WATS Report: June 23, 1964

McComb, Mississippi: taken by Jim Forman
Last night the home of Fred Bates was bombed at about 10:20pm. Bates is the Pres. of the Pike County NAACP, was active in the movement in '61-62, has been supporting Pat Walker and Freddie Green during the last few weeks and had agreed to house summer workers. Bates lives at 928 Summit Street. His phone number is 684-6346.

At 10:20pm last night, Miss Jessie Wilson, one of Mr. Bates' borders, noticed a light green 1963 four dots Chevy drive up to the house. She saw a man in the back seat fumbling around with something. He got out of the car, opened the front door and got out a package which he threw on the front porch. Miss Wilson shouted to Mr. Bates and the other boarder to move to the back of the house. Seconds later the bomb went off causing a great deal of property damage and damage the whole front of the house. Miss Wilson sleeps in the front of the house, her bed is about two feet from the window. If she had not seen the car drive up and the man throw the bomb, she would most likely have been hit.

A bomb also went off at the home of Mr. C.C. Bryant, local NAACP president, but no damage was incurred. That local branch has not really been active lately. Also, dynamite was found on the front of Corine Andrews' house, but the dynamite did not go off. Miss Andrews has no connection with the movement and it is not known why the dynamite was put there.

There is now a SNCC phone in McComb: 684-2110 (it is at 702 Wall St., home of Miss Willie Mae Cotton).

Steve: I spoke with the New Orleans FBI at 12:15noon (Mr. Paul Alker). Alker said that the FBI did not have jurisdiction in bombingsunless interstate transportation of explosives was involved or unless the Justice Department tells them to investigate. He said that as far as he knew there was no investigation going on. At 1:45 pm I spoke with John Doar, however, who said that a request had gone out early this morning for the FBI to investigate and that they were working on the case. He said that Mr. Mayner or Mr. Sylvester are the people to contact in New Orleans. The New Orleans office has jurisdiction over events in Southwest Mississippi.

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Washington: Lenore Ginsburg
Today 11 groups of parents flew into Washington, D.C. They will attempt to see President Johnson and will participate in a newsconference being held at 2pm at the AFL-CIO building. The students who are wokking in Southwest Mississippi will be there as well. They will discuss the bombings and the dissapearence in Philadelphia. This morning Cong. Fitts Ryan spoke about the Mississippi situation on the floor of the House. In addition, Jim Monsonis and some of the summer volunteers met with Burke Marshall this morning. If the groups of parentsare able to see Johnson they plan to ask him to send federal marshalls into Mississippi.

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Selma: Benny Tucker
re cross burning and mass meeting last night.
Police dispersed the cars of whites that were surrounding the First Baptist Church during the mass meeting and at the end of the meeting the people were able to go home with no interference. Police then went over to the Freedom House and guarded it during the evening.

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