JACKSON: (Mike Waddell/Grogan) 7:30 am

There were four people arrested/correction/only one was charged. Jay Litein, Annie Avery, Betty Doughtery, and another unnamed person were parked in front of the Edward Lee Hotel about 3:30 am when the local police came up and charged one with obstructing traffic. The fine was \$12. More information will follow later.

MCCOMB: (Lee Garrett/Grogan) 9:00 am

In preparation for the first southwest Mississippi Freedom Day, a mass meeting was held in McComb St. Paul's Church. This is the first church which has opened its doors to the McComb Freedom movement.

In spite of harassment, raids and intimidation all day (Aug. 17) over 200 persons turned out for the meeting. Folk singer Lyn Chandler and freedom singer Cordell Reagon opened the meeting with singing. Testimonies were offered by members of the audience. Roy Lee who was imprisoned the night of the last bombing and who was released on Aug. 17, described what had happened to him. Others including delegates to the FDP convention in Jackson spoke on the importance of the vote. The main speaker was project director Curtis Hayer, a native of the McComb area. He put the situation bluntly and demanded a choice from each present. The meeting was a good success both in numbers and in spirit. This is especially the case in light of continued intimidation. Plans for the freedom day were explained and people signed up. Plans for the freedom day continue. Four cars will make runs all day between the Freedom house in McComb and the courthouse in Magnolia. Five persons, including 3 ministers, will be stationed at the courthouse. In the meantime canvassing and leafleting will continue in McComb. It is expected that national press will be present to cover this virgin voyage. Rumor persists of possible retaliation on the evening of Aug. 18. It has been rumored that no Negro had better be on the streets after 5 pm. Also rumors have been reported here to the effect that a shipment of machine guns came into McComb about three days ago. So far the latter rumor remains unsubstantiated.

GREENWOOD: (Haberman/Grogan) 9:15 am

A Negro man, Fuschens, was shot and killed in Monticello, Miss. Sheriff N.S. Lambert said he was killed with a shot fired from a rifle or pistol. No arrests have been made. Apparently he has no record of civil rights activity. Monticello is in Lawrence County which touches the northeast corner of Pike County. This information came from Atlanta UPI.