

# THE STUDENT VOICE

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STUDENT VOICE, INC.

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## MFDP TO CHALLENGE CONGRESSIONAL SEATS

MILESTON, MISS. - The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party has decided to challenge the seating of four Mississippi legislators in the U.S. Congress.

The decision was made at a state-wide meeting of the MFDP here in the newly dedicated Mileston Community Center Oct. 18, after Henry Reeves, MFD county chairman for Benton County made the motion. The plan was seconded by Hartman Turnbow, Holmes County leader who called for the use of "every available legal resource" to aid the challenge.

The MFDP decision was partly triggered by the refusal of Mississippi Secretary of State Heber Ladner to accept petitions signed by 1000 voters asking that FDP candidates be placed on the ballot for the Nov. 3 elections. The Freedom candidates contesting the elections are : Aaron Henry, Council of Federated Organizations and state NAACP chairman who is running against Sen. Stennis for the Senate, Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, vice-chairman of the FDP delegation to the Democratic National Convention, who is challenging Rep. Whitten for the Congressional seat from the 2nd District, Mrs. Annie Devine running in the 4th and Mrs. Victoria Gray in the 5th District.

The three FDP candidates for

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# FREEDOM VOTE IS OPEN TO ALL

## Balloting On Oct. 30 - Nov. 2



Lawrence Guyot addresses the executive committee of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

JACKSON, MISS. - Last minute plans for a state-wide "Freedom Vote" in which all Mississippians will be able to vote are being completed here.

Sponsored jointly by the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and the Council of Federated Organizations, the Freedom Vote will include on its ballot the Republican and Democratic Party's candidates for President and Vice-President as well as local Democratic and Freedom Democratic Party candidates for Congress.

The election will be open to any resident of Mississippi who is over 21 and who has lived in the state for two years.

According to MFDP chairman Lawrence Guyot, the Freedom Election "will give local Negroes and whites a chance between the segregationist candidates of the closed regular Mississippi Democratic Party and a slate of MFDP candidates. It will also give the majority of the state's voting age Negroes a chance to participate in the election process for the first time since Reconstruction."

COFO officials announced that over 50 volunteers had already arrived in the state to assist voter registration workers on the 20 COFO projects and that "at least 75 more are expected this week."

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## YOU CAN VOTE

### Who? Where? What? When?

Who can vote in the Freedom Vote? Anyone, white or Negro, who is 21 years old and who has lived in Mississippi for two years.

Where do you cast your Freedom Vote? At a school, church, in a "Votemobile". Check with your local COFO office or with members of the Freedom Democratic Party.

Who can you vote for in the Freedom Vote? For President L.B. Johnson, a Democrat, or for Barry Goldwater, a Republican. You can also vote for the Freedom Vote candidates, who could not get on the ballot in the general election.

When can you vote in the Freedom Vote? On Oct. 21, Nov. 1 and Nov. 2. If you are a registered voter, you can also vote in the general election, Nov. 3.

## NEGROES REFUSED PLACE ON BALLOT

JACKSON, MISS. - The Mississippi State Election Commission has refused to place the names of three Negroes on the November 3 general election ballot. All are candidates of the Freedom Democratic Party (FDP).

The commission - composed of Governor Paul Johnson, Attorney General Joe Patterson and Secretary of State Heber

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# FREEDOM VOTE CANDIDATES



MRS. FANNIE LOU HAMER

The Freedom Democratic Party candidate for the 2nd District seat is Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer of Ruleville. Mrs. Hamer is 46 years old and lives with her husband and adopted children in Sunflower County, site of Senator James O. Eastland's plantation.

Mrs. Hamer filed an application to register to vote on August 31, 1962 and was dismissed that same day from her job as timekeeper on a cotton plantation, a job she had held for 18 years. Ten days later 16 shots were fired into the house in which she was staying.

Mrs. Hamer has worked full-time in the citizenship-teaching programs of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. While returning from a SNCC workshop on June 13, 1963 Mrs. Hamer was arrested on a charge of disorderly conduct and severely beaten while in jail. She has identified the officers of the Mississippi Highway State Patrol who were responsible for her beating. The beating aggravated a childhood disorder leaving one leg partially paralyzed and she has never fully recovered from its effects.

