

CANTON PROJECT REPORT

I am very sorry for the delay of this report. It will include the following things: Personnel Report (who is now on the project and how they are financed), Financial Report (beginning with March), Report on FDP hearings, Public Accommodation Testing, Madison County Activities report (including Farmer's League, County Convention, Sewing project, and Union project)

Personnel for Madison County

	<u>Work</u>	<u>Paid</u>
George Raymond Jr.	Project Director	CORE
Bill Forsyth	Madison County Comm. A	CORE
JoAnn Oelman	Canton Office Manager	CORE
Bill Hamblin	Madison County Comm BCD	none
Judy Hampton	Madison County Comm E	CORE
Phil Sharp	Madison County Comm G	CORE
Johnny Smith	Madison County Comm BCD	Work-Study
Milton Pickett	Madison County	Work-Study
Eartiss Crawford	Madison County Comm BCD	Work-Study
C.O. Chinn Sr.	Canton	CORE
Finch Evans	Madison County Comm BCD	none

Personnel for Rankin County

Martha Wright	Rankin County (Sandhill)	CORE
Sears Buckley Jr.	Rankin County "	CORE
Myrtis Evans	Rankin County "	Work-Study
Suzanne Maxon	Rankin County "	CORE chapter in North
Sandra Watts	Rankin County "	CORE

Personnel for Scott County

Pat Packard	Scott County (Ludlow)	paid by group in north
Josephine Walls	Scott County "	none
Louise Evans	Scott County "	none

(Valley View area headed by Andrew Green send in separate reports)

PUBLIC ACCOMODATIONS TESTING

On Friday, February 26th., local Negro citizens tested the Civil Rights Law. In the morning, a group of five Negro ladies went to Jones Drug Store and Wardell's restaurant in Canton. Three ladies went into Jones Drug Store which has a lunch counter and tables where one may eat. Just before they went in, a white COFO worker went into the Drug Store, sat down at one of the tables and was served immediatley. When the Negro women walked into the store, all the chairs at the tables had been removed except two. The waitress asked them what they wanted and they all said they wanted malts. She told them that she could serve them to go, but they could not eat them there. Just before she took their order she quickly removed the last two remaining chairs from the tables and put them behind the counter. When the ladies asked her why they couldn't eat the malts there, the waitress replied, "Because I'm just not going to serve you. Look down at the sign at the counter, don't you see it?" (pointing to a penciled sign which said "closed") The ladies said they saw the sign and walked out of the Drug Store. They then went to Wardell's Restaurant (all five of them) but they only walked in and sat there for about 2 minutes. They saw a man go to the back of the restaurant and pick up what they think was a telephone book. This made them nervous, so they got right up and left the restaurant.

That afternoon eight younger people tested Wardell's restaurant and the public library. The library was locked up when they got there at approximately 4:15 p.m. They then went up to Wardell's restaurant. Immediately preceding them was two white COFO workers who walked in and sat down in the restaurant. The Negro group came into the Restaurant and sat down at two tables. After about 2 or 3 minutes, the manager of the restaurant came over to each of the tables and told them very politely that he could not serve them. When they asked why he replied that it was not because of color or creed but because of the good of his business. He then came over to where the two white COFO workers were sitting and told them that they had better go too. When they asked why, he replied that he reserved the right to serve whom he pleased. When asked if he was Mr. Wardell he answered that he was. The Negro group and the COFO workers all got up ~~ffff~~ and left the restaurant. There were quite a few white people standing around the streets. A group of five students went into another place, called the Salty Sandwich Shop. (This place has a divided room one side for white and one side for "colored".) As the Negro students walked into this place the woman working there ran out of the shop and went over to talk to a policeman. Finally as the students just stod on the white side, a white man came in and told them that they would have to go over to the colored side to be served. When they asked why, the man replied that the woman just didn't want them in her place. They them left the shop.

