

MFDP Chapter 3

SAM CARR

Interview
Mr. Sam Carr
Negro leader (FDP Ex-Com)

0234
Side 1 and 2
Aberdeen, Miss.

Q: What is your first name, Mr. Carr?

A: Sam.

Q: Sam Carr?

A: Right.

Q: You live here in Mississippi?

A: Right. That's my home, here.

Q: How long have you been involved in the movement?

A: Well, I've been involved in the movement ever since the last of '43 is the beginning, and so '44 was actually when I started to work sure enough.

Q: What were you doing back then?

A: Well, back then I was...Well I just stopped working, at least the doctor had stopped me from working off the job. I quit working in '52...uh, '62, rather, I had a heart attack and they stopped me from work, see...and I haven't done any work since.

Q: In '62?

A: In '62.

Q: And what had you been doing in the movement then?

A: Well, I've been working in the movement ever since '62. And later, in '64, why, I was elected by my peoples of the colony in the first district as one of the State Executive Committee of the Freedom Party.

Q: Are you on the State Executive Committee?

A: Right.

Q: What kind of whork did you do in the movement up until the time when you got elected into the State Executive Committee?

A: Well, the first thing, the first work which we came to this time after Mrs. Gray came up from Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and set us up. They lived with me, and the first thing that we done was to go about and canvass the South side of

town, trying to get peoples to register to vote. But later, in '64, was we got started got the Party started in this county. Then we began to set up precincts and we started to work among the...But, this year, the program has been more gretta (phonetic) because one of the things in the last of last year...we worked along with the ACS and we did or were able to get a colored man on the ballot which come out. I have a he didn't get enough votes to win the election. So this year, we're planning to run two men from the South section, which they have combined those sections together, and I think that we'll be able to in this particular part of the section to get the someone on the ballot this time.

Q: This is for what position?

A: This is in the Selma agricultural position (?), you see. The ACS, you know, they have a group of men that's now working and their job is, you know, they're to come and the acres and the measurement of the land, you see, what needs to be done. Now, in this, the government pays them salary for doing so, and so one of the that we was trying. We was trying to get some colored person in on this job too because we figure this dollar-and-a-half an hour and so much a farm, you know, maybe land I figure and mostly, I imagine, their own land. Why, I think that it would be better for some of them did have a job in this.

Q: What does the ACS stand for?

A: Well, that they the agriculturally for the farm, agriculturally association.

Q: Association of...

A: Right. Right, right.

Q: Are they part of the government?

A: It's the government program. It's a federal government program, the ACS is. And I have in every district in the way they had Monroe County divided is -- it's in several farm districts, you see -- and they have so many mens, you know, out of that district. Other words, the man too is owned that land. And they go about and the time when the they determine these acres and they also measure your land. Whether you plant too much or not, whether you have to plow up, you know, give you so much grass and how these things should be done, your passes and what not to drain your land the right way. Well, this don't affect your regular job. You can still work, if you have another job, and still do this work. It's kinda like spare time. But they have one job that they pays at least you get as much as \$12 you know. They...the others is lesser than that. The others is paid

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off by the farms which you imagine are whatever you determine.

Q: Could you tell us something about the local Negro leadership in the local community here? Are you more or less the leader of the Negro Community?

A: Well, well, well, I would say I's one of them, because we have several in this district that do, rather, are leaders and so, in the prairie section, which is the West side, out in the rural community, they have several more out there, that peoples mostly look up to, or that they will take their advice from these people.

Q: What sort of issues do you have here in the Aberdeen area? In the Monroe County areas that are now being worked upon by the movement, such as the urban renewal project?

A: Well, the renewal project is one of them. They also have started organizainaing the small farmer now and we're working on that. In fact, (?) the prairie section, we have let that one sit up. It's waiting approval now. I haven't seen Rev. Cook in a day or day or two, which is heading that and I don't know what he is got his people back from Jackson yet. But they were sent to Jackson to be approved and what they are going to do...Why, they're going to find themself a buyer, and they're going to pool their money in whats ever they need to get for farm machinery, seeds, fertilizer, or whatsoever they need to go buy this in a bulk. But they might get it cheaper.

