

STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE



M.F.D.P. GIVES LIVE LESSON IN DEMOCRACY

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), late in September, issued a report explaining its role and plans much more fully than the "Position Paper" released earlier (and reported in last month's Newsletter). Because the MFDP cannot be successful "without pressure from the rest of the country", it is important that friends of SNCC everywhere understand what it does and why. That's why this report is reprinted below, with a minimum of cutting imposed by space limitations.

On its challenge to the National Democratic Party Convention, the key points of the report are:

"Many friends of the FDP have expressed concern and confusion as to why the FDP delegation at Atlantic City refused to accept the decision of the Credentials Committee. (That decision gave Dr. Aaron Henry and Rev. Ed King votes as Delegates-At-Large, required that the Regular Democratic Party of Mississippi pledge support to Johnson-Humphrey in November, and provided for a committee to work on requiring that at the 1968 convention all delegates be chosen through processes which do not exclude Negro registered voters.)

"In analyzing why the FDP did not accept this compromise, it is important to understand first what the FDP delegation represented ... The FDP delegation was not simply an 'alternative' delegation chosen by Negro instead of white Mississippians. The FDP is not a Negro party, but an integrated party, open to all whites. It grows directly out of the civil rights movement in Mississippi. It came to Atlantic City demanding, not simply that Negroes be represented, but that racism

be ended - in Mississippi and in the Democratic Party.

"Moreover, the conditions under which the FDP delegation was chosen were certainly unique. Though the FDP delegation was chosen according to the laws of Mississippi, its role was only partially political. This is so because simply to take part in the political process of the state makes the Negro in Mississippi automatically a rebel against the segregated society. This means that he is in immediate and grave danger of losing his job, his home, and possibly his life ... This ... means that they are literally gambling their lives against the right of being seated in Atlantic City.

"The third thing that must be understood is that the FDP had the support that it needed to win the fight at Atlantic City. Within the Credentials Committee there was sufficient support to get the FDP's demands on the floor of the Convention ... On the floor, there was sufficient support to force a roll call vote. Once a roll call was allowed, most observers agreed that the FDP would have been seated. What prevented this was the most massive pressure from the White House, through the mediation of Hubert Humphrey ... This kind of dictation is what Negroes in Mississippi face and have always faced, and it is precisely this that they are learning to stand up against.

"The specific reasons for the rejection of the Committee's decision follow:

1. Supporters of the compromise argued that the two seats would have great symbolic value. But 68 symbols would have been a lot better than two. We must stop playing the game of accepting token

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LOCAL AFFAIRS

"Mississippi Freedom Project - Stanford" is a new organization recently formed by volunteers returned from the Mississippi Summer Project and other students on the Stanford campus. Its purpose is to (1) interest and recruit students for civil rights work in the South; (2) raise funds for the on-going Mississippi Freedom Project; and (3) develop campus programs to prepare students for civil rights work. These programs will include Negro history, the curricula of Freedom Schools and first-aid and health education programs for Southern communities.

The new group was launched last month at a campus meeting addressed by Dr. Aaron Henry, chairman of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. Dr. Henry emphasized that "for the Mississippi Negro, the civil rights movement is more than a matter of dignity, more than a matter of being allowed to buy a hamburger at a lunch-stand or to rent the bridal suite at the Waldorf-Astoria. It is purely and simply a matter of survival."

Officers of the Stanford group are: Judy Walborn, chairman; Chris Wilson, administrative assistant; Carolyn Egan, secretary; and Geoff Smith, treasurer.

Mid-Peninsula Friends of SNCC begins with a party at the home of Clarence Heller, 98 Faxon, in Atherton. Be there on November 7, Saturday, at 8:00 p.m. - - and join.

BOARD MEETING -

Any interested person is invited to attend a San Francisco Friends of SNCC board meeting on Tuesday, November 10 at 8:30 p.m. at 584 Page Street, San Francisco. John Dearman will assume the chairmanship.

LAST CALL:

Registration for the westcoast Friends of SNCC conference, November 13 to 15, in San Francisco, is still open. Deadline: November 9.
Mail or take your registration form to the regional SNCC office,
584 Page Street, San Francisco 94117, with \$3.00 fee (\$2.00 students).

