

REPORT ON M.S. PERRY CHARGED WITH DISTURBING THE PEACE IN THE J.P. COURT,
 RULEVILLE, MISSISSIPPI
 MADE BY C.A. FRENCH OF WATERLOO, IOWA, - LCDC ATTORNEY

On leaving the Jackson LCDC office I was given an authorization by the defendant's mother to the firm of Young and Hall to represent Perry in the above case. I had with me an authorization from Young and Hall to conduct investigations in their behalf. I learned from David Goldstick, my predecessor in the Ruleville area, that the representation of Perry by out-of-state counsel had been questioned by local leaders of the bar and law enforcement officials.

On August 13, 1964, accompanied by Leonard Edwards, USCRK summer worker, I visited Indianola law office of Townsend and Davis. I presented my certificate of good standing in the Iowa and Federal Court along with the authorizations previously mentioned to Mr. Davis, the City Attorney. Mr. Davis advised me that he felt no objections would be made to my investigation into this matter. I then contacted Sunflower County Sheriff, William Hollowell, and requested that I be allowed to see Perry. After interrogation by Hollowell as to possible Communist connections on my part I was granted the right to see Perry who was incarcerated at the Sunflower County Farm outside of Moorehead.

I questioned Perry in a cotton field on the farm and he related to me the following story: He was in the 11th Grade in Ruleville Central High and a SCCC member. On August 3, two unidentified students made a speech at a school assembly in behalf of COFO activities in the area. Prior to being dismissed for the day, students were given literature which stated that activities in behalf of the COFO organization were prohibited at the school and anyone so involved would be expelled. (A copy of this pamphlet is in this report). Perry was given his copy by his home room teacher, Miss Hayes. Perry threw his copy in the waste paper basket. Miss Hayes stated that she would get the Principal if Perry didn't get his copy out of the waste basket. Perry refused. Miss Hayes then left the room and Perry got his copy out of the waste basket before Miss Hayes and the Principal returned to the room. The principal accused Perry of not ~~fixing~~ living in the Ruleville High School District and lectured him on his conduct. Principal Smith advised Perry not to come back to school unless he brought one of his parents back with him. Perry missed school on August 4. On August 5, he returned to school. Principal Smith met him in the hall as he was entering and asked him why he had not brought one of his parents with him. Perry claimed there was no justifiable reason for having to bring his parents to school with him. He then went to his first period class, Chemistry, taught by Mr. Green. Mr. Green took Perry to Principal Smith's office. Smith then called the Ruleville police and Negro policeman, Willie Martin, arrived shortly at the office of the principal. Perry was taken to jail by the police. At around 11:00 AM he was taken to the Mayor's office (Mayor Charles Dorough) where he was met by his mother and Willie Martin. There he was lectured by the Mayor on obeying school rules. On attempting to explain his story the Mayor became angry and told him he either had to back to Gentry (the other Negro High School in the County) or back to Ruleville Central High where he would have to obey all faculty rules and sign a statement at the school. He did not learn what the content of this statement was to be. He was then released. On Thursday, Perry chopped cotton and did not attend school. He later learned from a Doris Wood, high school student in his home room class, that his home room had walked out of the school for approximately one hour in protest of the action taken against Perry. On Friday, August 7, Perry returned to school. He was met in the hall by Principal Smith and asked why one of his parents was not with him. Perry told the principal that his mother had talked to the Mayor and that the Mayor said he

would be allowed to go back to school if he obeyed the rules. The Principal said he would check this with the Mayor. Shortly thereafter, he was again called to the Principal's office where the police again came. This time the officer was white. On arriving, he immediately pulled out the NCCO buttons from Perry's shirt. He also frisked Perry and found a pocket knife in Perry's pocket. Teachers Hayes, Green and Johnson were then called to the office. Perry was then asked by the white policeman why he was thrown out of school. Perry told him it was because his mother wouldn't appear at school. He was then taken to the jail and locked up. Shortly thereafter he was called into the Mayor's office and some type of trial took place. Perry was called as the only witness by the Mayor and interrogated as to his activities. The Mayor then found him guilty and sentenced him to 30 days on the county farm and \$100.

Perry advised me that the FBI had questioned him as to the above matter on August 10, 1964.

On August 15, a \$500 appeal Bond for Perry was posted. He was released from the County Farm. Action to be taken by the LCDC office. Suggested that the case be removed to federal court.

This case must be handled by the LCDC. This case extremely important to local Negro moral.

SUGGESTED: That the LCDC remove this case to federal court.