

U. S. Department of Justice

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INVESTIGATION

Bureau File Number

See also Nos.

CLASSIFICATION NO.

157-3738

28

157-3742

Serials

Volume Number

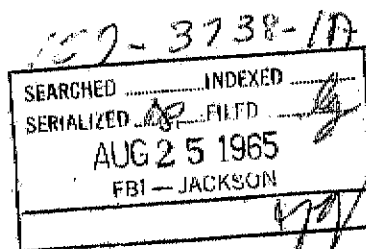
HARASSMENT OF MFDP WEST
POINT, MISS.

(Title)

(File No.) 157-3738-1A

1- 8-25-65 "Write Up" of event at Pheba, Miss. 8-20-65

Disposition:



File No. 157-3738
Date Received 8/20/65
From Jay Lockart
(NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR)
MFDP-451 Cothrell
(ADDRESS OF CONTRIBUTOR)
West Point, Miss
(CITY AND STATE)
By Lynn P. Smith
(NAME OF SPECIAL AGENT)
To Be Returned Yes ☐
No ☒

Description:

"Write up" of
Events at
Pheba, Miss.

Pheba, Mississippi
August 16, 1965

In early July a three-room shack in Pheba, Mississippi was repaired and painted and opened as a Freedom Democratic Party Freedom Center. It was staffed by five FDP volunteer workers. Tkb Center was to service the rural, western half of Clay County which had never been worked before. From the time it was opened the Freedom Center was an irritation to the white residents of Pheba and the surrounding area. There was continual harassment, people prowling at night, a cross burned, tacks put in the driveway.

Meeting and talking to people in Pheba and the surrounding communities, the workers soon learned that a major discontent among Negro citizens was the condition of their children's school. Beasley School is the Negro school int rural, western Clay County. It draws children from eight, widespread communities who are brought to the school by ten school buses. Beasley is only about five years old and has a nice looking building, but facilities within the building are totally inadequate. No class has enough books for all the children, often there are but five or six books for a class which might have as many as 50 or 60 students. The few books there are are hand-me-downs from the white school, and in very poor condition. At the end of the school year children lucky enough to have one of these books are made to pay for its damages. Beasley has no science laboratories, no home economics, no industrial courses, no foreign language, not enough desks, poor heating so children have to wear coats in cold weather, and no fans or air conditioning in mid-summer when the split session is being held.

There has been proven corruption in the administration of the county schools. In Spring of 1964 the County Superintendent of Schools, a man named Littlejohn, was convicted of stealing a sum of money from the schools. He was suspended from his job. The principal of Beasley, E.E. Heard, had been given authorith over the hiring and firing of teachers, and the running of Beasley, by Littlejohn and was kept on as principal by Littlejohn's successor, J.W. McCuiston, even though parents had requested that he be removed. Heard used his authority to fire several good teachers who opposed him on one thing or another. He also refused to let parents form a PTA.

Another grievance parents have is the constant fund raising going on in the school. Parents were paying for damages on books every year. Each class, at least once a year and sometimes more often, was asked to raise \$30 or \$40 in Queen Drives. The class raising most money would be privileged to provide the queen. No accounting was ever given of the money raised.

On July 15, after the condition and needs of Beasley had been discussed at FDP precinct meeting in several communities, a list of 20 demands was drawn up and presented to the Superintendent of Schools, J.W. McCuiston, by four Negro citizens of the area. Nothing was done to meet any of these demands.

Anger over the conditions of the school and the inaction of the Superintendent led students and parents to begin discussing and planning for a boycott of the school. It began on July 26, 1965. This was the beginning of the second week of the summer session, the 'split' session which runs for eight weeks in July and August to allow students to be free in spring and fall to work in the fields. On July 26, at 7am, before the school bell rang, about 200 Beasley st students walked out of Beasley School, singing, and down the street to Beasley Methodist Church to attend Freedom School. Two FDP workers and several students were leafletting at the school that morning to spread work of the boycott. Many students had heard already and stayed home. About 100 remained in school that day. The Average Daily Attendance of Beasley had been about 550. The total enrollment was 700.

About 8am that morning Sheriff Joe Ed Strickland came into the church. It was packed with students; they were singing Freedom Songs. The Sheriff arrested three

FDP workers who were sitting in the back of the church. He came back and walked to the front of the church, and the students stopped singing. He began talking, telling the students that they had a good school, that they shouldn't let themselves be led out of school, and that he, their sheriff, was 100%. The students began laughing. Mr. Strickland then attempted to arrest two more workers who were in the front section of the church. Neither co-operated, and he left saying he would be back to arrest them later. He didn't return until students had left Freedom School to return to the school buses.

In Freedom School that Monday there was a non-violent workshop and a discussion of non-violence. Students agreed to be non-violent for the boycott. There was discussion and role playing about what to do should students not be allowed on the buses at noon. Students believed it was their right to ride those buses home, and decided to sit down in front of them if they were not allowed on.

At about 11:30am students left the church and marched back to Beasley School. They boarded the buses with no trouble. However, at the road in front of the school, and in front of Beasley Church, seven more FDP workers were arrested. There were a total of ten arrests that day, all staff workers. Charges against five of them, who had only driven in from town to observe, were dropped. The other five were charged with disturbing peace, and were all out on bond by Tuesday evening.

With all the workers in jail, the students took over, spreading word of the boycott, and conducting Freedom School. In the local newspaper, the Daily Times Leader, articles about the failure of the boycott began appearing. The Superintendent of Schools called for a meeting of parents for Wednesday at Beasley. Parents and students called a special meeting Tuesday night and decided to boycott the Wednesday meeting, feeling its only purpose was to defeat the boycott and feeling it would be controlled by the Superintendent and Principal. About four people attended the Wednesday meeting, and it was called off. But the next day in the Daily Times Leader it was announced that forty parents voted to continue the split session at Beasley. Students then added a 21st demand to their list of 20--an end to Beasley's split session. Though there are a number of families who are in favor of the split session because they need their children in the fields, it is clear that a majority of students and parents want it ended.

The next move of the Superintendent was to put pressure on the bus drivers. They were told not to pick up children known to be going to Freedom School. Children in school were told they would not be able to ride home if they went to the church to Freedom School. Because of this, attendance at Freedom School declined slightly the first week, and a great deal the second week as pressure increased. But children continued to stay at home. There were between 100 and 200 at Beasley School each day of the first week of the boycott, and about 200 to 250 the second week. More and more pressure was put on the bus drivers. They were given lists of students not to be allowed on the buses. Students, however, were always successful in getting on the buses to ride home from Freedom School, though some were not able to get to school in the morning.

But on Thursday, August 5, seven city policemen and the sheriff were on hand from 7am on to guard the buses from the boycotters at Freedom School. When they walked, singing, from Freedom School toward Beasley about 11:45am, 55 of them were arrested. The youngest child arrested was 10, the oldest 19. They were taken to city and county jails in West Point, fingerprinted and photographed, and released without charges in the late afternoon. Three FDP workers were also arrested at the county jail for 'obstructing justice'; they were attempting to take photographs.

On Thursday afternoon at 3pm parents met with the Superintendent of Schools. J.W. McCuiston, substituting for

students who had made an appointment to see him but who were in jail. The Superintendent refused to discuss the 21 demands of the boycott with the parents.

On Friday afternoon, several different parents met with the Superintendent. He bargained with them, saying he would fire Principal Heard if they ended the boycott and presented a petition signed by parents to have Heard removed. These parents began telling people to send their children back to school.

This was the second attempt by the Superintendent to define in his terms the students' boycott. Their protest from the start was based on the 20 demands drawn up by in community meetings, and later increased to 21 demands. But the newspapers and school authorities first claimed that the boycott was only protesting the split session, and then, later, thought that its only aim was to have the principal removed. They continually refused to discuss seriously the 21 demands.

On Friday morning, before the second group of parents met with the Superintendent, there was a demonstration at the courthouse in West Point. It was in protest of the conditions at Beasley School and the arrests of the 55 children on Thursday. 58 demonstrators were arrested, charged with blocking the sidewalk. While searching the demonstrators and ripping off their FDP and SNCC pins, a Mississippi Cattle Investigator, Mr. B. Cowart, died of a heart attack. One of the demonstrators, [FOIA(b)(6)], son of [FOIA(b)(6)], was charged with manslaughter. However, he was nowhere near Mr. Cowart when he died, though it was claimed that Cowart was searching him and that [FOIA(b)(6)] drew his hand back to hit him just before he died. [FOIA(b)(6)] was beaten, but not seriously, in jail. Charges against him were dropped the next day. Charges were also dropped against all the female demonstrators and all those under 18 years old. The others paid fines for obstructing the sidewalk.

There was much anger over the death of Mr. Cowart in the white community. It must have been the last straw for some of them, to whom the presence of the Pheba Freedom Center was a constant irritation, and the boycott and demonstrations an added goad. At 2am on Sunday morning, August 8, night riders fired two series of shots into the Freedom Center. There were six people in the house at the time, four FDP workers and two lawyers. The two lawyers, Bill Kopit and James Shellow, and two of the workers had just arrived at the Center, having driven in from the Marshall Motel in West Point where they had been meeting with Congressman Reuss. They had just finished bringing some groceries into the Freedom Center, Bill Kopit was outside looking for a toothbrush in the car, the others were talking together, when the shooting began. After it stopped, the six people left the house by the back and went across a field to a neighbor's home. The neighbor's house was also shot into that night.

Sunday morning, after it became light, 51 bullet holes were counted in the front wall of the Freedom Center. There were about 10 holes in the neighbor's house. Sheriff Strickland and FBI men from Jackson and Columbus came to investigate. They examined the bullet holes and took impressions of tire tracks in the gravel road in front of the house. The Sheriff explained how 'these things happen', and commented on his inability to patrol the whole county. The FBI men took statements. Congressman Reuss came out and questioned a group of students and parents about Beasley School.

