

# MISSISSIPPI POLICE USE GAS TO ROUT RIGHTS CAMPERS

2,500 in Canton Are Chased  
While Trying to Put Up  
Tents in School Area

By GENE ROBERTS

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CANTON, Miss., June 23 — Mississippi highway patrolmen routed 2,500 civil rights demonstrators tonight with a thick fog of tear and irritant gas after the demonstrators had attempted to pitch camping tents on public school property.

"You will not be allowed to erect the tents—if you do you will be removed," troopers barked over microphones two minutes before hurling canister after canister of gas.

The troopers said they had acted at the request of city and county school and law enforcement officials, who said the marchers did not have permission to erect their tents on the school grounds.

The gas sent men, women and children running and crying from the tents they had been trying to erect for members of the rights march through Mississippi who arrived here today.

## Troopers Move In

From 25 to 50 white and Negro demonstrators buried their faces in the grass at McNeal Elementary School for Negroes and remained in the blanket of gas until 61 gun-wielding state troopers moved in with gas masks, grabbed them by the feet and hands and dragged them into the streets that surround the school.

Just before midnight the Rev. James McRee, head of the Madison County civil rights movement, led 500 angry marchers through the streets and called for a general strike and economic boycott by Negroes tomorrow to protest the highway patrol's action.

The highway patrol rushed an additional 50 patrolmen to Canton at midnight, but there were no disorders.

[In Washington, President Johnson, responding to a request by rights leaders for Federal marshals in Philadelphia, Miss., said he had been assured by Gov. Paul B. Johnson Jr. of Mississippi that state troopers would provide adequate protection for a rights rally there Friday.]

## 11 Marchers Arrested

Canton policemen and Madison County sheriff's deputies had earlier arrested 11 marchers, seized their camping tents and clubbed and kicked a Negro marcher who had rushed toward them with flailing arms.

There were no arrests tonight by the state troopers. One newsman said he saw a trooper shove the Rev. John Pader, a Roman Catholic priest from Chicago, and hit him with the butt of a shotgun.

When Robert Ellison, a freelance photographer of Gainesville, Fla., tried to get back on the schoolgrounds after the demonstrators had been routed, a city policeman tackled him

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Associated Press Wirephoto

**RIGHTS CAMPERS ROUTED WITH GAS:** Mississippi Highway Patrolmen and local police officers, carrying riot guns, advance on tents being pitched by civil rights

marchers after firing canisters of tear and irritant gas. The demonstrators, who had attempted to erect their tents on public school property, emerged running and crying.



# Police in Canton, Miss., Use Tear Gas to Rout 2,500 Trying to Put Up Tents for Civil Rights Marchers

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and knocked him into a ditch.

The demonstrators followed the advice of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who told them seconds before the canisters went off:

"There's no point in fighting back. Don't do it."

As the troopers moved in, the demonstrators were chanting, "Put up the tents, put up the tents."

After the marchers had been routed, the police picked up the tents and threw them into a truck and impounded the truck. This left the marchers with no shelter on a wet night. There had been drenching showers intermittently throughout the afternoon and the ground was soaked.

A Roman Catholic mission, the Holy Child Jesus Mission of the Trinitarian Fathers, headed locally by the Rev. Luke Mikschl, turned over its gymnasium to the marchers.

