



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

5 RAYMOND STREET, N.W., ATLANTA 14, GEORGIA • 680-0331

702 Wall Street
McComb, Mississippi
39648

(601) 684-9414

COPY OF AFFIDAVIT

{ STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
{ COUNTY OF PIKE

Donald Blanchette 36
Box 135, Webster City Iowa

On Tuesday, October 27, 1964, at 11:00 a.m., I took five Negro people to the court house at Magnolia Mississippi to register to vote. Ten feet from the courthouse steps, I was confronted by a civilian about five feet, nine inches, one hundred sixty-five pounds, who said, "Where are you going, Reverend and these people?" I said, "These people are here to register." He said, "Sorry Reverend, the registrar isn't here, today." I said, "When will he return?" He said, "Sorry Reverend, the registrar isn't here, today; come back next week. Now I think you better go along." I said, "We're not going." He said, "Your being here is only going to start trouble." I said, "If the registrar is not here, then we will just take a tour of the courthouse." He said, "You don't. You better go." I said, "Why can't these people take a tour of the courthouse? After all, their taxes helped pay for it." He said, "Reverend, you're not being reasonable; if you don't go I'll have to arrest you." Then, "Are you going or not?" I said, "You're being unreasonable. How can people break the law walking on public property paid for with their own taxes." He said, "Reverend, I'll have to ask you just once more; are you going to leave? If not, I'll have to arrest you." He waited a few seconds, then said, "Are you leaving?" I said, "No." He said, "Alright, I'll have to arrest you."

We walked about one hundred feet to the jail. He asked me once more to leave. I said, "No," that the whole thing was unreasonable. With that, I was ushered into the jail, told to place my hands on the wall, and was searched. I was then placed in a cell, a room which contained some seven other ministers, a student, and a rabbi. I was kept in this room for about two hours. Food was brought in (food that was little more than garbage). A few hours later, I was taken out, fingerprinted, and interrogated by a man who said he was an investigator for the Highway Patrol. He asked me why I was here. I told him that I was concerned about the rights of Negroes to vote. Both he and the

"One Man, One Vote"



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 RAYMOND STREET, N.W., ATLANTA 14, GEORGIA • 680-0331

702 Wall Street
McComb, Mississippi
39648

(601) 684-9414

sheriff said that I was "going to Hell." Previously I had asked for permission to make a phone call. They said, "Yes, I could." When they finished the questioning, I walked to the phone. They said, "Put that phone down." The sheriff cried out, "Put that damn phone down...Take him the Hell out of here."

Conditions were unbearable. Nine men in one cell, no beds, no toilet facilities; I had to sleep on the floor because there was no room on the concrete benches. There was no supper. There was no key available during the evening to open the cell door. If anyone had to answer an important phone call, in fact, my wife did call and was told to call tomorrow, or if anyone had been sick, there wouldn't have been anyway to help him. Then, whenever we knocked on the door to ask to make a phone call we were ignored or cursed like "stop knocking on the God damn door" or "what do the Hell you want now?" It was a very hellish twenty-four hours in jail.

"One Man, One Vote