The boycott continued on into its third week. However, Freedom School was suspended; students decided they did not want to continue to go to jail for trying to ride the school buses home after they had spent the morning at Freedom School at Beasley Church instead of Beasley School. Attendance at the school rose. The violence of Sunday and necessity of guarding the Freedom Center at night, as well as the beginning of a kind of defeatism among the staff and student leaders, disrupted communication between the leaders

8/20/68

Joe Ed Strickland

Therman Mc Kee - Wadell
John Thomas Cox - Wadell

Sanley Mann

Coon hunting Sat night at
11:30 PM - shot at Rabbit - &
then shots fired in then into
then vic. Blast hit Wadell
& one rock flew up & hit
his elbow - bleeding - went
home -

Same night at midnight
Shuff was at MDP Ham
no complaint -

Sanley Mann went to
home & inventory -
asked about shooting
asked why not report
Nolly done -

of the boycott and the communities. With the lack of information and the advice of that small group of parents who had met with the Superintendent on Friday, to return to school, students drifted back to Beasley.

In spite of this, E.E. Heard resigned as principal in the latter part of the week.

Those children in school began receiving a few new books, still not enough to go around even for them, and coat racks began appearing in the rooms.

On Friday, August 13, there was a second demonstration at the courthouse in town to demand the right to protest and significant changes in the school. About 200 people marched single file from the FDP office in West Point to the courthouse, and into a courtroom where the Sheriff and the School Board Attorney, Harvey Buck, and the Superintendent of Schools allowed people to ask questions for about half an hour to an hour. People at this meeting were not treated with respect. They were told they would be arrested if they were not orderly and quiet. Their demands and questions were not met with honesty or seriousness.

Friday night three people, one worker and two local students, stayed in the Pheba Freedom Center. About midnight, a carload of local whites drove up, and began prowling about the house. One of them, whom one of the local students had worked for and who said he wanted to talk, was allowed inside. After being in the house about 20 minutes, he pulled a gun, grabbed one of the local students, and put the gun to his neck, threatening to kill the 2 students and the staff worker. The worker grabbed a shotgun, and as he did this the student who was being held at gun point, grabbed the wrist of his assailant. Holding his wrist, the student managed to get the assailant out the door. The carload of whites left, after one of them kicked in the windshield of the project car. After a short time the two students and the FDP worker left the house to go to town, to report the incident. On the way their car was seen by the same people who had just been at the Center, and they were chased and overtaken. The car of whites pulled across the road in front of the project car with the FDP worker and the two students who managed to escape by quickly turning and driving down a dirt road. They were then able to get to the home of a local Negro.

Later it was discovered that the Freedom Center had been shot into after they had left.

On Saturday night the regular FDP precinct meeting was held at Mt. Zion Church next door to the Freedom Center. The decision was made at that meeting to end the boycott on Tuesday, August 17. There seemed no hope that continuing the boycott at the present time would force the school authorities to take seriously the demands of students and parents.

the next night, After the meeting on Saturday, August 14, some people remained with guns to protect the Freedom Center. Sometime before midnight three shots were fired at the house. Two shots were fired back at the night riders.

The next morning, Sunday, August 15, FBI men and Sheriff Strickland examined the new bullet holes in the Freedom Center, digging out two slugs.

Later in the morning, the Sheriff returned with two of the three men who had driven by and shot the previous night. He and they explained that they had shot not at the house but at a rabbit that had crossed the road in front of their car as they were passing the Freedom Center. They said they had warrants out for whoever had shot at them. We learned that one of the men who was in the car Saturday night was injured, either by buckshot or by gravel that had been kicked up by buckshot, when their car was fired at.

Sunday afternoon several of the workers attempted to swear out warrants against people they were able to identify when they were attacked on Friday night. The local Justice of the Peace refused to allow them to swear out warrants.

At the present things are very tense. We receive virtually no protection from the sheriff or the FBI. There have been no arrests of those who are known to have threatened

our lives. The local Negro people are are organized to protect themselves. The Freedom Center remains in operation. It is very possible that people will be hurt or killed if the Sheriff and FBI remain as irresponsible as they have been so far.

The school boycott, officially over tomorrow, accomplished the resignation of the Principal, the acquisition of a few new books and coat racks, and vague promises for more equipment. More significantly, it made clear to the community who it was who had power over the schools. There was a definite progression of thought. The first target was the Principal, but people came to realize that he was only controlled, and that it was the white people who controlled the purse strings who must be overcome. The boycott gave a number of students the experience of being leaders and of dealing with the white community in a new way.

We judge the boycott to be neither a success nor a failure, but a learning experience.

The Movement in the western part of Clay County will continue; the emphasis has already changed from the schools to voter registration and preparing for the ASC elections in December. It will continue whether or not there is local law enforcement.

MGL

August 17, 1965

We have finally been allowed to swear out warrants against two persons who were identified on Friday night. As far as we know, neither has yet been arrested. We have heard that warrants have been sworn against two Beasley students, leaders in the boycott, and one staff worker. We expect they will be arrested today. We don't know the nature of the warrants.

MGL

August 17, 1965

Last night at 9PM five shots were fired on the hill where the Freedom House and the Church where we have meetings. The local Negro who went to the church saw the car, a blue and white 1960 Chevrolet. The sheriff was waiting at the house of the local whites from whom we've had the most trouble, the Blanchards, for the Negro. He had followed the Chevrolet about 2 minutes later. He was drunk, and accused the Negro of the shootings the other night, and warned him that there were two carloads of armed whites waiting for him and that he would be followed on the highway. He spent the night with a Negro family. Negroes and whites are armed and the atmosphere is very tense. We still can't get any help from the FBI, and the local law officials have now shown clearly that they will not stop the violence and might actually be parties to it themselves.

Shirley
Blanchard
coming
church
Negro
Miffle

JL

8/20/65 Jay Lockard -
Principal, N.J.

8/20/65

Andrew Dillen / Took
M.F.O.P. House / you
to the

John Buffington - Project Director, M.F.O.P. -
West Point, Miss - going to Kib.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC

DATE: 8/15/65

FROM : M. JAMES KIDD, SPC

SUBJECT: SHOTS FIRED INTO HOUSE,
PHOEBA, MISSISSIPPI,
8/14/65
RM.

At 6:02 PM this date I received a call from ALBERT HALPRIN, COFO, West Point, Mississippi, who advised me that at approximately 10:50 PM, 8/14/65, three shots had been fired into a house in Phoeba, Miss. from a passing car. As a result of these shots, some local citizens who were protecting a nearby church fired two shots at the car. No injuries.

The above was given to Supr. Helgeson and SA L. P. Smith.

2 - Jackson
MJK:mjk
(2)

157-3738-1

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
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L. Smith

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC

FROM : M. JAMESKIDD, SPC

SUBJECT: HARASSMENT OF MFDP,
WEST POINT, MISS.
RACIAL MATTERS.

DATE: 8/14/65

At 7:33 PM this date I received a call from SHERRY MAXIE, FDP, Jackson, who advised me that she had just received a call from FDP, West Point, and requested her to contact the FBI in Jackson, and have them contact the nearest office to West Point and have the FBI come to West Point. MAXIE said that according to her source the local whites had been harassing the MFDP in West Point and some of them had guns, meaning the whites. MAXIE had no further details.

The above was given to Supr. Helgeson and SA Lynn P. Smith who was to contact the local authorities re above.

2 - Jackson
MJK:mjk
(2)

157-3738-2

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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L. Smith

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, JACKSON (157-3738)

FROM : SUPV. HUNTER E. HELGESON

SUBJECT: HARASSMENT OF MFDP
WEST POINT, MISSISSIPPI
RM

DATE: 8/17/65

At 11:43 AM, 8/17/65, an individual identifying himself as JOHN BUFFINGTON, COFO, West Point, Miss., telephonically advised that at approximately 9:00 PM, 8/16/65, five shots were "fired in the vicinity of the freedom house" at Pheba, Mississippi.

He stated that JANE LOCKHARDT was present when this occurred.

2 - Jackson
HEH:cj
(2)

157-3738-3

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FBI - JACKSON	

L. Smith



Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : FILE (157-3738)

DATE: 8/26/65

FROM : SAC ROY K. MOORE

SUBJECT: HARRASSMENT OF MFDP
WEST POINT, MISS.
RM

At 5:10 p.m., Saturday, 8/21/65, Supervisor BOB PETERSON, Division 6, called and related that JOHN DOAR, Department, had received a call from one FRANK THOMPSON, New Jersey, who in turn had received a call from an unknown girl's father to effect she and others at Pheba, Miss., were going to have a meeting in a church in Clay Co. and desired protection. They were afraid of harrassment from the BLANSET family. DOAR desired to know whether we were aware of the incident, whether local officers had been advised and whether the BLANSET family were in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. I informed Supervisor PETERSON the Bureau was already in possession of info relating to this incident and that it was an attempt on the part of the MFDP to get us to "guard" a church meeting they were going to have Sunday night, however, we would send a follow-up teletype to further elucidate.

1 - Jackson

RKM:elw
(1)

157-3738-4

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FBI - JACKSON	

[Signature]



In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Jackson, Mississippi
August 26, 1965

THE HARASSMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI
FREEDOM-DEMOCRATIC PARTY, PHEBA,
MISSISSIPPI, AUGUST 14-16, 1965
RACIAL MATTERS

On August 14, 1965, at 7:33 p.m., a telephone call was received from Sherry Maxie, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), Jackson, Mississippi, who advised a representative of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that she had received a call from the MFDP headquarters in West Point, Mississippi, and that they had requested her to contact the FBI in Jackson, Mississippi, and have them contact the nearest office in West Point, Mississippi, to have the FBI come to West Point, Mississippi. Maxie said that according to her source local whites had been harassing the MFDP in West Point and some of them had guns, meaning the whites. Maxie had no further details.

