

April 29, 1964

Greetings,

Here is a long overdue report. I'll try to keep it a little organized, but...

The Cultural and Artistic Agitation Committee has been busy but has suffered from lack of order. A lot of what was done was on a hit and miss basis, but, with the exception of the Holiday on Ice, this probably hasn't hurt anything. It just didn't help. Cancellations. Within two days of when we get back from Spring Break (April 6 and 7), both Birgit Nilsson and Sammy Kaye announced they were cancelling their performances in Jackson. The NAACP in New York had tried to make some deals with Miss Nilsson (she would give the money to charity, or to the NAACP--I've heard several versions), but when we found out we said it wouldn't do. She was replaced by local talent which had just finished a run at the First Baptist Church Revival. Concerning all this, the entertainment columnist for the Jackson Daily News had some very good, though a little indirect, things to say. Paul Harvey did not appear. We never heard from him, but at least he didn't come. Also, several people (we had nothing to do with this) cancelled out at state colleges. That takes care of entertainment in Jackson for this school year. Look is doing a story on the cultural events. Oh yes, students with tickets went to hear the replacement for Nilsson but were turned away.

Visits. A couple of more visits to the Capri theater were made on March 14 and 15. On the 14th they were sold out and on the 15th the students were turned away after a chat with the manager. We have talked with people who know the manager and they say his real concern is financial. This was also our impression. We haven't really tried to negotiate with him (just haven't gotten around to it), but we will this month. We'd settle for starting with one night during the week and seeing how that works.

On March 17, three students went to hear the choir of Georgia State College for Women (Milledgeville) at Mississippi College (Baptist). We were sold tickets and admitted without difficulty. During the third number, two police came in and took us out, refunded our money, and escorted us back to our car. One woman stopped the police and apologized to us and said to keep coming back. We have seen some students from the school since then. One of them was called into the Dean's office and asked if he were involved. The order to remove us got handed down from the President of the College, after the matter was passed up the line. A couple of nights later the school produced Hamlet and about 30 students were ready to walk out if anyone was turned away. Unfortunately, we were too busy to go. In the future, we will work with the students there if possible.

March 18-20 Millsaps did My Fair Lady. The Council was reported planning to make something of this. The director had gotten a lot of unfriendly calls and we hear that a firecracker brigade was waiting for our car. However, they didn't realize that the Negro (Mrs. Branch) in the group was Negro until they were inside. Reporters were waiting--they must have gotten wind of something. That night 6 shots were fired at the campus. A very mixed group went on Friday night without incident.

On March 27 the Concordia Choir sang at Millsaps. Some people from Jackson went to that. On April 13 the Jackson Little Theater gave a benefit performance of The Miracle Worker for a school for the deaf. Students with tickets were admitted without incident but were asked to leave just as the show was starting. They had considerable conversation before they left. On April 14 students went to Belhaven College to hear Shakespeare readings. Rev. Ashton Jones was with them. A man who said he was President of the College turned them away and said he would call us when they were open.

Joan Baez Concert. This was great. About 500 people were there, and about 300 of them were white students from nearly every school in the state. This will probably be the beginning of real contact with liberal white kids. Some came down from Ole Miss a day early to meet with kids in the Jackson area about setting up some kind of statewide underground movement. It was a very bad day (tornado weather) and this probably prevented us getting shot up again. Police parked at the gate to the campus. What was really great was when all these white students stood for We Shall Overcome. Kids at Mississippi College had been called in the day before and told they would be expelled if they came (they weren't). The next day a list of 50 Millsaps students was circulated on that campus listing (in small type) students who had been here.

Holiday On Ice. This is our one real defeat of the year. The main thing, I think, is that (for whatever reason) we didn't get in touch with the management ahead of time. When we finally did talk to the manager--the day after the show opened--he said they couldn't cancel because they would lose \$50,000 and why didn't we contact them earlier so they could have arranged it. Also, SNCC had contact a union, but it seems that the most the performers do is pay dues--if that much. We had several hours worth of long-distance negotiations and I doubt if they will return here before a segregated audience. They say the only segregated shows are one in S.C. and here. They need to be worked on by national organizations for next year. The opening night, April 14, Eddie McKay and Bobby Talbert were arrested when they tried to use their tickets. The next night two students were turned away (with tickets). The next night two (including Konditi--African) were turned away and two arrested (Marion Gillen and Eli--Eli is white). The next night the NAACP in town was handling. They seemed to be in motion all day and we got them tickets, but it fizzled. No details. The last night an instructor from Pakistan (who is more or less colored) went and managed a long talk with the person in charge. The NAACP committed itself to cover bail and lawyers. This worked fine on the first two arrested. But it sure didn't on the second two. Charles said he would have them out by the week-end (this was before the arrest). Friday things seemed to be moving. Saturday morning no one could find Charles (including Jack Young). He reappeared on Monday noon. The kids got out Tuesday morning. Eli was badly beaten by cellmates who wanted to make an "example" of him on Friday. Pete Stoner gotten beaten by the same guys on Monday while he was up for habeus corpus hearings. From now on we don't trust the NAACP--but we've said that before.

