

THE STUDENT VOICE

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DEMS TO TRY TO OUST DEFECTORS

WASHINGTON, D. C.--A group of Democratic Congressmen are attempting to throw out two members of their party.

Liberal Democratic congressmen are trying to purge Mississippi Congressman John Bell Williams and South Carolina Congressman Albert Watson, two Democrats who supported Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater.

Members of the Liberal Study Group are asking the Democratic caucus in the House of Representatives to deprive Williams and Watson of their status as Democrats, to remove them from Committee posts and deprive them of seniority.

Williams is the second ranking member of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee and serves on the House District of Columbia Committee. Watson is a member of the Post Office and Civil Service Committees.

The Democratic Caucus is composed of all House Democrats.



MRS. FANNIE LOU HAMER (center) and other members of the MFDP delegation at Atlantic City. A 68-man-strong MFDP delegation challenged the right of the all-white party to represent Mississippi at the National Convention.

Grass Roots Party Swells Membership

JACKSON, MISS. -- From its founding convention here last April, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) has grown to become the state's largest grass-roots organization.

At a state-wide convention here April 26, 1964, over 200 people representing nearly every part of Mississippi agreed to establish the MFDP. They elected a temporary state executive committee of 15 people (3 from each congressional district) and named Dr. Aaron Henry, a Clarksdale dentist and President of the State Conference of NAACP Branches, President.

A state-wide "Freedom Vote" in November, 1963 had laid the broad base the MFDP now operates from. In that "Freedom Vote", over 80,000 people cast ballots for Dr. Henry, Freedom Vote Candidate for Governor, and the Reverend Edwin King, Freedom Vote Candidate for Lt. Governor.

From that meeting last April came the decision to challenge the regular white Democratic delegation from Mississippi at the National Democratic Convention at Atlantic City, and run four Negro candidates in the June 2 Democratic Primary.

The four - Mrs. Victoria Gray and the Reverend John Earle Cameron, both of Hattiesburg; Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer of Ruleville and James M. Houston of Vicksburg - ran against white candidates in the primary and were defeated.

The Atlantic City challenge by the MFDP received world-wide attention, as a 60-man-strong MFDP delegation, pledged to support the national Democratic party, fought for seats with the rebel all-white state Democratic Party group. Although the MFDP pledged (continued on page 4)

MFDP CONTESTS MISS. SEATING

Freedom Party Calls Elections Void

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Mississippi is illegally a member of the Union. So says the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). The state-wide party is challenging recent elections in Mississippi.

The MFDP contends that primary elections held in Mississippi June 2 and the general election held November 3 are void.

The Freedom Party is also contesting the seating of three Mississippi Congressmen.

Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer of Ruleville, Mrs. Annie Devine of Canton and Mrs. Victoria Gray of Hattiesburg have asked the House of Representatives to refuse to seat their opponents, Jamie Whitten of the 2nd District, Prentiss Walker of the 4th, and William Colmer of the 5th.

The election of Thomas Abernethy of the 1st District and John Bell Williams of the 3rd is also being challenged. Walker is a Republican; the others are Democrats.

The three women candidates and the MFDP have charged that the election "violates the Constitution and laws of the United States because Negroes throughout the state of Mississippi ... were systematically and almost totally excluded from the electoral process...."

Technically, the MFDP is "challenging" the election and "contesting" the seating of three representatives. That is, the Freedom Party is "challenging" the state-run

elections, contending they are null and void since they excluded Negroes from the electoral process. They are also "contesting" the seating of three Mississippi congressmen on the grounds the three were not elected in a free and open election. Mrs. Hamer, Mrs. Devine and Mrs. Gray charge that they are the only true representatives since their election was the only one "open to all citizens".

The notice of contest was formally served on the three congressmen, December 5, in accordance with Title 2 of the United States Code, Section 201. Under the statute, the formal notice of contest must be filed within 30 days after certification of the results of an election.

The contested members then have thirty days to reply which would be on or about January 2, 1965.

