

Missal

MISSISSIPPI:  
HOW NEGRO  
DEMOCRATS  
FARED  
  
PART II

This report is a record of events that took place on June 23, 1964. It is an account of what took place when Negroes for the first time since Reconstruction attempted to participate in Democratic County Conventions.

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## INTRODUCTION

This is the second in a series of reports describing Negro participation or attempts to participate in political party affairs in Mississippi. This year there is extensive political activity, particularly centered around the nomination and election of the president. In Mississippi delegates to the national convention are chosen at the congressional district caucuses and at the state convention. The last report, Mississippi: How Negro Democrats Fared, dealt with the attempts of Negroes to participate in the precinct meetings, the first set of conventions leading to the state convention. This report will deal with attempts of Negroes to participate in the next level, the county conventions.

The report covers seven different counties. Some stories are in the form of affidavits, others are telephoned reports. The affidavits that would normally come from the areas of telephone reports have not yet reached this office. Eventually all material connected with the political program will be made into one large report; at that time the affidavits will all be included. This report is published now to inform people immediately of what is happening as Negroes attempt to truly enter political life in Mississippi.

At the precinct meetings June 16 there were a variety of reactions to the Negroes who appeared. At several of the precinct meetings, however, there were no whites at all. At those meetings the Negroes went ahead and elected delegates themselves. By and large it is these delegates who attempted to enter the county meetings June 23.

Several generalizations can probably be made. It is evident from these reports that even at the county level there is no real "voice of the people." The county conventions are run by the top political figures in the area, and they are men of great stature and place in the white community. The other delegates are usually among the so-called finest men in the community. These are professional men, lawyers, business leaders and the like.

Perhaps as a corollary to this type of representation at the county level one will note that in virtually all cases very little attention was paid to the Negro delegates (with the exception of Greenwood where an over-elaborate and painfully studious effort was made to point out how stupid the Negroes had been). Any leader in the community is not going to feel threatened by the presence of a few inconsequential Negroes at a meeting. On the contrary he will simply be a little irritated that they have shown up and that there is a need to spend some time getting rid of them or dealing with them.

Moreover, the presence of this almost solid phalanx of big men in the community in the county meetings must serve as well to intimidate many of the whites who might benefit by more close contact with political affairs in their area. These meetings are a graphic demonstration of the willingness of most of the people in the state to leave politics to someone else.

The resolution referred to in several of the reports is a resolution calling for delegates to support the National Democratic Party's platform and candidates. See the report, Mississippi: How Negroes Fared, for the full text of the resolution.

## HINDS AND WARREN COUNTIES

In two of the large cities Negroes who had been properly elected and certified as delegates from the precinct convention were seated and allowed to participate as delegates from the precincts they represented. The stories are told in an affidavit by Mr. J. B. Harrington, the Negro delegate from Jackson, and in an affidavit by three white summer volunteers in Vicksburg who witnessed the Warren county convention.

### Affadavit by Mr. J. B. Harrington

Both Mr. Chapman (alternate delegate for my half vote from the 24th precinct) and I arrived at the Hinds County Courthouse a little before 10 a.m. this morning. I had been told by Mr. Robert Smith, Jr. to look for a man named Wells before the meeting. Mr. Chapman and I searched out and found Mr. Wells, who later turned out to be on the county executive committee. Mr. Wells said that things are at the point of happening here, so he asked us to cooperate. He said that if we all cooperated, he'd see that nothing happened. He also said that if he were elected back to his position he would get, say, two persons out of the community to contact persons to try to interest them in the Democratic party, particularly at the grass roots level. Mr. Wells seemed somewhat nervous and unsure of himself as far as knowing how to handle us. He seemed to me to be surprised that we had even shown up. At the conclusion of the interview he assisted us to the door of the convention.

At the door our credentials were barely examined by the man at the door. We were waved into the hall. I presume he had been alerted to the fact that we were coming and so made no effort to challenge us.

We sat at the back of the ground floor. Delegates were seated by Supervisor's districts and within the districts they were seated by precinct. They were seated by precinct in almost all cases, that is. The two ladies who were a delegate and an alternate from our precinct were seated up near the front while we were asked to sit in the back. Most of the other seating accommodations were crowded, but our row contained only the two of us.

