

WATS REPORT: SATURDAY, JULY 4, 1964

unofficial report

Selma Alabama: John Love: 7:30pm

Local Negro students and adults have come into the Freedom House with reports that in the downtown area local whites, posse, police and sheriff Clark are attacking Negroes, beating them with sticks and clubs. ~~kkk~~ there was one report that Sheriff Clark hit a Negro woman in the back with a billy club and then hit the man she was walking with. Violence has been directed at the students in the downtown area. Alvery Williams was trying to get some students out of the way of the attackers and Sheriff Clark threw his billy club at him. ~~kkk~~ There was further report of Clark drawing his pistol at Alvery, but not shooting. Some students were mistaken for staff members--one boy was grabbed and called John Love, ~~kkkk~~ another ~~kkkkkkkkkk~~ grabbed and called Alvery Williams. People are trying to get out of the downtown area and into the Negro community but are having difficulties. John has advised everyone he has spoken to to keep out of the downtown area and off the streets as much as possible--when necessary he has told people to go out in pairs.

7:40

called John Doar and reported the situation in Selma. He said that he would call the FBI immediately and then call John Love for more details.

7:50pm Alvery Williams was picked up by local police in the Negro neighborhood. He was just walking down the street, most likely back to the freedom house.

During the afternoon when John reported the arrest of the four literacy project members police cars were cruising around the office every five minutes or so.

Monday will be Freedom Day in Selma: they have been leafleting throughout the county for it. They will also attempt to set up a mass meeting for tomorrow night--it will be announced in churches tomorrow morning. We will try to get some people into Selma from Mississippi and press have been alerted about the situation and the planned freedom day.

Most of the beatings took place where the theatres admitted Negroes. About 60 were admitted before the manager stopped selling tickets to them. ~~kk~~ The group of Negroes outside the ~~kkkkkk~~ Wilby Theatre were the people who were beaten while they waited to gain entrance to the theatre.

HATTIESBURG; 575 Sign Up For Freedom Schools
(reported by Bill Light)

SNCC office in Hattiesburg reports that by Thursday, July 2, 575 prospective students had registered for the five freedom schools about to open in the area. The students range in age from 8 to 82 years.

The first to register was an old man of 82 who has taught himself to read and write. He now wants to learn how to pass the voter registration test.

The Freedom Schools will be staffed by at least 33 volunteer teachers. Local teachers are also being recruited to help out. Several voter registration workers and office workers in Hattiesburg project have offered to help in night time teaching to alleviate the shortage of teaching staff for this unexpectedly large number of students.

During the past two weeks, voter registration workers in Hattiesburg passed out Freedom School applications as they canvassed the Negro community. On one day alone last week 175 of these forms were mailed into the SNCC office.

As the students registered at one of the 6 registration centers set up in the local churches, they checked off their choice of courses. The youngest group, aged 8 to 12, have no choice. They will all follow one curriculum which includes the following subjects: language arts, reading writing spelling (2) Negro history (3) General mathematics.

Those 13 and over could choose three courses from among the following: (1) language arts including not only basic skills but creative writing and public speaking as well (2) related American history, a course which will correlate general Am. history with Mississippi history and Negro history. (3) Social Studies a course which will include studies of the Mississippi and U.S. Constitution as well as some local and national geography. (4) Science survey course (5) general mathematics.

The courses for the older age groups will be repeated during a two-hour night session. However, the approach to the subject matter may be somewhat modified. As the night sessions are geared for adults. About 1/3 of the registrants are over 35. The night session will also contain courses in advanced science and math and in typing. More than 25 typewriters have been secured but many more are needed to cope with the flood of people who wish to learn to type.

Morning classes run from 8 to 11 am, evening classes from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. For those who wish to participate, there will also be programs scheduled for the hot afternoons. Informal discussion groups on social topics, selected by the young people themselves, entertainment, movies, etc. are tentatively planned for this time. Although the Freedom School registration books have had to be closed because of the unexpectedly large number of applicants, many people continue to phone in requests to be admitted. The staff is considering opening registration for the second session scheduled to begin in four to five weeks.

RULEVILLE: JULY 3 FOUR U.S. CONGRESSMEN PAID AN UNANNOUNCED VISIT TO A MASS MEETING SPONSORED BY THE SNCC SUMMER PROJECT AND THE RULEVILLE CITIZENSHIP CLUB.

