

WATS REPORT: JULY 6, 1964

Unofficial report

David Prince, St. Montgomery Hospital

Jerry DeWitt is doing all right but may have a fractured elbow. They are staying at the hospital until a bone specialist comes in, which should be around 8 AM, Selma time.

Prince stated that the police said they traced Jerry's license number and that they discovered that their address was the SNCC office. Prince also said that he overheard a policeman say that they knew all about the photo project and that "they" knew ~~what we were doing~~. ~~Prince~~ Prince also stated that he saw the police complete files on SNCC and on the photo project.

Selma: John Love 10am

a ten o'clock curfew was announced last night after the rally. Police and posse went up on people's porches and clubbed them with night sticks if they would not go into the house. They also beat on the doors with their sticks to make people lock them. Chairs were thrown through the windows and screen door of a house next to the hall where the mass meeting ~~was~~ held. ~~Under~~ Under the curfew people must also turn their lights off at 10pm.

After the ~~people~~ people left the rally tear gas was sprayed inside the church building. Apparently it was believed that people were still there. Cans ~~of~~ of tear gas were found this morning which ~~were~~ were marked Federal Laboratory from some city in Pennsylvania. They were marked #112, expiration date August 1967/

Selma: 10:40am

At the courthouse possemen are posted at the front. When Negroes walk up they are told they can not come in. If they question the men they are told that if they want to register they ~~must~~ must go around to the back where they are given numbers and sent into the alley to wait. There are possemen posted at the entrance to the alley. ~~They~~ They will not allow anyone to enter the alley who is not there to register. They would not permit James Austin, a resident of Selma and formerly on SNCC staff, to join the line to attempt to register. It has been estimated that there are about 150 people waiting to register.

Negro trustees from the jail have ~~been~~ been given civilian clothes and are out on the streets around the courthouse.

There are state troopers in town. Last night Al Lingo personally closed the South Wind cab stand at 10pm in accordance with the curfew. Private clubs such as Elks were also closed.

Attorney Chestnut has not been allowed to see anyone in jail. We do not know how many local citizens may have been arrested since Friday though we do know that seven SNCC people are in jail. Peter Hall has arrived in town and will try to handle the legal matters.

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Washington: 11:15am John Doar

Reported the Selma situation to Doar. He said that the JD has a suit concerning discriminatory practices in voter registration pending with Judge Thomas. Thomas previously refused to set a date for a hearing but the date has now been set for the fall.

The misconduct of Selma police is being investigated by JD and they have a suit against all law enforcement authorities in the county which is pending in appeals court.

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WATS REPORT: Monday July 6, 1964

unofficial report

Boston: Pam Emerson

Boston office called John Doar at 12:30pm who told her that it was the 11th call he had received from SNCC people in a couple of hours. He told her that the JD was doing everything they could

Detroit: Martha Kocel

At 1pm Martha called John Doar person to person. The secretary answered and when she had determined that Martha was calling from SNCC she told her that Mr. Doar was no longer receiving long distance calls, but that he wanted her to know that he was doing everything possible in Selma and that he was keeping in contact with SNCC people there.

The Detroit Friends are also calling the UAW and asking them to call sheriff Clark; UAW will send out an office memo to that effect, so he should receive as many as 50 calls from Detroit/ ~~She~~ Martha Kocel called Sheriff Clark and talked with his secretary. When she ~~asked~~ asked why Negroes were being ~~made~~ made to go ~~back~~ to the back of the courthouse the secretary answered that everyone had to.

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Selma: 2:30 Mary Varela to Sandra Stovall

John Lewis, Francis Mitchell, John Love and James Austin have been arrested. Between 40 and 50 people were standing on the steps of the federal building. Three young boys with posters went over to the courthouse and were allowed to stand there about 5 minutes. Meanwhile the people at the federal building began to sing and then began moving down the steps. A group of possemen with cattle prodders moved up to meet them and arrested the whole group.

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Selma:

During an earlier call from Mitchell reported that John and others had headed down to Broad Street and that the office had received a report that white youths were going down there with bags of rocks.

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Report on Selma from Greenwood:

Re above arrests: The group was standing on the federal building steps, Lewis, Mitchell, Love and Austin amongst them. Three youngsters went over to the courthouse with signs. The sign was taken from one girl. One boy was arrested. When that happened, the group on the steps began to ~~sing~~ sing. They had been signing for about two minutes when ~~sheriff~~ sheriff Clark shouted through a ~~horn~~ horn that everyone would be arrested for disturbing the court which had been in session for 10 mins. A group of posse charged at the federal building arrested the whole group. Mary Varela received a report that when the group was taken around the corner they were beaten with night sticks and cattle prodders were used on them. All newsmen were chased down the street away from the federal building.

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~~Washington, D.C.~~

Washington, D.C. ~~Call:~~ John Doar: 2:45pm

Called John Doar and left a report concerning ~~the~~ the arrests in Selma with his secretary. Emphasized that arrests took place on steps of federal building.

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Atlanta AP and UPI were called: they already had the story from their men down in Selma.

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July 6, 1964, 11:30 pm

Jessie B. Stellwarth, in early twenties, victim of shooting:

Woman shot in Moss Point as she left voter registration mass meeting at Knights of Pythias Hall. Twelve shots were fired from carload of whites. Believe the car was green Comet. She was the only person hit by shots and is now at Singing River Hospital in Pascagoula with wounds in either back or side.

Arrived at hospital at 9:50 pm, Mississippi time.

Police were in meeting until five minutes before the meeting dispersed.

Jessie B. Selllwarth was asked by the nurse at the hospital if she had been shot by her father. The nurse then remarked "this happens all the time."

John Dohr was called from Greenwood at 9:30 pm, Mississippi time.