CAN FREEDOM GET TO POOR WHITE FOLKS?

This summer the freedom movement took the first stumbling step toward organizing the white poor in Mississippi. Even though the surface hasn't been scratched, this trial made sharply evident the urgent need, despite fantastic difficulties and dangers, to develop a full-scale program, in poor white communities.

Bruce Maxwell, staff worker in the White Folks Program, calls it "a near impossible task" that "both politically and in human terms, the freedom movement has no other choice but to develop ... (emphasis added)". His frank and informative report builds up a compelling case.

"Politically, the freedom movement cannot succeed as a Negro movement ... (because) a solid black vote can never be a political majority of the state or the South." A little over 42 percent of Mississippi and about 20 percent of the South is Negro. Moreover, a racial political order would "create nothing less than a racial war among the people ... Hopes for human rights would suffer a destructive blow if race were to block the possibility of the South solving its problems of poverty."

In human terms, he shows, from the U. S. Census of Mississippi, that "the white poor (is) chained to the Negro at the bottom of the economic ladder." Of the state's population earning \$2,000 and less in annual family incomes, 28 percent are Negro and 13 percent are white. "Almost one-third of the really poor folks in the state are white."

On these grounds Maxwell challenges those "who share the dream of an interracial movement of the poor, to establish programs in white communities in twenty counties by the end of next year." He proposes that "The movement must go to them and help them develop their own leadership rather than demand that the moderates and the liberals fight their political battles for them. The greatest thing about the freedom movement in Mississippi (and what the rest of the country should consider very seriously) is that the people themselves are voicing their own political needs." (emphasis added)

In order to get going on the job Maxwell projects, the White Folks Program must have "an influx of volunteers in February" — people with rugged guts and an express understanding of the conditions peculiar to white southern poverty and hostility. With sustained leadership and competent personnel, matching Maxwell's determination, the freedom movement can succeed where "the populist movement and the labor movement both failed": to resolve the issue of race.

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recognition for real change and of allowing the opposition to choose a few 'leaders' to represent the people at large — especially if ... the opposition is all white and the people are all Negro. If the people are going to be heard in this country, then we must make the country talk with and listen to them, and not a handpicked committee. The people sent 68 representatives that they chose in open convention. The delegation could not violate that trust.

2. The first provision of that compromise was that the Regular delegation would be fully seated and recognized. The FDP did not go to Atlantic City to vote for a proposal which would recognize the Regular party as the Democratic representative in Mississippi. The FDP came to unseat the regulars because they don't represent the people of Mississippi ...

3. The compromise made pretense at setting up means of challenging delegations in 1968 from states which interfere with Negro participation in the party. But the Credentials committee, in private talks with the FDP delegation, said that it would not guarantee a single registered voter added to the lists in the next four years. Less than 6 percent of voting-age Negroes are now registered in the state...

4. Some supporters of the compromise argued that the FDP was representing all Negroes in the country and the two seats offered would mean a lot to them in the Northern cities, where rioting has been taking place. But the 68 persons came to Atlantic City to represent the Negroes of Mississippi and not the country as a whole ...

5. The compromise ... offered the FDP nothing in the way of permanent recognition, patronage, official status or a guarantee of participation in the 1968 convention. The compromise was a completely one-shot affair; the FDP is not.

6. The committee set up to review such matters for the 1968 convention has no official status or power with regard to the 1968 convention. It may look good on paper, but its strength lies there on the paper and nowhere else.

7. ...The compromise was not designed to deal with the issues raised by the FDP in challenging the regular delegation. The FDP delegation came to Atlantic City to raise the issue of racism, not simply to demand recognition. It could not accept a token decision which had as its goal the avoidance of the question of racism.

"Finally, it must be understood that the FDP delegation ... came demanding full rights, for themselves and for 1,000,000 other human beings. They would have accepted any honorable compromise between reasonable men. The test was not whether the FDP could accept 'political realism', but rather whether the Convention and the National Democratic Party could accept

the challenge presented by the FDP. The Convention and the National Democratic Party failed that test."

On its plans for the future, the MFDP report continued:

"Under the impetus of the Convention Challenge at Atlantic City, the Freedom Democratic Party has undergone great growth and solidification throughout Miss..