On August 14, 1965, the above information was furnished to Chief of Police Thomas F. Smith, West Point Police Department, Investigator Dan Davis, Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol (MHSP), Mantee, Mississippi, and to Sheriff Joe Ed Strickland, Clay County Sheriff's Office, West Point, Mississippi.

On August 15, 1965, at 6 p.m. a telephone call was received from Albert Halprin, MFDP, West Point, Mississippi, who advised a representative of the FBI that approximately 10:50 p.m. on August 14, 1965, three shots had been fired into her house in Pheba, Mississippi, from a passing car, and as a result of these shots, local citizens who were protecting a nearby church, fired two shots at the automobile. There were no injuries incurred.

8 - Bureau

1 - USA, Oxford

① - Jackson (157-3738) 157-3738-5

LPS/lsk

(10)

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THE HARASSMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI
FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY, PHEBA,
MISSISSIPPI, AUGUST 14-16, 1965

On August 17, 1965, at 11:43 a.m., an individual who identified himself as John Buffington, MFDP, West Point, Mississippi, telephonically advised a representative of the FBI at Jackson, Mississippi, that some shots had been fired in the vicinity of the Freedom House at Pheba, Mississippi.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 8/26/65

JOHN BUFFINGTON, Project Director, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), West Point, Mississippi, was contacted at the MFDP headquarters, 451 Cottrell Street, West Point, Mississippi, at which time he was advised of the identity of the interviewing agent and the nature of the investigation. BUFFINGTON advised as follows:

He said that it was no use furnishing information to the FBI relative to the fears of the MFDP in the Pheba, Mississippi area as the FBI would not protect the MFDP personnel in the Pheba area. He said that the local law enforcement officers and the Sheriff of Clay County, Mississippi, were doing nothing to protect the MFDP workers in the Pheba, Mississippi area. BUFFINGTON advised that a long and detailed "write-up" had been prepared in this matter by several of the MFDP workers and that it would be made available to the FBI by J. LOCKARD who had been instrumental in preparing this write-up.

On 8/20/65 at West Point, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-3738

by SA LYNN P. SMITH /lsk Date dictated 8/24/65

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to you; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 8/26/65

JJAY LOCKARD, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) worker, was contacted and interviewed at the MFDP house at 451 Cottrell Street, West Point, Mississippi. She was advised of the nature of the investigation and the identity of the interviewing agent. She advised as follows:

She said that she had prepared a complete write-up concerning the occasions and incidents that had occurred at Pheba, Mississippi, from August 16, 1965, and that she is furnishing a copy of this write-up for inclusion in the FBI records. The write-up is set out below:

"Pheba, Mississippi
August 16, 1965

"In early July a three-room shack in Pheba, Mississippi was repaired and painted and opened as a Freedom Democratic Party Freedom Center. It was staffed by five FDP volunteer workers. The Center was to service the rural, western half of Clay County which had never been worked before. From the time it was opened the Freedom Center was an irritation to the white residents of Pheba and the surrounding area. There was continual harassment, people prowling at night, a cross burned, tacks put in the driveway.

Meeting and talking to people in Pheba and the surrounding communities, the workers soon learned that a major discontent among Negro citizens was the condition of their children's school. Beasley School is the Negro school in rural, western Clay County. It draws children from eight, widespread communities who are brought to the school by ten school buses. Beasley is only about five years old and has a nice looking building, but facilities within the building are totally inadequate. No class has

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"There has been proven corruption in the administration of the county schools. In Spring of 1964 the County Superintendent of Schools, a man named Littlejohn, was convicted of stealing a sum of money from the schools. He was suspended from his job. The principal of Beasley, E. E. Heard, had been given authorith over the hiring and firing of teachers, and the running of Beasley, by Littlejohn and was kept on as principal by Littlejohn's successor, J. W. McCuiston, even though parents had requested that he be removed. Heard used his authority to fire several good teachers who opposed him on one thing or another. He also refused to let parents form a PTA.

"Another grievance parents have is the constant fund raising going on in the school. Parents were paying for damages on books every year. Each class, at least once a year and sometimes more often, was asked to raise \$30 or \$40 in Queen Drives. The class raising most money would be privileged to provide the queen. No accounting was ever given of the money raised.

"On July 15, after the condition and needs of Beasley had been discussed at FDP precinct meeting in several communities, a list of 20 demands was drawn up and presented to the Superintendent of Schools, J.W. McCuiston, by four

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Negro citizens of the area. Nothing was done to meet any of these demands.

Anger over the conditions of the school and the inaction of the Superintendent led students and parents to begin discussing and planning for a boycott of the school. It began on July 26, 1965. This was the beginning of the second week of the summer session, the 'split' session which runs for eight weeks in July and August to allow students to be free in spring and fall to work in the fields. On July 26, at 7am, before the school bell rang, about 200 Beasley st students walked out of Beasley School, singing, and down the street to Beasley Methodist Church to attend Freedom School. Two FDP workers and several students were leafletting at the school that morning to spread work of the boycott. Many students had heard already and stayed home. About 100 remained in school that day. The Average Daily Attendance of Beasley had been about 550. The total enrollment was 700..

"About 8am that morning Sheriff Joe Ed Strickland came into the church. It was packed with students; they were singing Freedom Songs. The Sheriff arrested three FDP workers who were sitting in the back of the church. He came back and walked to the front of the church, and the students stopped singing. He began talking, telling the students that they had a good school, that they shouldn't let themselves be led out of school, and that he, their sheriff, was 100%. The students began laughing. Mr. Strickland then attempted to arrest two more workers who were in the front section of the church. Neither co-operated, and he left saying he would be back to arrest them later. He didn't return until students had left Freedom School to return to the school buses.

"In Freedom School that Monday there was a non-violent workshop and a discussion of non-violence. Students agreed to be non-violent for the boycott. There was discussion

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and role playing about what to do should students not be allowed on the buses at noon. Students believed it was their right to ride those buses home, and decided to sit down in front of them if they were not allowed on.

"At about 11:30am students left the church and marched back to Beasley School. They boarded the buses with no trouble. However, at the road in front of the school, and in front of Beasley Church, seven more FDP workers were arrested. There were a total of ten arrests that day, all staff workers. Charges against five of them, who had only driven in from town to observe, were dropped. The other five were charged with disturbing peace, and were all out on bond by Tuesday evening.

"With all the workers in jail, the students took over, spreading word of the boycott, and conducting Freedom School. In the local newspaper, the Daily Times Leader, articles about the failure of the boycott began appearing. The Superintendent of Schools called for a meeting of parents for Wednesday at Beasley. Parents and students called a special meeting Tuesday night and decided to boycott the Wednesday meeting, feeling its only prpose was to defeat the boycott and feeling it would be controlled by the Superintendent and Principal. About four people attended the Wednesday meeting, and it was called off. But the next day in the Daily Times Leader it was announced that forty parents voted to continue the split session at Beasley. Students then added a 21st demand to their list of 20--an end to Beasley's split session. Though there are a number of families who are in favor of the split session because they need their children in the fields, it is clear that a majority of students and parents want it ended.

"The next move of the Superintendent was to put pressure on the bus drivers. They were told not to pick up children known to be going to Freedom School. Children

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in school were told they would not be able to ride home if they went to the church to Freedom School. Because of this, attendance at Freedom School declined slightly the first week, and a great deal deal the second week as pressure increased. But children continued to stay at home. There were between 100 and 200 at Beasley School each day of the first week of the boycott, and about 200 to 250 the second week. More and more pressure was put on the bus drivers. They were given lists of students not to be allowed on the buses. Students, however, were always successful in getting on the buses to ride home from Freedom School, though some were not able to get to school in the morning.

"But on Thursday, August 5, seven city policemen and the sheriff were on hand from 7am on to guard the buses from the boycotters at Freedom School. When they walked, singing, from Freedom School toward Beasley about 11:45am, 55 of them were arrested. The youngest child arrested was 10, the oldest 19. They were taken to city and county jails in West Point, fingerprinted and photographed, and released released without charges in the late afternoon. Three FDP workers were also arrested at the county jail for 'obstructing justice'; they were attempting to take photographs.

"On Thursday afternoon at 3pm parents met with the Superintendent of Schools, J.W. McCuiston, substituting for students who had made an appointment to see him but who were in jail. The Superintendent refused to discuss the 21 demands of the boycott with the parents.

"On Friday afternoon, several different parents met with the Superintendent. He bargained with them, saying he would fire Principal Heard if they ended the boycott and presented a petition signed by partens to have Heard removed. These parents began telling people to send their children back to school.

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"This was the second attempt by the Superintendent to define in his terms the students' boycott. Their protest from the start was based on the 20 demands drawn up by in community meetings, and later increased to 21 demands. But the newspapers and school authorities first claimed that the boycott was only protesting the split session, and then, later, thought that its only aim was to have the principal removed. They continually refused to discuss seriously the 21 demands.

