

1EK40.13

In the Tougaloo Movement we tried to analyze the new events in the church visit campaign. There were too many factors in the situation at Capital St. Church to be ~~ex~~ sure why no arrests were made. ~~It~~ Certainly very important was the presence of a visiting Methodist minister. We could not be sure that the arrests would not be resumed the very next Sunday, or at any time or church when there were not "outside ministers" present. ~~It~~ For that next Sunday we thus needed help. Stanley Hallett returned to Chicago and explained the Jackson situation to a group of concerned men in the Methodist and the Evangelical United Brethren churches there. They agreed to send volunteers to Jackson for the next several weeks to do the same things Hallett had-- peacefully accompanny Black students to the closed doors of white Methodist churches. (The "E.U.B." ~~denom~~ denomination was in the final stages of a process of merging with the Methodist denomination that year, ~~and~~ and to men in that denomination were particularly concerned about the church arrests.)

<sup>white</sup> Six men from Chicago came to Jackson that weekend. ~~It~~ They talked to white church leaders ( of all factions) in Jackson as well as with Black ministers in the city and with the Movement students at Tougaloo. At my home on Saturday night we talked theology and practical matters like what to do in jail until the lawyer comes. Coeds ~~for/iron~~ demonstrated techniques learned

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in past sit-ins and demonstrations such as the "non-violent crouch," a way of curling up the body and placing the knees and hands so as to give <sup>maximum</sup> minimum protection to ~~the~~ vital parts of the body. The ministers practiced remaining silent as students played the role of taunting, cursing cops or hostile ushers. We joked that a demonstrator should be especially careful of people carrying Bibles which could easily be turned into weapons. Most of the men did not believe arrest was possible--not at a church of their own denomination. The men asked many questions about the whole state of the Movement in Mississippi and told us about ~~the~~ the problems of Chicago. Most of the men were deeply involved in the civil rights struggle in their own communities as well as the effort to bring life, "renewal"; to the Church.

On Sunday morning, Oct. 20, we sent ~~the~~ teams to many churches in the city. (Since the first arrest we had decided to avoid the Baptist churches since these churches just might support the police in a trespassing arrest. Most churches, like the Methodist, which belonged to national denominations could not legally do such a thing.) The police were waiting--outside the college gates so that they followed the first few cars into town--and outside the major downtown churches. Even the churches which were not "visited" were so guarded by the police and the police dogs that every member of the congregation was aware of

the issue. The integrated teams of students which were going to visit several churches of other denominations had been instructed to leave the churches as soon as the police appeared. At the two major Methodist churches the groups of students would be accompanied by these northern white Methodist ministers. Here the goal was to see if a group which was denied entrance could continue to talk to the ushers and other church people; or at least stand silently on the public sidewalk outside the church.

They couldn't. The ~~old~~ famous Jackson police policy of "instant arrest" was brought back into use. At Capital St. ~~Z~~Meth- odist Church the same three coeds were turned away from the church for the third time--and instantly arrested. Two ministers with them, ~~the~~ Gerald Forshey and Don Walen were arrested just as quickly. This time we sent this group to the door alone--sympathetic members of the congregation were watching from a short distance away. Everyone knocking on the door was jailed; probably any local church member or Millsaps College student would also have been jailed. There were two more Chicago Methodist men in the group of observers. ~~S~~ According to plan we had asked them to be "observers" and not risk arrest so they could report accurately whatever happened. These men were Rev. Jim Reed and an attorney and active churchman, Lee Rayson.

Events at two other churches were ~~was~~<sup>even</sup> more bizaare. One was the Galloway Memorial Methodist Church. John Garner, a white physics teacher at Tougaloo College, ~~had~~ and his wife, Margrit had been a member of Galloway Church for several years. John and Margrit were dedicated Christians who strongly supported the civil rights Movement--and the ~~an~~ idea that people could communicate with each other. They had ~~joined~~ become active members of Galloway Church so that they could communicate with white people and listen to them even though they worked and lived in the Black community. They believed that within the Christian ~~community~~ fellowship, in time, some of these divisions could be overcome. (Margrit had been jailed a few months earlier, along with my wife, Jeannete, and several local Negro adults, when they carried picket signs saying, "Jackson Needs a Biracial Committee," in a public demonstration.) Now that the church desegregation campaign had reached the point of actual arrests at the church door, John Garner decided to act. He invited one of his Negro students, SNCC veteran, Joyce Ladner (chairman of the Tougaloo Campus Christian Fellowship--and Chairman of the Tougaloo Movement), and two of the white Chicago ministers to be his guests at his Sunday School class. The integrated group entered the church building without trouble, but hardly without being observed. White police soon rushed into the church building and surrounded the party.