Q: Is there any connection between this and the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union?

A: Well, it's not any connection that part in the union itself. However, the union itself is a branch of the Party, see.

Q: I mean, this ACS. Is this an organization of local farmers who own their own land.

A: Right. Well, it'll apply to anyone, because this is it's a government program, but the ACS each year, each time that they have a election, well, we run so many men for that you see, for that. Two or three mens is run for that particular office, and then you can run for it, to get it, you see. And so, when the ballots are...the ballot this year, or last year, rather, but we worked until we're dead, going to the ACS office downtown, and the auxiliary...and presenting our candidaties, why, we did get the chance to get one of the names on the ballot. One did come out in that section along with three or four white, see. His name were on the

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ballot.

Q: Tell us something here about the dispute over the urban renewal project.

A: Well, one of the mans of this group told the urban renewal is this, that the offer what was given the...to the people really is not enough to even start a foundation of a house, if you had to move out of the section. So, really one of the other things that was involved in this, they didn't have enough places to locate people after they moved them out. That was another thing and so that was the two main points we were working on. The peoples themself that is involved in this do not want to go to public housing. This is one of the things that they is asking them to do. They wants the biggest of them to move on the North side where the government project is until this is torn down and rebuilt. And who knows. But the main point about it, all of these peoples out in that section, ones that is involved, now, owns their land. But when this is done, well, they owns it no more. In other words, you will have to buy it back again. And one of the problems that faces us, lots of the people, some of them don't have jobs and then the others is older people, and they just gets a little welfare check once a month. However, they told them that you could buy it back, but the house that would come up to specifications, why, you know what that would be. That, I don't think, really, and I heard some of the experts say that it would be at least a \$7000 house, that you could get by with. And the next thing, they said that you'd be allowed 40 years to pay for it, but the thing about it, uh, is peoples now, you figure at a low age of 33, where would you be when the 40 years was up, see. And then, peoples who didn't have anything but a little welfare check couldn't make the payments no way. So then, and what there have you got? But, one of the ways, is the way this thing is handled, instead of it coming directly from the federal government likes it was handing it down, why, what they'd do, the city himself and the Chamber of Commerce sould fix it over and do the buying, see. That's the way they do the thing. The Chamber...They gets the money from the government, the Chamber.. ..The city, in turns, borrow the land, see, in other words, send it back to the government, and the prices that they offer, few peoples thought that they were satisfied with it, but there was others that was not. Anywhere from 1300 to 2000 dollars that you built a house, why, you wouldn't get much more than a foundation, about that much to build that. Still don't have enough. But the main thing that is hurt anyone is this, that you owns property, you owns a house, and then, in turn, they come around and sell this house, in other words they take the house rrom you, and you have nothing. And course that's very hard. It's very hard to

peoples, because one they own land, even if they didn't have anything but a tent, well, that's yours. But when you get something, that's somebody else. So, the thing, I think that related peoples askin' for is that. Now, one of the tow easiest that we put before them, that if this done, then what we are askin' for is that, well, they guarantee peoples' jobs, see. That's one of the things. One of the poeple have expressed that they would like, if they could get the type of job that they wanted, why that then they would improve themselves without movin', see. But, you see, nothin' has been done about this. No guaranteein' has been done on any of these things. That's the tie-up right now,,you see. And we are askin' for these main two points, you see. Will they guarantee them jobs? One time is was spoke of that lots of industries, they hoped to get along which the highway will come through that section, providin' if they can get the land. And they want to build that up into business, see. While another thing they askin' for, well, these peoples that was involved in this be able to get a job owin' some of this industry and this buildin' that is goin' up. Will they be able to get employment on the...when they start building the publics themselves, see. And none of this have been...no guarantee that they would. The only signs that they got say, "Well, a contractor will have this, and we not tellin' him who he should hire, see."

Q: Tell us, Mr. Carr, something of your own role in these various projects.