The Congressmen, Rep. William Fitts Ryan of NY's 20th District (D), Rep. Don Edwards, California's 9th District (D. San Jose), Rep. Gus Hawkins, Calif 21st District (D. Los Angeles) and Rep. Philip Burton, Calif 5th District (D. San Francisco) joined in the singing of freedom songs, and gave speeches of encouragement to the audience of 125.

The meeting was held at 8 pm at Williams Chapel Baptist Church; only a week and a half earlier a Molotov cocktail was thrown at the church and tonight the Congressmen walked up the still charred steps. John Lewis, Chairman of SNCC, introduced three of the liaisons; Len Edwards, a SNCC summer volunteer, working in the Ruleville project and a 2nd year law student at the U. of Chicago, introduced his father, Congressman Edwards. Mrs. Irene Johnson, President of the Ruleville Citizens Club, the local CR organization, chaired the meeting and welcomed the "people we thought would never be here."

Ryan, reform Democrat from New York State told the Summer volunteers that they were in Mississippi on a "mission of conscience." He told the local Negroes "today we have been traveling in a state particularly to see the people in Miss. who are oppressed. There is no reason why Miss. should not join the rest of the nation in living up to the ideals of this country."

Selma: John Love

Yesterday John contacted Att. Chestnut to try to get Eric Farnum out of jail. When the two went to the jail the jailor tried to hit John, but missed. He did curse him however. Chestnut was unable to get Farnum out of jail. Later in the evening Att. Bruce Boynton drew up a writ of habeas corpus but the two judges he called refused to speak with him. John reached Att. Hall today concerning Farnum and expects to hear from him later today.

When Farnum was first arrested he was not allowed to see anyone, but later Chestnut was able to see him and he was all right at the time. He had been placed in the cell with Negroes, so staff people are less worried about his safety. They had been concerned about possible brutality while in jail.

Last night when some staff members were in town a white man who was slightly drunk came up to them and said that he thought black people should have equal rights. A group of whites overheard him and dragged him into a nearby restaurant, beat him and threw him out on the street. He was then arrested. Before he was beaten he warned one staff member that we should cancel Monday's scheduled mass meeting because there would be trouble there. Monday is Freedom Day.

Jackson: Bob Byers

Holly Springs: Last night 200 people attended a mass meeting in Holly Springs, the largest number yet to attend.

NEW YORK From Giss arezovsky

MK

9 people arrested at a subway station outside of entrance leading to World's Fair at about 2-3:30 including Julio Prettyman. Also: Carol Rogoff, Luvaughn Brown. They had gone there to distribute leaflets and were expecting to be arrested since some high school kids who went there yesterday to leaflet were immediately stopped by a Transit Authority policeman. Forcibly ejected from subway station, went back and were arrested on charges of disorderly conduct and trespassing. Fair supposedly has a designated area where leafleting can take place; high school kids had been asked to distribute. Only appropriate place was FA boardwalk which has policy against distribution. Court ruling in 50's that so long as material is non-commercial, can distribute. They are the police station being booked, will go to night court later tonight. Lawyer Jerry Krosner, state assemblyman.

Selma: John Love : 4:50pm

All of the people on the tutorial ~~project~~ project except Mary Varela were arrested this afternoon within the last half hour. They have also been arresting Negro youngsters ~~attempting to integrate the Wilbur Theatre~~ attempting to integrate the Wilbur Theatre in Selma (John is not positive if that is the correct name of the theatre). A number of kids decided to go to the show and attempt to sit downstairs- there was no organization involved. John has no information about the literacy project people other than that they are in the county jail. He will call down to the county jail now.

The boys in the literacy project are Silas Norman and James Wiley. The girls are Karen House and Carol Lawson. All are Negro. They are being held under \$500 cash bond on the charges are trespassing (we believe they might have been in the theatre). ~~John called the county jail and received the above information concerning Karen and assumes it applies to all four.~~ John called the county jail and received the above information concerning Karen and assumes it applies to all four. The car belonging to one of the four was parked about two blocks from the theatre and John saw the police towing it away. He believes they didn't want anyone to know the four had been arrested.

Selma: Mary Varela: 6:30pm

Corrections on above report:

1. we believe that only 4 were arrested- the four from the literacy project- no local people as far as we know.

2. location: they were arrested at or near the Thirsty Boy drive-in restaurant.

3. Charges: Mary Varela: Trespassing and carrying a concealed weapon: \$1000 bond
Mary is 21, Washington, D.C., graduate of Howard.