"On Friday morning, before the second group of parents met with the Superintendent, there was a demonstration at the courthouse in West Point. It was in protest of the conditions at Beasley School and the arrests of the 55 children on Thursday, 58 demonstrators were arrested, charged with blocking the sidewalk. While searching the demonstrators and ripping off their FDP and SNCC pins, a Mississippi Cattle Investigator, Mr. B. Cowart, died of a heart attack. One of the demonstrators, [FOIA(b)(6)], son of [FOIA(b)(6)], was charged with manslaughter. However, he was nowhere near Mr. Cowart when he died, though it was claimed that Cowart was searching him and that [FOIA(b)(6)] drew his hand back to hit him just before he died. [FOIA(b)(6)] was beaten, but not seriously, in jail. Charges against him were dropped the next day. Charges were also dropped against all the female demonstrators and all those under 18 years old. The others paid fines for obstructing the sidewalk.

"There was much anger over the death of Mr. Cowart in the white community. It must have been the last straw for some of them, to whom the presence of the Pheba Freedom Center was a constant irritation, and the boycott and demonstrations an added goad. At 2am on Sunday morning, August 8, night riders fired two series of shots into the Freedom Center. There were six people in the house at the time, four FDP workers and two lawyers. The two lawyers, Bill Kopit and James Shellow, and two of the workers had

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just arrived at the Center, having driven in from the Marshall Motel in West Point where they had been meeting with Congressman Reuss. They had just finished bringing some groceries into the Freedom Center, Bill Kopit was outside looking for a toothbrush in the car, the others were talking together, when the shooting began. After it stopped, the six people left the house by the back and went across a field to a neighbor's home. The neighbor's house was also shot into that night.

"Sunday morning, after it became light, 51 bullet holes were counted in the front wall of the Freedom Center. There were about 10 holes in the neighbor's house. Sheriff Strickland and FBI men from Jackson and Columbus came to investigate. They examined the bullet holes and took impressions of tire tracks in the gravel road in front of the house. The Sheriff explained how 'these things happen', and commented on his inability to patrol the whole county. The FBI men took statements. Congressman Reuss came out and questioned a group of students and parents about Beasley School.

"The boycott continued on into its third week. However, Freedom School was suspended; students decided they did not want to continue to go to jail for trying to ride the school buses home after they had spent the morning at Freedom School at Beasley Church instead of Beasley School. Attendance at the school rose. The violence of Sunday and necessity of guarding the Freedom Center at night, as well as the beginning of a kind of defeatism among the staff and student leaders, disrupted communication between the leaders of the boycott and the communities. With the lack of information and the advice of that small group of parents who had met with the Superintendent on Friday, to return to school, students drifted back to Beasley.

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"In spite of this, E.E. Heard resigned as principal in the latter part of the week.

"Those children in school began receiving a few new books, still not enough to go around even for them, and coat racks began appearing in the rooms.

"On Friday, August 13, there was a second demonstration at the courthouse in town to demand the right to protest and significant changes in the school. About 200 people marched single file from the FDP office in West Point to the courthouse, and into a courtroom where the Sheriff and the School Board Attorney, Harvey Buck, and the Superintendent of Schools allowed people to ask questions for about half an hour to an hour. People at this meeting were not treated with respect. They were told they would be arrested if they were not orderly and quiet. Their demands and questions were not met with honesty or seriousness.

"Friday night three people, one worker and two local students, stayed in the Pheba Freedom Center. About midnight, a carload of local whites drove up, and began prowling about the house. One of them, whom one of the local students had worked for and who said he wanted to talk, was allowed inside. After being in the house about 20 minutes, he pulled a gun, grabbed one of the local students, and put the gun to his neck, threatening to kill the 2 students and the staff worker. The worker grabbed a shotgun, and as he did this the student who was being held at gun point, grabbed the wrist of his assailant. Holding his wrist, the student managed to get the assailant out the door. The carload of whites left, after one of them kicked in the windshield of the project car. After a short time the two students and the FDP worker left the house to go to town to report the incident. On the way their car was seen by the same people who had just been at the Center, and they were chased and overtaken. The car of whites pulled across the road in front of the project car

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with the FDP worker and the two students who managed to escape by quickly turning and driving down a dirt road. They were then able to get to the home of a local Negro.

"Later is was discovered that the Freedom Center had been shot into after they had left.

"On Saturday night the regular FDP precinct meeting was held at Mt. Zion Church next door to the Freedom Center. The decision was made at that meeting to end the boycott on Tuesday, August 17. There seemed no hope that continuing the boycott at the present time would force the school authorities to take seriously the demands of students and parents.

"After the meeting on the next night, Saturday, August 14, some people remained with guns to protect the Freedom Center. Sometime before midnight three shots were fired at the house. Two shots were fired back at the night riders.

"The next morning, Sunday, August 15, FBI men and Sheriff Strickland examined the new bullet holes in the Freedom Center, digging out two slugs.

"Later in the morning, the Sheriff returned with two of the three men who had driven by and shot the previous night. He and they explained that they had shot not at the house but at a rabbit that had crossed the road in front of their car as they were passing the Freedom Center. They said they had warrants out for whoever had shot at them. We learned that one of the men who was in the car Saturday night was injured, either by buckshot or by gravel that had been kicked up by buckshot. When their car was fired at.

"Sunday afternoon several of the workers attempted to swear out warrants against people they were able to identify when they were attacked on Friday night. The local Justice of the Peace refused to allow them to swear out warrants.

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"At the present things are very tense. We receive virtually no protection from the sheriff or the FBI. There have been no arrests of those who are known to have threatened our lives. The local Negro people are are organized to protect themselves. The Freedom Center remains in operation. It is very possible that people will be hurt or killed if the Sheriff and FBI remain as irresponsible as they have been so far.

"The school boycott, officially over tomorrow, accomplished the resignation of the Principal, the acquisition of a few new books and coat racks, and vague promises for more equipment. More significantly, it made clear to the community who it was who had power over the schools. There was a definite progression of thought. The first target was the Principal, but people came to realize that he was only controlled, and that it was the white people who controlled the purse strings who must be overcome. The boycott gave a number of students the experience of being leaders and of dealing with the white community in a new way.

"We judge the boycott to be neither a success nor a failure, but a learning experience.

"The Movement in the western part of Clay County will continue; the emphasis has already changed from the schools to voter registration and preparing for the ASC elections in December. It will continue whether or not there is local law enforcement.

"MGL

"August 17, 1965

"We have finally been allowed to swear out warrants against two persons who were identified on Friday night. As far as we know, neither has yet been arrested. We have

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heard that warrants have been sworn against two Beasley students, leaders in the boycott, and one staff worker. We expect they will be arrested today. We don't know the nature of the warrants.

"MGL

"august 17, 1965

"Last night at 9PM five shots were fired on the hill where the Freedom House and the Church where we have meetings. The local Negro who went to the church saw the car, a blue and white 1960 Chevrolet. The sheriff was waiting at the house of the local whites from whom we've had the most trouble, the Blanchards, for the Negro. He had followed the Chevrolet about 2 minutes later. He was drunk, and accused the Negro of the shootings the other night, and warned him that there were two carloads of armed whites waiting for him and that he would be followed on the highway. He spent the night with a Negro family. Negroes and whites are armed and the atmosphere is very tense. We still can't get any help from the FBI, and the local law officials have now shown clearly that they will not stop the violence and might actually be parties to it themselves.

"JL"

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In addition to furnishing the above information, LOCKARD advised that she could not furnish any direct information regarding the shots that were fired into the house at Pheba, Mississippi, and that it was difficult to say if any shots actually hit their house or not as the house had been so shot up on the occasion of the shooting that occurred there on August 8, 1965.

LOCKARD advised that she was very disappointed and said that the FBI due to its policy of not protecting workers with the MFDP would be directly responsible for any forthcoming violence in Clay County and that this violence would probably be the results of inefficient law enforcement by the police department, sheriff's office, and the FBI.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 8/26/65

Sheriff JOE ED STRICKLAND, Clay County Sheriff's Office, West Point, Mississippi, was advised of the nature of the inquiry and the identity of the investigating agent. Sheriff STRICKLAND was advised that any information he might furnish could be used in a court of law. Sheriff STRICKLAND advised as follows:

He said that he had received numerous complaints from the personnel at the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) House near Pheba, Mississippi. He said that this house is located adjacent to the Mount Zion Church on a very rural road in a rural part of Clay County. He said that the purpose of the MFDP establishing themselves in this house was unknown to him but that the house was owned by a VALENTINE Family and that the VALENTINE Family had been very antagonistic toward the Beasley School, an all Negro school located in the rural part of Clay County. He explained that Mrs. VALENTINE had been discharged by a principal at the school two or three years previously and therefore she had vowed to "get even". He said that he has investigated numerous complaints of white people in automobiles armed and waiting to shoot or to persecute the MFDP people in Pheba, Mississippi, and on each occasion when he has stopped automobiles, he has found that they are usually individuals who have been intoxicated and who due to their lack of education and understanding, know no way to react to the MFDP workers being in the community other than by some type of violence. He has not stopped one automobile thus far in which he has found any weapons. He said that on the occasion of the complaint of the shooting that he made a thorough investigation of the shooting and that it resulted in the identifying of two individuals, THERMON MC KEE and JOHN THOMAS COX, both white males.

On 8/20/65 at West Point, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-3738

by SA LYNN P. SMITH /lsk Date dictated 8/24/65

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He said that these individuals were going coon hunting on a Saturday night at approximately 11:30 p.m. when they passed in the vicinity of where the BLANSETT house was situated. He said that as they passed there, a rabbit ran out in the middle of the road and they stopped their automobile and one of the individuals fired a weapon at the rabbit. Upon doing this, someone from a great distance away fired a blast at them resulting in some rocks being thrown up around the automobile and one of the rocks cut the elbow of JOHN THOMAS COX. He had come to the Sheriff's house and wanted to swear out a warrant charging personnel at the MFDP house with assault and battery. He said that he had talked to these individuals and talked them out of making a warrant as he certainly did not want to cause any more disturbance. He said

He further advised that on the Sunday following Sunday morning, August 15, 1965, he had gone to the MFDP house and asked those people present why they had not reported the shooting and no one there could give him any type of explanation as to why the shooting was not reported to him. He said that he feels positive that if there was any shooting occurred at the MFDP house or at the Mount Zion Church, then it had originated with those individuals in the MFDP house and the Mount Zion Church.