"The main effort of the FDP in the next six weeks will be a Freedom Vote ... held October 31 and November 1 and 2 ... open to all people, Negro and white, registered or unregistered, who are at least 21 and residents of Mississippi ...

"The FDP is also supporting the Johnson-Humphrey ticket in the regular election November 3 ... the only major group in Mississippi (to do so) ...

"The FDP is supporting Johnson and Humphrey because it recognizes the importance of a Johnson-Humphrey victory in November; and because it believes, despite Atlantic City, in the ultimate ability of the Democratic Party to meet the challenge of the FDP and eliminate racism from its ranks. It also knows that support for Johnson will help in its fight against the Regular Democratic Party because of the latter's opposition to the candidates and platform of the National Party.

"But since 94% of Mississippi's Negroes of voting age still are not registered, the FDP can only offer token support for candidates in the regular election ... The importance of the Freedom Vote is that it gives to Mississippi's disenfranchised Negroes the chance to participate in politics and indicate their political preferences.

"The FDP hopes to have more votes cast for its candidates in the Freedom Vote than are cast for the opposition candidates in the regular election. In this way, the Freedom Vote will show, not only that Mississippi's Negroes would vote if they were allowed to do so, but that the outcome would be radically different. It would also show that Negroes under such circumstances would be elected to public offices in Mississippi, if the Negro half of the state's population were allowed to vote.

"The 1964 Freedom Vote will lead to further challenges on the national level. In January, the FDP will attempt to have the Mississippi representatives to Congress unseated, on the grounds that they were chosen through a discriminatory voting procedure. The FDP will show through the Freedom Vote that some, at least, of the regular candidates would not have been elected if Negroes had the right to vote. If this effort fails, the FDP will ask the Democratic caucus to strip all Mississippi representatives of their seniority in Congress. This will also be done on the grounds of voting discrimination, and on the grounds of regular party disloyalty..."

TEEN-AGERS GIVE MISSISSIPPI A FREE PRESS

Most Freedom Schools have student newspapers. The average editor and writer for these papers is about 13-15 years old. Their articles give news and opinions not likely to appear in the established Mississippi press.

In the McComb "Freedom Journal" a 15-year-old thanked the Freedom School for enabling "me to know that I can get along with the whites and they can get along with me without feeling inferior to each other."

Two young students in the Holly Springs Freedom School collaborated on an article describing their home town: "The working conditions are bad. The wages are very low. The amount paid for plowing a tractor all day is three dollars ... The white man buys most of the supplies used for the annual crops, but the Negro contributes all the labor. In the fall of the year when the crop is harvested and the cotton is sold to market, the white man gives the Negro what he thinks he needs, without showing the Negro a record of the income the white man has collected for the year. This process of farming has become a custom. This way of livelihood is not much different from slavery."

In the Mt. Zion "Freedom Press", a girl wrote that she attended its Freedom School because "I want to become a part of history also."

The August 22 issue of Shaw's "Freedom Flame" ran a lead story describing

the integration of the public library: "After several days of non-violence workshops, three of Shaw M.S.U. (Mississippi Student Union) students went to the public library here in our town. The three students were Eddie Short, James Johnson, and Willie Wright, along with two summer volunteers Grace Morton and Mel Fahnestock. They checked out recent novels and books on sports and electronics. After 20 minutes James Johnson left the library followed by four policemen. Ten minutes later the others left with the two volunteers followed by more police, while Sheriff Capps and other groups of police and a number of bystanders watched with appalled and confused expressions."

Students of the Palmer's Crossing (Hattiesburg) Freedom School drafted their own "Declaration of Independence," which declares to begin with: "In this course of human events, it has become necessary for the Negro people to break away from the customs which have made it very difficult for the Negro to get his God-given rights." Following a simple and eloquent statement on the sovereignty of people over government and a list of 17 grievances, the declaration concludes: "We, therefore, the Negroes of Mississippi assembled, appeal to the government of the state, that no man is free until all men are free. We do hereby declare independence from the unjust laws of Mississippi which conflict with the United States Constitution."