Jim Wiley, born Selma; lives Gary, Indiana, 21, Harvard U.; trespassing and resisting arrest: \$1000

Carol Lawson, 19, Bronx, Howard U.; trespassing: \$500.

Silas Norman: 23, Augusta, Georgia; grad. student in medical microbiology at U. of Wisconsin: trespassing: \$500.

Attorney Hall has been contacted about the cases. Most likely the four will remain in jail until Monday. Mary will attempt to raise bond money.

I also contacted Att. Solomon Saay in Montgomery who has names of Mary and John Love: he can be used in case of emergencies when Att. Hall can not be reached.

Will try to get Att. Chestnut of Selma to see the four tomorrow.

AMERICUS, GEORGIA - SNCC WORKER BEATEN AFTER INTEGRATING RESTAURANT

From John Perdeu, 21, 2364 S. Madison, Denver, Colo. *Hawaii Univ.*
 Integrated group ate at Hasty House (Meadowbrook Lane, Americus) tonite. Included Perdeu, Robt. Mants, Willie Ricks, Graham Wiggins, two others. When they left the restaurant, a mob of about 20 to 25 to 30 white men who had been slowly gathering as they were inside the restaurant, started to attack the car the SNCC workers climbed into. Everyone got into the car except Perdeu. The driver apparently panicked when the whites started reaching in the windows hitting them, and when one man broke a rear window with a crowbar. The car drove off leaving Perdeu faced with mob.

"As I came out of the door (last) I was met by a sizeable guy who slugged me and knocked me to the ground. He started kicking me in the head. Another joined him kicking me in the head." - Perdeu.

He started walking away and heard a policeman yell Stop. The policeman barely kept the crowd at bay, and called Sargeant Bowens. When the second police car arrived, Perdeu asked for protection, and for a ride to safety. The cop said, "Well, we can't give you a ride in a police car." Both cars then drove off.

Perdeu had asked a policeman to accompany him to pick up the pieces of his eyeglasses which had been knocked off at the first blow. Cop refused.

Started walking into town when a black compact car pulled up and two whites got out and started beating him again. Same pattern - knocked in head and to the ground, kicked in head and back, etc. After that car left, the white 63 plymouth or chrysler (license 31-1450) which played an important role in gathering the thugs together in the first place and circled as he was being beaten, pulled up and two whites got out and started beating him all over again. They tripped him to the ground, kicked in head, etc.

The black compact accosted him again across from the bus station. And again the police appeared - first one car and then the sgt. was called. The cops listened to the whites cursing Perdeu and "casually quieted" them down. The sargeant spoke with the whites and then with Perdeu, implying to Perdeu that Perdeu had assaulted the others, and asking if Perdeu had any witnesses. This time they allowed Perdeu to get in the police car, drove him to station. There they made him wait 10-15 minutes before allowing him to make phone call. When Perdeu was allowed to use the washroom, Officer T.H. Smith told him, "Clean up the washroom, we don't want any of your damn blood on the washbowl."

A white crowd gathered at the station, came in, and several paraded back to see the damage done to Perdeu. He recognized some of them as having been on the scene when he was being beaten.

Perdeu told the assistant chief of police he wanted to file charges. Cop said he couldn't get the names of assailants until the police report was filed in the morning.

Ricks came and got him from the station.

Perdeu called FBI agent Marion Cheek in Albany, who said he had to check with his chief due to new legislation and that Perdeu would hear from him.

PERDEU WANTS HIS CONGRESSMAN BYRON ROGERS NOTIFIED.

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TIFTON, GEORGIA From Judy Richardson, Greenwood.

Similar scene. John Putnam, local Negro went to drive in restaurant. Counter man motioned him from side window to the front. When he finished receiving order a white man in a group of motorcyclists beat him. SNCCers George Bass and John Washington came to help him. The policeman told them Putnam couldn't take out a warrant unless he knew the man's name - and the cop wasn't about to give it.

In another part of Tifton a group of (report said 1,000 - suggest it might have been several hundred) whites gathered when a Negro placed an order at an eating establishment.

NOTE: Don Harris (in Albany) says it is apparent this will be repeated over and over again. Negroes will be served but mobs of whites will gather to beat people or intimidate them. Wants us first to do some followup with Hasty House and then to think about strategy in such cases.

There is no staff in southwest Georgia with a camera. They would like a photographer, think it may help, for example, in court.

Add: Earlier report from Judy in Greenwood mentioned a GBI agent named Southwell who is reported to have tripped Perdeu or someone else in movement in Americus at police station. Not checked out.

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