Her opponent in the 2nd District is Rep. Jamie Whitten, chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee of the Committee on Agriculture. The district has a Negro population comprising 59% of the total but only a small fraction of voting age Negroes are registered.

In a recent campaign speech, Mrs. Hamer summed up the political needs of her district: "Politically this district remains isolated from the mainstream of American life. Conditions currently prevailing in Mississippi are horrible. We



MRS. ANNIE DEVINE

Mrs. Annie Devine was born in Mobile, Ala., and moved to Canton, Miss. when she was two-years-old. She has two years of university credit from Tougaloo College. Mrs. Devine served as a teacher in Madison County for 8 years. She has also worked as debit manager for a life insurance company. In June 1964, Mrs. Devine, long a leader in her community, joined the staff of COFO in a full-time capacity. Mrs. Devine believes in the need for "vigorous local participation in politics if Negroes are to receive their rights in Mississippi."

"The real keys to freedom are organization and education. We have registered 500 Negroes in Madison County but there are more than 10,000 qualified to vote. The reason the White Citizens Councils are so powerful in this state is because they are so well organized. It is time that the forces of justice and emancipation become as well organized, as the forces of injustice and oppression."

"And just as important, we must become better educated. This means political education and citizenship training for adults, and it means long, hard hours of studying by our younger generation. We want freedom, not only for our children, but for ourselves, now."

"But if we are to participate in our society as equals, and even to advance as individuals, we must concentrate on education with all the effort and all the determination with which we seek out freedom."

have little industry and few towns. The dominant economic system is sharecropping and we have the lowest family income level in the nation. And we know, in our hearts, we want to change these conditions."



AARON HENRY

Aaron Henry, 46-year-old Clarksdale, Miss. druggist, is the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party candidate for the Senate against incumbent John Stennis. Chairman of the Council of Federated Organizations and the Mississippi NAACP, Mr. Henry is married and has a daughter in Clarksdale.

"Doc" Henry, as he is affectionately known to Negroes all over the state, has been actively engaged in the civil rights movement in Mississippi for many years. In December of 1961 he was arrested for organizing a boycott against Clarksdale stores which refused to use courtesy titles in dealing with Negro patrons. In June of 1963, along with 70 persons he picketed every segregated church in Clarksdale. On July 8 he was enjoined from participating in "all meetings and congregations." He was arrested three weeks later and served one week on a chain gang for "parading without a permit."

Because of his outspoken advocacy of Negro civil rights, "Doc" Henry is reputed to be high on the assassination lists of local hate organizations. His home in Clarksdale has had to be guarded by armed men because of repeated threats against his life and family.

In 1963 Henry ran for Governor of Mississippi on a Freedom ticket on which the Rev. Edwin King ran for Lt. Governor and Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer for the U.S. Senate. Mr. Henry was elected chairman of the delegation sent by the Freedom Democratic Party to the national convention in Atlantic City last August.

He received his degree in pharmacy at Xavier University.



MRS. VICTORIA GRAY

Mrs. Victoria Gray, the 37-year-old Freedom Democratic Party candidate for Representative of the 5th District in Mississippi, lives with her and three children in Hattiesburg.

Mrs. Gray, who opposes Democratic incumbent William Colmer for the 5th District seat was educated at Wilberforce University (now Central College) in Wilburforce, Ohio. She was a school teacher and business woman state supervisor of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's citizenship program and is a member of the SCLC board of directors. She also serves on the General Board of Education of the Methodist Church and is director of COFO's intensified voter registration program in Hattiesburg.

Mrs. Gray began attempts to register to vote in Forrest County in 1959. It required four years and the agency of a three judge panel of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals before she was finally registered in July of 1963.

National Committeewoman for the MFDP, Mrs. Gray was one of the first people to house workers from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) when they first set up projects in Hattiesburg in 1961. In the regular Democratic primary held June 2 of this year, Mrs. Gray opposed John Stennis for nomination to the seat once held by arch-racist Theodore Bilbo.