WATS Report - July 6, 1964 - Taken by John Perlew 10:00 pm

Americus, Georgia (Sumter county) NEGRO AND WHITE MOBS FORMING Robert Mants  
About 150 whites are grouped downtown in front of the Martin Theatre, scene  
of a riot last night. Negroes have been grouping to oppose them and dispersing  
periodically. Mants has helped to disperse them. Police and firemen are  
present in the area. Earlier in the day Negroes ate at George's Restaurant  
and the B&B Restaurant in downtown Americus. There were no incidents.

Atlanta, Ga. July 6, 1964 8:15 pm John Perlew

REPORT TO FBI - I informed agent Charles Haynes of Atlanta FBI that Willie  
Ricks in Americus had called at 8:00 pm, had said that Negroes were organizing  
to meet a white mob tonight, that there was a white mob downtown, size unspecified.  
I insisted that the very presence of a mob at the site of a public accommodation  
which Negroes had been using constituted interference with the implementation  
of the Civil Act of 1964. I said I understood that anybody interfering with the  
implementation of the Act was liable to prosecution. I claimed that I thought  
FBI agents should go immediately to the scene and if necessary use their power of  
arrest to keep the situation under control. Haynes replied that he was not determin-  
ing policy, that it was determined from Washington, and that the policy was not  
to go into the field and interfere with the actions of local law enforcement  
officers to keep law and order. I answered that I wasn't sure that law and order  
would be kept, that my concern was preventive measures, not post facta reports.  
Reminded Haynes that Sunday night the police and firemen had attempted only to  
disperse the Negro mob and not the whites.

Atlanta, Ga. - July 6, 1964 - 10:00pm John Perlew

REPORT TO FBI - Called Albany FBI agent Joseph H. O'Rourke and informed him of  
what Mants had said concerning mobs forming in Americus at the time. O'Rourke  
said he couldn't act except on orders from Atlanta FBI agent Charles Haynes.  
When I said I had already talked to him, O. asked me what he had said. I told him.  
I emphasized that my concern was prevention of an incident, not reports after the  
fact. He said he had been informed that the State Patrol had been held in reserve  
last night in case police couldn't handle the incident.

WATS REPORT - July 6, 1964 11:10 pm Taken by John Perlew

Americus Ga. (Sumter County). Robert Mants. WHITES SHOOTING IN NEGRO SECTION  
Carload of Whites went through Seaboard side of Americus shooting in Negro  
residential area. So far no one reported hit. The downtown area appears to  
be clear of groups now. All people in SNCC house have just taken refuge  
in Barmun Funeral Home when they heard noise of what sounded like an approach-  
ing crowd. Learned the crowd was going down Forsyth St. about a block away,  
parallel to the street which the SNCC house is on.

WATS REPORT JULY 6, 1964 Taken by John Pardew

Americus, Ga. (Sumter County) Robert Mants. REPORT OF SHOOTING CONFIRMED, MAYOR ISSUES STATEMENT BLAMING OUTSIDE AGITATORS FOR FRICTION. Reported that seven carloads of whites were seen going through Seaboard side, Negro section of town. Whites came to Hope Merritt's Grocery Store. No one reported hit in shooting. Mants and Ricks back at SNCC house, expect trouble tonight, if whites continue going through Negro section. Ricks claims mobs still downtown. R. and M. have decided not to move from the SNCC house on Jefferson street.

Mayor Griffin Walker issued a statement in the Americus Times-Recorder today calling for an end to violence and mobs. He urged that children be kept home, blamed the friction in the last few days on outside agitators. State Patrol seen cruising the area.

M King

SELMA, ALA. From Matt Herron (Mr. J C Grendel) 1:10 am  
Mass meeting - Abernathy spoke, at Shiloh Baptist Ch. 350 people there. At least 150 policemen outside, about 30 around front and up road, then busload plus 8-10 carloads totalling 150 up side. Ready for action but there was no action. Very quiet there tonight "yown dead." No action since afternoon arrests he knows of. Matt thinks he can hold out for awhile so long as noone blows his cool. Concerned that other person who went to jail has any jail and whether he can get it out. He'll try to get to jail tomorrow and get film and info. Needs local contacts because everyone is out of sight. Tell Danny Lyon his next assignment is to take the next four days cruising the Delta doing anything that strikes his fancy. One requirement: that he stay in close touch with an office.

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12:30 MOSS POINT, MISS. from Charles Glenn  
Lamar Turnipseed arrested. He was one of a group of local Negroes who pursued the car of whites doing the shooting. Unconfirmed report that E.J. Wiggins was also arrested. Guyot called at 1:20 to say that L.T. was being held without charges at a jail - no. SO 2-4383. He asked for long distance calls to be put through the jail, worried about his protection since a 16-year-old youth, Fletcher Ledille, was kicked by police at a service station in M.P. and the police looked prone to violence. Glenn also reported the second shooting occurred on Magnolia Street in M.P.; same group of whites.

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1:00 am MOSS POINT From AP in New Orleans  
1. - the earlier report of a car being overturned was rebuffed by police AP said the chief of police told him the police car was not overturned but involved in a routine incident - routine wreck.  
2. - the same car of whites shot at a passing car of newsmen on their way to the KP hall. - reported to NO AP from Mobile.

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Glenn also said the report by Guyot of police telling Guyot that martial law had been declared referred to the curfew. Guyot said police at the hospital had given him one minute on the phone and told him "martial law has been declared."

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Jessie B. Stalworth - correct age: 19, according to Glenn.

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Sheriff's office reported at 1:25 am that "Fred Turnipseed's charge would probably be public drunk." He confirmed there had been "some shooting at the colored's meeting."

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