Mr. W. S. Wells, the man who had spoken to us, was temporary chairman of the convention. He called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. There was quite an extensive prayer. The prayer was quite liberal, including references to free speech, to freedom to worship, to freedom of the ballot. I felt that the prayer was not just directed at the whites in the audience but was directed at me as well. The prayer also asked for the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout the whole meeting. I was quite surprised at the prayer on the whole.

The credentials committee made a report. They said that all credentials were in order with the exception of two statements. I assume they were referring to Mr. Chapman and myself. The committee went on to say, however, that it felt that all the delegates were correctly identified, so there was no problem about being seated. Later on in the meeting it was pointed out that Mrs. Black and I each represented  $\frac{1}{2}$  vote each in our precinct and that we were the only precinct with one vote to split in this way; most of the vote splitting was limited to precincts with multiple votes.

I might point out that there had been some trouble at the precinct convention the week before. Mrs. Black, the temporary chairman, said at the precinct meeting that either her children or her grandchildren or her grandchildren had destroyed some of the normal credentials that had come to her in the mail. She had called up and gotten the proper wording from a Mrs. Ware and had then brought two copies of the correct wording with her to the convention. After I had been elected chairman and had had elections I asked Miss May, the secretary, to make three more copies of this information. One was sent to the Hinds County Democratic

Executive Committee, one was given to Mrs. Black, the other elected delegate, and a third I kept myself. Then the two that Mrs. Black had brought were given to Mr. Chapman and to Mrs. James W. H. Sutton, Mrs. Black's alternate. I presume that it was the condition of these temporary statements that had caused the credentials committee some difficulty.

After the report of the credentials committee the floor was opened for nomination of the permanent chairman of the convention. Mr. Wells was unanimously elected. A secretary was elected.

The rules committee gave a report. The committee recommended that the same procedure used in electing delegates at the state legislature be used in electing delegates at this convention, as closely as I could make out. The report was accepted.

The keynote speaker was Mr. Bill Winters, the State Treasurer. His talk was filled with indirect references to the changing Negro in Mississippi, I felt. His opening sentence was that he did not have the answer to the problem facing them today, that he did not claim to have the answer. He said that too few people were attending the grass roots level of political meetings. He urged them to give themselves the same way the soldiers had given themselves in the civil war. He went on to say that the tactics that had been successful in the past would not work any more, but that there weren't any new tactics that he could suggest that might be successful. He said that even in this free and open meeting today there is no easy solution to the problem. He said that Mississippi's seven electoral votes shouldn't be cast for the nominee of the national democratic party, that the votes wouldn't do any good for the Mississippi way of life this way. The speech lasted about 20 or 30 minutes.

The resolutions committee gave a report. Mr. Dan Shell was chairman of the committee. There were three resolutions:

- 1) Endorsement of the Mississippi Senators and Congressmen for the stand they took regarding the Mississippi way of life.
- 2) The delegates should support a candidate whom the people of the Democratic party of this state should support.
- 3) The delegates to the national convention should be bound to support a specific candidate at the national convention, there should be no freedom to support another candidate later on in the convention.

The first two resolutions were passed, the third was tabled. Judge Moore then called the attention of the chair to the fact that Judge McGowan had a resolution. This resolution was backed up by Chapter 32 of the Mississippi law book of 1963. The sense of the resolution was that there were to be two kinds of electors on the ballot, pledged and unpledged. The resolution was passed. Recess for lunch.

One hour for lunch.

The nominating committee brought up a slate of names for the County Democratic Executive Committee, three names from each supervisor's district. Nominations were made from the floor to districts 1 and 5. Voting was by wards. Voting totals were placed on the blackboard; the results are to be in the paper, says the chairman.

Election of delegates to the state convention was next. There are 18 delegates from Hinds County, 13 from Jackson, 5 from outlying areas. The nominating committee brought in some names. Others were nominated from the floor. Voting by wards. Highest 13 chosen were to represent Jackson, next highest 13 to represent alternate votes from Jackson, etc.

When we left at 5:20 p.m. voting was still going on. At recess an attorney named White, later one of the nominees for delegate, had spoken to us and had encouraged us to make remarks before the meeting adjourned. We had hoped to do so, but the process of election in the afternoon was so long and drawn out, and there seemed to be no time



allotted for us to really speak, that we left before the end of the meeting.

I voted for names that I knew about for one reason or another. In the course of the voting I jotted down the votes of the precincts that I knew were heavily populated with Negroes. There were, of course, no Negro delegates other than myself, but it is probable that some could be elected if only people would attend the precinct meetings. The votes are as follows: Ward 22, 3 votes; Ward 23, 2 votes; Ward 29, 3 votes; Ward 43, 3 votes.