A: Well, this far down on this street, especially on the Urban Renewal, we are not involved yet, but the only thing is just a matter of time and we will be, you see. Step by step, however, the project don't come any farther than just by the office up there, and so every two years, probably, they'll just continue to move out. And one of the things, in Aberdeen, 'specially in this town, knowin' this town,it's only two ways that this town can grow, and it'll have to come south or go west, because on the north side, they have build back to Matabee (?) Creek which come across there, and they can't go any farther. And on the east side, why, the Tumbigue (?) River is now stopped the buildin' and growin' out in that section, because the river itself don't hold no water. Everybody that's livin' in that section now, usually in the winter time, you have to move out.

Q: How are you yourself participating in the Movement here in Aberdeen?

A: Well, you see, my job is the secretary of the office in this...not only in the county of Monroe, but the

county of Clay, Lowndes, and Oktibbeha is the counties which I am supposed to visit. And Rankin. And make a report of how they are gettin' along, and help them to get set up, you see, like they should be. One of the things that we're workin' on in Monroe county, which we don't have a full structure yet, and that's...as you know, we have five Supervisors District, and the structure set up is that you should have three men out of every supervisor district, along with the county chairman, on this committee which they, in times, make policies for the county. And that's one of the things that we're workin' on now along with registration and organizin' the farms and tryin' to work these five supervisor's district and get the mens to get that set up where we'll have contacts to work. We have several supervisor districts which is no work have been goin' on, which is the second, the third distri..the supervisors district. And so in the second supervisor's district, I believe that a few weeks ago, and I got the promise from two responsible mens out there, which ils kind of leaders in that section, to accept the job as chairman, so now the next thing that we are workin' on is somemore contacts that we might start workin' on registration in those areas and settin' up precincts.

Q: Do you serve as chairman of the Party for all these things you mentioned?

A: Well, I works on those projects. You see, I'm on the state, and not...I'm not the chairman of the first district. We have a chairman. But all state officers you work. When they elect one out of that distrlct, then you work along. You supposedly are responsible.

Q: Do you still have a position in the local FDP? Are you president or chairman of Aberdeen or Monroe county?

A: No. Reverand Whitley (?) is the chairman of the county, and Mr. Young, who is what the office is rented from, that lives near-by, is the chairman of South Side precinct. Mrs. Smith, which is secretary of the county is also chairman of the North side.precinct.

Q: Do you have much connection with the project going on down the road here, the summer project? That is, with the volunteers that come in from the North?

A: Well, that's right. Yousee, the all volunteers that come in and workin to the county while they are under the supervision of the county chairman, and the county committee, see. And in turns, I call them together, well, about two weeks ago, and we had an executive meeting, and it was spelled out them the wishes of the peoples. The first thing that the peoples themself, through the

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precinct level, and in the different district decided to what they would want. what projects that they would want to work on. What things they would need dmore. And then times we would bring this to the executive body and then we decide on what type work on, and who go where, and who have the expericnce of doin' certain jobs, and then they will be placed in that area. To do that job.

Q: Are any of these volunteers directly under you, or are they under the...

A: They under the supervision of the county chairman. On the state leve,, now, this is one of the jobs that we have. Beginnin' from the precinct level, the information out of each supervisor's district will be reported to when the district caucus or conference, when all the counties come together. We do that at least once a month. We bring all the counties in the first district who is now in operation, they comes together. And then they reports. But then times they send delegates from each precinct along with the chairman, or one of the chairmans of the...that supervisors district, and then times he makes the report to the district, you see. And then after thereport is made into the district, then we state executive committees take this report on to the state when the state convention. Whatsoever is needed, then we are responsible to seein' that the state gets these in-formation.

Q: Could you discuss the incoming summer volunteers? Where they will be sent? what they will be doing?

A: Well, during at Hattiesburg, we did. We also, at the beginnin' when we was asked how many workers that we thought that we would need in each county, to work, we also submitted a sheet on that, and also the type of work that the people would like to see done. This was in the beginnin'. We asked for peoples of that qualifi- cation. 'Course all times, you know, you don't get that, but the meantime, when the workers come to the county, then we, along with the county chairman, and the reat fo the committees, we holds a day or two orientation with them here, to get get them acquainted with the things, and the things that we find out then that they can do, and try to place them int o the best place, or the more needed place.