Freedom Here Too SNCC Tells UC

On October 2, while students were fighting for free speech on UC's Berkeley campus, Bay Area Friends of SNCC gave them support in a public statement censuring the University's anti-free speech regulations. Issued by twelve local SNCC leaders, the statement read:

"We the undersigned members of the Bay Area Friends of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, are deeply concerned over the University of California's new regulations limiting free speech on the University's campuses.

"We regret the University Administration's attempts to separate discussion of issues from participation in social action. Is it the University's position that a student can discuss conditions in Mississippi but not urge his fellow students to go to Mississippi as volunteer civil rights workers? Will the University allow on the campus recruitment for community service abroad but not at home?

"Regarding the issue of fund-raising, we note that funds are raised on the campus for aid to underdeveloped countries abroad. Will this be allowed while fund-raising for Mississippi community centers and freedom schools is denied? Student groups at dozens of colleges and universities across the country raise funds for Mississippi on their campuses. Can we allow our own great State University to deny its students the same right?

"Rather than seeking to stifle student protest, we should encourage it. We may disagree with a particular student group in a particular action it might take, but how insignificant such disagreement is when compared to the significance of the fact that students of the '60's will never be spoken of as a silent generation."

The statement was signed by: Mrs. Robert Lauter, John Dearman, Rev. Thomas Dietrich, Rev. William Grace and Dick Lynden (of S. F. Friends of SNCC); Dorothy Weller (of San Jose Friends of SNCC); Mrs. Gail Brown, Gene Opton and Mrs. Marvin Shibrot (of East Bay Friends of SNCC); Mrs. Donald Gillis and Mrs. Mary B. Moore (of Marin County Friends of SNCC); and Jeff Freed (of S. F. State College Friends of SNCC).

MOSES TO LEAD REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Robert Moses, director of the Mississippi Summer Project, will be the main speaker at the November 13-15 regional SNCC conference in San Francisco.

A SNCC field secretary and director of the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), Moses first went into Mississippi in 1961, with five people, working in Pike, Humphreys and Amite Counties, where he initiated the voter registration movement in the State.

Bob Moses is 29 and holds an M. A. in philosophy from Harvard University. He left a teaching job in New York City to become active in the movement.

Conference Plans Roll On

The Western Regional Friends of SNCC Conference is moving ahead with plans and support. Workshops on political support for SNCC will be led by Willie Brown, Jr., Assemblyman to be from San Francisco and by Mervyn Dymally, Los Angeles Assemblyman. The workshop for social workers will be led by Dave Fogel, Director of the Marin County Juvenile Hall and recently returned from Mississippi. Professional fund-raisers from the Bay Area will be leading special workshops on fund-raising for SNCC.

Registrations are coming in from Los Angeles, Boulder, Seattle, Sacramento, Portland, San Jose and around the Bay Area. WHERE IS YOURS?

✓ for your information:

SNCC: The New Abolitionists, by Howard Zinn, Beacon Press, \$4.95. Inquire at your bookstore or order from East Bay Friends of SNCC.

"Upside-Down Justice", an excellent pamphlet documenting the Albany (Ga.) cases, the U. S. Justice Department's prosecution against civil rights leaders. Order from the National Committee for the Albany Defendants, 532 Mercer Street, Albany, Georgia, enclosing a contribution.

Where Are Your Blue Chip Stamps?

Your blue chip stamps are not coming in fast enough. Do you know what they mean to SNCC? About 3,000 books of stamps will get a bus or a truck. Transportation is one of the most important lines of communication. SNCC has all kinds of communicating to do: Staff and volunteers have to get places, from one end of Mississippi to the other, to keep freedom on the move. Contributions of food, clothing and books have to be trucked from the

North to southern distribution centers. In fact, it's because of the lack of motor vehicles that the Mississippi Project has had to call a halt to donations of books and clothing for the time being. If Friends of SNCC make a full-fledged campaign of collecting blue chip stamps from neighbors, people at work, relatives, and friends - a mass of stamps will add up to the autos, busses and trucks that SNCC needs. Civil rights moves faster on wheels.

DAY BY DAY IN MISS.

