

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI
JACKSON DIVISION

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:
COUNCIL OF FEDERATED ORGANIZATIONS, :
et al. :
 : Plantiffs, :
 : v. : CIVIL ACTION
 : L. A. RAINEY, et al. : NO. 3599 (J) (M)
 : Defendants. :
-----x

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI))
) SS.:
COUNTY OF LEFLORE)

June Johnson, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

I am 16 years old and live at 317 Noel Street, Greenwood, Mississippi. A group of Civil Rights workers was traveling from Charleston, South Carolina to Greenwood, Miss. by bus on June 9, 1963. The group consisted of Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, Miss Annelle Ponder, Mr. James West, Miss Euvester Simpson, Miss Rosemary Freeman, and myself. On the trip from Columbus, Miss., to Winona, Miss., our group sat in the front of the bus and occasionally sang freedom songs.

When we got to Winona, the bus stopped at the terminal there. Everybody went into the terminal except Mrs. Hamer. When we got inside the terminal, our group sat down on the "white" side. The Winona Chief of Police came in and told us to "get over where you belong." We got up and went outside the terminal. Soon the Chief of Police and a State Trooper came outside and arrested us. When she saw us getting into the Trooper's car, Mrs. Hamer got out of the bus and asked us "should I go on to Greenwood?" We told her to go ahead, but the Trooper called out "Get that woman," and an unidentified white man grabbed her and put her in his car. The Trooper took us to the Montgomery County jail. Mrs. Hamer arrived in the other car about the same time.

We were taken inside. The Trooper said, "What you niggers come down here for--a damn demonstration?" We all shook our heads and answered "no". Then he said "You damn niggers don't say 'no' to me--you say 'yes sir'" While he was saying this, the county sheriff and the Winona Chief of Police came in, accompanied by the same white man that brought Mrs. Hamer in.

The Sheriff walked over and stamped James West's toe, and hit Euvester in the side with a ring of heavy keys. Then the Trooper questioned us. While questioning Annelle Ponder, he found out that she lived in Atlanta, Ga. He told her, "I knew you wasn't from Mississippi 'cause you don't know how to say "yes sir" to a white man." Then he turned to the rest of us and said "I been hearing about you black sons of bitches over in Greenwood, raising all that hell--you come over here to Winona, you'll get the hell whipped out of you."

He opened the door to the cell block and told everybody to get inside. I started to go in with the rest of them and he said, "Not you, you black-assed nigger." He asked me, "are you a member of the NAACP?" I said yes. Then he hit me on the cheek and chin. I raised my arm to protect my face and he hit me in the stomach. He asked, "Who runs that thing?" I answered, "the people." He asked, "Who pays you?" I said, "Nobody." He said "Nigger, you're lying. You done enough already to get your neck broken." Then the four of them--the sheriff, the chief of police, the state trooper, and the white man that had brought Mrs. Hamer in--threw me on the floor and beat me. After they finished stomping me, they said, "Get up, nigger." I raised my head and the white man hit me on the back of the head with a club wrapped in black leather. Then they made me get up. My dress was torn off and my slip was coming off. Blood was streaming down the back of my head and my dress was all bloody. They put me in a cell with Rosemary Freeman, and called Annelle Ponder. I couldn't see what they did to Annelle, but I could hear them trying to make her say, "Yes sir." When they brought her back, she was bloody and her clothes were torn.

About 5 minutes later the trooper came in and yanked Rosemary Freeman off the bed and bumped her up against the brick wall of the cell two or three times. Then he turned to me and said, "Pull your dress down and wash off--when I come back in 5 minutes, you'd better be clean." I started to wash up but a man in a blue uniform told me to wait until we left.

Then we heard the policemen shouting at Mrs. Hamer in her cell. Then they took her somewhere into a different part of the building.

A little while later we heard Mrs. Hamer hollering, "Don't beat me no more--don't beat me no more." Later they brought her back to her cell crying. She cried at intervals during the night, saying that the leg afflicted with polio was hurting her terribly.

We stayed in that jail day and night from Sunday till Tuesday, when they booked us and informed us that we were charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. We then went back to jail until Wednesday afternoon, when a group of SNCC people came from Greenwood to get us out of jail. We got back to Greenwood about 7:00PM on June 12, 1963.

Signed: June E. Johnson

Sworn to and signed before me this 28 day of July 1964

Signed: _____

Notary Public

I hereby certify that a notary public is (not available to me and that the above is true, this 28 day of July, 1964

Signed: June E. Johnson

Two witnesses: Feta J. Salomon, & Robert Weir