Attendance of 173 delegates at the meeting.

The convention was a great experience for me. I learned quite a bit by just sitting and listening. My impression in advance of the people who might come was very different from the people who actually came. The general delegate was a professional person or a very high class person. I had expected many more people from the working class.

From what I saw and heard I see that as a race we have a long way to go. There is a lot that can be done, but we have to get out and work. We have to get more people registered, and we have to encourage people to attend meetings at the local level.

Affadavit of Mrs. Hazel T. Palmer

On June 2 I was selected to be a poll watcher at Precinct 23 in Jackson along with Mrs. Navvy Taylor.

I was elected to go to a 23rd precinct meeting held on June 16 for the purpose of electing delegates to the Hinds County convention. At this meeting I was nominated as delegate but not elected.

Today, June 23, at 100:00 a.m., I went to the Hinds County convention at the Hinds County Courthouse, with the intention of being an observer. Mr. Welch, the chairman, came into the hall. He spoke politely but said that there wasn't any room for visitors and he turned us away. (I was with Mrs. Nannie Benson.) The door was guarded by about four persons--all white.

I feel that Mrs. Benson and I were turned away because we are Negroes.

Article on front page of the Jackson Clarion-Ledger, June 24, 1964

**HINDS DEMOS GOING ALL-WAY UNPLEDGED** Unpledged elector groups were in firm control of the Hinds County Democratic Convention at the Jackson courthouse Tuesday. In a day-long session, the convention unseated its chairman and secretary in favor of more outspoken advocates of the unpledge slate. And the convention knocked down a resolution which would have delayed, until after the Democratic National convention, the actual instruction of delegates to that convention as to candidates....

The Resolutions committee appointed by the Executive committee argued in vain that it would be better to let a delegation chosen by the state convention go to Atlantic City and vote and speak in opposition to candidates and platforms out of harmony with Mississippi Democrats, than to endanger their standing at the convention. This, they said, would enable Bill Higgs and his integrated delegates to be seated at Atlantic City, and in the name of Mississippi, support candidates and platform statements opposed to the Mississippi Democratic thinking....

Dan Shell, chairman of the Resolutions committee, said if the McGowan resolution were adopted at the State convention, it would eliminate the seating of the state delegation and seat people who "do not represent us."...

The first Negro to sit in the Hinds convention since Reconstruction, J. B. Harrington of Box 24, sat at the back of the courtroom with a friend. He voted what observers considered a mixed ticket.

One Negro woman complained of being turned away from the courtroom when she sought entry as a spectator, but a number of whites were turned away as both downstairs and balcony were used for delegates and alternates.

Affadavit of Howard S. Stromquist, Jonathan Steele, and Patrick M. Thomas

1. Mayor opened the convention and named a credentials committee of three white citizens.

a. He then read off the list of the members of the Warren County Democratic Executive Committee, who had served for the last four years. The Mayor punctuated the list with the comment, "they have served well, and deserve to be re-considered." As he read the names, each person stood.

b. Mr. Frank Summers, President of the Vicksburg Improvement League, was recognized and asked to read a prepared statement. He was told by the mayor that the convention was not officially convened and that Mr. Summers had to hold his statement until official business could be handled.

Note: Mr. Frank Summers and Dr. Aaron Shirley, both Negroes, had been duly elected the previous week at the precinct convention for the first ward in Vicksburg.

2. The credentials committee in the meantime had been considering the credentials from Redwood and Yokena Precincts. Mrs. Mildred Cosey told the committee of the meeting which was held at the appointed time and place in Yokena precinct on Tuesday, June 16.

a. She arrived at Jack Ogle's store at 9:30 a.m. and waited until 10:30 for the meeting to begin. A white voter, Mr. Bell, arrived at 9:40 and left shortly after 10:00 without having a word to say to Mrs. Cosey. At 10:30, having notified the proprietress of her purpose for being there, she opened the meeting herself in the presence of a friend, Mrs. Willa Mae Thomas, who is not registered to vote. She nominated and elected herself, being the only voter present. She wrote up a statement to that effect, witnessed by Mrs. Thomas.

b. She presented this statement to the credentials committee at the County Convention. The committee refused to consider the statement or to read it. They also refused to tell her whether she was going to be seated as the delegation from Yokena precinct. Only when she raised a point of order from the floor was she told by the Chairman of the Convention, Mr. Willis Kessler, that she was out of order, and having been refused credentials, had no right to speak.

