

MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM LABOR UNION

DRAFT CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

To raise the standards of living and bring a better security to those making less than the minimum wage, and to protect their jobs. To raise the wages of all labor. To organize the poor people, and give them unity power. To better working conditions, and to cut the hours of work. To get equal treatment of people in their jobs, and equal pay for the same kinds of work. To get people hired equally. To get more jobs, and to get more people employed. To end the obligation of children and of old age people to work. To get equal protection of the laws for all workers, and to secure education for all children. To have social security and insurance to cover all workers.

ARTICLE III - MEETINGS

A State Union Convention will be held twice a year in July and December. These meetings will be to discuss the problems of the union, to make new laws or change the constitution if necessary, and to give reports on the union.

All members in good standing may attend and vote in the Conventions.

The exact time and place of the Conventions will be called by the Executive Board.

2/3 of the locals must have members present at a Convention for it to do official business.

The Executive Board can call Special Meetings between the Conventions. 2/3 of the Chairmen of the locals may also call a Special Meeting.

The Special Meetings will require the same quorum and have the same powers as the Conventions.

Each local must be notified, through the Chairman or the Secretary, at least 3 days before each Convention or Special Meeting. The person notified will be held responsible for notifying the members of the local.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

The officers of the union shall be a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and Treasurer.

These officers will make up the Executive Board.

The Chairman will call meetings of the Executive Board.

Three members of the Executive Board must agree to the calling of a Convention or Special Meeting.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

Any person 15 or over who works, whether employed or not, can be a member of the union.

Any member who misses two months payment of dues may lose his good standing by vote of his local. Any member not in good standing will lose his vote in all union meetings and will receive no support from the union.

A member taken off good standing must pay \$2.00, plus \$ .25 for each month of dues not paid, to get back on good standing.

Members should attend the meetings of their local and of the state union.

A local can suspend from membership any member it feels to be working against the interests of the union. A member suspended can get back into the union by a majority vote of the local which suspended him.

A person suspended by a local may appeal to a Convention or Special Meeting of the State.

#### ARTICLE VI - ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Election of officers will take place at the December Convention. The term of the officer will be 1 year, and an officer can be re-elected.

Each member in good standing at the Convention shall have 1 vote in the election of each officer. Balloting will be by secret ballot.

Officers will take office one month after the date of the election.

An officer can be impeached at any Convention or Special Meeting by a 2/3 vote, with 3/4 of the locals represented at the meeting.

#### ARTICLE VII - REVENUE

Members shall pay \$1.00 joining fee and \$ .50 a month in dues. A member will pay joining fees and dues to his local and this money will be used as the local decides.

The union will to the best of its ability meet the emergency expenses of members on strike.

To meet these and other expenses the union will undertake fund-raising activities.

No person can act as a fund-raiser for the Union without the approval of the Executive Board.

There will be a 5-member State Issuing Committee which will decide the use of all state union funds. The State Issuing Committee will be elected each year at the December Convention. The State Issuing Committee will be chosen by secret ballot, and will be subject to the same impeachment rules as the officers.

The Chairman of each local shall be responsible for seeing that the needs of his local are presented to the State Issuing Committee.

Each local shall have its own issuing committee elected by the local.

Locals can spend money for union expenses and to aid members of their local on strike, but cannot issue money to members not on strike.

Locals can raise money for their own treasuries, but if any local treasury exceeds \$500.00 the State Issuing Committee must be informed, and it can decide the use of any money over \$500.00.

The Chairman and the Secretary of the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union shall sign the checks of the Union with the approval of the State Issuing Committee. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-chairman can sign. In the absence of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary can sign.

The Executive Board will appoint a Board of Auditors, who will audit the books of the union before each Convention.

#### ARTICLE VIII - STRIKES, BARGAINING, AND APPROVAL OF CONTRACTS

Strikes can be called by a majority vote of the membership immediately affected, subject to approval of the local, and of the Executive Board.

Collective bargaining will be done by representatives chosen by the members immediately affected by the bargaining.

Approval of contracts will be by a majority of those covered in the contract.

ARTICLE IX - RELATIONS WITH LOCALS

A local must be approved by the Executive Board before becoming an official local of the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union.

Locals will be required to keep up-to-date records of their finances, membership, and strike list, and to report these to the state headquarters once each month.

If any local fails to act according to this constitution, the State Issuing Committee will have the right to cut off funds to the local, subject to approval of the Executive Committee. This action can be appealed to any Convention or Special Meeting.

Any local can be put out of the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union for misconduct by a 2/3 vote of any Special Meeting or Convention where 3/4 of the locals are represented.

ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution can be made by a 2/3 vote at any Convention or Special Meeting, provided that at least 3/4 of the locals are represented at such a meeting.

ARTICLE XI - APPROVAL OF CONSTITUTION

This Draft Constitution will be printed and given to each local, where it should be discussed. After each local has had a chance to discuss this Draft Constitution, a Special Meeting of the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union will be called. 3/4 of the locals must be represented at this meeting for it to approve the Constitution. Changes can be made in any part of this Draft Constitution at the Special Meeting by a majority vote. The final Constitution will require a 2/3 vote of the members at the Special Meeting to be approved.

DRAFT CONSTITUTION prepared September 9, 1965, by the following union members:

Mr. P.D. Sherrod  
Hollandale

Mr. Edward Williams  
Rosedale

Mrs. Ellen Williams  
Indianola

Mr. Isaac Foster  
Tribbett

Mr. George Shelton, Jr.  
Shaw