He said that further investigation conducted by him on each night reflected that on Monday night, August 16, 1965, there was talk of those at the MFDP house of shots being fired in the vicinity. He said that he was actually on the scene on August 16, 1965, when the shots were reported to have been fired. He said that the shots were not shots from any type of weapon whatsoever, but actually were a result of a backfire of a muffler of a Negro's automobile known to him only as CLUCK. He said that this Negro was drunk and that it had been necessary for him to make him stop driving his automobile in the vicinity of the

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Mount Zion Church and the MFDP house. He said that when the so-called "shots" were fired that he was at the BLANSETT House which is just down the road from the MFDP house and that he was at that time informing the BLANSETT Family that they must entirely ignore the personnel at the MFDP house so that no further difficulties would occur.

Sheriff STRICKLAND further advised that it was significant to him that no report had been made to him of the so-called shooting that occurred on August 16, 1965, because he was at the scene and he knew that no such shooting took place.

8/26/65

AIRTEL

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, JACKSON (157-3738) (C)

THE HARASSMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI
FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY, PHEBA,
MISSISSIPPI, AUGUST 14-16, 1965
RM

Enclosed herewith are 8 copies of a LHM
relative to the above captioned matter.

One copy of this LHM has been forwarded to the
USA, NDM, Oxford, Mississippi.

Incidents set forth in the "write up" furnished
by JAY LOCKARD have been covered by investigation by the
Jackson Division in the following communications to the
Bureau:

LHM entitled "BOYCOTT OF BEASLEY SCHOOL, HIGHWAY
46, CLAY COUNTY, MISS., 8/5/65 - RM", Jackson file
157-3641.

"BILLY BUSBY, JOHN LUTHER BELL - VICTIM, CR",
Jackson file 44-1267.

"RACIAL DEMONSTRATIONS, WEST POINT, MISS., 8/6/65 -
RM", Jackson file 157-3692.

3 - Bureau (Enc. 8)

2 - Jackson

LPS/lsk

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157-3738-6

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JN 157-3738

"JAMES BRYANT WYATT, JAMES LAVERT BLANSETT, CLEMMIE CHILDS, LLOYD WATSON; ALBERT PHILLIP HALPRIN, Aka Burt - VICTIM, THEODORE BALLARD, - VICTIM, THOMAS GENE BELK - VICTIM - CR-EL".

"PICKETING AND PROTEST AGAINST SPLIT SCHOOL TERM, WEST POINT, MISSISSIPPI, AUGUST 13, 1965 - CRA, 1964, PUBLIC EDUCATION," Jackson file 173-401.

The Jackson Division contemplates taking no further action on this matter.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 8/26/65

Sheriff JOE ED STRICKLAND, Clay County Sheriff's Office, West Point, Mississippi, was advised of the nature of the inquiry and the identity of the investigating agent. Sheriff STRICKLAND was advised that any information he might furnish could be used in a court of law. Sheriff STRICKLAND advised as follows:

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On 8/20/65 at West Point, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-3738-9

by SA LYNN P. SMITH /lsk Date dictated 8/24/65

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He said that these individuals were going coon hunting on a Saturday night at approximately 11:30 p.m. when they passed in the vicinity of where the BLANSETT house was situated. He said that as they passed there, a rabbit ran out in the middle of the road and they stopped their automobile and one of the individuals fired a weapon at the rabbit. Upon doing this, someone from a great distance away fired a blast at them resulting in some rocks being thrown up around the automobile and one of the rocks cut the elbow of JOHN THOMAS COX. He had come to the Sheriff's house and wanted to swear out a warrant charging personnel at the MFDP house with assault and battery. He said that he had talked to these individuals and talked them out of making a warrant as he certainly did not want to cause any more disturbance. He said

He further advised that on the Sunday following Sunday morning, August 15, 1965, he had gone to the MFDP house and asked those people present why they had not reported the shooting and no one there could give him any type of explanation as to why the shooting was not reported to him. He said that he feels positive that if there was any shooting occurred at the MFDP house or at the Mount Zion Church, then it had originated with those individuals in the MFDP house and the Mount Zion Church.

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Mount Zion Church and the MFDP house. He said that when the so-called "shots" were fired that he was at the BLANSETT House which is just down the road from the MFDP house and that he was at that time informing the BLANSETT Family that they must entirely ignore the personnel at the MFDP house so that no further difficulties would occur.

Sheriff STRICKLAND further advised that it was significant to him that no report had been made to him of the so-called shooting that occurred on August 16, 1965, because he was at the scene and he knew that no such shooting took place.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 8/26/65

JAY LOCKARD, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) worker, was contacted and interviewed at the MFDP house at 451 Cottrell Street, West Point, Mississippi. She was advised of the nature of the investigation and the identity of the interviewing agent. She advised as follows:

She said that she had prepared a complete write-up concerning the occasions and incidents that had occurred at Pheba, Mississippi, from August 16, 1965, and that she is furnishing a copy of this write-up for inclusion in the FBI records. The write-up is set out below:

"Pheba, Mississippi
August 16, 1965

"In early July a three-room shack in Pheba, Mississippi was repaired and painted and opened as a Freedom Democratic Party Freedom Center. It was staffed by five FDP volunteer workers. The Center was to service the rural, western half of Clay County which had never been worked before. From the time it was opened the Freedom Center was an irritation to the white residents of Pheba and the surrounding area. There was continual harassment, people prowling at night, a cross burned, tacks put in the driveway.

Meeting and talking to people in Pheba and the surrounding communities, the workers soon learned that a major discontent among Negro citizens was the condition of their children's school. Beasley School is the Negro school in rural, western Clay County. It draws children from eight, widespread communities who are brought to the school by ten school buses. Beasley is only about five years old and has a nice looking building, but facilities within the building are totally inadequate. No class has

On 8/20/65 at West Point, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-3738 -8

by SA LYNN R. SMITH /lsk Date dictated 8/24/65

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enough books for all the children, often there are but five or six books for a class which might have as many as 50 or 60 students. The few books there are are hand-me-downs from the white school, and in very poor condition. At the end of the school year children lucky enough to have one of these books are made to pay for its damages. Beasley has no science laboratories, no home economics, no industrial courses, no foreign language, not enough desks, poor heating so children have to wear coats in cold weather, and no fans or air conditioning in mid-summer when the split session is being held.

"There has been proven corruption in the administration of the county schools. In Spring of 1964 the County Superintendent of Schools, a man named Littlejohn, was convicted of stealing a sum of money from the schools. He was suspended from his job. The principal of Beasley, E. E. Heard, had been given authorith over the hiring and firing of teachers, and the running of Beasley, by Littlejohn and was kept on as principal by Littlejohn's successor, J. W. McCuiston, even though parents had requested that he be removed. Heard used his authority to fire several good teachers who opposed him on one thing or another. He also refused to let parents form a PTA.

"Another grievance parents have is the constant fund raising going on in the school. Parents were paying for damages on books every year. Each class, at least once a year and sometimes more often, was asked to raise \$30 or \$40 in Queen Drives. The class raising most money would be privileged to provide the queen. No accounting was ever given of the money raised.

"On July 15, after the condition and needs of Beasley had been discussed at FDP precinct meeting in several communities, a list of 20 demands was drawn up and presented to the Superintendent of Schools, J.W. McCuiston, by four

Negro citizens of the area. Nothing was done to meet any of these demands.

Anger over the conditions of the school and the inaction of the Superintendent led students and parents to begin discussing and planning for a boycott of the school. It began on July 26, 1965. This was the beginning of the second week of the summer session, the 'split' session which runs for eight weeks in July and August to allow students to be free in spring and fall to work in the fields. On July 26, at 7am, before the school bell rang, about 200 Beasley st students walked out of Beasley School, singing, and down the street to Beasley Methodist Church to attend Freedom School. Two FDP workers and several students were leafletting at the school that morning to spread work of the boycott. Many students had heard already and stayed home. About 100 remained in school that day. The Average Daily Attendance of Beasley had been about 550. The total enrollment was 700.

"About 8am that morning Sheriff Joe Ed Strickland came into the church. It was packed with students; they were singing Freedom Songs. The Sheriff arrested three FDP workers who were sitting in the back of the church. He came back and walked to the front of the church, and the students stopped singing. He began talking, telling the students that they had a good school, that they shouldn't let themselves be led out of school, and that he, their sheriff, was 100%. The students began laughing. Mr. Strickland then attempted to arrest two more workers who were in the front section of the church. Neither co-operated, and he left saying he would be back to arrest them later. He didn't return until students had left Freedom School to return to the school buses.

"In Freedom School that Monday there was a non-violent workshop and a discussion of non-violence. Students agreed to be non-violent for the boycott. There was discussion

and role playing about what to do should students not be allowed on the buses at noon. Students believed it was their right to ride those buses home, and decided to sit down in front of them if they were not allowed on.

"At about 11:30am students left the church and marched back to Beasley School. They boarded the buses with no trouble. However, at the road in front of the school, and in front of Beasley Church, seven more FDP workers were arrested. There were a total of ten arrests that day, all staff workers. Charges against five of them, who had only driven in from town to observe, were dropped. The other five were charged with disturbing peace, and were all out on bond by Tuesday evening.

