

Jackson Nonviolent Movement Report - Page 2

Report to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

1. Recent Progress of the Jackson Nonviolent Movement

The Jackson program continues to shape up and draw in more people. On Friday and Saturday (February 23 - 24) there were meetings of the smaller group which plans to participate in the initial action on the busses (hopefully to be followed up by mass action). At the Saturday meeting there were five people who definitely plan to go to jail and four who will participate in other capacities (observers, communication men, etc.) and go to jail if it cannot be avoided. Further reports were brought in on the treatment of Negroes on the busses. The pattern seems to be this:

If no whites are on the bus, Negroes may sit anywhere. The line of demarcation is the rear exit. If a white gets on the bus, he may sit anywhere in front of the rear exit, and all Negroes must sit behind him. Frequently, whites will sit in the last seat in their area to force Negroes to the back. Negroes may only stand back of the first white from the rear. Once this area is filled, Negroes are not admitted to the bus. When whites are standing in the aisles, Negroes must give their money to the driver - who puts it in the machine; whites put in their own money - get off the bus, and re-enter at the rear door.

Buses chosen for demonstrations are Nos. 1, 3, 4, and 5. It was decided that it would be best to demonstrate at about 7:30 a. m., in the middle of the morning rush hour. The buses are still being watched to determine the best day. At least one of the buses can be counted on not to have any whites aboard. Therefore, we will have a white person board the bus at the stop before the Negro demonstrator or at the same stop. He will take the second or third seat if possible, though it is probable that the driver will instruct the white person to take the first seat. However, it would still be possible to have a demonstration if this should happen.

Monday evening, both the Student Action Committee and the Adult Advisory Board met. The meetings are rather fully covered in the enclosed minutes. The students met again on Thursday night (again, minutes enclosed). This was the first time we have received any real verbal contribution from the students - very encouraging.

At Tougaloo, the students have drawn up formal plans for the action and a few students have already conducted tests. Monday night the film Walk To Freedom will be shown, and the enclosed sheets distributed and the programs explained. Several factors seem to work toward a general increased political consciousness on the campus. Two of the most respected students recently went to Swarthmore for a week. They have conducted quite a few formal and informal discussions of their experiences. This has made the student body quite aware of its shortcomings in comparison with other schools. Also, there have been quite a number of "radical" or otherwise refreshing speakers and individuals on campus that have stimulated the students to think. All of this helps to create a general atmosphere more conducive to a response from all of the students.

The police in Jackson are beginning to harrass us more than before. Last Monday, February 26, there were three distinct incidents of such activity. First, Luvagh Brown and Joan Trumpower were both walking to town and by coincidence of time and space were walking a few foot apart and would have been interpeted as walking together if they hadn't spoken (whice they did). They were picked up, for the second time in nine days, and taken down to the police station. By and large, they were treated very politely (particularly by Captain Ray and one other officer), but it was suggested that Joan would be booked if she continued to engage in activity which would make people feel like breaking the law. Captain Ray told Joan that she could wait for Luvagh, but Luvagh was taken out the back way in a squad car and put out some distance away. The officer told Luvagh that he (the officer) would tell Joan that Luvagh had been released, which he did - one hour later. Before returning to the office, Joan ate without difficulty at the "Negro" counter in Woolworth. In the afternoon, a squad car was cruising very slowly in front of the office with the police leaning out the window to look at the place. About an hour later, Jesse Harris was stopped by officers in a squad car about a block from the office for no apparent reason. He was not taken to headquarters but questioned on the spot as to what he was doing. (Both Josse Harris and Luvagh Brown are local fellows who work closely with the Movement.)

II. Personnel

Please understand that although there has been much progress made by the Nonviolent Movement in Mississippi since I assumed the responsibility of Project Director, about two months ago, there is still much to be done before the desired efficiency has been reached. I have, since becoming Director, worked hardest as organizational structure and recruitment in order to establish a sound promise on which we might operate during demonstrations. Enclosed please find copies outlining the steps made.

The following is a general account of each Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee staff member working presently in Mississippi.

A. Bevel, James:

James has, for the last five or six months, been working in the Delta area of Mississippi, mainly out of Cleveland. At approximately bi-weekly intervals, he has made verbal reports to me, stating that his average weekly attendance has been from 50 to 400. Each time, it was my suggestion that he write out a report on these activities and send it to the Atlanta office. This, he assured me, he would do. James' activities have also included working with the "Eramell For Congress" campaign. After I was informed that James would start working for SCLC, I contacted him to verify this and he advised me that he would begin working for them on the first of March. I then advised that he notify SNCC's Atlanta office as to his resignation. I regret I have the occasion to truthfully say that a most competent worker as Rev. Bevel was quite delinquent in discharging his responsibility as a Field Worker for SNCC in so far as obligated co-operation was concerned.

B. Bovel, Diane:

Prior to her leaving Jackson, for Cleveland, Mississippi, to be with her husband, Diane worked primarily with the groups in Laurel and Tougaloo, Mississippi. She and Lester McKinnie would hold weekly Tuesday night workshops in Laurel. Attendance was from 12 to 20 students. These students seem to be dedicated and ready for action. However, it was decided that they were not prepared to go to jail and stay. So, plans were made and implemented to test downtown facilities. This was done several times. Since going to Cleveland, Diane's activities have been somewhat ill-defined. If I remember correctly, she has held one Laurel workshop. I would assume that she would join in with her husband. Nevertheless, just as was indicated about James, she has been most delinquent. Due to the fact that she is now expecting, Diane has informed me that we might expect her resignation on or about March 15. I promised to send this information along with a report on her activities up to that date.

C. Brooks, Paul:

My general activities have been in the area of and dealing primarily with correcting the many mistakes made in previous months by people who made many contacts but did not follow through. Enclosed you will find recorded copies of what my activities entailed. See list below:

1. Reorganization of the Jackson Nonviolent Movement
 - a. Statement of purpose
 - b. Membership cards
 - c. Fund Sheets
 - d. Fund sheets
 - e. Increased Enrollment
 - f. Financial Account of Trips Made

D. Moses, Robert

Bob has been working very hard with the "Smith for Congress" campaign and voter registration in general. He has been working six and seven days every week, sometimes holding classes out of town. Enclosed, find a copy of a proposal by he and Tom Gaither. Since Moses has been sending weekly reports to the office in Atlanta, I will not go into further detail on his activities.

E. McKinnie, Lester:

Lester's activities in general might be best described as "General Assistance Man." He has been going with Diane to Laurel for workshops. He has been giving Bob a hand with voter registration and the campaign. Lester has gone on four test demonstrations: three in Jackson and one in Laurel, Mississippi. He is now helping with recruitment.

F. Trumpauer, Joan:

Joan has been putting in approximately 40 hours per week as secretary for the movement. About 95% of all typing is done by her. She has

also been attending most of our meetings. Joan is the Chairman of the Nonviolent Movement on Tougaloo Campus and is planning on being an initial part of the non-test demonstration by the Jackson Nonviolent Movement. It is my feeling that since Joan's job is so clearly defined and consequently so obvious, there is no need for her to send in weekly activity reports.

Submitted by: Paul Brooks

Brooks, Paul

Hoasa, Robert

McKinzie, Lester

Trampanor, Joan

1. Registration of the Jackson Nonviolent Movement
2. Statement of purpose
3. Membership cards
4. Fund raising
5. Fund raising
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