Q: How many volunteers did you originally ask for?

A: Well, this year, we asked for twenty, and in turns, we were plannin' to use ten, and the adjoinin' county, which is Chickasaw County. But after we got to Hattiesburg, and we didn't get the number of volunteers that we thought

that we would have comin' down this summer, why we wasn't able to get the amount that we asked for. Our plans were that ten of these peoples into Chickasaw County, which is adjurnin' county, about eighteen miles north of here, but we didn't get enough to start there. But one of the main things we had planned in this executive committee meetin' that we had experienced, local people, and the places that are now operatin', in precincts and precinct level; we felt like that these peoples would be able to carry out, and also to canvas the peoples in these areas which the precincts are now set, and get those peoples on the book, but the main areas that we were interested in to get people, is the areas that haven't been touched yet. Such as the second supervisors and the third supervisor's district. These are the places that we was more interested in gettin' peoples in. And the rest, we was interested in gettin' started in Chickasaw County, because, a few monthes back, we had an injunction against Chickasaw register, in which this injunction was approved by Judge Clayton (?) and was issued also by him, and so we wanted to start the whites with them, because, see, we had the same type of injunction that they had in Sunflower County in the delta, 'bout registerin' Negroes, because in Chickasaw County, before this injunction was brought, why they had no Negroes registered to vote. One teacher tried to redisher up there, in sixty-three, and he were out of a job. They never said that he passed the test. But, however, during the time of the court hearings, (inaudible) court-house why, the government brought in at least eight of white witnesses, and these peoples had been retishered voters since sixty-two, some sixty-three, and at least about eight of those peoples couldn't even write the name. This man was a Profetter...Professor in the school, and he was teachin' history, and they say he didn't pass the test. So, these peoples testified, under oath, that they couldn't even write the name. One lady was there; her name was on the book as a retishered voter, and she say she ain't never been to the court-house. She don't know how it got on there. Som these were white, and we hope that we could get started in ther right away, and get the peoples movin' less, since we got this injunction against them. I think it would be a good time now to start movin'. I have, We've had a few peoples out of Chickasaw County who is been comin' across the line into Monroe County, takin' part in the precinct that is clos to the line. And these peoples have the experience now, and we wants to begin settin' up precincts in the county.

Q: The summer volunteers are doing the voter registration Work?

A: Well, that's is mostly what they are workin' on. I have a... an Freedom School, where I have a teacher which is not in Jackson at orientation session for Freedom School, and I think that she doin' a very good job since she's been here, because she stepped 'em on up until about seventy-five students. However, these are the small kids, and she's plannin' to start a Negro history class, and I think as soon as she return, why this will be done.

Q: Have you ever had demonstrations around here?

A: Well, they waven't had any demonstrations around here as yet, but one of the things we had a group in sixty-four which worked on this accomodation part, and the fact we had at one time at least twenty, twenty-five of 'em to go to jail at one time for integratin' places. And, however, this year the first of the summer, we also moved from Monroe County into Chickasaw County, so they have been integratin' the theater over there in several places it has been done. But as far as a mass demonstration, there happen been yet here, but this is in the mill and is plannin' sometime soon. This will be also around voter retishration. We're workin' the field for that now, and we'se tryin' to get a drive at least on the people some more to go up to the court house at one time. So we're plannin' to drive like that. But, however, in Chickasaw County, they have had several demonstration and pickett there. In fact, they had one, I believe, this Monday, because, as you know, there was a group of 'em there that were gettin' locked up for passin' leaflets an' goin' aroun'.

Q: Were you a member of the FDP Executive Council when the decision was made to bring volunteers into the South, into Mississippi?

A: Right.

Q: When was the decision made? Do you remember?

