

Canton weekly report, March 16 thru March 22, 1964
CANTON, MISSISSIPPI

This was a week of transition. After the relatively intense preparations leading up to Freedom Day, this past week has been very quiet. Many staff changes were made, and a revised program has not yet been started.

Chronological outline

Monday, March 16, 1964 Two different staff meetings occupied almost the entire day. The morning meeting was a workshop in which there was extensive discussion of assignments, housing, and transportation as well as work content.

The afternoon meeting with Dave Dennis was an official breakdown of the new staff assignments and job contents.

Mass meeting at Pleasant Green Church in the evening. About 75 in attendance.

Tuesday, March 17, 1964 FBI started appearing in Canton as part of its massive investigation of Madison County.

Staff did nothing but wait for assignments and transportation during the day.

Mass meetings in the evening at Pleasant Green and Magdalene.

Wednesday, March 18, 1964 Evening mass meetings at New True Light and St. John.

Thursday, March 19, 1964 Carsie Hall here to get C.O. Chinn and the others out of jail. C.O. Chinn is released.
Mass meetings at Milton Grove, Magdalene, Mt. Olive, and Mt. Zion.

Friday, March 20, 1964 Scott Smith and the Bouldin boys get out of jail. Valleyview people appear on TV in Jackson.
Meetings between Hattiesburg and Canton students in the afternoon and evening.

Saturday, March 21, 1964 Student meeting is a workshop followed by canvassing.
Madison County residents go to Greenwood to assist in the Greenwood plans for Freedom Day.

Sunday, March 22, 1964 COFO meeting in Jackson attended by large number of Madison County residents.
Cheney and McNair move to Leake County.

Staff work

Staff was largely inactive this week. Originally many of the staff had hoped to move to other areas fairly soon, but inefficient management of the available transportation prevented an orderly transfer. In addition there was some reluctance on the part of staff to accept transfer elsewhere in the state.

The staff that was supposed to remain in Madison County didn't get moving either in the general turmoil.

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Justice Department and FBI

The justice department and the FBI have been very active in Madison County this week. We know that over ten agents have been investigating all arrest cases, many cases of economic intimidation, and all cases of police harrassment that have occurred within the past year. The reasons for this investigation are not known.

The Justice Department immediately began to determine whether or not registrar Campbell was complying with Judge Cox's temporary restraining order. (See below for contents of the restraining order.)

The Justice Department continues to press us for full details of the names of people who go down daily to register.

Judge Cox's temporary restraining order

On Monday, March 16 Judge Cox issued a temporary restraining order. The order tells the registrar to be capable of registering up to fifty people a day and that he make provision for taking four applicants at a time. The order also restricts the number of persons who can line up at the courthouse at any one time to twenty-five.

The order came as a surprise; no one had expected any sort of restraining order. Some are of the opinion that Judge Cox issued the order under pressure of the suit filed against him in New Orleans, questioning his ability to handle racial questions.

The staff reacted strongly negatively to the provision limiting the number of people standing in front of the courthouse. No policy about official reaction to the order has been arrived at.

Student activities

The visit of students from Hattiesburg to Canton over the weekend was a valuable addition to the Canton student program. Both groups felt that the interchange was very worthwhile. The most valuable time seemed to be the time spent canvassing together.

Greenwood trip

The visit of some Madison County people to Greenwood was also felt to be very valuable. The people helped to canvass and attended a mass meeting. Both this and the student exchange will be the first of many such exchanges, it is hoped.

Selective buying campaign

The movement finally began to face up to some of the problems that will have to be met in order to continue the selective buying campaign. This new state law making it a criminal offense to publish or distribute any boycott literature is hamstringing the operation. In the meantime there is a feeling that people are starting to slack off and return to the stores. There is a feeling that the law is unconstitutional and should be tested, but there has been an unwillingness to send people to jail for it. Limited legal help and bond resources will mean a cutdown on other programs if we do an effective job of keeping the boycott going. At this point the responsibility for furthering the program is left in the hands of local citizens.

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Harrassments

C.O. Chinn and Scott Smith were both threatened in jail. In the dark of night someone came up to their cells and told them they were going to be killed. Nothing came of the threat.

The sheriff worked hard at trying to convince them that the movement was deserting them and would not help get them out of jail.

Five new cases of people being laid off work have been reported. They seem to be related to movement activities.

A local resident of Madison was threatened for his life for wearing a FREEDOM NOW pin. The same man was told by a man to whom he had owed a bill that he would be shot if he did pay the bill and shot if he didn't.

A local high school girl was told not to return to a store and not to let any of her family return to the store if she took part in any movement activities.

Registration estimates

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number attempted</u>	<u>Number-successful</u>
Monday, March 16	-	
Tuesday	-	
Wednesday	13	
Thursday	10	
Friday	10	
Saturday, March 21	5	
- means unknown		

The staff working in Canton this week was George Raymond, Richard Jewett, John Newman, Andrew Lee Green, Joe Lee Watts, Marcellus Byrd, Theodios Hewitt.

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