

Sheriff Challenges F.B.I. to Arrest Rights Slayers

PHILADELPHIA, Miss., Nov. 27 (AP)—If the Federal Bureau of Investigation knows who killed three civil rights workers here last June, why doesn't it make arrests? Sheriff Lawrence Rainey asked today.

The Bureau announced Wednesday that it knew the identities of the murderers but lacked sufficient evidence to obtain a conviction.

"People wonder if they knew, why they haven't done something," the sheriff said in an interview. "About all we know is what we saw in the paper."

Relations have not been cordial between the sheriff and the bureau agents since the three civil rights workers, whites and a Negro — disappeared in this central Mississippi town last June.

Their bodies were found buried in a newly made earthen dam two months later. They had been shot to death with a .38 caliber weapon. A private autopsy report said the Negro also had been beaten probably fatally.

The sheriff said the agents had cooperated with him early in the investigation, then had cooled toward him.

"They never have even given me the size of the bullets that were in the bodies," the sheriff said.

About all the agents do here now is watch after civil rights workers who have flocked to Philadelphia in the wake of the slayings, the sheriff said.

If the sheriff was critical of the bureau, the bureau appeared to have little enthusiasm for him.

Accused by Hoover

"Around Philadelphia, Miss., law enforcement is practically nil and many times sheriffs and deputies participate in crime," the F.B.I. director, J. Edgar Hoover, said last week.

The murdered civil rights workers — Michael Schwerner, 24 years old, and Andrew Goodman, 20, both New Yorkers, and James Chaney, 22, a Negro from nearby Meridian — came here to investigate the burning of a Negro church and the beating of the church elders.

They disappeared June 21, touching off a massive search in which President Johnson took a personal interest. Their bodies were found Aug. 4 about 20 feet from the top of the red clay dam.

There were widespread rumors — never confirmed or denied — that a tipster had been paid a reward for information

leading to the discovery of the bodies.

"Nobody around here knows who got it [the reward] if they did," Sheriff Rainey said.

The sheriff was questioned repeatedly by the F.B.I. in the months that followed the slayings. At one point, he refused to answer further questions. "If you want to talk to me get a warrant," he told agents.

The Justice Department presented evidence gathered in the case to a Federal grand jury at Biloxi last month. After hearing Sheriff Rainey and a score of others from here, the jury recessed without taking any action in the case.

However, the sheriff and his deputy, Cecil Price, were indicted on a charge of violating a Negro's civil rights by beating him two years ago. That charge is pending.

Pressure Continues

JACKSON, Miss., Nov. 27 (AP)—The Council of Federated Organizations says pressure from segregationists is continuing.

"Most civil rights workers ate Thanksgiving turkey Thursday," a spokesman said here, "while white racists continued harassments in Greenwood, Vicksburg, Ruleville and Columbus."

He said a worker in Ruleville, Kathy Ruble of Los Angeles, was arrested there for trespassing while watching a Negro high-school football game.

Ruleville's Mayor C. M. Dorrough said the worker had not

been arrested, but had been advised to leave the school grounds.

In Columbus, the spokesman said, Fred Hamburger of 828 Greenwich Street, New York City, was jailed on two traffic charges.

Authorities at Columbus confirmed the jailing but referred all questions to a judge handling the case.

In Vicksburg, the council spokesman said, C. L. Ellis, a Negro who reportedly has helped civil rights workers in the area, filed a complaint with the city police that a former policeman threatened his life.

The ex-policeman cursed Mr. Ellis and advised him to "leave town for your own good," the spokesman said.

The Vicksburg Police Department said it knew nothing of the report.

In Greenwood, the council spokesman said, white men in a car shot into the home of a council director, Willie McGee, wounding his dog.

Farbstein Asks Data

Representative Leonard Farbstein asked the Attorney General's office in Washington yesterday to inquire about the safety of Mr. Hamburg.

Mr. Farbstein made the request in a telegram to the Civil Rights division of the department.

In the telegram the Manhattan Democrat said: "Fred Hamburg of my Congressional district incarcerated in Columbus

County Jail of Columbus, Miss., for improper registration of his automobile while working for Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee. Please check regarding his personal safety."

A spokesman for the New York Office of the committee said Mr. Hamburg had gone to Mississippi about two weeks ago to help install two-way radios in cars and offices throughout the state.

The radio network is being expanded so field workers can call their offices if they get into trouble, the spokesman said. Money for the citizens-band radios was raised in New York.

The office here said Seales Buckley, a Negro from Mississippi, also working on the radio network had been arrested with Mr. Hamburg. Mr. Hamburg's bail was set at \$400. Mr. Buckley was charged with vagrancy and held in \$200 bail, the spokesman said.

The office here sent bail money Thursday, the spokesman said. Mr. Hamburg's trial is scheduled for Monday and Mr. Buckley's for today.