Inside the church some people had spoken in a friendly way of greeting to the integrated group. Others had stared in horror. When the police burst in some of the friendly people literally turned their heads, as if to close their eyes to the impossible scene of a man they knew, one of their own church members and his guests being arrested inside the church. <sup>Some of the</sup> People had been so friendly that Joyce Ladner really believed that they would be allowed to stay. For a moment it was beautiful. Then she saw the police, saw the looks of hate on some white faces, and the even more terrible look of fear and shame on the faces that were turning away. Joyce began softly crying. The two ~~Methodist~~ Methodist ministers tried to explain to the police that they could not arrest Methodist ministers inside a Methodist church--or anyone else in the group. The ministers kept asking the confused members of the congregation to bring one of the ministers of the church. Sympathetic churchmen hurried down the halls to get the ministers. <sup>Neither</sup> ~~Neither~~ minister appeared.\* John Garner began calling to church members he knew by name, asking them to tell the police that he really was a member of the church. Silence, except for one white woman who started crying, ~~and~~ turned, and ran away down a long hall. John asked ~~men and women he had thought were friends to bring the ministers~~ or to bring various laymen who were officials of the church. No help came. The police led them out of the church to the waiting ~~men and women he had thought were friends to bring the ministers~~ were informed of the events. I am sure theykn

paddy wagons. The charges were the now familiar ones, but especially ironic in this case: "trespassing" on private church property, although Garner was a church member and the others were his guests; and "disturbing public worship," although the arrests took place and they were all in jail before the organ ever began playing the prelude to the morning worship service. (However, it is most probable that the worship and mood and prayers of every person at the church that morning was disturbed in some way.) Dr. Cunningham, the pastor who could not arrive at the scene of the trouble, was called by Margrit Garner almost as soon as he finished his sermon. In almost innocence Margrit said that her husband was in serious trouble, that he had been arrested and was in jail, and ~~she~~ she wanted her minister to please visit her husband in the jail as he surely would do for any member of the church who was in such a situation. He didn't.

The third church ~~where~~ where people was arrested was Trinity Lutheran Church, the largest church of that denomination in the state. The pastor of this church, Rev. Wade Kunz, wanted an open church. He had told us that Negro students were welcome at the church. There was great division within this church over the matter. ~~But~~ But, probably, a majority of the members were willing to accept Negroes at the worship services. The

\*Joyce Ladner had lived in Galloway Hall, the main women's dormitory at Tougaloo College for three years; now she was arrested at ~~the~~ Galloway Church. Both buildings were named for a white Methodist Bishop of Mississippi who, more than 50 years earlier, was a moderate on race relations.

people who actually approved of an open church were few in number. But most of the people were willing to accept the word of their minister that not only was it "unChristian" to close the doors, but that according to denominational policy no ushers had the right to bar Negroes. This church was one of those which had been segregated ~~✓~~ on visits during the summer then had opened its doors and the few Negro students who attended had received more friendly comments than hostile ones. For the past several weeks the policy seemed to be determined by whichever set of ushers was at the door. Sometimes an unofficial set of ushers blocked the path of Negro students and turned them away before the regular ushers could speak. The pastor had asked us to let him know every time this happened. What we did not know that weekend was that this church, as well as the Methodist churches, was receiving particular attention from the racists forces. One of the two city alderman was a church member. He had sent a letter on city stationary to every church member telling them that they had better keep the church segregated because the police were going to start arresting Negroes at the church doors. The letter threatened to arrest any church member or minister who got in the way of police policy. Without knowing of this additional factor to the turmoil in the church we sent an integrated team of girls to the church, even thinking they

three girls in this group got out of their car and walked up to the church. They were met by the hostile team of usher-guards and told it was a segregated church. The police had followed them and instantly placed them under arrest. This all took place next to the outstanding physical feature of the church.

On the side lawn of the building, facing the street, was a bigger than life size statue of Christ with His arms ~~upl outstret~~ uplifted over a large globe of the earth. (At night the scene was lit by ~~spot~~ spotlights and the ~~globe~~ globe revolved.). The hostile ushers ~~blocked~~ blocked the path up to the main door where the friendly ushers (recognized by one of the girls who had been admitted to the church previously) waited. The police surrounded the girls, even standing between them and the Christ figure. The three girls quickly acted together and stepped the few feet past one of the ~~off~~ policeman and fell on their knees, their heads bowed, underneath the arms of Christ. Police ran up and grabbed them and ~~carried~~ pulled them away.\*

There were twelve people--an appropriate number--arrested at the Christian churches of Jackson, Mississippi, that Sunday morning.

*who/where?*

\* A white Movement photographer took pictures of the arrest at the feet of Christ, but the police saw him. Several held him while