

CORRECTION ON LAUREL, MISS.

From Bob Beyers... Betty Garman

At about 7:30 a group of well-dressed Negro teenagers decided to test for public accommodations by attempting to get service at the Burger Chef - a drive-in in a borderline area, Cook Ave. and Theresa Street. They were met outside by a group of whites who asked, "Where are you going?" The youths answered, "Inside to get a hamburger." The whites said, "You better not go in," and barred them from entering. The whites then asked, "Do you want to fight?" The youths left. They came back a second time at about 8pm. Twelve whites met them at the entrance and a similar exchange occurred. They were again barred from entering.

The drive-in has one side marked colored, the other unmarked. The Negro youths headed for the unmarked side. They were on foot. There was apparently no management involvement.

After being blocked again, the Negroes left. A group of about 20 other Negroes had formed in the area and threatened to start throwing bottles if the others were not let in. The original group of seven came back at about 8:30 and were surrounded by about 25-30 whites when they again tried to enter. The whites said, "Go home Yankees." And a general melee ensued in which Willie Roy Gillum was cut across the chest with a razor blade and his brother Terry was cut on the face. By that time there were about 40-50 whites and around 20 Negroes. The police appeared, closed off the section to traffic and kept the two groups apart. After the situation was under control, a couple of highway patrol cars were seen.

Two calls had been made to the police when it was obvious there would be this confrontation by the white thugs. One by a local Negro woman who didn't want to leave her name; the police refused to take the information. The other by Lester McKinnie. When he refused to give his name and address, the police hung up. Part of the group of 20 Negroes who assembled did so, according to McKinnie in response to this treatment by the police.

The Gillum brothers were taken to Southeastern Benevolent Hospital it is believed since it is the only Negro hospital in town.

McKinnie also reported that phone service at a local residence was cut off after he called the Jackson office for the second time on that phone.

(Incidentally, McKinnie worked in Laurel back in 1961 when things were getting underway in McComb. That was before or between Nashville. There was direct action on a lunch counter at that time, if I recall what McKinnie told me earlier this year in Oxford, Ohio. --MK)

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CARTHAGE, MISS.

Re: Freedom School From Beyers (info from Samstein)

The freedom school opened July 2 with 50 students, 20 more expected. On Tuesday, June 30, the (white) county school superintendent suddenly called for a summer session only for Negroes. It would have been the first in the memory of local residents. Under Mississippi law, holding summer sessions pre-empts you from having to hold fall sessions in the public schools.

From Tuesday until Thursday local citizens had scrubbed down an abandoned school building (the school was closed by the county in 1956) and built a library. High enthusiasm in the community was evident. On Thursday, when the school - located in Harmony, Miss. - opened, the sheriff and county supt. told residents they could not use the facility. A "NO TRESPASS" sign was posted and classes moved to a Negro church and private homes. Prior to the start of public education in Miss., the Negro citizens of Harmony provided the land and property for schools. In the 30's the Rosenwald Foundation gave money for the school. When the school was incorporated as a public school, Negroes continued on the board of trustees. When the state incorporated the school in 1953 under the county school board, Negro trustees were ousted. In '56 the county closed the school. The county now claims citizens cannot use it; Negroes say it is theirs to do with as they please. Harrassment began Thursday. A cross was burned on the main road of the Negro community Thursday. 5-6 pounds of large roofing tacks were poured on roads of the Negro community Friday night. Police have been shining light in the homes of Negroes. Morale is reported to be very high however.

The summer session is supposed to begin on the 15th. Warnings have been made that those who do not attend would be set back in school.

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JACKSON

Press conference for the Congressman (Ryan, Hawkins, Burton) Sunday, 12:30 noon at the Jackson airport. They held an impromptu press conference in Meridian today.

