

U. S. Department of Justice

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FEDERAL BUREAU

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INVESTIGATION

Bureau File Number

See also Nos.

CLASSIFICATION NO.

157-4951

file

157-4989

Serials

VOLUME NUMBER

Jackson, Mississippi
December 6, 1965

UNKNOWN SUBJECT; BURNING OF VACANT
RESIDENCE, RURAL ROUTE 2, THEBE,
MISSISSIPPI, DECEMBER 3, 1965, WHICH
WAS FORMERLY OCCUPIED BY MISSISSIPPI
FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY DURING JULY
AND AUGUST, 1965
RACIAL MATTERS

At 9:35 p.m. on December 3, 1965, Sheriff Joe Ed Strickland, Clay County Sheriff's Office, telephonically contacted a representative of the FBI at Columbia, Mississippi, and advised that the vacant three room frame house located adjacent to the Mount Zion Baptist Church, Rural Route 2, Thebe, Mississippi, burned at approximately 7:30 p.m. on December 3, 1965.

Sheriff Strickland advised that upon receipt of information that this house was burning he went immediately to the scene and conducted an immediate investigation to determine the origin of the fire. He explained that this three room vacant house was the property of Vernon Valentine, Rural Route 2, Thebe, Mississippi, and that this dwelling house had been used by workers of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) from Natchez, Mississippi, during the months of July and August, 1965. The house was vacated on or about September 1, 1965, by the workers of the MFDP and has not been used by the MFDP workers since that time. Sheriff Strickland advised that the origin of the fire was not yet established but that he has requested the assistance of the investigators of both the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol (MSHP) and the State Fire Marshal's Office to aid him to determine if the fire in question was purposely set.

8-Bureau
(2-Jackson (157-New))

LPS:hke

(10) *wh*

157-4966-1
J. Smith S
Searched _____
Serialized *hr* _____
Indexed _____
Filed *h* _____

UNKNOWN SUBJECT; BURNING OF VACANT
RESIDENCE, RURAL ROUTE 2, PHENA,
MISSISSIPPI, DECEMBER 5, 1965, WHICH
WAS FORMERLY OCCUPIED BY MISSISSIPPI
FARMER DEMOCRATIC PARTY DURING JULY
AND AUGUST, 1965

Sheriff Strickland advised that he did develop information that the vacant house in question has been used by various young people in the immediate vicinity for courting or dating but that he has no positive information that there were any daters or young people in the house at the time the fire started or that they were responsible for the burning of the house in question.

An automobile which no witnesses can identify or describe is reported to have departed the vicinity of the residence at the time the fire was first observed.

Sheriff Strickland is conducting an active investigation and pursuing all leads vigorously to establish the origin of the fire.

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.

F B I

Date: 12-6-65

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

To: Director, FBI

Att.: Civil Rights Section
General Investigative Division

From: SAC, JACKSON(157-NEW) (C)

Subject: UNSUB; BURNING OF VACANT RESIDENCE, RURAL ROUTE 2,
PHEBA, MISSISSIPPI, 12-5-65, WHICH WAS FORMERLY
OCCUPIED BY MEDE DURING JULY AND AUGUST, 1965
☐ BOMBING MATTERS - THREATS ☒ RACIAL MATTERS

Enclosed are eight copies of a letterhead memorandum.

No investigation being conducted by the Jackson
Office and enclosed being submitted for information.

1 - Bureau (Enclosures 8)

①-Jackson

LPS:hke
(2)157-4966-2
Searched _____
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Special Agent in Charge