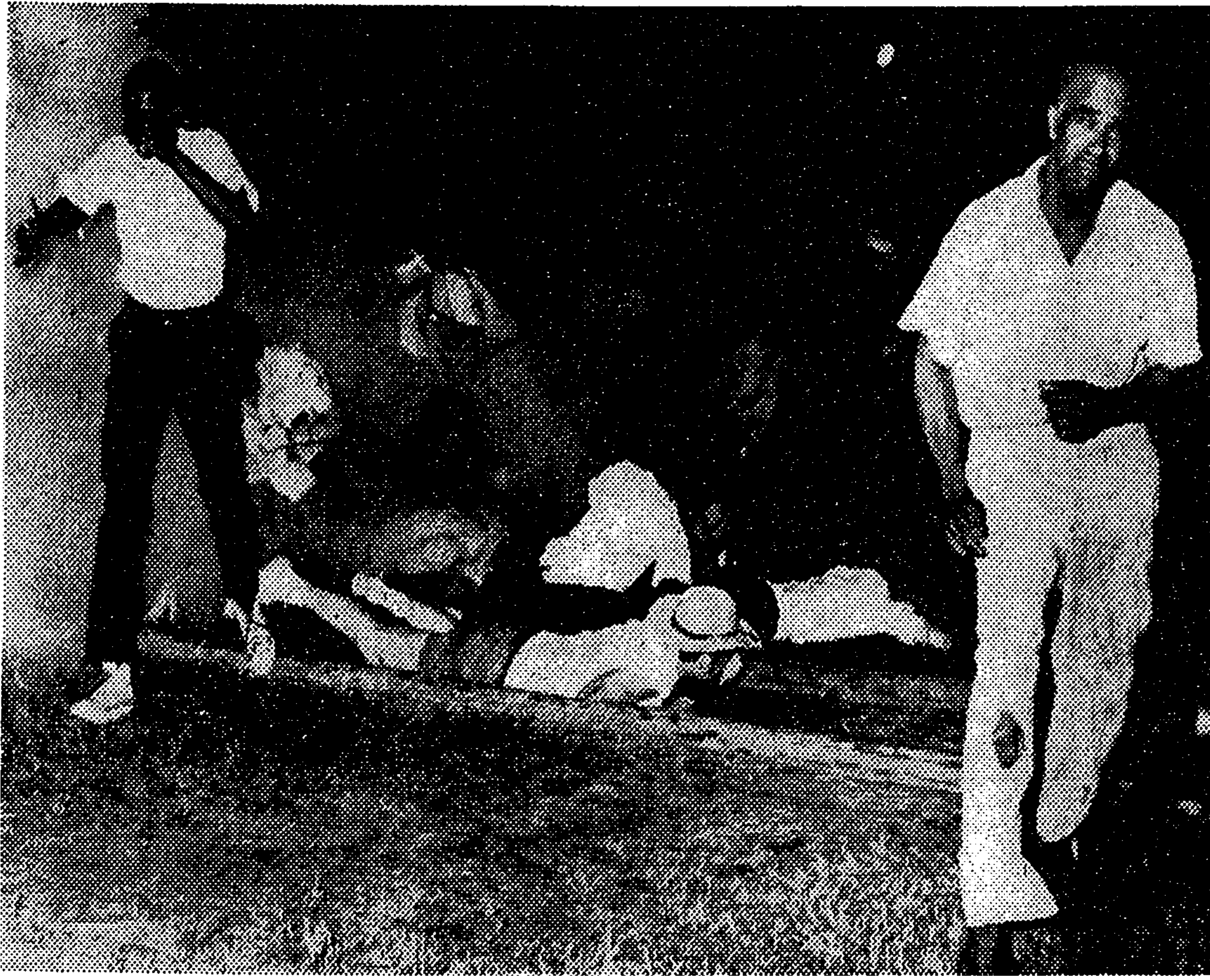
Until the gas drove them away, Dr. King, Floyd B. McKissick, national director of the Congress of Racial Equality, and Stokely Carmichael, chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, stood atop a covered van shouting instructions to the demonstrators.

"I don't know what they plan for us," Dr. King said, "but we aren't going to fight any state troopers. But we are willing to fill up all the jails in Mississippi."

"Don't fight back," shouted Mr. McKissick as he saw the tear gas canisters come into view. "Just take out your handkerchiefs and put them over your face."

The troopers moved with military precision. At 7:35 they marched to the windward side of the school grounds and waited until they saw the marchers begin putting up the tents. Then they began checking their guns with snaps and clicks that could be heard for several feet. Next, they moved closer to the demonstrators, pulling out their tear gas masks and moving in an even column.

At 8:40 they issued the warning and at 8:42 they began hurling conventional tear gas and another type of gas marked "riot grenade irritating agents." The demonstrators began to



Civil rights demonstrators, eyes streaming with tears from gas, bolt out of their tents

run, scattering in every direction, but the troopers continued to hurl the canisters.

One trooper shouted, "Let them have an escape route, let them run."

By 9 P.M., all the demonstrators were off the field and the troopers had rolled up the tents and put them in the van.

Watching the gas attack from the street was the Rev. Robert Castle of St. John's Episcopal Church in Jersey City.

"It was sick, evil and inhuman," he said. "It spoke of the sickness of our society. It made one wonder if democracy in Mississippi, and perhaps in the United States, was dead."

"Can't You See It?"

An unidentified white girl rushed up crying to 20 sheriff's deputies and city policemen who assisted the troopers: "Can't you see I'm a human being, just like you?" she asked. "Can't you see it? Can't you see it?"

"I couldn't see it, friend, I couldn't see it," a city policeman drawled to a reporter as the girl stumbled away.

Superintendent of Schools Lamar Fortenbury told a delega-

tion of marchers earlier in the day that school property "could be used only for school-sponsored events."