The law then provides for forty days in which the MFDP can gather testimony to support its case. The Freedom Party may use federal subpoena power to take testimony in public hearings throughout the state. These hearings could run until about February 20, 1965. The contested (continued on page 2)

Congressman to Object To Miss. Reprs. Seating

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A New York Congressman has announced here that he would object to the swearing in of five so-called congressmen-elect from Mississippi on January 4, 1964 when Congress convenes.

Democratic Congressman William F. Ryan stated that he would propose to the House that no congressman be sworn in to occupy the state's seats "until a full and exhaustive investigation of the evidence has been completed by Congress."

The New York Congressman, who visited Mississippi this summer, stated that he would move to have the Mississippi "representatives" remain seated during the swearing-in ceremony. This would be followed by a resolution asking for the unseating until all the evidence is in.

As provided by the Constitution, the House alone "shall be the Judge of the (continued on page 2)



The Freedom Vote

Contested Election

(continued from page 1)
representatives then have an equal amount of time for testimony under the same conditions. They may take testimony until about March 20.

The MFDP then has ten days to take rebuttal testimony. On or about April 1, all the evidence must be formally mailed to the Clerk of the House of Representatives. The parties concerned are personally called before the clerk to decide how much of the testimony will become a part of the official record.

The printed record is distributed to the House Subcommittee on Elections and Privileges of the House Administration Committee. The Freedom Democrats have thirty days to file their brief before the subcommittee and the contested parties have thirty days to answer.

At this point the Subcommittee on Elections and Privileges has full jurisdiction over the matter. The subcommittee may hold public hearings. The subcommittee will then vote on its position and

present it to the House of Representatives in the form of a resolution. The entire process should be completed by July, 1965.

The MFDP is also challenging the elections of June 2 and November 3 on the grounds they violated the 1870 Compact between Mississippi and the Congress of the United States. The Freedom Democrats contend that in the Act of February 23, 1870, Mississippi was allowed to re-enter the Union on the condition that it would never change its Constitution, which at that time provided for universal male suffrage with simple residence and age requirements.

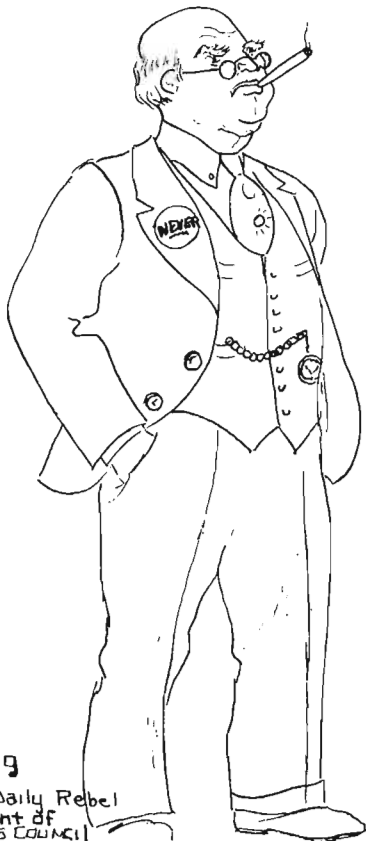
Under the compact the State of Mississippi was to abide by the conditions of the Act "in good faith (as) a condition... to the representation of the state in Congress."

The MFDP charges that since 1890 the state of Mississippi has "arrogantly repudiated its solemn compact with the congress of the United States..." by the almost totally disenfranchising the Negro citizens of the state..



THE STATE-WIDE MFDP Convention in April, 1964. Over 200 people from across the state met to officially form the party, an outgrowth of the November, 1963 Freedom Vote. The MFDP is now the largest grass roots organization in Mississippi.

Scenes of the South by [Signature]



Senator Billy Smug

Editor of the Daily Rebel
State President of
the CITIZENS COUNCIL
One of the Governor's Colonels
Member, the Miss Board of Regents

"We are not asking Congress to punish Mississippi," said Lawrence Guyot, Chairman of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

"We are merely asking in our challenges that the House recognize the simple fact that the rigidly segregated and undemocratic political system in that state which disenfranchises 428,600 Negroes has by that fact disqualified itself from participation in the U.S. Congress," he stated.

The Freedom group is also contesting the election under Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution, and the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

Article I, Section 2 states that the "House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second year BY THE PEOPLE of the several states..." Mrs. Hamer stated that Jamie Whitten was "not 'chosen ... by the people' as required by the Constitution. More than 50% of this district's (the 2nd) adult population have been systematically excluded from these purported elections."

The MFDP is also calling for a "Fairness Resolution" to be presented on the first day of Congress in the House of Representatives. The Freedom Party is calling for

the procedure in which a member of the House may object to the oath being administered to a contested Congressman. The speaker can then instruct the contested person to remain seated while the others are sworn in.

A resolution may next be introduced which provides, in all fairness, no one should sit in the contested seats until the final decision by the House subcommittee.

The three ladies were elected in a "Freedom Vote" held Oct. 31 through Nov. 2 by the MFDP. At that time Mrs. Hamer defeated Rep. Whitten 33,009 to 59; Mrs. Devine defeated Rep. Winstead 6,001 to 4; and Mrs. Gray's 10,138 votes defeated Rep. Colmer.

The ballot for the "Freedom Vote" included the candidates for president from both major parties, as well as the MFDP candidates and their opponents. Ballots were cast in 53 of the 82 counties. The three women were refused a place on the official ballot in the state-run election.

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Congressman Objects

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elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members." Under House precedent, any Congressman can rise and object to the oath of office being given to another Congressman-elect.

In most cases, the contested member is allowed to retain his seat pending the outcome of the investigation. However, in one recent case in 1961 the House voted that neither contestant be seated until the dispute was settled.

If Rep. Ryan's move is successful, Mississippi would be without a Congressman for approximately four months.

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) is attempting to gather strong support in the House before the January 4, opening.

FACTS AVAILABLE

FOR FACTS AND FIGURES ON LIFE in Mississippi, write for "The General Condition of the Mississippi Negro", SNCC, 6 Raymond Street, Atlanta, Georgia 30314.

Challenge Gains Northern Support

WASHINGTON, D. C.-- Community leaders from eight cities in Northern states met here with leaders of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) to lay plans for support of the Party's challenge of the Mississippi congressional delegation.

The meeting heard MFDP candidates Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, Mrs. Annie Devine and Mrs. Victoria Gray discuss the growth and development of the MFDP and the reasons for the challenge. MFDP Chairman Lawrence Guyot and MFDP legal counsel Attorney Arthur Kinoy outlined the legal and technical steps for the challenge and offered suggestions for organizing Northern support.

Represented at the November 28 meeting were community groups in New York; Newark, New Jersey; Cleveland, Ohio; Chicago, Illinois; Stanford, Connecticut; Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Detroit, Michigan.

Rallies and public meetings featuring local political leaders and MFDP candidates were planned for Chester, Pennsylvania, New York, Chicago, Boston and Detroit.

MFDP leaders here urged "all Northern supporters of freedom and justice to write their congressmen immediately urging them to support the MFDP and the Fairness Resolution."

The "Fairness Resolution" asks that no Mississippi delegation be seated until Congress investigates and decides the legality of the election process.

FREEDOM PARTY NEEDS ASSISTANCE

JACKSON, MISS. -- Two offices of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party need help in seeing the congressional challenge through. If you can offer funds, supplies, skills or support, or simply want more information, call or write: MFDP, 1353 "U" Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, telephone (202) 332-7732 or MFDP, 1017 Lynch Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39203, telephone (601) 352-9605.

3 WOMEN CHALLENGE HOUSE SEATING

MRS. FANNIE LOU HAMER

The Freedom Democratic Party candidate for the 2nd. District seat is Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer of Ruleville, Mississippi. Mrs. Hamer, delegate to the National Democratic Convention in Atlantic City, is 46 years of age 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 the job she had held for 18 years as time-keeper on a cotton plantation, and forced to leave the home in which she had lived for that period. Ten days later 16 shots were fired into the house in which she was staying.