A: Well, right now, it was back in the fall of the year. I can't think of exactly what month, but the information that caused that theFdp decided to have volunteers this year, because Core and SNCC said that they wouldn't have a summer volunteer program, and then we decied, through the committee that we were, that they wouldn't, of course. And they, in turn, said that they would submit all appoications to FDP; the applicants for the summer project.

Q: Was there much opposition within the FDP Executive Council itself to having summer volunteers?

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A: Not at all. I think all the board was unanimous to have them here. They wanted to have them, and we felt like that it was very necessary that we should have one, because our plans is to work the shole eighty-two counties, which is in the Mississippi, and we was hoping to get those counties who haven't been touched, some of 'em at least; this summer open up.

Q: Is there z lot of opposition in the FDP to summer volunteers? I know I've met a few people who prefer not to have whites from the North mixing up in this.

A: Well, I don't think it's too much, but in places you will find that. In fact, in this county, there is one section, one particular section, on the East side, which is known as the Hampton (?) section. They asked that to open that section up, that they would like to have peoples up there on raise to start this off. So that's about all in this county that I know of, and Clay, I haven't found any trouble at all in Clay County of who come to work. But this was asked of by the peoples in this section, which is in the Hampton section that someone of their own race start 'em off. Now in this particuaar section, it's quite a light section, and all colored live there, and they been livin' there, I guess, some of 'em all their lives, and for years, and they own this land now to here. And it's a kind of a section that they all to themself, and they haven't been used to nobody else comin' in, and I think that's one of the things that was a little rough on 'em. They mostly kept theself cut off from the woutside world. So, I think that's it. But one of the things that we have tried to get them to see, and I think a few very wide understandin's...

Q: What do you think is the role of white people in the area?

A: Well, one of the best things that I know of is this, and I think that it's one of the greatest things, and some of th things that I can see that hepped us to get a step closer to the goal which we'se tryin' to achieve was this, because lots of things have been done from the cause in Mississippi since the volunteers started to comin' down in sixty-four, because we had the cooperation of the parents and other peoples of the North, which applied pressure, and we got certain things done, because the parents themself would talk to the Congressman who represent them, and to get him ton the ball. And to support these things, and to let out, and that's one of the things. And one of the greatest things that I can think of, maybe, that many peoples of the.. at the expense of that they have, and they spent the years in the army like I do, where we

all was together that don't know, but the best way to get yourself with this society, and if you goin' to become a part of this society, then you have to...both races will have to get together, that you might know how each other think, and get along together. That's one of the best things that I know of. I don't think that ilt would be much good if we were to start the campaign. You say you wanted to mix with this society and then you'de just be all of one race.

Q: Mr. Car,, do you find that some of the volunteers work more effectively than others?

A: Yeah. Exactly right. That's true of some of 'em. That they is more effective in all fields than others.

Q: What characteristics, reasons, make one person, one volunteer, more effective than another do you think?

A: Well, I think that one of the things that makes some of 'em more effective, it's the way that they approach people, and I think they think more of the job that they have to do, and think about. They puts this job on the level that they can reach the people. You see, in dealin' with Mississippi, why, you have a whole lots of peoples that have very low education, and then thegain this person, to get him to see what you talkin' about, why, you have to get down to his level. And thwn I think really that's why lots of 'em haven't been too effective, because they were all on a higher level, and they just really didn't understand what they meant.

Q: What sort of characteristics do you think are undesirable in Civil Rights workers? those who might not work quite as effectively?

A: Well, some of 'em, I've had this experience of last summer in sixty-four, we had saome that's...they would probably have a meeting with us at one time and they would (inaudible) and then say, "Take its" and sometimes they would go places and they would just (inaudible), you know, to some of the people, and not explain anything to 'em. And that part, you see, they didn't understand, that was something new, anyway, you know, especially to the Negro population, because they never have been in political or politics before. It's all new. And these definitions and things will have to be explained to toehm, you see. You can't just give it to 'em and say, well, you take it and you go ahead, because you have some peoples that can, and then, but the peoples on the lower level cannot. It's all, you might say, Greek to them.

Q: You said you did have volunteers here in Monroe county?

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A: Right, sir.