After the demonstrators had been routed, Madison County Attorney Robert Goza said:

"This was a rough decision, but these people had been told 20 times not to do it. This is not a campsite, this is public property dedicated to education. The Boy Scouts couldn't use it. The church couldn't use it."

"This was just a propaganda maneuver. I'm sure it was pre-planned."

"They only wanted to sleep here," a newspaperman said.

"No, they were going to make speeches," Mr. Goza replied. "Suppose they got away with this. They would want to take City Hall next."

Mr. Goza said the decision to call out the state troopers to disperse the marchers had been made by Canton and by Madison County officials.

"The state had nothing to do with this," he said.

At about 6 P.M., when 200 marchers hiked in from Route

16 on their way to Jackson, they gathered about 1,000 local Negroes for a rally at the Madison County Court House.

After the rally, Mr. Carmichael told the crowd:

"They said we couldn't pitch tents on our own black school-ground. We're going to do it now."

Then the demonstrators, singing, marched to the school property, about 15 blocks away, gathering still more recruits.

When they arrived at the school, Mr. Carmichael again addressed the crowd.

"The time for running has come to an end," he said. "Tell those white people all the scab Negroes are dead. They've killed all the rabbits."

At one point, as many as 3,500 persons were on the school property, but about 1,000 melted away when they saw the state troopers, who were wearing helmets and carrying a variety of weapons—carbines, automatic shotguns and pistols.

Hal York, a steward waiter at Lindy's Restaurant in New York City, was among the hundreds who were gassed. He said:

"I thought this type of thing

ended with Nazi Germany. All these police needed were swastikas."

Claire Maier of Philadelphia, Pa., a staff member of Fellowship House, an interdenominational human relations council, was one of the last marchers to be removed from the field.

"Police dragged me across the field and threw me into a ditch," she said.

Others injured in scuffles were Charles Meyer, a premedical student at Albright College in Pennsylvania, who was treated for a swollen cheek and X-rayed for possible rib fractures, and George Johnson, a 24-year-old Negro from Canton, who suffered a gash on the back of his head when a trooper hit him with a gun stock.

At least 12 demonstrators passed out from the gas fumes, including the 3-year-old son of Bill and Joan Johnson, a white couple from Toronto.

Assistant Attorney General John Doar stood on the school grounds and watched quietly as the troopers routed the crowd.

Just before the tear gas was fired, the Rev. Richard McSorley, S.J., professor of social justice at Georgetown University, said to Mr. Doar:

"Isn't there something you can do?"

"What can I do?" Mr. Doar replied. "Neither side will give an inch."

"This is the very state patrol that President Johnson said today would protect us," Dr. King said while trying to reassemble the demonstrators after they were routed. "Anyone who will use gas bombs on women and children can't and won't protect anybody."

Dr. King and Mr. McKissick were turned down in Federal District Court in Jackson by Judge Dan Russell when they requested a temporary restraining order that would have ordered state troopers, Neshoba County sheriff's deputies and the Philadelphia Police Department to provide them with protection tomorrow.

Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, meanwhile, were inquiring into a shooting incident in Canton last night in which a white man, Wallace Longreer, 26, of Canton suffered superficial gunshot wounds on his left arm.

C. O. Chinn, 46, Canton and

director for the Freedom Democratic party, was charged with "assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill."

The rights official, who was released under \$7,000 bond, denied that he had done the shooting.

He said that he and "several other" rights activists were "standing around" rights headquarters about 10:30 P.M. when "whites passed and threw a

homemade fire and smoke bomb that hit a car and bounced off."

Mr. Chinn said that he and the others had pursued the fleeing carload of whites and stopped their car at a service station, where they were met by a volley of soft-drink bottles.

Mr. Chinn was among those arrested for attempting to pitch tents on public school property.

Leaders of the rights march quickly raised \$1,550 bond and won the release of the tents, Mr. Chinn and 10 others, including Hosea Williams, a top aide to Dr. King, who were charged with trespassing.

The other marcher was charged with assault. He calls himself Glenn Freedom X, but was listed on the police blotter as Torrance Gurley, 25 years old, of Washington.

After a tent crew left the school property, Mr. Williams, accompanied by Mr. Chinn, returned to the school grounds to confront the police.

"This is our ground," said Mr. Chinn. "We get no cooperation from white people."

"If you don't move the truck, we'll tow it away and it will cost you," said Sheriff Jack C. Cauthen of Madison County.

Mr. Williams refused to move the truck, arguing that "our marchers don't have any other place to stay."