

Monday, July 13, 1964

Report of Mary Ellickson, COFO worker assigned to courthouse to aid Negroes coming there to register.

At 10:15 AM, I followed a Negro man outdoors to ask him if he had passed the test. When I walked back in the courthouse a man (elderly, with a sheriff's badge on) told me "if you want to talk to the colored people, you'll have to do it outside." He had been watching me for a half-hour or so. He said I couldn't go upstairs or sit downstairs in the lobby. He asked me if I had any business with the court and I told him no. He was at the front entrance. I asked him if there were a law against sitting in the courthouse and he said there was no law, and "I don't want any disturbance here." He said he didn't want me running in and out talking to the colored people. So I asked him if he wanted me to sit out in the rain and he said, "I'd rather if you did." So I did.

At the back entrance an elderly man who looks like Charles De Gaulle was standing around. At 9:30 or so I was inside talking to a couple of Negroes and he came up to us and asked if they were there to register. One of the men said yes and the man ushered ~~him~~ him away from us and upstairs to the Circuit Clerk's office.

At 10:30 this man was stationed at the back door as we stood outside. He told us only 1 could go up at a time. A white man came to ~~the~~ the door and the man asked him what he was there for. He said he wanted to register and the man told him that only one could go in at a time. The man said he had some other business inside too (a drivers license) so the sheriff told him to go around to the other entrance to get in, which the man did.

Mary Ellickson

Witnesses: Marianne C. McKay
Deborah Roud