

F A C T S H E E T

(Background on poor peoples' use of Greenville AFB)

- Median income of Negroes in the Delta: \$456 a year (USDA report, 11/64)
- Of 26,000 tractor drivers living with their families on Delta plantations, 6,500 will be jobless by spring because of cuts in cotton allotments and increased automation (Ralph Alewine, Mississippi Employment Security Commission, 11/18/65). This means approximately 30,000 persons made homeless.
- Eight counties of Mississippi have no commodities distribution at all. Thirty-nine counties give them only to people on welfare.
- "Mississippi has no provision for welfare payments to any person (except the blind and disabled) for any purpose between the ages of 18 and 65....Welfare payments are provided for the blind, the old (over 65), the permanently and totally disabled, and the dependent child who is without adequate care because he has lost the care and support of one or both parents...." (John Childs, Delta Democrat Times, Feb. 16, 1966.)
- A contract for Operation HELP, designed to forestall distribution of federal commodities by Delta Ministry, was signed by the state and the Department of Agriculture on Nov. 24. It was to bring a total of \$24 million worth of food into the state, beginning within sixty days, and would hire over 450 poor people to help give it out. At the end of the 60 days, no food had been distributed; the state had not even appointed the interracial board to administer it.
- The chances of a Negro baby's dying in its first year in Mississippi are more than twice those of a white baby's. (1960 Census)
- In 1960, over 90% of the Negro rural homes in Mississippi had no flush toilets, no bathtub and no shower. Only 1/3 were in "sound" condition (1960 Census)
- Standard pay for tractor drivers in the Delta is \$6 a day; for cotton choppers it is \$3 a day, sunrise to sunset. Plantation families have no income during the 6 months between growing seasons, must live on commodities and on advances on wages.
- Less than 1/2 of 1% of Negro children in the state go to school with white children (12 years after the Supreme Court decision.) Fifteen school districts have not desegregated at all.
- In the Delta, over half the males over 25 years old have less than a sixth-grade education. Mississippi does not have a compulsory school attendance law. Negro schools are so poor that the federal government classifies a Negro with five years of Mississippi schooling as functionally illiterate (STAR program criteria.)
- Greenville Air Force Base, formerly a jet training base, has not been used by the air force in more than a year. There are more than 300 empty, well-kept buildings on its 2,000 acres.