

## FIELD REPORT

## WEST FELICIANA

June 23 &amp; 24, 1964

On Tuesday morning, June 23, 1964, four CORE personnel, Ronnie Moore, Robert Hurwitt, Mimi Feingold, and Ronnie Sigal left Clinton, Louisiana for St. Francisville in West Feliciana Parish. We picked up two applicants, Mrs. Sally Smith and Mrs. Helena Hamilton and proceeded to the St. Francisville Courthouse, arriving there at 9 A.M., the time at which the registration office opens. Ronnie Moore and the two applicants went to the office while the three remaining CORE workers remained in the car.

About a dozen white men gathered on the steps of the Masonic Temple across the street from the courthouse during the 20 minutes we spent sitting in the car. At 9:20 A.M. Ronnie Moore, Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Hamilton returned to the car with the report that the registrar, Fletcher Harvey, had said that two white people were already waiting to be registered and that we would have to wait 60 minutes.

We then moved the car around the corner, parking it on the left side of a street under construction. A few minutes after 10 A.M. two deputies (one of them Deputy Daniels) informed us that we would have to move the car because the street was under construction. We drove the car around the block and pulled up in front of the courthouse and the Masonic Temple again. Ronnie Moore stayed at the wheel, motor running, while Bob Hurwitt and Ronnie Sigal got out, planning to drop everybody off and park the car elsewhere, as there was no parking space left on that street. Before Mimi Feingold and the two women could get out, a short, punchy red-faced white man of about 55 came running across the street from the courthouse, crossing behind the car to the sidewalk in front of the Masonic Hall, throwing stones at the car and cursing furiously. Ronnie Sigal jumped back in the car, but Bob Hurwitt was struck with a piece of wood and grabbed by the man before he could get in. The car was slightly dented.

As we pulled out onto the street under construction, the man fired a shot after us from a small black gun pulled from his pocket. He was seen directly by Mimi Feingold and in the rear view mirror by Ronnie Moore. After turning the car around, and getting the car back onto a populated street, three white men in a Chevrolet found us and followed us as we proceeded to the highway and the parish line. We continued into Baton Rouge to the office of our lawyer and talked to the FBI and the Justice Department. Because we could not get FBI protection for that afternoon, and one of the applicants did not want to return to the courthouse, we returned the ladies to their homes and then drove back to Clinton.

At 7:30 that evening there was a clinic at the Masonic Temple at Laurel Hill, where deputies patrolled the nearby

highway off and on. About 100 people attended. It was reported by the Smiths and the Hamiltons that after the meeting, shots were fired from cars on the highway.

On Wednesday, June 24 at 7:30 A.M. the same four CORE workers as on the previous day arrived at the Negro temple and proceeded to St. Francisville with a train of 12 cars, and 63 people. Arriving at 8:15, we were again advised that there were some whites who were already waiting to register. Six FBI agents and two Justice Department attorneys were on hand, and the local deputy sheriffs were all in the area.

At 11:00 the first applicant was taken; after that there was one applicant every 40 minutes. 12 Negroes were able to apply for registration; 3 passed and 4 failed. It was reported that Fletcher Harvey was courteous to all of them and helped them fill out the new form. He took out extra money for lunch and kept the office open until 6:00 P.M. The applicants spent the day lined up along the Episcopal Church cemetery fence, and there were no incidents.

The following cars were seen on Tuesday or Wednesday and looked to be suspicious:

Blue-green Chevrolet Impala 1964 La. license 126A698  
Red and grey Volkswagen bus La. license 126A228 (it contained photographic equipment and the man who got out of the car spent the day taking pictures of the applicants)

Ronnie Moore filed a complaint with Deputy Daniels concerning the shooting of the previous day. Midday on Wednesday, the deputy informed Ronnie that he had identified the man as T. H. Martin, Sr. a barber in the parish. Ronnie signed a warrant for his arrest, but no action has yet been taken against him.

Submitted by:

Ronnie Sigal and Mimi Feingold  
June 27, 1964