April 6-8 we had a team of Glen Smiley, Jim Lawson, C.T. Vivian, and the Hardings on campus to get us nonviolent. There were a few formal presentations but mainly they were talking to people informally. Also, they spoke in a number of classes. Probably half the school heard them in a class. They talked about non-violence from the historical, practical, and philosophical points of view rather than specifics of demonstrations here.

(note: March 14)

Students have stopped going to the library. One Saturday/in late March they were put out after they had been admitted. A couple of years ago the city passed a law that only residents of Jackson could use the library. This is the first time we know of that they have tried to enforce it. The same time they put out our students they put out a white college student. We hear that Millsaps students are now having difficulty using the library. There is a desk where they stop you going in. Some day students may still be going down.

Visits to COFO are irregular, but they still take place.

For awhile we were averaging getting shot up from the county road once a week, (my count) but I haven't heard anything lately. The only time this month was on April 10. There were two series of shots that night. Also a cross burning by the gate (there were quite a few in this area that night). We have a can with finger prints found by the cross, but the FBI won't come out to get it.

Church Visits continue. On March 12th students went to Lenten Communion Services at Galloway Methodist and were turned away. On the 15th, students were turned away at Capital Street Methodist and Trinity Lutheran. They attended services at St. James Episcopal. I'm not too sure about March 22, but I believe we went to Briarwood and St. Lukes Methodist and Foundren Presbyterian, and were turned away at all three. On Easter, (March 29) Bishops Golden and Matthews (Matthews is the 2nd most powerful bishop in the Methodist church) were turned away twice at Galloway. Seven ministers and two local people were arrested at Capitol St. Five of the seven were southerners. All are deans, instructors, etc. at seminaries. One is under the jurisdiction of the local bishop. We hear that Cunningham, minister of Galloway, decided to resign after the bishops were turned away but that he was persuaded to stay by a liberal in the church--with the suggestion that now that he had seen the light he could speak out. No visits that I know of on April 5th (this was during vacation). On April 12, students were admitted to St. Andrews and Ascension Lutheran. They were turned away from Briarwood Methodist. The instructor from Pakistan and I went to Foundren Presbyterian. Some people were visibly angered that we were admitted. (We had some doubts that we would be.) Foundren decided sometime around Easter to arrest people who wouldn't leave. On the 19th, students were admitted to Ascension Lutheran and turned away at Trinity. During the previous week, the southeastern synod (Ga., Ala., Miss., Tenn.) of the Lutheran Church in America (both of these belong) had met and called on all churches to rescind in policy of discrimination. It was also announced that Trinity had done so and so the synod would meet there next year. We were fanding out. A word

about Ascension. This is a new church and about 30 families who left Trinity because of its segregation policy (this is after they put up quite a fight and came in for threats, etc.) On the 25th (the day that the Methodist General Assembly opened) two ministers from Texas and a Negro student were admitted to services at Gallo-way.

A few random words on churches. We hear that at the same time that we were getting stopped on the road the people at Foundren Presbyterian were getting threats on their lives (the liberals were). Yesterday some Episcopalians split off from their church and formed the Anglican Orthodox Church. The news media down here are giving a great deal of attention to the meetings of the different denominations.

A bus is going up from Jackson to Pittsburgh for an all night rally in connection with the Methodist General Conference. It is mainly Tougaloo people going up, but also a few from in the city.

We are helping the Rabble Underground--the liberal underground paper at Ole Miss. In fact, we financed (paper) the first one. Plans are for the second edition to be distributed at Hillsaps too. The Rebel Underground at Hillsaps has come out again.

Five of our students went to the SNCC Easter Conference. One, a freshman named Eddie McKay was elected to the Executive Committee. He missed the first meeting due to the need to use the transportation money for bail.

There have been three cases in court before Judge Wize. On the 20th of April was Lois Chaffee's perjury case, and on the 21st were petitions for removal of the last sets of minister arrests and Peter Stoner's habeus corpus case. He decided to wash his hands of all of them.

Last week-end was a state college conference on campus. I was out of town and don't know much about it.

The kids at Hillsaps (particularly the girls) have begun to move. Jim Lawson met with them. There plan is to bring our students in to different things as their guests, working up to overnight in the dorms. This is a build up to integration of the school. We've had some difficulty getting together, but the program is underway. They took students into a concert in the student union (and were put out of the main room) and to the library. Two Hillsaps girls have been called before the dean and threatened with expulsion. However, they seem willing to go ahead with it.

That's about all I can think of for now.

Peace,

Joan