Mrs. Hamer has worked full time for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. 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, but no action has been taken against them. The beating aggravated a childhood disorder, leaving one leg partially paralyzed, and she has never fully recovered from its effects.

Mississippi's Second Congressional District lies in the heart of the flat fertile area known as the Delta in which there is the heaviest concentration of Negroes in the state. The total Negro voting age population in the Second District is 159,200.

Her opponent in the 2nd District is Rep. Jamie Whitten, chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee of the Committee of Agriculture. The District has a Negro population comprising 59% of the total but only a small fraction of voting age Negroes are registered. In the Freedom Vote held in Mississippi Oct. 30-Nov. 2, Mrs. Hamer received 33,009 Freedom Votes.

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

MRS. VICTORIA GRAY

Mrs. Victoria Gray, the 38-year-old Freedom Democratic Party candidate for Representative of the 5th District in Mississippi, lives with her husband and three children in Hattiesburg.

Mrs. Gray, who opposes Democratic incumbent William Colmer for the 5th District seat was educated at Wilberforce University in Wilberforce, 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



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. She has also worked as debit manager for the Security Life Insurance Company. In June, 1964, Mrs. Devine, long a leader in her community, joined the staff of the Congress of Racial Equality. Mrs. Devine believed in the need for "vigorous local participation in politics if Negroes are to receive their full rights in Mississippi."

In the November third election, Mrs. Devine opposed Democrat Arthur Winstead. In the Freedom Vote tally she received 6,011 Freedom Votes. She also served as Secretary of the MFDP delegation which went to the National Democratic Convention in Atlantic City. The total population of voting age Negroes in the Fourth District, where Mrs. Devine ran, is 56,000.

"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."

Mrs. Devine has been active in voter-education and citizenship workshops throughout the 4th District; particularly in her own county of Madison.

In the Fourth District Congressional Race, the Republican candidate Prentiss Walker received 34,684 votes; the incumbent Democrat Arthur Winstead received 27,843.

If the 56,000 voting age Negroes in Mrs. Devine's district were allowed to vote, she might have been elected.

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 1962. After five applications, and a hearing before a three-judge panel of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, her name was added to the registration rolls in October, 1962.

Mrs. Gray opposed Sen. John Stennis in the June 2nd primary. There are roughly 28,169 Negroes of voting age in the district. In the Freedom Vote, October 30-Nov. 2, 1964, she received 10,138 votes from fewer than half of the counties in the District.

A National Committeewoman for the MFDP, Mrs. Gray was one of the first people to house workers from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee 9sncc0 when they first set up projects in Hattiesburg in 1961.

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 Mrs. Gray refused to withdraw from the primary.



The Men Who Represent Mississippi

CONGRESSMEN DO NOT SUPPORT PARTY

The Mississippi Democratic Representatives who are being challenged hold many key committee positions—positions held through the seniority system in a national party to which they claim non-allegiance.

Representative William Colmer is vice-chairman of the Rules Committee and the fifth ranking House member. Rep. Thomas Abernethy is sixth on Agriculture and second on the District of Columbia Committees. (The committee that runs the District,) Rep. John Bell Williams is second on Interstate and Foreign Commerce and fifth on the District of Columbia Committee. Rep. Jamie Whitten is fourth on Appropriations

Their voting records reflect their lack of allegiance to the national party. On partisan roll calls in the 87th Congress, Colmer voted with the national party 19 per cent; and Whitten, 31 per cent. That is an average of 26 per cent while the average for all House Democrats were 71 per cent.

Rep. John Bell Williams supported the Republican presidential candidate, Barry Goldwater, during last fall's election. But this wasn't the first time he had defected. For example in 1956, when even the other Mississippi representatives were least vocally supporting the national Democratic ticket, Rep. Williams supported a States' Rights ticket. Williams, with Sen. Eastland and Mississippi Supreme Court Justice Tom Brady, worked out the philosophy of "interposition." This was the "law" the former Gov. Barnett used when he defied the federal government at

Ole Miss. He has voted against foreign aid, food stamp legislation, the war on poverty, and other important measures.

