A PROGRAM FOR A STATEWIDE VOTER REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN IN MISSISSIPPI

Submitted by the COUNCIL OF FEDERATED ORGANIZATIONS:

Dr. Aaron Henry, President, Clarksdale, Miss.
Atty. Carsie Hall, Secretary, Jackson, Miss.

I. Aims and Goals

A. Voting and Economics:

We do feel that the basic aim of the program should be more than the mere registration of the large majority of Negroes in the state, for there is evidence that unless some degree of economic independence is achieved along with the ballot, the lot of the majority of the state's Negroes will not be greatly improved.

We feel it will be necessary for the Council, therefore, to articulate the needs of the Negro in the areas of Labor, Education, Housing, Justice, and Voting. More than articulation is needed, however, and the Council will have to lobby for specific programs at all levels of government, through its state office, or its member organizations.

B. County Organizations:

Since the fundamental political unit in the state is the county unit, one of the goals of the program should be the development of leadership at this level to ensure an on-going program in voter registration and to press for progress at the county level. Local conditions should determine the type of organization developed at this level.

II. Organization and Scope:

A. We propose to partition the state into twenty districts. (See attached maps and table.) Each district would be manned by a full time paid field secretary. These field workers would meet bi-weekly in Jackson and other cities to evaluate the program.

B. Priorities:

Following the political outline of the state and the concentration of Negroes, it seems natural to give priority to the second, third, and fourth congressional districts, where the Negroes comprise 50%, 66%, and 45%, respectively, of the population. Cities where Negroes are free to vote without fear of economic reprisals would also receive priority.

C. Summer program:

We envision the use of 100 students to work this summer in the rural areas and the towns where the adult leadership is unable, for some reason, to conduct the program.

These students would live in rural areas bringing with them an educational, political, cultural program. We hope to include white students.

These students would be recruited across the spring semester and all subjected to an intensive week-long conference before taking the field for the summer. They would include specialty groups such as gospel quartets and folk dance teachers who would travel across the state.
III. Timetable

The following steps may be profitable taken now, even before further developments with the directors of the South-wide program.

1. The establishment of a date for a meeting of representatives from urban areas to discuss the mechanics and operation of a city voter registration office.

2. Organizing regional meetings across the state to prepare for the total program. Bob Moses, of the S.N.C.C., and James Bevel of the S.C.L.C. are available for leg work in setting up these meetings. A representative of the executive committee of the Council should be present at each meeting.

3. A search began for field workers and students.

4. The Council should designate persons to solicit the support and cooperation of ministers and professional people at the local and state level; liberal white persons should also be contacted and their assistance solicited.

IV. Table of proposed working districts:

District 1: Hinds, Madison and Rankin Counties
Headquarters: Jackson, Mississippi

District 2: Warren, Claiborne, Copiah and Jefferson Counties
Headquarters: Vicksburg, Mississippi

District 3: Adams, Amite, Franklin and Wilkinson Counties
Headquarters: Natchez, Mississippi

District 4: Pike, Walthall, Lawrence and Lincoln Counties
Headquarters: McComb, Mississippi

District 5: Forrest, Marion, Lamar, Perry and Green Counties
Headquarters: Hattiesburg, Mississippi

District 6: Harrison, Pearl River, Hancock, Jackson, George and Stone Counties
Headquarters: Gulfport, Mississippi

District 7: Jones, Jefferson Davis, Covington, Wayne and Simpson Counties
Headquarters: Laurel, Mississippi

District 8: Lauderdale, Newton, Scott, Smith, Jasper and Clarke Counties
Headquarters: Meridian, Mississippi

District 9: Attala, Leake, Neshoba and Kemper Counties
Headquarters: Kosciusko, Mississippi

District 10: Oktibbeha, Choctaw, Wilmot, and Noxubee Counties
Headquarters: Starkville, Mississippi

District 11: Lowdens, Clay, Monroe, Chickasaw, Calhoun and Webster Counties
Headquarters: Columbus, Mississippi

District 12: Lee, Itawamba, Tishomingo, Prentiss, Alcorn and Pontotoc Counties
Headquarters: Tupelo, Mississippi

District 13: Marshall, Benton, Tippah and Union Counties
Headquarters: Holly Springs, Mississippi

District 14: Grenada, Yalobusha and Lafayette Counties
Headquarters: Grenada, Mississippi
2nd District:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>Negro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,750</td>
<td>1,084</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sup'vr: Alton E. Tucker...1715 Catherine St., Vicksburg
J. P: Joseph C. Evans......1776 Openwood St., Vicksburg
Consb: W. E. Winkler........1609 Openwood St., Vicksburg

3rd District:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>Negro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,291</td>
<td>1,371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sup'vr: George S. