ALBANY, Ga., March 26 — As a prelude to the trial of ten Freedom Riders here, two deputy sheriffs dragged five people from the Albany courtroom in an attempt to enforce segregation manually.

The deputies knocked down Charles Sherrod, a Field Secretary from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, when he walked toward the front of the courtroom. The SNCC staffer was in court as a spectator. After knocking Sherrod to the floor, the deputies pulled him on his back to the rear of the courtroom. Three white men and a white woman who tried to sit with Sherrod in the "colored" seats in the rear, were also forcibly ejected from the courtroom. Once outside, one of the deputies threatened one of the white men, threw him down on the hall floor, and kicked him. One deputy also tried to scratch the man's eyes out, and threatened his life.

Three of the five were in court for trial. Bob Zellner, SNCC Field Secretary, Tom Hayden of Atlanta, and Por Larson of Copenhagen, Denmark, were among ten people arrested on December 10, 1961 outside of the Albany Train Station. They had just completed a Freedom Ride from Atlanta to Albany, but were arrested with two bystanders outside the Albany Train Station for "disorderly conduct, obstructing traffic, and refusing to obey an officer."

SNCC Field Secretary Charles Sherrod said that Chief Deputy Lamar Stewart accosted him roughly, knocked him to the floor, and dragged him by his arms to the rear. Then Stewart grabbed Tom Hayden and violently crushed him into the revolving door and out into the corridor. Stewart jolted Zellner from his seat and threw the SNCC Field Secretary into the aisle on his back. He then dragged him by the arms, with the aid of Deputy Jimmy Faircloth, down the aisle and through the revolving door, injuring his right knee and tearing his coat in two places. One deputy pulled Mrs. Sandra Hayden over a row of seats on her stomach, and then both pushed her through the door. Larson had his arms twisted behind him by the deputies who then hustled him through the door on his feet. SNCC Chairman Charles McDow wired Assistant Attorney General Burke Marshall and protested the "manhandling" of the five. McDow also wired the Danish Ambassador in Washington, and asked him to ask the Justice Department to provide protection for the Riders.