

WATS REPORTS

Saturday, February 27, 1965

more on BATESVILLE from Penny Patch/Barbara Brandt 11 pm NEAR RACE RIOT

This morning the 10 students and two staff people were tried one-by-one in closed trials in the Mayor's office. Around 10 am, about 100 high students picketed then jail. Sheriff Earl Hubbard allowed them to picket for about 15 minutes. Then the 100 students marched to the center of town, through mobs of white people, all the way back to the Negro section of town, carrying signs like "Protest illegal arrests," and singing freedom songs. THIS IS THE SECOND DEMONSTRATION EVER IN BATESVILLE. The first was when the 22 people were arrested. There were about 50 policemen of all types, armed with night sticks, rifles, cattle prods, tear gas, wearing helmets, etc. While the students were demonstrating, four white men tried to overturn the car in which Penny and Chris Williams were sitting.

During the afternoon, the entire group went back to City Hall to vigil while the trials continued. Policemen were all around, and some white people standing around began harrassing the vigilers. Two students, John Henry Joiner and Isaac Morris, were beaten by the same four white guys who had earlier tried to overturn the car. Then the four guys jumped Chris Williams, and began beating and stomping him. Mr. Miles came to his defense. A fight broke, and the four guys began slugging Negroes standing around. One man was hit with brass knuckles and required five stitches. The police just stood around. Finally they broke it up and told Penny and Chris to leave town, because they couldn't protect them. Then Sheriff Hubbard said, "You Negroes are causing all the trouble. If you don't leave town, I'll have the Highway Patrol disperse you." The Highway Patrol was standing around with guns, etc. So the people left. Later in the evening a deputy sheriff came to Mr. Miles' house and arrested him for slugging the guys. Two of the white guys were also arrested.

Sunday, February 28, 1965

NATCHEZ VIA Jackson COFO notified the FBI on Friday about the disappearance of a Negro cafe worker last Tuesday. Dorie Ladner said Richard Robinson, 31, has never been missing for any length of time before, according to his family. He has no direct contact with the movement. His mother, Mrs. Fisley Jones, notified a Negro resident active with the movement about his disappearance. Police refused to handle the case when Miss Ladner called them. The FBI office here was not open at the time. Robertson's mother said that police told her they had the keys to her son's car. ~~When she called them they said they~~ They said they picked it up and asked her to take the vehicle. She refused because of the unusual circumstances. Miss Ladner said she received reports that a policeman saw Robertson picked up by a driver in another car at about 11 p.m. Tuesday. Robertson is about 5'7" tall, 145 lbs., light brown skin, and brown eyes. He is married. For more information, call Natchez, 601-442-1298.

School boycotts will be continuing in Indianola, Valley View, Moss Point, and Issaquena-Sharkey, and Pike Counties. (In Pike Co, the boycott is continuing along with courthouse picketing.)

MOSS POINT received information from a reliable source in the white community that violence can be expected tomorrow. Quite a few parents are expected to picket tomorrow. COFO is trying to get Cliff Vaughns of SNCC Photo, UPI and AP to come down. Picketing is at the Magnolia HS.

CORRECTION: The Executive Committee and Personnel Committee meetings have been moved one day. They will now begin at 4 pm on Thursday, March 4, in Atlanta. This is to make room for a COFO convention to be held Sunday in Jackson. The Atlanta meetings will last through Saturday, March 6.

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