Q: How many did you have last summer?

A: We had five last summer.

Q: How many do you have this summer?

A: Well, along with the one's that were here last yaer, why we only got two out of the orientation dis summer that came in from the North. And one who was a school teacher, which is doin' a good job, and then we got one more, got a men, which is one other worker, plus three that we got from the Freedom Corp, which, in terms, that we are plannin' to use them in this county to make out. However, the orders was, and I don't know what it will dome this summer, because they have lots of work in all counties do, but Clay County at one time, one of the slowest counties, because the retister down there wasn't hardly passin' anybody, and up here in Monroe county, the lady in term was passin' a few. But there, until this year, they hadn't made any progress,,as far as gettin' people retistered and on the vote. And therefore, the west portion haves a group of people in Clay County, and the understandin' was that some of these peoples would branch out and also work in the Lowndes County and also in the Monroe County, and some into Lee County, but one of the things right now is tryin' to get Clay county straightened out, which I think is on the move, and they have done a good job.

Q: What do you think is wrong with Clay County right now that needs straightening out? Anything in particular?

A: Well, I think that they is very well now is got it set up now, because now they hav started more precincts and also have one on the west side that is out of town, it's a little town they call Free Bay (?) and Tivvee (?) and the section and White Station, and several other places is usin' West Point, and I think that we are workin' well. Now, last Sunday afternoon, I were at the White Station, and the volunteers who's in White Station them question some of the local peoples around there, they're doin' a very good job. And one of the thinks, how they meetin' peoples, and 'fore long, I think we'll readily get the job done, because they seem to be liked by the peoples in that area, and they weremeetin' the people. I also seen them, last Sunday evenin', talkin' to quite a few peoples, and their response was great.

Q: How would you compare last summer's project in the north county with this summer's project?

A: Well, last summer was one of the beginnings, and I do think that last summer project wasn't all bad, but I

think there's...it was lots of good come out of last summer's project, which was mostly on voter registration, setitng up precincts, and freedom schools. But this year, the programs have been enlarged all over, because there was other programs which have been being brought in this year, and which the peoples would like to have. Along the lines...like they're organiz the farmers and the adult school, which they hope to start pretty soon, in which the adults are, which we didn't have last summer. And the latest, they was talking about some kind of sewing job that the ladies might start on, getting some experience, and the next thing that we are working on in this area, is there's quite a few plants, most all the plants that is in the Aberdeen Area do have government contracts, and we are workin on that, urgin peoples to make applications that we might get employment in all these plants. And what we are really asking for is not just a job, but a machinery job, that's had in that place.

Q: How important to the movement do you think the summer projects are, in regard to the work of the summer volunteers, in regard to the whole work of the FDP?

A: Well, I think they's very important, because one of the things that we have,most of the people work, they have jobs, and they don't have anything but spare time to work in these fields. And therfore the summer volunteers can make more progress and can see more peoples in this area, because they will have their whole summer before them, and they can be sent to these different areas, and start something. Whereas peoples who are working part time, maybe will get to one or two, the whole summer.

Q: What disadvantages do you see in the summer projects, in the white volunteers?

A: Well, to me, I don't see any disadvantage. Now of course, some peoples might see some. I don't think... the only thing that the needs to be, and that we will stress more, and has been done, is once you get the local peoples started, why let them take ahold and do the work, because one of the things that we found to come out of the '64 project was that the volunteers did all the work, and to some peoples, this just suited them, in other words, I give them a name, that peoples like that that you will call the barley-nipple gang, because they want someone to put the nipple in the bottle and then hold it up for them to suck, andhe do nothing. But I think once you get him started, push him out in front and let him do the work. And I think it'll be great, because I had some, well, not experience of this kind, but there form..and in one of the other counties, especatly Lee County, around Tupelo, the volunteers said that they wouldn't even have a precinct

meetin, unless they were there. And if they were to be away, why, they wouldn't even try to have it. They look for them to open it up and to run it--do everything. Well, I think one of the best things that they can do, once they get them started, is to get some poeple in there, that catches on to the idea, and push 'em out in front, once if even you get them up to the front of the meeting and have some kind of excuse, that you got to go somewhere, and let them carry it on.

