

*June-Aug 1963*

REPORT ON CANTON, MISSISSIPPI  
by David Dennis

*Since June 1, 1963 - August, through our workshops, canvassing and meeting people in general, we have contacted over 4,946 persons here in Madison County. We have gotten 275 of that number to go to the Courthouse. Twenty-seven (27) persons of that number are now registered voters and 188 of the 275 flunked and are still trying to pass.*

There were 66 persons out of the 275 that did not get a chance to see the registrar because he refused to open his office on several occasions as well as procrastinated on many occasions by taking only 2 or 3 during the entire day. Sometimes he would just ask people to return the next day without giving reason.

CANTON, MISSISSIPPI INJUSTICE

I. Police Harassment

A. Parking outside the office

1. giving tickets
2. entering the office during meeting

B. Mass Meeting

1. Parking in church driveway--checking license
2. Occasionally going inside of church
3. making arrests in the crowd coming to the church
4. Driving by trying to frighten the teen-agers

II. Discriminatory Practices by the Registrar

A. Flunking people

1. because they wrote Mr., Mrs., or Miss in front of their names
2. Making people afraid by getting the sheriff to come over to talk while the Negroes take the test
3. closing his office when he desired - closed twice on a blind man
4. Flunked 188 persons out of 204
5. Telling the Negro people to return in a month, year or two years

III. Loss of Jobs (In addition to these there are many more)

A. Mrs. Mattie Williams, cook for the County jail, was fired because she attempted to register. While taking the test Quete Campbell (registrar) called the sheriff

the

over to let him know that she was the cook in the county jail. Mrs. Williams was told by the registrar that she flunked. His advice to her was to go get the jailer to help her. The sheriff commented that she was the "use to be cook" as he walked out.

B. Joe Lee Watt was fired from the Mosby Milk Co. because he hauled us in his car. He was told to stop attending meeting or suffer the consequence.

IV. Shooting

A. Five young Negro teen-agers were shot by white service station owner, Price Lewis. Lewis continued this case

for 1 month and then finally appeared in court to be charged \$500.00 for unlawful use of a fire arm not mentioning the shooting of the Negro teenagers. He pleaded "nolo-no contest"

- B. I, Annie Moody, along with some SBCC working students returning to Tougaloo College was fired at in the car and the same night someone wrecked the voter registration office

V. Threats

- A. White people going to Negroes homes with guns asking them not to bother (us) them "CORE Niggers"  
B. Daily threats by the "Boss" on certain jobs

FOLLOWING ARE SOME DATES AND EXAMPLES OF INJUSTICES IN CANTON

June 13- A young girl was slapped by a police officer. The young lady was Miss Bessie Mae Hamblin.

June 14- Friday four policemen led by the Sheriff Billie Noble came into the office while the meeting was going on.

June 17- Monday the office was wrecked

June 22 - Mr. C.O. Chinn was arrested and charged with possession of a concealed weapon: this bond was set at \$2,500.00.

June 24 - Monday five young Negroes were shot by Price Lewis Lee Carter, a registered voter; Bernice McGruder, Shirley Dotson, Aggie Dotson, and Levi Jones.

June 28 - Friday Local police along with sheriff, Billie Nobles and Constable Earl Evinis, blocked the highway so people could not come to a voter registration meeting.

July 3.- Wednesday Sheriff Billie Nobles and Constable Earl Evinis came 16 miles to a voter registration meeting at True Light Baptist Church.

July 5 - Friday Betty Bennett was raped by a white man.

First week of August - Whites went to Negro homes in the Farm Haven area and told them to stay away from the polls; it would be healthier.

Aug. 11 - R. Moore, a white man went to Mr. Luckett's home in Farmhaven with a gun to find out where the voter registration meeting was being held.

Aug. 26 - 30 Negroes attempted to vote in the first state primary with affidavits, but were refused.

This type of intimidation has placed the heart and minds of these people a fear that will take much work to destroy. It is a hard job that must be done because of the symbol that Mississippi represents to the world of this great nation of ours.

1963  
Freedom  
Day

D. Gray

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the land to me for \$100.00. I have since  
retained the land and have not sold it  
and the land is now in my possession  
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