Rep. Thomas Abernethy, though he has voted with the national party more than any other Mississippi representative, still has voted against Democratic administration backed social legislation. In both the 87th and 88th Congress, he even voted against the Area Redevelopment bills which were aimed at economically depressed areas such as parts of Mississippi. He also voted against a tax cut, against accelerated public work, against college aid, and so on.

Rep. William Colmer is now in Congress for his 17th term. Among his ultra-conservative platform pledges was one "bringing an end to the foreign aid program." With House Rules Committee Chairman Howard Smith of Virginia, he controls that committee. The Rules Committee must approve all legislation to come before the House. Last February he received a letter from the ten members of the House's Southern Group praising him for his fight against the civil rights bill. "As a result of your constant daily efforts...the bill was stalled for nearly a year," the letter read. "We regard this as quite an accomplishment in the House

where the parliamentary procedure does not permit a filibuster."

Rep. Jamie Whitten, besides being fourth on Appropriations, is serving his 14th year as chairman of the Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee and is a member of the National Defense and Public Works Subcommittees. These three subcommittees handle appropriations for about 80 per cent of the entire budget. Rep. Whitten has fought for cotton subsidy and keeping the price of beef high. At the same time he has led the fight against programs which would benefit the farm worker such as a tractor driver training program. Other programs he has voted against include food stamp legislation and the war on poverty.

Rep. Prentiss Walker is the only Republican representative. With the help of the Goldwater sweep, he defeated incumbent Democrat Arthur Winstead. But Rep. Walker hasn't been a Republican for long. As a Democrat he had served as part of the Barnett administration on the Fish and Game Commission. In 1960, Walker was chairman of the unpledged elector movement for the 4th District. After his election as a Republican, his first public speech was made in Brandon, Miss., before the extremist Americans for the Preservation of the White Race. Members of the APWR were those implicated in the McComb race-hate bombings.



Dr. Aaron Henry



Lawrence Guyot

MFDP Grows

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party loyalty and all but two members of the white group refused to do so, neither group was seated. The MFDP refused to accept two compromise "seats at large" and regular Democrats from Mississippi walked out of the convention.

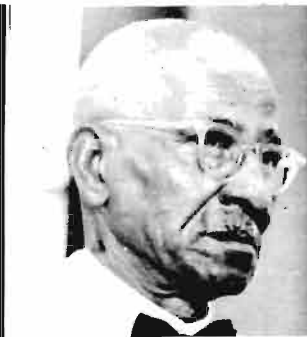
At Atlantic City, MFDP had pledges of support from Democratic groups in California, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Oregon, New York and the District of Columbia, as well as from Democratic party members and office holders in other states. Pressure from top Democratic leaders, including President Lyndon B. Johnson, kept the group from achieving recognition despite its strong legal and moral stand.

One feature of the MFDP's growth leading to the Atlantic City Convention was "Freedom Registration" and the formation of a duplicate structure to the regular all-white Democratic group. "Freedom Registration" involved registering on "Freedom Registration" forms native Mississippians as members of the MFDP. Over 60,000 people were "Freedom Registered".

The building of the duplicate structure involved attempts by MFDP members to join the regular party structure. Negroes tried to attend precinct and county meetings throughout the state, and after being refused, held their own meetings and elected delegates to a



Rev. J. E. Cameron



James M. Houston

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state convention, which in turn elected the MFDP Atlantic City delegation.

In October, MFDP Candidates tried and failed to get their names placed on the general election ballot. The state election commission - composed of Governor Paul Johnson, Attorney General Joe Patterson and Secretary of State Heber Ladner - refused to place Mrs. Hamer, Dr. Henry and Mrs. Annie Devine on the November 3 ticket.

In addition, the MFDP has been enjoined against using the name "democratic" in its title.

Lawrence Guyot, a SNCC worker from Pass Christian, Mississippi, formerly 5th District Project Director and Political Programs Coordinator for COFO, is now MFDP State Chairman.

Guyot said the January, 1965 challenges by the MFDP "will once again bring to America's attention the repression and intimidation under which Mississippi Negroes live and die."