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SELMA, ALABAMA

presumed

- David Prince and Jerry DeMuth injured by/possemen here tonight. Following amass meeting here tonight at the AME Zion Church on Green Street, the two reporters were attacked and beaten by white men presumed to be part of Sheriff Jim Clark's posse. As they left the church where law enforcement personnel had been present part of the time, they saw about 60 helmeted possemen. Some had brown uniforms, others plain-clothes, but all had helmets. He took some pictures then tear gas came. Prince called to Jerry to get between the bullings, when he turned Jerry wasn't there. A spotlight was shone in his eyes and then a shot rang out intended for him and lodged in the house behind him. His camera was thrown against the house. Later it was smashed. He was assaulted and rolled up in a ball. He was hit and kicked in the back and legs. He and Jerry left Selma driving to a ~~sp~~ hospital in Montgomery. They stopped at a Howard Johnson's on the way, where someone called the police. They were greeted by a Montgomery policeman with two police dogs in the back.
- They went to St. Margaret's hospital on the outskirts of Montgomery. By midnight it seemed Jerry had a gash across the forehead as if from a billy stick, and a slash across his neck which was bleeding badly. His glasses were broken. Prince had some kind of back injury.
- Prince described the possemen: some had tear gas masks. Those with masks also had automatic weapons. All however had helmets.
- When they arrived in Selma this afternoon they first called the FBI and reported their presence. The FBI man told him he wasn't sure what protection they could expect from the Sheriff but suggested they call him. They introduced themselves in the office of Sheriff Clark shortly after noon. They are on a Black Star assignment. Both have Atlanta police press credentials. DeMuth is also with Esquire. Prince with Macmillan publishing. In the sheriff's office there were about "20-30 uniformed men." Prince said the second next mad to Clark, who was directing the office appeared embarrassed that the men were talking about beatings. At first it appeared the Sheriff's posse had singled out the reporters. However, three local Negroes were hospitalized as a result of beatings after the mass meeting. Two men, one woman. One was admitted to Bur-ell Hospital in Selma, the other two to Good Samaritan Hosp. in Selma. Nature of injured and names not known.
- John Lewis and Mitchell arived safely. After midnight Lewis and Love were the only ones left in the office. They reported local people told them the streets had been cleared. Mrs. Boynton reported earlier that she had seen several local Negroes carried bloody to the hospital. Lewis also said Lingo was in town.
- DeMuth and Prince had eaten at a restuarant earlier where the cook had pulled a large man to the side. They whispered together and pointed to the two reporters. Later Prince recognized the big man as his assailant. When he had Prince on the ground he told him the waitress said Prince had a weapon. The big man took his wallet.
- Prince also reported that two times Sheriff Clark tried to intervene -- once when the camera was being smashed.
- He said before he was knocked down he saw the possemen swinging at some women with children. One man with a tear gas mask asked Prince if the Negroes started it. He claimed to be a state inspector.
- The Sheriff's men asked to see the press cards again when they left the church. Clark and some of his men watched through the windows during part of the mass meeting. After they got in their car, some law enforcement men told them to get moving and keep going.
- At one point P. was knocked in the stomach with a rifle.

WATS REPORT: Sunday, July 5, 1964

unofficial report

Selma: John Love 10:30am

There was more violence through the night in Selma. More students went into the downtown area last night and were beaten. People in the Negro commercial sections were also attacked. One man coming out of a Negro restaurant on broad street was beaten by 6-12 policemen who converged on him and beat him back into the restaurant. At about 11pm a rally of whites was held at the A&P downtown, and during the evening a cross was burnt on highway 41 about 1 mile from the heart of town.

There will be a mass meeting tonight at the Green Street Hall at 7pm.

Selma: John Love: 6:15pm

Benny Tucker was arrested in the downtown area of Selma at about 5pm Selma time. He was driving a SMCC car Kk and was stopped and arrested on the corner of Franklin and Alabama. ~~Edie Edie~~ He and John Love had gone downtown to pick up leaflets for the mass meeting and voter registration. The police took the car when they arrested Tucker. The car had a Calif. license on the front, a Georgia on the back and the registration in the glove compartment.

At about 5:15pm Joseph Chapman, a local Selma resident, 27, was arrested. The charges are unknown in both cases.

John reports that a great many whites are milling around downtown, particularly near the Wilby Theatre. Very few Negroes are downtown.

John Doar was called about the arrests and about Freedom Day at 6:25pm.

ALBANY, GEORGIA, taken from Peter Delissovoy, at 6:30 pm.

Donald Harris, Randy Battle, Roy Sheilds, and Dale Smith and nine others were arrested for loitering after they tried to enter all-white Tift Park Pool (formerly a public pool) in Albany. Two white SNCCs had gone to the pool first, entered, and reported back by telephone that white men, armed with ball peen hammers, sticks clubs and that life guards had baseball bats. An integrated group of 25 went (including the arrestees) and tried to get in. The ticket seller - after a lot of discussion - admitted the pool was private for white people, and that Negroes were not admitted. The group split, half retired, and 13 were arrested for loitering and are being held on \$102 bail. C. B. King will defend. New Albany number is: HES-9811.

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LAUREL, FROM DOTTIE ZELLNER IN GREENWOOD.

Lester McKinnie was arrested in Laurel at 2:00 pm. McKinnie was arrested there in 1962 at the bus station. He was released while his lawyer appealed the case to municipal and county courts, and was rearrested today on the old charge, and told he would have to spend four to six months in jail and pay a fine. Apparently the deadline for appeal has passed - his lawyer was Jess Brown - and Jackson lawyers are working on the case. This is NOT FOR RELEASE.

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