

WATS LINE REPORTUNOFFICIAL REPORT

FROM BILL LIGHT IN JACKSON/BOND 11:12

McComb, July 17 - The Zion Hill Baptist Church was burned to the ground last night. One report says 4:45 am, another 1:00. The church is located slightly west of McComb on Route 44. There are no houses immediately in the area. None of the local people reports having heard an explosion, but observers reported a chemical smell of explosives pervaded the site of the church. There is no record of the church ever having been used in connection with civil rights activity. Mendy: police have not yet to determine if it was burned or bombed and have no indication of who did it.

Philadelphia, July 17 - Daniel Perlman, 23, 40 West 84th Street, NYC, Columbia Law students, and David Welsh, 28, Detroit, freelance reporter now with JET, paid a visit to a local white attorney in Philadelphia at 1:40 pm. They left at 1:50 and were attacked a few minutes later on the corner of a main street about a block from the courthouse by a couple of middle-aged white men. Perlman was struck on the head by a chain, and bled profusely. Three or four men chased him as he ran toward the courthouse, one waving a chain. He reached Sheriff Rainey's office, and requested help. Rainey dispatched Deputy Cecil Price who returned to the scene with Perlman. Welsh was the first to be struck, repeatedly in the face and head and kicked in the ribs several times, as he started to fall under the blows. He too tried to run toward the courthouse, but was intercepted by another man who struck him. He returned to the scene, only to be kicked around again. He then made it to where his car was parked, and picked up Perlman who was talking to a smiling Deputy Price. Price asked them if they could identify any of their assailants. They weren't sure whether to trust him, so they said they wouldn't try and left town. Perlman came to Jackson COFO with a shirt completely covered with blood, and dried blood on his face. His main wound was the right side about three inches above his eyeline. He is ok now.

Note to photography: Bill Light in COFO/Jackson needs 35 mm film. He needs tri - x and plus - x. He has sent in 10 rolls, but only has received back three contact sheets.

FROM SHEILA MICHAELS IN HATTIESBURG: BOND

3,000

They have 3,000 people registered in the Freedom Registration books. There are only 7,450 eligible Negroes in the entire county, the second smallest population in the state. They are 2,00 Freedom Registration forms ahead of anyone else.

There are 600 kids in the Freedom Schools (started with six, now have ten) and they come every day. One community center is set-up, will open formally on Saturday, and already has too many kids registered for the nursery school (5 to 7). They are in school all day, and extra classes (piano) are being set up. An art teacher is coming down, visiting lecturers. They are also making a movie there. They want two (2) MISSISSIPPI (lynching) posters. AND, some SNCC buttons.
