

How the Voting Bill Works in Baker County, Georgia

Affidavit from Jim Perry, SNCC worker in Baker County, and local people.

We do attest that on August 16, 1965, at about 11:30 AM, some 46 people went down to the Baker County Court House in Newton, Georgia, for purposes of registering to vote:

- A) Sheriff Earl Warren Johnson would not permit persons who accompanied the registrants to remain at the building.
- B) Sheriff Johnson also intimidated the voter registrants and he used vile and abusive language during the proceeding.
- C) Sheriff Johnson also beat and abused by knocking down one person, Charles Sherrod, who had come to assist voter registrants, and pushed others. The Georgia State troopers, city police and sheriff's deputies were witness to the total incident, but did nothing to restrain Sheriff Johnson

I, the undersigned, do hereby request the resources of federal registrars in Baker County, Newton, Georgia, to facilitate the prompt and orderly process of voter registration.

Affidavit from Charles Sherrod.

At about 11:30 AM, August 16, 1965, around 30-40 people in the Baker County Movement went to assist some 16 people to register to vote. When we arrived at the courthouse, state troopers were standing there along with sheriff and deputies and the chief of police. Mr. Julius William had left the meeting at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church the same morning, advising the state troopers that we would bring people down to register.

We arrived at the courthouse and went into the office of the registrar, Carl T. Williford. When I entered the office of the Registrar with Mrs. Amelia Zachery whom I had brought down, he asked me if I was a resident of the county and I advised him that I was staying with Jack Holp. He then asked me how many people were there to register, and I told him about 11.

He said as he passed by me going toward the door, that the sheriff didn't want but five people at a time in the voter registration office. I told him that some people needed help in reading and writing. Then he went to the door, stood in the doorway, and said that all but five had to go outside of the courthouse. Then Sheriff Warren Johnson met me at the door of the registration office and he asked me if I were a resident of Baker County. I responded by saying that I had come down to the courthouse to assist people who could not read and write. Then the sheriff said, "All you sons of bitches get out of here. All that have registered get outside of the rock fence."

I went over the same statement to him saying that I was at the courthouse to assist some people to register to vote. At this point, he shoved me down three steps, saying, "Nigger, you leave. I'll pop something through you. You don't believe I'll pop something through you, do you?" Then he pushed me down four more steps to the concrete rockway. I skinned my right arm. Then I got up and told everybody to come out of the courthouse for fear that the sheriff would hurt someone. After I had left the courthouse, waiting for Mrs. Amelia Zachery, I was standing by the rock fence. I had a short conversation with the sheriff. I told him that I was waiting for Mrs. Zachery, and he told me in so many words to shut up and added that I was aching to get hurt. I had not been permitted to wait for or to aid Mrs. Zachery who I had taken down. I was blocked by Deputy Herbert Johnson at the entrance to the courthouse steps. In fact, Herbert Johnson went for his gun as he told me that I was not coming into the court room.