Q: How much longer do you think the FDP will ask summer volunteers to come down?

A: Well, one of the things right now, as long as I's clear enough, is that we is working in 36 counties...or 32. Well, you can see from that that we got a long ways to go yet, you see, to complete the whole state, and that's our plan.

Q: The FDP is operating in 36 counties?

A: 36 counties.

Q: How many of those have summer volunteers?

A: I think every county that is operatin now do have; one or two at least, one or two volunteers.

Q: Then you think the FDP will have summer volunteers next year?

A: I think they will. I think they will; if there are no other changes, I think they will have them. At least some of them, because our plans is to cover all 82 of the counties, to get the state complete. And as you know, that each county have in Mississippi, the way they is set up, they have supervisors in the districts, and one of the things these districts--some of them is terrible--because the second district begins at the Crosstome-Bigby river at the place they call Lackey, and that's close to the Alabama line, so you see what you got.

Q:What do you think about violence and nonviolence in the movement?

A: Well, I think that we are following the best course, which is nonviolence. I think that is the greatest of all, I think that is greatest weapon you can use. Because when the...limiting...living in this state, all my life, I know what I'm talking about, and there is some peoples that that's exactly what they would like for you to do; they would like for you to be violent, they would like for you to destroy, to strike back. And then they could start a full-scale something.

Q: Do you feel akin to nonviolence as a philosophy as well, or is this just a tactic?

A: Well, in a sense I think it'd be both, because I think it's a wonderful tactic, that you would use this.

Q: What do you think of an organization such as the Deacons?

A: Well, I don't have any objection of the Deacons, and I think that they have done some good. And perhaps later on, we might see the value of these things, but right now I think that we're following the best course.

Q: If it ever happens that the tactic, the weapon--as you call it-- of nonviolence fails, do you think that you'll resort to violence?

A: Well, as far as I can see, I think they will--in fact, this have been expressed several times, several speeches that have been made from different of the higher-ups, and in fact one were made in Jackson during the time of the demonstration on Jackson, that we were going on with our nonviolence, but we wouldn't promise you how long this would last.

Q: Do you agree with that?

A: Well, in some sense I'll agree with that statement.

Q: What do you think of the effectiveness of the aims of the other organizations in the South, groups like SCLC and CORE and the NAACP?

A: Well, one of the things that I think the SCLC has done a pretty good job in Salem (?). I don't hear too much, fact the FDP don't have too much trouble from them. The most one that is fighting us most is the NAA, in some sense. We're very well, I think, understand why that these things would happen, but now there it's lots of issues that they do fight us on. Well, it was a statement made about the Congressional Challenge, and they'd said that they'd support it, but you understand, if you have read that article, they didn't say that they'd support it, the Congressional Channel, which the FDP had, but they'd said that they would support unseating of the Mississippi representative, you see. They didn't say...they didn't, but they said they would support the unseating of these men.

Q: How was it that you decided that groups like SCLC and CORE are just too non-operative in Mississippi?

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A: Well, one of the things that I understand about that is, they figured that this year's operation...we had pretty close to around, you might say, 80,000 members, a little better, of what belongs to the FDP. They feel like the FDP has enough enough local people's mire (?) along with some volunteers would be able to complete the state. In other words, they feel that they had expensed enough now to move on, and therefore they moved to other areas, see. To do work.

Q: What do you think the movement is headed toward? Do you think there is some difference between what SNCC sees at the end of the movement and what a group like SCLC sees? What do you think it's leading up to?

A: Well, I think they do have different opinions about that, what's...but so far, I see that this is not...the FDP itself have really brought the idea out, and what we have done this year have inspired not only the peoples in Mississippi, but in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Arkansas, which is now planning to have the same type. Some type of FDP is what they're planning to organize this summer. So, it's my feeling that some way it will be successful, and the movement now, which is going on and accomplishes a few things, that it will spread all over the Southern states. I think just a matter of time that we will have FDP organization in every Southern state, and once we will unite the whole group.