Anthony Gray, husband of the candidate is by profession a plumber who cannot work at his trade because Hattiesburg will not license Negro plumbers. Before last June he had worked for the Department of Water Works in the city of Hattiesburg but was dismissed from his job when it was learned that Mrs. Gray was entering the primary.

## Workers Arrested On Syndicalism Charge

BELZONI, MISS. - Four men including two field secretaries from the Atlanta-based Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) - are being held under \$1,000 bail each on charges of "criminal syndicalism" here.

The four were jailed Oct. 15 as they were walking down a street in Belzoni's Negro neighborhood.

They are William Ware, from Minneapolis, Minn.; Robert Bass, Ellis Jackson and Joe Louis Stigler.

The "criminal syndicalism" statute was passed by the state legislature last spring shortly before a state-wide Mississippi Summer Project began. The law prohibits anyone teaching or advocating "the commission of crime, violence or force as a means of accomplishing or in affecting a change in agriculture or industrial ownership or control or in affecting any political or social change."

The new law has been used only twice, in Belzoni and in McComb, where 15 Negroes are still behind bars following their arrest Sept. 21.

Witnesses said the four youths were approached by a Belzoni policeman who told them they were wanted a police headquarters. When they refused to enter the car, they were placed under arrest.

## Four Whites Held For Attacks On Workers

NATCHEZ, MISS. - State and Federal authorities are holding four white men on charges of "assault and battery with intent to kill" two civil rights workers.

The four are charged with shooting at and beating George Greene, a Negro worker for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and Bruce Payne, a white volunteer worker from Arlington, Va.

They are charged with beating Payne, a graduate student at Yale University, in a Port Gibson service station on Oct. 31, 1963, and with firing three shots at a car carrying Greene and Payne near Fayette, Miss. One shot lodged in the car, but neither man was injured.

Payne was in Mississippi last fall to work on a mock gubernatorial election sponsored by the Council of Federated Organ-

## Illiterates Vote, Negroes Barred

GREENVILLE, MISS. - Some white people who can't read or write are registered voters in Sunflower County, Federal court testimony revealed last week.

One white voter testified that although his name is on the rolls he didn't "know how it got there." Another white voter said he'd never seen a registration form, and another said he'd received help from Sunflower County registrars.

Sunflower County is the home of Sen. James O. Eastland (D.-Miss.). Only 114 Negroes from an eligible total of 13,524 are voters, while over 50% of the eligible whites are registered.

Four Negro witnesses testified they had failed the test, while one white woman, who has passed testified she couldn't define the word "imprisonment," even though she lived at Parchman, site of the state prison.

The testimony came at a non-jury trial that began Oct. 12. The U.S. Department of Justice is seeking an injunction against Sunflower County circuit clerk and registrar Cecil Campbell forbidding him from discriminating against Negro voting applicants.

The Atlanta-based Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) has been conducting a voter registration drive in Sunflower County for two years.

In its suit, the government maintains that Negroes are generally required to fulfill voter requirements specified by state law while whites are generally required to meet either less stringent requirements or no requirements at all.

izations. COFO is sponsoring a similar campaign this fall.

The four whites, all Natchez men, are being held in Jackson following their arrest here Oct. 22.

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Federal government has given the city of Philadelphia, Miss. - scene of the murder of three civil rights workers this past summer - \$33,400 in Federal funds.

The money, which will help construct an airport and related facilities, was awarded by the Federal Aviation Agency under the Federal Aid Airport Program and is part of \$626,502 which has just been awarded to seven Mississippi cities.



## Mileston Opens Community Center

MILESTON, MISS. - An overflow crowd of 300 people crowded into and around the auditorium of a newly erected community center to hear speeches from leaders of the Holmes County Movement and candidates of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party speak in the opening ceremonies of the new structure. The community center, a result of the Mississippi Summer Project of COFO, is the brainchild of Californians Abe Asheroff and Jim Boebel. Asheroff and Boebel, Los Angeles carpenters, decided to work with a Delta community in the erection of a community center as a part of the Summer Project. Funds for materials of the center were contributed by residents of Los Angeles and the center was built by Asheroff and Boebel with the help of the local community.

The modern one story wooden frame building is set on the edge of a soy bean field on land leased to the community by a local Negro farmer.

Rev. J. J. Russell of Mileston performed the ceremony, dedicating the building to the work for freedom in Holmes County (Negro population 87,000), using the Biblical text "I have surely built a house for you, and a habitation for you to dwell in forever."

Abe Asheroff, the white California carpenter, who with Mrs. Asheroff and Jim Boebel raised the money for the center, and directed the work said: "What I hope will be said of this center is that in the summer of 1964 when white folks in Mississippi were burning down some 30 churches, the Negro folks of Mississippi and

their white friends were building two community centers." Another community center was built this summer in Carthage in Leake County.

Asheroff also said that the work of the center was just beginning. "It can be the freedom center of Holmes county. It can be regarded as an offering from friends in California who as long as Negro are held in bondage in Mississippi, are held in shame and guilt."

Boebel told the crowd that he hoped the building would serve as a reminder that all white people were not oppressors, referring directly to the State Patrol cars which were cruising on the highway outside.

Hartman Tornbow of Tchula, chairman of the Holmes County Movement told the crowd that the building would be used in the struggle to secure justice for Negroes in Mississippi. He urged the crowd to participate in the Freedom elections because if "If we seek first the ballot boxes then all will added to us. It is time for us to join together to help ourselves as we joined together to build this center." Turnbow said.

Mrs. Victoria Gray from Hattiesburg, called the building "a labor of love, not merely a building but a dream made reality, a reality above price." She urged the people of Holmes County to spread out into neighboring counties in support of the MFD candidates and voter registration.

The white wooden frame building contains a large auditorium, two bathrooms, a kitchen and library containing 7000 volumes donated by friends in the North.

# MISS. BALLOT

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Ladner - said Oct. 6 the three did not have the required number of signatures of registered voters on their petitions.

Actually, the petitions contained more than the needed number of signatures, but many county registrars refused to certify them. Also many registrars acknowledged neither the U.S. 24th Amendment nor state laws passed last spring to implement that amendment. They demanded prior payment of poll taxes as a requirement for certification.

Atty. Gen. Patterson called the three petitions "ridiculous." The three candidates are Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer of Ruleville, Dr. Aaron Henry of Clarksdale and Mrs. Annie Devine of Canton.

They and two other Negroes - Mrs. Victoria Gray of Hattiesburg and Harold Roby of Canton - will run against white opposition in a Freedom Vote Oct. 31 through Nov. 2. The Freedom Vote will be a supplement to the regular national election -- the only difference being that all residents will be eligible to vote regardless of color. Civil rights leaders hope that this will bring attention to the gross inequalities of the Mississippi electoral system.

Mrs. Hamer was vice-chairman of the Mississippi Delegation of the Mississippi FDP which tried unsuccessfully at the Democratic National Convention to take the seats held by the all-white regular Mississippi Democratic Party. The Freedom Democrats - who pledged loyalty to the national party - were offered a two-seat compromise, which they refused. All but two of the regular delegation refused to take the loyalty pledge and were refused seats.

In the June 2 Democratic primary Mrs. Hamer ran against Rep. Jamie Whitten of Mississippi's 2nd Congressional District, Mrs. Gray faced Sen. John Stennis, Rev. John Cameron of Hattiesburg faced Rep. William Colmer of the 5th District and James W. Houston faced Rep. John B. Williams of the 3rd District.

Dr. Henry - who is state NAACP head - ran for Governor in a Freedom Vote campaign in November, 1963, with Rev. Edwin King, - white chaplain of Tougaloo College - as candidate for Lieutenant Governor. They polled 90,000 votes cast by the state's disenfranchised Negroes in churches, schools, poolrooms and votemobiles over a three-day period. Henry had tried to qualify as an independent against Sen. Stennis but Gov. Patterson and the election commission disqualified him. Earlier the election commission had ruled that neither Mrs. Hamer nor Mrs. Gray could participate in both the Democratic primary and the general election.

Mrs. Devine will face Rep. Arthur Winstead in the state's 4th District.

All of the candidates have been enjoined by the state from participating in the affairs of the FDP.

# SEATS CHALLENGED

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the House have been campaigning despite attempts by state officials to enjoin them from any further participation in the affairs of the Freedom Democratic Party.

Lawrence Guyot, MFD chairman told the meeting that steps would be taken to implement the resolution. "We will prove to the nation and to Congress that the regular Mississippi Congressmen enjoy their high position because 90% of the state's Negroes are traditionally and systematically disenfranchised by intimi-

# FREEDOM VOTE

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The volunteers will join with local FDP precinct and county organizations in manning polling places and mobile "Vote-mobiles" in an effort to give significant numbers of Mississippi's voteless Negro population a chance to cast a ballot.

The Freedom Ballot will carry the names of four MFDP candidates who have been excluded from the regular ballot.

"We intend to show that the people presently alleged to be representing Mississippi in Washington are only representing a small minority of the population," FDP chairman Guyot said.

"We are particularly hopeful in the 2nd District where voting-age Negroes are in the majority," he added. "A large vote will show that more people there will vote for Mrs. Hamer than the white Democratic candidate, Rep. Jamie Whitten, and that if these people were allowed to vote, Mrs. Hamer and not Rep. Whitten would be the Representative in Washington."

The MFDP said voting will be done Oct. 30 through Nov. 2 "in churches, schools, community centers, barbershops, cottonfields, in fact, anywhere that people are."

The FDP also plans to legally challenge the seating of Mississippi's Congressional delegation in Washington next January.

In 1963, COFO staged a Freedom and other repressive measures. Since our candidates have been denied the ballot we shall conduct a separate election in which every qualified Mississippian will be allowed to vote."

Guyot said that the "freedom election" would prove that representative democracy was observed in Mississippi the results of the Nov. 3 elections would be substantially different.

"In January," Guyot said, "the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party will go to Washington, in much the same way that we went to Atlantic City, to ask the U.S. Congress and the nation to refuse to seat the Mississippi Congressmen until all Americans in Mississippi who are entitled to vote enjoy that right."

Guyot told the meeting that plans would immediately be made to file suits in Federal courts challenging the result and methods of the elections in Mississippi.



LAWRENCE GUYOT

dom Election in which Aaron Henry and the Rev. Edwin King ran for Governor and Lt. Governor. The Freedom Candidates got over 90,000 Freedom Votes from Mississippi's voteless Negro population.

Guyot, a native Mississippian and field worker for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), said the first 50 workers were dispatched to 17 Council of Federated Organizations projects ranging from Holly Springs in northern Mississippi to Biloxi and Gulfport in southern Mississippi.

The volunteers, mostly white male college students, come from Princeton, Stanford, Brandeis, Tulane, and Southern Illinois Universities, and Oberlin, Dartmouth, Sarah Lawrence and St. Elizabeth's Colleges.

Last year's "Freedom Vote," offered Mississippi citizens - and the state's 325,000 unregistered Negroes who are eligible to vote - a choice between segregationist Democratic and Republican candidates and an integrated slate of "Freedom Vote" candidates running for Governor and Lieutenant Governor. The "Freedom Vote" slate polled 80,000 votes.

This year's Freedom Vote, held the three days before the general election Nov. 3, will offer Mississippians a choice to vote for Democratic or Republican candidates for President and Vice President and MFDP candidates for Federal offices.

The candidates and the FDP will campaign actively for the Johnson-Humphrey slate.

Members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) have helped organize voter - registration drives in Mississippi since 1961. SNCC staffers work closely with local civil rights leaders throughout the state.

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond St., N.W. Atlanta, Ga. 30314

Enclosed is my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to SNCC to continue the struggle for true democracy in the South.

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The first \$3.00 of each donation goes toward a subscription in The Student Voice, SNCC's newspaper.