"With all the workers in jail, the students took over, spreading word of the boycott, and conducting Freedom School. In the local newspaper, the Daily Times Leader, articles about the failure of the boycott began appearing. The Superintendent of Schools called for a meeting of parents for Wednesday at Beasley. Parents and students called a special meeting Tuesday night and decided to boycott the Wednesday meeting, feeling its only purpose was to defeat the boycott and feeling it would be controlled by the Superintendent and Principal. About four people attended the Wednesday meeting, and it was called off. But the next day in the Daily Times Leader it was announced that forty parents voted to continue the split session at Beasley. Students then added a 21st demand to their list of 20--an end to Beasley's split session. Though there are a number of families who are in favor of the split session because they need their children in the fields, it is clear that a majority of students and parents want it ended.

"The next move of the Superintendent was to put pressure on the bus drivers. They were told not to pick up children known to be going to Freedom School. Children

in school were told they would not be able to ride home if they went to the church to Freedom School. Because of this, attendance at Freedom School declined slightly the first week, and a great deal deal the second week as pressure increased. But children continued to stay at home. There were between 100 and 200 at Beasley School each day of the first week of the boycott, and about 200 to 250 the second week. More and more pressure was put on the bus drivers. They were given lists of students not to be allowed on the buses. Students, however, were always successful in getting on the buses to ride home from Freedom School, though some were not able to get to school in the morning.

"But on Thursday, August 5, seven city policemen and the sheriff were on hand from 7am on to guard the buses from the boycotters at Freedom School. When they walked, singing, from Freedom School toward Beasley about 11:45am, 55 of them were arrested. The youngest child arrested was 10, the oldest 19. They were taken to city and county jails in West Point, fingerprinted and photographed, and released released without charges in the late afternoon. Three FDP workers were also arrested at the county jail for 'obstructing justice'; they were attempting to take photographs.

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"This was the second attempt by the Superintendent to define in his terms the students' boycott. Their protest from the start was based on the 20 demands drawn up by in community meetings, and later increased to 21 demands. But the newspapers and school authorities first claimed that the boycott was only protesting the split session, and then, later, thought that its only aim was to have the principal removed. They continually refused to discuss seriously the 21 demands.

"On Friday morning, before the second group of parents met with the Superintendent, there was a demonstration at the courthouse in West Point. It was in protest of the conditions at Beasley School and the arrests of the 55 children on Thursday, 58 demonstrators were arrested, charged with blocking the sidewalk. While searching the demonstrators and ripping off their FDP and SNCC pins, a Mississippi Cattle Investigator, Mr. B. Cowart, died of a heart attack. One of the demonstrators, [FOIA(b)(6)], son of [FOIA(b)(6)], was charged with manslaughter. However, he was nowhere near Mr. Cowart when he died, though it was claimed that Cowart was searching him and that [FOIA(b)(6)] drew his hand back to hit him just before he died. [FOIA(b)(6)] was beaten, but not seriously, in jail. Charges against him were dropped the next day. Charges were also dropped against all the female demonstrators and all those under 18 years old. The others paid fines for obstructing the sidewalk.

"There was much anger over the death of Mr. Cowart in the white community. It must have been the last straw for some of them, to whom the presence of the Pheba Freedom Center was a constant irritation, and the boycott and demonstrations an added goad. At 2am on Sunday morning, August 8, night riders fired two series of shots into the Freedom Center. There were six people in the house at the time, four FDP workers and two lawyers. The two lawyers, Bill Kopit and James Shellow, and two of the workers had

just arrived at the Center, having driven in from the Marshall Motel in West Point where they had been meeting with Congressman Reuss. They had just finished bringing some groceries into the Freedom Center, Bill Kopit was outside looking for a toothbrush in the car, the others were talking together, when the shooting began. After it stopped, the six people left the house by the back and went across a field to a neighbor's home. The neighbor's house was also shot into that night.

"Sunday morning, after it became light, 51 bullet holes were counted in the front wall of the Freedom Center. There were about 10 holes in the neighbor's house. Sheriff Strickland and FBI men from Jackson and Columbus came to investigate. They examined the bullet holes and took impressions of tire tracks in the gravel road in front of the house. The Sheriff explained how 'these things happen', and commented on his inability to patrol the whole county. The FBI men took statements. Congressman Reuss came out and questioned a group of students and parents about Beasley School.

"The boycott continued on into its third week. However, Freedom School was suspended; students decided they did not want to continue to go to jail for trying to ride the school buses home after they had spent the morning at Freedom School at Beasley Church instead of Beasley School. Attendance at the school rose. The violence of Sunday and necessity of guarding the Freedom Center at night, as well as the beginning of a kind of defeatism among the staff and student leaders, disrupted communication between the leaders of the boycott and the communities. With the lack of information and the advice of that small group of parents who had met with the Superintendent on Friday, to return to school, students drifted back to Beasley.

"In spite of this, E.E. Heard resigned as principal in the latter part of the week.

"Those children in school began receiving a few new books, still not enough to go around even for them, and coat racks began appearing in the rooms.

"On Friday, August 13, there was a second demonstration at the courthouse in town to demand the right to protest and significant changes in the school. About 200 people marched single file from the FDP office in West Point to the courthouse, and into a courtroom where the Sheriff and the School Board Attorney, Harvey Buck, and the Superintendent of Schools allowed people to ask questions for about half an hour to an hour. People at this meeting were not treated with respect. They were told they would be arrested if they were not orderly and quiet. Their demands and questions were not met with honesty or seriousness.

"Friday night three people, one worker and two local students, stayed in the Pheba Freedom Center. About midnight, a carload of local whites drove up, and began prowling about the house. One of them, whom one of the local students had worked for and who said he wanted to talk, was allowed inside. After being in the house about 20 minutes, he pulled a gun, grabbed one of the local students, and put the gun to his neck, threatening to kill the 2 students and the staff worker. The worker grabbed a shotgun, and as he did this the student who was being held at gun point, grabbed the wrist of his assailant. Holding his wrist, the student managed to get the assailant out the door. The carload of whites left, after one of them kicked in the windshield of the project car. After a short time the two students and the FDP worker left the house to go to town to report the incident. On the way their car was seen by the same people who had just been at the Center, and they were chased and overtaken. The car of whites pulled across the road in front of the project car

with the FDP worker and the two students who managed to escape by quickly turning and driving down a dirt road. They were then able to get to the home of a local Negro.

"Later is was discovered that the Freedom Center had been shot into after they had left.

"On Saturday night the regular FDP precinct meeting was held at Mt. Zion Church next door to the Freedom Center. The decision was made at that meeting to end the boycott on Tuesday, August 17. There seemed no hope that continuing the boycott at the present time would force the school authorities to take seriously the demands of students and parents.

"After the meeting on the next night, Saturday, August 14, some people remained with guns to protect the Freedom Center. Sometime before midnight three shots were fired at the house. Two shots were fired back at the night riders.

"The next morning, Sunday, August 15, FBI men and Sheriff Strickland examined the new bullet holes in the Freedom Center, digging out two slugs.

"Later in the morning, the Sheriff returned with two of the three men who had driven by and shot the previous night. He and they explained that they had shot not at the house but at a rabbit that had crossed the road in front of their car as they were passing the Freedom Center. They said they had warrants out for whoever had shot at them. We learned that one of the men who was in the car Saturday night was injured, either by buckshot or by gravel that had been kicked up by buckshot. When their car was fired at.

"Sunday afternoon several of the workers attempted to swear out warrants against people they were able to identify when they were attacked on Friday night. The local Justice of the Peace refused to allow them to swear out warrants.

"At the present things are very tense. We receive virtually no protection from the sheriff or the FBI. There have been no arrests of those who are known to have threatened our lives. The local Negro people are are organized to protect themselves. The Freedom Center remains in operation. It is very possible that people will be hurt or killed if the Sheriff and FBI remain as irresponsible as they have been so far.

"The school boycott, officially over tomorrow, accomplished the resignation of the Principal, the acquisition of a few new books and coat racks, and vague promises for more equipment. More significantly, it made clear to the community who it was who had power over the schools. There was a definite progression of thought. The first target was the Principal, but people came to realize that he was only controlled, and that it was the white people who controlled the purse strings who must be overcome. The boycott gave a number of students the experience of being leaders and of dealing with the white community in a new way.

"We judge the boycott to be neither a success nor a failure, but a learning experience.

"The Movement in the western part of Clay County will continue; the emphasis has already changed from the schools to voter registration and preparing for the ASC elections in December. It will continue whether or not there is local law enforcement.

"MGL

"August 17, 1965

"We have finally been allowed to swear out warrants against two persons who were identified on Friday night. As far as we know, neither has yet been arrested. We have

heard that warrants have been sworn against two Beasley students, leaders in the boycott, and one staff worker. We expect they will be arrested today. We don't know the nature of the warrants.

"MGL

"august 17, 1965

"Last night at 9PM five shots were fired on the hill where the Freedom House and the Church where we have meetings. The local Negro who went to the church saw the car, a blue and white 1960 Chevrolet. The sheriff was waiting at the house of the local whites from whom we've had the most trouble, the Blanchards, for the Negro. He had followed the Chevrolet about 2 minutes later. He was drunk, and accused the Negro of the shootings the other night, and warned him that there were two carloads of armed whites waiting for him and that he would be followed on the highway. He spent the night with a Negro family. Negroes and whites are armed and the atmosphere is very tense. We still can't get any help from the FBI, and the local law officials have now shown clearly that they will not stop the violence and might actually be parties to it themselves.

"JL"

In addition to furnishing the above information, LOCKARD advised that she could not furnish any direct information regarding the shots that were fired into the house at Pheba, Mississippi, and that it was difficult to say if any shots actually hit their house or not as the house had been so shot up on the occasion of the shooting that occurred there on August 8, 1965.