Q: Would this be, in the other states, a third political party set up alongside of the present structure, to work as the FDP?

A: Right.

Q: Why do you feel that this third party system...for what reason, in your opinion, is it as effective as or more effective than working through the existing structure?

A: Well, one of the things, in studying the structure and the man's party, as you know, this party is operated, as you know, by a few peoples at the top, and then it is handed down. And one of the things that I think that this third party, or the FDP will effective because the voice and the makings of the peoples. The peoples have the say, nobody at the top, but it start at the lower levels, from the peoples precinct level and what's there what the peoples want, that's what is done at the top. And I think that it's be effective. And one of the things about it...I think it's one of the greatest things for the Negro, because the thing about it, the...he had no voice in this structure that is going on, and this will give him a voice, and not only

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that...this FDP, we feel like and we do believe it's the onliest party for the peoples and it's the onliest party that have no discrimination in the party, because anyone, white or black, can become a member of the FDP, if he so desires.

Q: Do you think that, eventually, the rights of Negroes in the South are going to come about, the whites and Negroes are going to be able to live together in harmony? Do you think this will ever be able to happen?

A: Well, I think it will be. It's a matter of time, you know. We can't say exactly when, but I feel like, that if we can get enough peoples on the book, and which we are planning to do, we're planning to get it as solidly as we can, that the matter of changing some peoples now is in office, and get the platform of other peoples who will represent all the peoples and not a one-sided group, then I feel like we will be up to the place that we can live peacefully.

Q: You feel that once you have this political power that political harmony will thereby result?

A: Well, I feel like in some parts it will, but one thing that I always think of is this, and which I think is a very good thing, and that's pressure group, and I think even from now on, around certain issues and certain things, you're still goin' to have a pressure group to get things done.

Q: Do you think that the FDP will remain a poor peoples' party, or do you think that it is possible that it will become more-or-less...more like the regular Democratic or Republican Party?

A: Well, I don't think it will. I think mostly, that it will be the poor peoples. Anyone. But the main thing that this party is built on and structures around, and that's the way that we intend to keep the party. And that's the peoples' say, and not one or two peoples at the top. But everybody will have a voice in what's being done, by what's being maked.

Q: Was an effort made last year to organize the poor white people down near the Gulf coast into the party? This didn't meet with too much success, did it?

A: Right.

Q: Is it typical...well, do think this is any indication that the poor whites and the poor Negroes won't be able to band together into one party?

A: Well, in some parts I really think so, and in others I don't. But I feel like a little later on, that the

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sun will get higher, and then they will see more what this party's doin'; I feel like we will have them come in. But one of the things that is puzzling him now is that the man that is higher than him is got him fooled yet, and still he's used. That's one of the things. They keep him from seein' what he's missin'; but yet, he don't, in a sense, still have a voice, and this make.

Q: Why do you think that the people above use him?

A: Well, what I think about that: cases like this: well, that's it to some of 'em. One of the things that happened to make him feel like he's all right in this party: 'gun this structure along, the ones that could vote for a representative, what-not, why usually he had some confidence in somebody, and lots of 'em that's casted votes is really not his idea, but he ovte for a certain person because Mr. So and So and So said so, you see. That happens a lots to the lower peoples. Well, I'm workin', I'm livin' on this man's place. I'm workin' on his job. I'm doin' things. He'll tell me, "Well, you vote for so-and-so," and he do that. It might not be who he wanted, but he do that. In a sense, he's thinkin' on the job, and of support, you see, and he will like' do that. But I feel like that everybody that should have their right, and it is a right, That they should cast a ballot whoseever that they feel is the best fit person.

Q: Do you feel at this time that the FDP is closer to being a Negro party than a poor man's party? Or is it going back and forth between these two positions?

A: Well, right now I would say at the beginnin' of it, I would think, yes. Right now. But I feel like it just a matter of time, and I don't feel like it would be very long before we will have. However, we do have some white now that do belong to the party, but this a very few.

Q: Well, thank you very much Mr. Carr...