The "Running Summary of Incidents" is a log of everyday events in the various towns of Mississippi, recorded by the Mississippi Summer Project, from June 16 through August 26. Here are a few sample days, exactly as noted in the 26-page summary:

July 31 — "Shaw: Three white volunteers made to leave Negro high school cafeteria where they had been invited to a fund-raising supper. They were warmly received by students and supervising teacher, but were told by principal they must first secure permission of superintendent to enter school. One volunteer called this an 'excellent demonstration of the fact that not only Negroes but whites also are not free in Mississippi.'

Aug. 2 — "Greenwood: Local resident arrested today while in his front yard. He reported that police car drove by, an officer made obscene gestures, the Negro laughed, the car backed up, and the Negro was arrested for profanity. Bond: \$50."

Aug. 3 — "Clarksdale: White Church of Christ minister and white summer volunteer refused admission to white Church of Christ. Church members felt they were 'exploiting the church.'

Aug. 4 — "Shaw: Negro schools closed indefinitely following student boycott. This was triggered by Negro principal's request that three white volunteers leave cafeteria where they'd been invited for school fund-raising dinner last Friday. Students declared boycott of cafeteria, asked Student Union to assemble their grievances, then called a general boycott of the schools which was supported by 75 per cent of students. The Union called the boycott 'because

of the inadequate education we're getting.' Its demands included up-to-date texts, a well-stocked library with Negro history materials, workshops and laboratories, foreign languages and other courses needed for college entrance. Principal relayed these requests to white school superintendent, then notified students schools would be closed. Heavily armed sheriff's deputies in helmets soon arrived on scene."

Aug. 12 — "Charleston: 24 Negro citizens attempted to register at Tallahatchie Co. Courthouse here yesterday. Approximately 93 armed whites gathered. Cars and trucks with guns prominently displayed were double- and triple-parked in front of courthouse. Potential registrants were able to take test quickly as registrar is under Federal injunction to cease discrimination. Sheriff also under Federal injunction restraining him from intimidating Negro applicants."

Ruleville: Students at local Negro school organizing to force teachers to register to vote. Only one is registered. They are also pressing to improve school conditions, and to stop practice of students financing school's operations. Classes reportedly have class field days when students go out in field and pick cotton to raise money for school."

Aug. 18 — "McComb: After series of bombings and intimidation, first Southwest Mississippi Freedom Day was peacefully conducted here today. 25 potential Negro registrants went to courthouse, 23 of whom permitted to take test. Registrar processed one applicant every 45 minutes. Police and FBI agents were at Pike Co. courthouse in Magnolia throughout day.

(Of Pike County's 35,063 Negro voting-age citizens, 207 (3%) registered, as contrasted to 9,989 registered whites representing 82.1%). Over 200 local Negro citizens attended mass meeting here last night to protest terrorist activities brought against Negro citizens and voter registration workers in this hardcore area."

"Yazoo City: Two local Negro citizens today filed applications for cards at local library here without incident. Police talked with two 'politely' and later contacted mother of one."

Aug. 19 — "Natchez: Owner of house rented by SNCC workers here has indicated he does not want to rent it to civil rights workers for fear of bombing. Company holding house's insurance indicated it does not want to continue the policy on the house.

Aug. 23 — "McComb: Local white citizen held for 3 hours last night by five heavily armed, hooded white men. He is described by McComb SNCC spokesmen as 'poor; his friends are all Negroes and he lives in Negro neighborhood.'

Aug. 25 — "Moss Pt.: Owner of local laundromat here refused to desegregate facilities when presented with petition by local Negro citizens. He reportedly stated that he realized Negroes constituted 80% of his business, but that whites would refuse to wash there if partition removed. He reportedly told Negroes that 'Communists are behind this whole thing,' and that 'Negroes and whites had a good relationship in Moss Pt. until few months ago when COFO workers came in.' (On Aug. 26, six Negroes arrested for urging fellow citizens not to patronize the laundromat.)

SNCC FILM FOR RENT OR SALE

Church groups, civic clubs, trade unions, business groups, schools, political clubs and discussion groups can rent or buy "A Dream Deferred", a film that shows the daily life of millions of Southern Negroes and SNCC's work with them in voter registration, community centers and freedom schools. It should be on the agenda of all programs concerned with social justice. The film may be rented or purchased from Bay Area Friends of SNCC, 584 Page St., San Francisco. Rental: \$10. Sale: \$60.

FRIENDS OF SNCC IN YOUR AREA



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