

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, ~~kkkkk~~ 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.

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