3. Mr. Willis Kessler, Chairman of the Convention, appointed three white delegates as a nominating committee to draw up a list of nominees for the Executive Committee. Members of the committee were Sam Castrell, Jack Evans, and Eva Nicholson.

a. Dr. Aaron Shirley, Negro delegate along with Mr. Frank Summers from the first ward in Vicksburg, requested a secret ballot in the vote for convention delegates. The request was granted.

b. The slate of nominees presented by the nominating committee for the County Democratic Executive Committee were quickly read, nominations were immediately closed and the slate elected.

4. The same nominating committee was then dispatched to draw up a slate of nominees to the state convention.

a. Before they left the room Dr. Shirley protested that nominations should be permitted from the floor. The Chairman, Mr. Kessler, said nominations would be permitted from the floor when the nominating committee returned.

b. Mr. Frank Summers was then recognized to make his written

statement. In the statement Mr. Summers declared the intention of COFO to unseat the Mississippi Democratic Party at the national convention on the basis of discriminatory practices. Mr. Summers suggested that these charges might be allayed if Warren County were to send the two Negro county delegates to the State and National conventions as delegates.

- c. The Resolution Committee then read their prepared resolution condemning the Supreme Court School Desegregation decision of 1954 and all those following, declaring freedom to be a gift of God and the Civil Rights Bill to be a flagrant violation of man's basic right to private property. The resolution was passed with only two dissenting votes--those of Dr. Shirley and Mr. Summers.
- d. The nominating committee returned and the proposed slate of delegates was read off. After the reading Dr. Shirley's was the first hand in the air, followed quickly by a Mrs. Watson. She however was recognized first and moved to close the nominations and was seconded. Dr. Shirley protested that the Chairman was supposed to ask for nominations from the floor. The Chairman said Dr. Shirley could move to have the nominations reopened if he so desired. The motion was made, seconded and promptly defeated with only two votes of Aye--again those of Dr. Shirley and Mr. Summers. Because the slate of delegates was then uncontested, the Chairman said a vote was unnecessary. Dr. Shirley then stated that he withdrew his request for a secret ballot.
- e. The final piece of business was a vote not to support the national democratic candidates but to support instead a slate of unpledged electors. Again there were only two dissenting votes, Dr. Shirley and Mr. Summers.

Article from the Jackson Daily News, June 24, 1964

NEGROES VOTE NO TO UNPLEDGED Vicksburg, Miss. (Special)--An integrated Democratic County convention decided Tuesday that they would go to the state convention in support of the unpledged elector plan.

The only dissenting votes on it were from two Negroes--Dr. Aaron Shirley and Frank Summers--who were delegates from the First Ward precinct....

The convention also favored to abide by the unit rule at the convention and the only opposition came from the two Negroes....

The state convention is scheduled for July 28 in Jackson. Yokena and Redbone were the only precincts not represented at the county convention. From four to ten delegates represented each of the other 16 precincts....



## LEFLORE AND MADISON COUNTIES

In two areas of hard resistance to the voter registration drive there was an equally hard resistance to allowing any Negroes into the county convention. In one case even--that of Madison county--there did not seem to be a county convention at all, perhaps a reflection of how tightly some people feel politics must be controlled when the population of the county is over 70% Negro. The stories are told in a phone story from Greenwood and in two affidavits from residents of Canton.

Story phoned in by Sam Block and Eli Zaretski

Nine people went to the meeting in Greenwood, including the two delegates chosen at the COFO office precinct meeting the previous week. The first people arrived at 10:10 a.m. It appeared as though the meeting had not yet started. The group went to the circuit clerk's office to find out where the meeting was being held. They were told that there was no meeting. The sheriff, however, directed them to the courtroom.

As they approached the courtroom there was a group of men coming out to meet them. One of them was Hardy Lott, executive secretary of the county democratic party. One of the men wanted to know if the people were registered voters. The registered voters gave their names. Mrs. Pilcher gave her name as a delegate; so did Mrs. Carrie Davis even though she is not registered. This same man then said that the meeting inside the courtroom was being stopped while the credentials committee took time out to examine their credentials.

