

February 5

Hattiesburg, Cliff Vaughts

letter to Burke Marshall: Justice Department

Dear Sir,

Between the evening of Feb. 3 and early morning of Feb 5 the voter registration workers here in Hattiesburg, Mississippi were faced with another serious of intimidating acts of harrassment by the Hattiesburg police department in their efforts to hinder and obstruct the registration of Negroes to vote in the city, state, and federal elections. The following is a list of incidents and arrests:

11pm, Feb. 3: James Rittman and Alvin Packer were stopped in front of the voter registration office. They were questioned and their names were taken by the Hattiesburg.

3:20, Feb. 4: Mr. Frank Smith, acting director of the Hattiesburg voter registration project was stopped on block from the office and questioned by the Hattiesburg police. He was detained for 15 minutes and released.

8pm, Feb. 4: Mr. Clifford Vaughts was stopped and arrested for not having a drivers license in his possession. He was held in jail for four hours and then released on \$5 bail for appearance in city court. on Feb. 7. This is the second arrest for Mr. Vaughts within a week.

Between midnight and 3am, Feb. 5: Mr. Sanford Leigh was arrested for vagrancy and for not having his selective service card in his possession. He is being held under \$10 bail. Mr. Milton Hancock was arrested for allegedly ridiculing a police officer, resisting arrest and profanity. He is held under \$40 bail. Mr. Perry Todd, a volunteer worker was arrested for not having selective service card in his possession. There is no bail information at this time in his case. Mr. Edward Brown was arrested for vagrancy and burglary. The burglary charge was dropped but he is being held under \$10 bail on the vagrancy charge. All the arrests on Feb. 5 took place in front of the voter registration office.

We strongly urge you to intervene and use all the power at your command to stop these acts of intimidation and harrassment. The activities of the Hattiesburg Police Department are obviously designed to prevent Negroes from voting in the state of Mississippi.

Yours truly,

Clifford Vaughts, by direction Frank Smith

cc/ SNCC, Atlanta
COFO Jackson
U.S. Civil Rights Commission