There is more testing to be done in Madison county. As of yet ~~ffff~~ suits have not been filed against any of these places. We have been advised by attorneys to wait until we finish testing all of the places that we want to test so that one suit may be brought against all of these places.

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FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY DEPOSITION HEARING FOR THE CONGRESSIONAL CHALLENGE

On February 8th. through February 12th. the Freedom Democratic held hearings for the Congressional Challenge in Madison County. The hearings were held at the Madison County Courthouse in Canton. This was part of the statewide 40 day period to gather testimony to substantiate the challenge to the five regular Congressmen from Mississippi that they had not been elected by the majority of the people of Mississippi. Many local Negro citizens testified at these hearings about how they had been denied the right to register to vote or the complicated procedure that they had to go through to become registered voters. The first witness was Mr. George Washington Sr. who told of how he had been harassed and threatened since he rented the house to the COFO Project and became involved in the Movement in Madison County. During Mr. Washington's testimony the sheriff and two deputies came into the courtroom with their guns exposed and stood glaring at the witness. Our lawyer protested after which a 15 minute recess was called with the final decision that the opposition lawyers said that the hearings could be moved into another room and our lawyer said that they would try to find some other place ~~ffff~~ for the hearings so our witnesses would not be subject to intimidation. During the cross examination of Mr. Washington by local Canton lawyers representing Frentiss Walker it was attempted to show that the things that happened to Mr. Washington were just isolated incidents. George Raymond Jr., Canton Project Director, was the next witness and he testified with great clarity about all acts of intimidation, beatings, bombing, etc. connected with the Voter Registration Drive in Madison County and the recent ASCS election. His cross examination was put off until Thursday. six

On February 9, 1965 ~~ffff~~ Negro witnesses testified as to what happened to them when they tried to register and what happened to them on the first Freedom Day in Canton in 1963. All during the testimony the opposition lawyers kept referring to Negroes as "Nigras" to which our lawyer kept objecting strongly as well as to the use of the witnesses first names by the opposition lawyers. The local citizens testimony went from failure to pass the test, to loss of land and physical intimidation when they took the voter registration test.

On February 10, 1965, six more local Negro citizens testified also about the difficulties they had encountered when they attempted to register to vote. Their stories told of being arrested on false charges, threatened by police officers, and a killing of a Negro citizen.

On February 11, 1965, George Raymond Jr. was cross examined by the opposition lawyers. That afternoon, the mayor of Canton, L.S. Mathews and the local president of the White Citizens Council, Gus Noble, were questioned. Mayor Mathews was very elusive but it was brought out that he is a member of the WCC and on the state executive board. The mayor refused to answer many questions about who were members of the WCC and in general put himself in a very bad position. Gus Noble was very hostile about the first freedom day and the selective buying campaign. Our lawyer continually badgered him about the meaning of the WDC and also put him in very bad light. Upon ~~ffff~~ the conclusion of these witnesses testimony the opposition lawyer made an objection saying that the testimony was irrelevant and immaterial.

On February 12, 1965, six more local Negro citizens testified.

These hearings were very significant not only for the Challenge, but also for the local Negro people of Madison County. For the first time the courtroom was integrated and integrated so thoroughly that the whites finally retreated up behind the the bar that separates the judge and jury from the audience. Also for the first time the white man heard Negroes telling him that they did not like to be called by their first names and did not like conditions in Mississippi.

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CANTON PROJECT FINANCIAL REPORT

This report will begin with the month of March. As of that time the money in the office was given out of personal checks from individual staff members.