LOCKARD advised that she was very disappointed and said that the FBI due to its policy of not protecting workers with the MFDP would be directly responsible for any forthcoming violence in Clay County and that this violence would probably be the results of inefficient law enforcement by the police department, sheriff's office, and the FBI.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 8/26/65

JOHN BUFFINGTON, Project Director, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), West Point, Mississippi, was contacted at the MFDP headquarters, 451 Cottrell Street, West Point, Mississippi, at which time he was advised of the identity of the interviewing agent and the nature of the investigation. BUFFINGTON advised as follows:

He said that it was no use furnishing information to the FBI relative to the fears of the MFDP in the Pheba, Mississippi area as the FBI would not protect the MFDP personnel in the Pheba area. He said that the local law enforcement officers and the Sheriff of Clay County, Mississippi, were doing nothing to protect the MFDP workers in the Pheba, Mississippi area. BUFFINGTON advised that a long and detailed "write-up" had been prepared in this matter by several of the MFDP workers and that it would be made available to the FBI by J. LOCKARD who had been instrumental in preparing this write-up.

On 8/20/65 at West Point, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-3738 -7
by SA LYNN P. SMITH /lsk Date dictated 8/24/65

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation

JD:TL:mbd-
DJ 166-40-NEW

John Doar
Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division

AUG 20 1965

Burt Blanchard, (FNU) Wyatt, et al., Subjects;
Burt Halpern, Theotus Ballard, Tommy Belt, Victims.
Voting Intimidation, Clay County, Mississippi
CIVIL RIGHTS; ELECTION LAWS

We have received a series of complaints regarding incidents of violence and intimidation of voter registration workers in Clay County from Miss Jay Lockard, a civil rights worker in Pheba, Clay County. Please conduct a preliminary investigation of any of these incidents which you are not already investigating to establish violations of 18 U.S.C. 241 and 42 U.S.C. 1971(b).

Miss Lockard advised that on August 7, 1965, 51 shots were fired at the Freedom House in Pheba and 30 shots fired at the home of a Negro, Vernon Valentine, who resides in Pheba, Clay County, Mississippi. Your Bureau was requested telephonically by Mr. Doar to investigate the shooting into the Freedom House on August 7, 1965.

Miss Lockard also advised that on August 13, 1965, a white male, said to be Burt Blanchard, entered the Freedom House in Pheba and pointed a pistol at a Negro male named Tommy Belt. Burt Halpern, a civil rights worker, and Theotus Ballard were also inside the Freedom House at the time of the incident. Subject Blanchard was said to have been accompanied by (FNU) Wyatt and an unidentified white male and the last two individuals remained outside the Freedom House. Blanchard also was said to have threatened to kill everyone in the Freedom House.

When Halpern, Ballard and Belt attempted to reach a phone in West Point, they were followed by a car containing the above-named white males. Miss Lockard advised that the white males at some point attempted to attack the civil rights workers and one of the white males climbed on the roof of the car and broke the windshield.

44-*msw*

44-1331-
157-3738-10

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On August 14, 1965, Joel Bernard, another Clay County civil rights worker, was said to have been chased by a car containing white males. When Bernard complained to the sheriff, it is claimed that the sheriff arrested and fined Bernard for speeding.

On the night of August 14, it was alleged that three shots were fired at the Freedom House in Pheba, Clay County, Mississippi, and that Negroes in the nearby Mt. Zion Church fired two shots back.

Miss Lockard further advised that on August 15, the Sheriff of Clay County and state examiners arrived at Pheba and examined the bullet holes in the Freedom House. The Sheriff of Clay County was said to have returned that day with a general warrant charging unknown persons with shooting rabbits. There were no arrests.

On that same day, the civil rights workers attempted to swear out a warrant against Blanchard and Wyatt but Justice of the Peace in Pheba, Bob White, refused to issue the warrants. The warrants were said to have been issued later by a Justice of the Peace in West Point on August 16. We do not know whether or not arrests were made.

Miss Lockard also advised that at about 9:00 p.m. on August 16, five shots were fired at the Freedom House in Pheba which was unoccupied at the time. A Negro resident observed a 1960 blue and white Chevrolet, license number unknown, in the area at that time and the car was observed to turn into a nearby driveway and to extinguish its lights. Sheriff Strickland of Clay County was said to have arrived at the scene about two minutes after the shooting and to have stopped a Negro who had been driving by and accused the Negro of the shooting.

8/26/65

Airtel

To: SAC, Jackson

From: Director, FBI

UNSUB; SHOOTING AT HOUSE,
PHEBA, MISSISSIPPI, 8/8/65;
JAMES SHELLLOW, ET AL - VICTIMS
CIVIL RIGHTS - ELECTION LAWS
JACKSON FILE 44-1270

JAMES BYRON WYATT, ET AL
ALBERT PHILLIP HALPRIN, ET AL - VICTIMS
CIVIL RIGHTS - ELECTION LAWS
JACKSON FILE 44-1285

UNSUB; SHOOTING INTO
FREEDOM HOUSE, PHEBA, MISSISSIPPI,
8/16/65
CIVIL RIGHTS - ELECTION LAWS

Enclosed herewith are three copies of a self-explanatory memorandum received from the Department on 8/23/65. A review of enclosed memorandum indicates that the information set forth in paragraph two refers to case captioned, "Unsub; Shooting at House, Pheba, Mississippi, 8/8/65; James Shellow, Et Al - Victims, Civil Rights - Election Laws," Jackson file 44-1270.

It further appears that the information furnished by Miss Lockard in paragraphs three and four of page one and the first four paragraphs on page two refer to case captioned, "James Byron Wyatt, Et Al; Albert Phillip Halprin, Et Al - Victims, Civil Rights - Election Laws," Jackson file 44-1285.

No information could be located at the Bureau regarding Miss Lockard's allegation of the shooting into the Freedom House on 8/16/65. If your office has submitted a communication regarding this matter, by return airtel advise date and caption under Enclosures (3)

44-1381-2

157-3738-11

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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AUG 28 1965	
FBI - JACKSON	

[Handwritten signatures and initials over the stamp]

Airtel to SAC, Jackson
RE: UNSUB; SHOOTING AT HOUSE, PHEBA,
MISSISSIPPI, 8/8/65; JAMES SHELLOW, ET AL -
VICTIMS, CR - EL

which submitted. If your office has not received information concerning this matter, immediately determine details and airtel. If information confirmed, preliminary investigation should be instituted and report submitted within seven days of receipt of this communication. All persons contacted should be advised investigation being conducted at the specific request of Mr. John Doar, AAG, CRD, USDJ.

You should carefully review contents of enclosed memorandum to insure that your investigations cover all aspects as received from Miss Lockard.

9/1/65

AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM: SAC, JACKSON (44-1270) (P)

UNSUB; SHOOTING AT HOUSE, PHERA,
MISSISSIPPI, 8/8/65; JAMES
SHELLON, et al - VICTIMS
CR - EL
JACKSON FILE 44-1270
BUFILE 44-30105

JAMES BYRON WYATT, et al;
ALBERT PHILLIP HALPRIN, et al -
VICTIMS
CR - EL
JACKSON FILE 44-1285

UNSUB; SHOOTING INTO FREEDOM
HOUSE, PHERA, MISS. 8/16/65;
CR - EL
JACKSON FILE 157-3738

ReBuairtel dated 8/26/65, captioned as above
and enclosing a memorandum received from the Department
on 8/23/65, setting forth in detail a series of complaints
regarding incidents in Clay County, Miss., received from
Miss JAY LOCKARD.

3-Bureau
3-Jackson
(1- 44-1285)
(1- 157-3738)

OFFICE ADDENDUM: Suggest that Jackson
file 44-1285 be placed in a
closed status, as no
further action necessary.

LPS:ish
(6)

ISL

157-3738-6012
Searched _____
Serialized JP
Indexed _____
Filed JP

JN 44-1270

All of these incidents have been investigated by the Jackson Division previously and the one incident regarding the shooting into the MFDP House at Pheba, Miss., was reported under the caption "THE HARASSMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY, PHEBA, MISS., AUGUST 14-16, 1965 - RACIAL MATTERS".

In the above LHM a detailed 11 page "write-up" of various harassments were furnished by LOCKARD to the interviewing agent. It is noted that the incident regarding the shooting that was alleged to have happened on 8/16/65, was not observed by Miss LOCKARD and investigation reflected that the incident was observed by Sheriff JOE ED STRICKLAND who was at the scene at the time.

On 8/20/65, the Director of the FBI and its agents were vehemently attacked by JAY LOCKARD, aka JANET LOCKARD, JOHN BUFFINGTON and ANDREW GERSON SILVER when inquiry relative to the shooting on 8/16/65, was being made. Details of this attack and background information of those individuals attacking the Director and agents of the FBI are set forth in the letterhead memorandum dated 8/25/65, at Jackson, Miss., and entitled "MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY - RACIAL MATTERS".

The enclosed memorandum from the Civil Rights Division of the Department has been carefully reviewed and it is a synopsis of the "write-up" furnished by LOCKARD on 8/20/65, which was forwarded to the Bureau by airtel dated 8/26/65, entitled "THE HARASSMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEMOCRATIC PARTY, PHEBA, MISS., 8/14-16/65, RACIAL MATTERS". Each and every allegation and/or complaint has been investigated by the Jackson Division and the Bureau advised accordingly.

JN 44-1270

Investigation is being vigorously pursued in the matter entitled "UNSUB; SHOOTING AT HOUSE, PHEBA, MISS., 8/8/65; JAMES SHELL, et al - VICTIMS, CR - EL".

