

BILOXI BARS

The COFO office in Biloxi is in the Negro section, and nearby the office are two nice bars -the Torch and the Shalimar- that COFO people used to frequent . On July 20, all of the Negro bar owners in this area were called to a meeting at the Mayor's Office. Both the Mayor and the Chief of police were present, and the purpose was to intimidate the people so they would stop serving us. They were told, 'some of these out-of-towners are trying to create trouble between races. If they come in, tell them to leave, and call us (the police) if they refuse. If you don't do this, we will close you up for serving illegal whiskey. Any time we wanted to, we could close you up ~~xxx~~ on illegal whiskey charges.' It was not made clear whether the warning applied to serving any COFO people, or just whites in COFO, or any whites at all, since all the COFO people are not known by sight to the bar owners. Mr Johnson, owner of the Shalimar, asked some questions to clarify the matter, but received only obscure, uncertain replies.

There were about 10 owners at the meeting. Of these, only Mr Johnson, and Charles Smith, owner of the Torch, had the guts to continue serving us. It was in any event, somewhat academic for the others, because we ~~xxx~~ did not go in the other places very much. In the evening of July 24, the police raided both places and did; in fact, close them up for ~~xxxx~~ possession of illegal liquor. The cops took barmaids in both places to jail and let them out on \$250 bail, and also put the owners out on the same bail, although the owners were never taken to ~~xxxx~~ jail.

Enroute to jail with Gloria Powell, barmaid in the Torch, the cops said to Gloria, in response to question of why they were raided, replied that it was because they were serving COFO people.

Rita Glimens, operator of the Club Rockawhile, another Negro bar in the area, was told ~~xxxx~~ by a cop by the name of Lee on Saturday the 25th, that the raids were because Johnson and Smith did not do what the Mayor told them to do.

Both Johnson and Smith are tired of being pushed around by the police and are ready to make a fight out of it. Johnson as a lawyer, but the guy is not the kind to use for a court fight on an issue like this one. He is white, an old-timer, wheels, deals, and negotiates with the power structure, and probably would not even want to get involved in a conflict like this one, which will turn out to be a challenge by the Negroes to the whole white power structure.