Mr. Lott (also head of the local chapter of the White Citizens Council and one of the Beckwith defense lawyers) was head of the credentials committee; Mayor Charles Samson was also on the committee. The committee took down all the claims of the group and then went to the convention where a motion was made to seat the group. The motion was defeated for the following reasons:

- 1) Others had credentials
  - 2) The meeting at which our people had been elected was not an official meeting
  - 3) The county meeting was held at 10 a.m., our people were late.
- The seating of delegates had already taken place. Also they said we had to remember they had taken note of what had happened last week.

Article in the Jackson Daily News, June 24, 1964

DELTA NEGROES SELF APPOINTED DEMO DELEGATE Greenwood, Miss. (Special)--A delegation of six Negroes and seven white youths appeared at the Leflore County Court House Tuesday morning while the County Democratic Convention was in progress. They asked to have their delegates attend the convention....

It was learned that only two of the negroes were qualified to vote and they had not been chosen delegates at a county precinct meeting....

A similar story appeared in the Jackson Clarion-Ledger as well.

Affidavit of Mrs. Annie Devine

We met and decided to go to the Madison County Courthouse together Tuesday morning, June 23. We left for the courthouse in two cars. There were five of us in all. We got to the courthouse at about ten to ten. Alberta Kelly, Annie Devine, Margaret Glover entered the courtyard from the south side and we walked through the building from which we could see 10 or 12 men gathered outside. We went upstairs and entered the courtroom. The door was closed but not fastened. We sat in a group at the back of the room. There were 16 men in the

front of the room just talking. Since we were not sure whether the County meeting was to be held here, we sent the two men down to the Chancery Clerk's office to find out. As they seemed to be coming to order, I went forward and sat down. Stanley Mathews, the mayor of Canton, brought the meeting to order. He asked first that the credentials committee give its report. Three men went into a back room and returned with their report. They submitted their report. The chairman of the meeting read the report. Then said: "the report of the credentials committee is unanimously accepted." Then he said: "This is the meeting of the County Executive Committee and no visitors are allowed and we will have to ask you to leave (speaking to us). I said "May I ask you a question?" He said "yes". I said, "We are the delegates from the West Precinct to this county Convention, and we are asking that you recognize us as such." He said again, "This is not the County Convention, this is a meeting of the County Executive Committee." We will have to ask you to leave." We got up and left. We went back and held our own meeting and elected our own delegates.

## Affadavit of Leonard Clay

We arrived at the courthouse about 5 minutes to 10:00 a. m. We went up first to a room in the court house. (Madison County), we weren't sure where the County Democratic Convention was actually being held. So we took a seat in the rear with a large crowd outside and a small group inside the court room. We then decided to split up. Rev. McCloud and I went outside to the Chancery Clerk's office. We were told that the County Convention wasn't being held there. We had seen a large crowd of people go in, we therefore went to inquire about the Convention. Upon arrival we were told that it was ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> awaiting of the County Convention, but a meeting to bid on the hospital.

Rev. McCloud and I left and went back to the court room, where we found that Mrs. Devine had moved up to the front. There I took a seat right across from her. Then Rev. McCloud, Mrs. Kelly and Mrs. Glover followed. This committee sitting around a table was talking and whispering and we couldn't find anything out. Later we found out that the chairman had appointed a credential committee to go out, they went out. When they came back, they had made up a slate for the representatives to the District Democratic Convention. They asked that his slate be accepted unanimously. And it was accepted by the white committee. Then the chairman turned to us, and said that this is a meeting of the executive committee and not open to the public. When he asked us to leave Mrs. Devine asked to be recognized. And she was. She asked wasn't this a meeting of the County Convention. And he said there wouldn't be a County Convention. Only a meeting of the executive committee. Mrs. Devine said that we were delegates from the West Ward. And he said that he couldn't find our names on the credentials list. So we then left and went back to the COFO office and held our own County Convention. I was elected chairman of the Convention and Mrs. Devine the secretary. The following delegates were elected to go to the District Conventions: Mrs. Devine, Rev. McCloud, and myself, with Mrs. Kelly as alternate. Then the meeting was adjourned.

WASHINGTON, LAUDERDALE AND SUNFLOWER COUNTIES

In two of the more "liberal" areas of the state, Greenville and Meridian, Negroes were allowed to enter the meeting and sit there, but they were not allowed to meaningfully participate in the conventions. Both stories are phoned reports from the areas. In the last county, Sunflower, the Negro delegates were allowed to participate somewhat but were not officially recognized. Again a phoned story from the area.

