

February 28, 1964

Jackson; Cantons; Charlie Cobbs 12:30 and Cliff Vaughns (in Canton)

The first group of Negroes started downtown (about 15 people) and found a road block. When they reached the courthouse they found kkkk that 200 were already there across the street from the courthouse. Sheriff kkkk Noble and Officers Cook and Carson asked the 15 there purpose there when they went up to the courthouse. They said they were there to vote. They were then asked if they were residents and if they were over 21. They said yes and were told that they could be there kk and could register. The registrar has hired no extra people to help with the processing and there is only one registrar there. The people are being let in one at a time. Cliff kkk says that up to this point only one man, Mack Owens, 86, has been let in the courthouse since 9:30. There are about 400 persons lined up at the courthouse and around it in the courthouse square. Cliff reports that the people are being challenged as to their business there.

There are kkkkkk local police (as well as local citizens who have been deputized), police from Yazoo City, Neshoba County, and Jackson. Reinforcements have arrived by Madison County schoolbus with shotguns, riot guns and one submachine gun. (earlier Charlie reported that local police had only clubs, shotguns and teargas). Yesterday's rumor that the Jackson thompson tank would be there has not been confirmed.

A march from the church of about 50 or 60 to the courthouse was started, but they were stopped challenged and turned back. (Vaughts) Another group of 150 people was led downtown by Rev. Elton Cox and the people were met by police, were separated and let through the roadblock two at a time. The police made the people walk two car lengths apart (this is info. from Charlie Cobb-- I'm not certain if both reports were about the same march-- Charlie's kkkk info is from Claude Weaver).

Claude says that the mood of the Negroes is that of quiet jubilation. There is a possibility that they'll be able to get 1000 people to go down to register tomorrow.

The only problem might be that of getting the whites to kkkkk control their people. The local paper has been cooperative on this score, telling people to remain cool through the demonstrations (a shut your eyes and they'll go away-type police). The Sheriff has told the demonstrators that if they don't make trouble he won't. / Everything is quite peaceful now.

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CAMBRIDGE, MD.: Gloria Richardson

The people who were arrested in Cambridge on Tuesday (18 of them) were released from Pikesville this morning. They kk had been demonstrating outside of the Employment Security and Welfare Office kkkkk for surplus food for Dorchester County. kk There is a general ban on demonstrations in Cambridge since last summer. General Gelson has now said that the people were in 'protective custody' and had not been charged. The Federal Gov't is ready to send in the surplus food, but they are having trouble with county commissioner. They will resume demonstrations soon but this time they will be for kkk public accommodations, jobs, etc. (like the summer) and not be restricted to food program.

The Stanley Branch, Gregory in Princess Anne--demonstrations planned today