

[1964, July 7]

Mrs. Joan Ranko-- 1st 1000 July 7, 1964

In the company of a **group of individuals including three CBS news men** I proceeded by car to the **Holiday Inn** and requested to be served at the **Admiral Benbow**. The **man in charge** informed us that he had closed the restaurant and **would not be served at this time or at any time he could form**. Mr. **Koflinski** asked him if he understood that the **Civil Rights bill** had been passed: "Do you know sir that it is now **illegal** against you to refuse to serve us?" and "Do you understand that **the policy** of the Holiday Inn management is that all **fe** cilities at their establishments will be open to us?" The man at the **desk** of the hotel replied to the first question "The bill has never **been** passed in a court of law." The man who refused us service to the restaurant replied to the second question something to the effect that **this policy** on the part of general management will probably not be accepted by the local **management** and that **his** staff refused to wait on us or provide accommodations to us. **When** refusing us restaurant service he locked the door to the **Admiral Benbow** so that we could not enter. He was asked by several **our** party to serve them and was also asked by several: "Why do you refuse to serve us? Is it because we are Negro?" and it more than one instance it was stated directly to him that he was refusing to accommodate us because we are **Negro**. I was a **Canadian** in the company of about nine **Negro** friends. None of us were granted service. We informed the man that we would leave but that we would return at an unspecified time. **Mr. Henry** told the man that we liked him and hoped that one day we would find his hotel and restaurant service open to us and that when this came about we would assuredly patronize the Holiday Inn restaurants. We then went to the **Southern Inn** and requested to rent hotel accommodations for each of our party as we had previously done at the Holiday Inn where we were refused. We were refused at the **Southern Inn** also and **she** was asked to speak to the manager, we were told that she **was out of town** and could not be reached by phone

or in any other way. Two service station attendants who were at the **Holiday Inn** when we stopped there and who drove off in a blue and white 3/4 ton pickup truck had by now arrived at the **Southern Hotel**. One man was behind the desk as we entered and the other came in behind us and told the one that he had "called and if they start anything we have plenty of people to take care of things." Later, on leaving, I saw these two men surrounded by about eight others, all approximately 25-35 years of age and dressed in working clothes, standing by the police car which had followed us to the establishment and parked as we did in the parking lot. They were having a talk with the police who were standing by and **seemed** to be friendly and in each others company.

While we were in the **Southern Inn** the starter of those two men who was wearing a red and white checked shirt turned up the volume on the TV set in the lobby of the hotel and I turned it down and he struck my hand away from the set and turned the volume back up so that the CBS sound equipment tape recorder would be **drummed** out. I moved away from the TV set and back to our party.

Also present with our party as an observer for CBS was **Ivonne Klein**, a **Canadian** woman. We left the **Southern Inn** in a party of three cars. The lead car with **Mr. Henry** led us to the local airport. It was followed by a **Missouri** rented car driven by the three CBS reporters.

Two of the reporters proceeded from the airport by car with their equipment. We overheard a statement that four men were going to try to "get" them.

We returned to the Freedom House of GOWO. We were told that mobs are beginning to be formed because of our attempt to gain access at these two establishments.

signed,  
John Drake