The four subjects have been identified and signed statements taken from two and verbal admissions from the other two in the case entitled "JAMES BYRON WYATT, et al; ALBERT PHILLIP HALPRIN, et al - VICTIMS, CR - EL" and in the matter "UNSUBS; SHOOTING INTO FREEDOM HOUSE, PHEBA, MISS., 8/16/65", investigation has failed to reflect that the house was shot into and the Sheriff who was on the scene at the time denies that there was ever an actual shooting. No further action is contemplated in this matter by the Jackson Division.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, (44-1331)

DATE: 9/1/65

FROM : SA LYNN P. SMITH

SUBJECT: UNSUB; Shooting into Freedom
House, Pheba, Mississippi
8/16/65
CR-EL

Reference is made to Bureau airtel to Jackson dated 8/26/65 captioned, UNSUB; Shooting at Houst Pheba, Mississippi, 8/8/65; JAMES SHELLLOW, ET AL - VICTIMS, CR-EL JAMES BYRON WYATT, ET AL; ALBERT PHILLIP HALPRIN, ET AL, CR-EL and UNSUB; Shooting into Freedom House, Pheba, Mississippi, 8/16/65, CR-EL.

By airtel to the Bureau dated 9/1/65, which was sent under the above referenced caption, the Bureau was advised that the captioned matter was investigated and reported by the Jackson Division by Letter Head Memorandum entitled, "The Harassment of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, Pheba, Mississippi, August 14-16, 1965 @ RM" and that this LHM was forwarded to the Bureau by Jackson Airtel dated 8/26/65.

The Jackson Division advised the Bureau that it contemplated taking no further action in this matter.

In view of the above, it is suggested that the captioned matter be placed in a closed status and that verifax copies of all serials in this matter be placed in Jackson file 157-3738 which is entitled The Harassment of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, Pheba, Mississippi, August 14-16, 1965 - RM.

LPS
(3)

44-1331
157-3738

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157-3738-13
44-1331 into

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FBI - JACKSON	

L. Smith
(info)



Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

F B I

Date: 9/2/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via Airtel _____
(Priority)

To: SAC, Jackson

From: Director, FBI

UNSUB; SHOOTING INTO
FREEDOM HOUSE, PHEBA, MISSISSIPPI,
8/16/65
CIVIL RIGHTS - ELECTION LAWS

ReBuairtel 8/26/65.

As requested in reBuairtel, furnish summary of
information concerning the allegation of the shooting into
the Freedom House on 8/16/65.

cc returned Bu 9/10/65
See Serial 6, 157-3738
file

Consolidated
157-3738

3738
144-1331-14

9
Smith S

Sent Via _____ M Per _____

Date received 8/26/65	Received from (name or symbol number) <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">FOIA(b) (7) - (D)</div>	Received by SA LAWRENCE W. GORMAN
Method of delivery (check appropriate blocks) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in person <input type="checkbox"/> by telephone <input type="checkbox"/> by mail <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> orally <input type="checkbox"/> recording device <input type="checkbox"/> written by Informant		
If orally furnished and reduced to writing by Agent: Dictated <u>9/1/65</u> to <u>cas (RD)</u> Transcribed <u>9/14/65</u> Authenticated by Informant _____		Date of Report 8/26/65 Date(s) of activity 8/12-26/65
Brief description of activity or material Identities of 7 additional members WKKKKOM at Clarkston, Vardaman, Houston, Miss. Info re possible Mantee, Miss., Unit. Info re shooting at HAMBONE HILL and Burning of Negro Church by Woodland, Miss., Unit.		File where original is located if not attached <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">FOIA(b) (7) - (D)</div>

Remarks:

INFORMATION CONTAINED IN ENCLOSED REPORT IF USED IN A REPORT BEING PREPARED FOR DISSEMINATION SHOULD BE SUITABLY PARAPHRASED IN ORDER TO ADEQUATELY PROTECT THE IDENTITY OF THIS INFORMANT.

2 -

FOIA(b) (7) - (D)

1 - 157-1436 (Webster Co. Klan)
1 - 157-222 (Woodland, Miss., Klan)
1 - 157-FLOYD REESE
1 - 157-CURTIS WEBB
1 - 157-458 (EVERETT WIGGS)
1 - 157-ALBERT REYNOLDS
1 - 157-PORTER WHITE
1 - 157-RALPH HENRY
1 - 157-C. W. WRIGHT
1 - 157-Dr. (FNU) SCARBROUGH
1 - 157-(FNU) HARRINGTON
1 - 157-WOMACK HENLEY
1 - 157-PETE WIGGS
1 - 157-DON WOMACK
1 - 157-BUD WIGGS
1 - 157-FLOYD WIGGS
1 - 157-M. E. BELL
1 - 157-3542 (W. H. ASWALT)
LWG/cas
(23)

1-157-3638(PRESS WATKINS-VICTIM)
1-157-917(PINEY GROVE METHODIST CHURCH)
①-157-3738(SHOOTING - FREEDOM HOUSE, PHEBA, MISS.)
CAS

157-3738-15

Block Stamp

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SERIALIZED *no* FILED *ic*

SEPTEMBER 14, 1965
FBI--JACKSON

ANK

West Point, Miss.
8/26/65

Informant advised the last meeting of the WKKKKOM held in his area was on 8/12/65 at a cut-off road west of Woodland, Miss. He had received that information from contacts wFOIA(b)(7) - (D) member of the Clarkston, Miss., Unit, who told informant that the meeting was preceded by a movie on the Reconstruction Period which was shown on 8/11/65 in the home of FLOYD REECE. FOIA(b)(7) - (D) o told informant that the word had been passed down from the Woodland Unit that there should be no more Klan signs or handshakes given to anyone not known for certain as a member of the Klan, and that any shootings into homes in the future would be above the windows of the houses. Informant advised that these directives and the fact that the meetings have been discontinued temporarily were a result of DON WOMACK and EVERETT WIGGS being contacted by Agents of the FBI concerning the shooting into the Freedom House in Pheba, Miss.

Informant stated that he learned from FOIA(b)(7) - (D) the identities of the following members of the Clarkston Unit:

CURTIS WEBB, an employee of B & W, West Point, Miss.
ALBERT REYNOLDS, employed at Mitchell Engineering, Columbus, Miss.
PORTER WHITE, employed B & W, West Point, Miss.
RALPH HENRY, employed Mitchell Engineering, Columbus, Miss.
C. W. WRIGHT, employed Mitchell Engineering, Columbus, Miss.

Informant also furnished the identity of the following additional members of the WKKKKOM residing at Vardaman and Houston, Miss:

Dr. (FNU) SCARBROUGH, Vardaman, Miss.
Attorney from Vardaman whose father was a member of
of the State Senate and died in office recently
(Believed to be ROBERT G. GILDER)
(FNU) HARRINGTON, who resides on Airport Road, Houston,
Miss.

Informant advised that there are no names of Klan members of the Woodland Unit listed on a roll as each of them are given a number and the numbers are used for identification purposes.

On 8/26/65 informant spoke to [FOIA(b)(7) - (D)] who told him there were several of the members of the Woodland Unit, who reside in Mantee, Miss., talking about separating from Woodland and organizing in Mantee, Miss. [FOIA(b)(7) - (D)] said that the people in Mantee were concerned about the unlawful activities of the Woodland Unit. Although none of them know for certain who it was that shot into the home of PRESS WATKINS, a Negro resident of Mantee, Miss., they are sure it was done by the Woodland Unit as a result of a rumor that went around to the effect that WATKINS was planning to send his children to the white school. Informant stated that WATKINS is well thought of by the white members of the Mantee Community and the shooting has aggravated them considerably.

The informant also furnished details on the following incidents of violence that can be attributed to the Woodland Unit:

In about July 1964, it was decided that something should be done about a local bootlegger named HAMBONE HILL living with a Negro woman in the northeast section of Clay County. FLOYD WIGGS, PETE WIGGS, DON WOMACK, BUD WIGGS, and BILLY JOE WRIGHT attempted to burn a cross in front of HILL's home at about 10:00 p.m. As it happened HILL was at that time having a "fish fry" in his backyard and chased after the group before they were able to get away. As they fled the scene, with HILL chasing them in his pickup, BILLY JOE WRIGHT, who was in the back of BUD WIGGS' pickup, shot HILL's pickup with a semi-automatic carbine. Also in the back of

WIGGS' pickup were PETE WIGGS, BUD WIGGS, and DON WOMACK. WOMACK had a shotgun and PETE and BUD WIGGS each had pistols, both of which were also fired at HILL's pickup. Informant stated that they would have killed HILL if they had not noticed another person riding in the pickup whom they believed was the nephew of OLAN JOHNSON. During the shooting one of the rounds from the pistols went through the tailgate of WIGG's pickup, which was repaired without cost by a body repair shop in Vardaman, Miss.

Informant also stated that about one year ago FLOYD REESE and BILLY JOE WRIGHT had burned a Negro church near the Calhoun-Chickasaw County line. FOIA(b)(7) - (D) told the informant that REESE had come to his house and told him they had a job to do and when he left with REESE, he did not know what REESE intended to do. FOIA(b)(7) - (D) aid that he did not want to burn the church and told the informant he would not be involved in any similar incidents. Since that time [redacted] has not been very active in the Woodland Unit. FOIA(b)(7) - (D)

Informant also advised that he would be in attendance at the next meeting held by the Woodland Unit and would report any information he might develop. He stated that he was now involved in the busiest time of the year for his occupation and that once the work slacks off he would be able to devote more time to Klan activities.

Informant advised that he had no information concerning M. E. BELL's being a member of the UKA at Mathiston, Miss., or of W. H. ASWALT or OSWALT being a member of the UKA at Louisville or Sturgis, Miss.