<u>Received</u>	<u>Paid Out</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Date</u>
\$25.00		Contribution from Bill Forsyth	3/5/65
\$40.00		Repaid loan from Sonny Dearon	3/9/65
\$190.00		Contribution from Sarah Leiber (used to pay for Bill Hamblin's car)	3/10/65
\$100.00		Payment from Mississippi CORE to make up for money spent on fixing Hamblin's car	3/11/65
\$225.00		Contributions from North obtained by Bill Forsyth in speaking tour	3/11/65

\$580.00 (received up to March 18, 1965)

+15.00 contribution from North			
2.00 contribution for food from local person			
<u>\$597.00 Total</u>	<u>\$281.80</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Date</u>
		Food money for Freedom House	3/6/65
	2.80	Laundry for Freedom House	3/6/65
	3.33	Food money	3/8/65
	6.14	Food money	3/8/65
	2.79	Food money	3/9/65
	4.00	Food money	3/9/65
	7.82	Food for staff meeting (15)	3/9/65
	1.69	Food money	3/10/65
	10.00	Subsistence money for Finch Evans and Bill Hamblin	3/10/65
	1.00	Phone money and soap	3/10/65
	2.12	Phone bill ending Feb. 22nd.	3/10/65
	1.26	Food money	3/11/65
	2.00	Food money	3/11/65
	2.00	Loan to Phil Sharp	3/11/65
	75.00	Rent to Washington's for Freedom House	3/11/65
	2.88	Food money	3/11/65
	2.41	Food money	3/11/65
	2.24	Food money	3/12/65
	5.00	Food money	3/12/65
	6.00	Money for Madison County Citizen	3/12/65
	2.69	Food money	3/13/65
	4.00	Food money	3/15/65
	1.00	Food money	3/15/65
	8.00	Finch Evans & Subsistence money	3/16/65
	8.00	Bill Hamblin - subsistence money	3/16/65
	<u>\$168.30</u>		

Total Received - \$597.00

Total Paid Out - 358.30

(including \$190
check above) \$238.70

Balance

MADISON COUNTY ACTIVITIES

The County Convention

The Madison County Movement has set up a county convention for March 27, 1965 at a local man's house by the name of Stokes Ware. All the project's activities have been centered around this coming convention for the past month. The county has been divided up into the same communities that were used for the ASCS Election. This gives the county 8 communities plus the town of Canton. Each of these communities has been worked by COFO workers. The main idea behind this convention is to bring elected representatives together to talk about the things that they want to do in the coming months. It is generally felt that COFO has continued to bring programs to the people to carry out like the Freedom Registration, the Freedom Vote and the Challenge. For the first time, local citizens will be coming together to discuss what they want to carry out themselves. Each of these 8 communities plus Canton, are now electing representatives to represent them at the convention. There is also a educative process going on with these elections. The people are first discussing the merits of such a convention before electing delegates and are also discussing things that they want to see done in their various communities. For example, most of the people in two communities want to see their roads improved and want to talk about having Freedom Schools this summer. Most of the people have been meeting in small groups with a COFO worker to talk about what this convention means and what they want to see done. One community has already drawn up a petition to take to the county road supervisor about their roads. All attention of the project has been centered on this one program and it is hoped that for the first time local people will have a hand in selecting the programs that they want to carry out. It is also hoped that these elected representatives will continue to function in their communities after the convention.

Sewing Project

A group of about five local ladies have been talking about starting a sewing Co-operative. They can all make shirts and dresses in a short amount of time. They feel that they could start a COOP which would make shirts and dresses to sell to places. There has also been talk of getting some Northern contacts to supply the material. The ladies have now made four samples of their work and it will be sent to various companies in the North to see if they would be interested in this market. The COFO office has two sewing machines to start with and plans are now being made to look into the procedure to set up such a Coop. The ladies are very serious about this project and want to start on it right away.

Union Activity

There have been several meetings about forming a union at one of the local wood working mills in Canton. This mill employs about 150 Negroes and they work in segregated facilities and for a low wage and long hours. The main problem is trying to get all the employees together. Many are afraid of losing their jobs. George Raymond is going to get more information on how to start a union, plus talk to the head of the Mississippi AFL/CIO. There will be more information on this later. Right now it is just in the talking stages.

*submitted by
Sonya Wren*