Statement phoned in from the Greenville COFO office

The Washington County Democratic Convention met at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, June 23, at the county courthouse. A five man caucus met during the meeting and nominated the county delegation and the fifteen man slate for the executive committee for the county. Both slates were accepted without debate. Ray Raphael, Mississippi Summer Project volunteer, made a point of information just prior to the close of the meeting. He explained that the third precinct had passed a resolution encouraging party loyalty at its June 16th meeting--a resolution which that delegation has bound itself to present and support at the county and subsequent conventions.

Mr. Doug Wynn, executive secretary of the Washington County Democratic party then stated that none of the delegates from the third precinct were present. Therefore, the resolution calling for party loyalty was neither presented nor considered by the convention.

Nineteen delegates and several observers attended the county meeting. The audience included Raphael and another summer volunteer, Lynn Hamilton, as well as SNCC worker Jesse Davis.

The location of the 10 a.m. meeting was not announced in the paper as required by state law. On the day of the convention at approximately 9 a.m. Raphael called the Delta Democrat Times for information relating to the time and place of the meeting. One Mr. Childs, a reporter for the newspaper, indicated that such information was unavailable. However, at 10 a.m. Mr. Hodding Carter III, Associate Editor of the Delta Democrat Times, was present at the same convention.

On the afternoon following the convention Miss Hamilton called each of the delegates and alternates of the third precinct. She sought an explanation for their absence from the convention. The response was as follows: 1) Mr. J. B. Arnold, delegate, was not at home. His wife stated that he no longer resided in Greenville and there was no answer at the Greenwood telephone number which she gave. 2) Mrs. H. C. West, delegate, said that she was not notified of the time or place of the meeting. 3) Mrs. Ira Bethel, alternate, had been out of town for about two weeks, according to her daughter-in-law. 4) Judge Emmett Harty, alternate, could not be contacted until the following morning when he then stated that he had been appointed by the precinct without my knowledge or consent." He also stated that he wanted no part in the political situation, that he had not attended the precinct meeting and that he was not even sure that he would vote on the Democratic party ticket. He said that he had advised Mr. Wynn of his feeling and that he would not attend the party county meeting.

Statement phoned in from Meridian

Three people, Rev. Turnipseed, Ernest Johnson, and Mary Hubbard, tried to participate in the Lauderdale County Convention today. They had been elected in precinct meetings the previous week when no whites had shown up for the precinct meetings. They arrived about 9:40 a.m. at the circuit court room on the second floor. At 10 a.m. about 150 white people came into the room. Mr. Shields went to the

Chairman's stand. Because he was chairman the last time he was calling the meeting to order. Mr. Gibson stood up and nominated Mr. Shields for chairman of the convention. Mr. Shields was rapidly elected.

Other offices and slates of delegates were elected. In each case Gibson would read a name or list of names for the offices, and the election was rapid and without quarrel.

Shields asked for a credentials committee. Gibson read off six names. Seconded. Mr. Turnipseed tried to oppose, but the chair ruled that a vote had been taken before the objections was raised.

The credentials committee asked for a report from each supervisor's district. Each district had a man get up and give credentials for the entire district. The credentials committee then retired and after five minutes gave a list to Shields. Turnipseed, Johnson, and Hubbard did nothing about this. They did not question the credential report nor did they seek to have their credentials recognized in any way.

Turnipseed objected during the voting for delegates to the state convention, but he was ruled out of order by Shields after the deputy sheriff pointed out that "that colored boy has his hand up."

Same procedure for the County Democratic Executive Committee. This time Johnson spoke up. Shields ruled that he was not a delegate and hence had no right to speak up.

Shields read some resolutions. Johnson tried to read a resolution. He was again questioned about being a delegate and whether his resolution could be considered.

The three Negroes left, feeling that they had no part in the meeting. They don't know what happened after that.

#### Phone report from Ruleville

Mrs. Rennie Williams, Negro from Ruleville, participated in Sunflower County Democratic party convention yesterday. Ruleville Mayor Charles Durrrough accepted Mrs. Williams' nomination of another Ruleville Negro, Mrs. Ruby Davis, for alternate delegate to the Democratic State Convention even though Mrs. Williams was not officially a delegate to the county convention. First Negro known to participate since Reconstruction, Mrs. Williams cast the only vote for Mrs. Davis. Three other times Mrs. Williams tried to be heard, but she was not recognized by the chair.

There were three observers: Charles MacLaurin and John Harris of SNCC as well as Dale Gronemier, a summer volunteer.