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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ATTN: Marvin Rich

Three Freedom Riders in Lynch Jail
Mississippi Arrests CORE Testers

New Orleans, Nov. 10: Three Freedom Riders arrested in Poplarville, Mississippi are being held today in the same Pearl River County jail from which Mack Parker was dragged by a mob and lynched in 1959.

"We're especially concerned because of the Parker case," said Oretha Castle of New Orleans CORE.

At the request of CORE National Director James Farmer, Attorney General Kennedy's office and the F.B.I. are keeping an eye on developments in the sleepy little Mississippi town, 90 miles east of New Orleans. It drew worldwide notoriety as the scene of the Parker lynching -- for which no indictment was voted in spite of voluminous FBI testimony.

In jail awaiting trial November 13 are Frank Nelson, 23 a white engineer from New York, and two Negro members of New Orleans CORE, Alice Thompson, 21 and Patricia Smith, 18.

Nelson was arrested on a charge of interfering with an officer after asking police officers why they were arresting the two girls. The girls were charged with disturbing the peace in Poplarville's Greyhound bus terminal.

The three were among a group of six CORE members making a trip from Mobile, Alabama to New Orleans testing compliance with the new I.C.C. regulations banning discrimination on buses. They received service in the Mobile terminal but were refused in Hattiesburg.

In Hattiesburg they were ordered to "move on" by local police and offered no resistance.

"They didn't offer any in Poplarville, either, because our policy at this time is to move on when we're told to," said CORE's New Orleans vice-chairman, Oretha Castle.

Served

"Nobody stopped the two girls from entering the bus station's white cafeteria," she said. "They ordered Cokes and were served -- but when they started to leave they were arrested.

"Nelson saw them being marched past the bus, so he got off to see if he could help, and that's when they arrested him."

The remaining three riders -- Betty Daniels, 21, Jean Thompson, 20, and Doratha Smith, 18 continued on to New Orleans, where all five girl riders live.

Miss Castle said a local F.B.I. agent had told her of the charges against the three riders and of the trial, scheduled for Monday.

CORE's National Director, James Farmer, said in New York that the Attorney General's office had promised to contact Mississippi authorities to ask that the riders be protected.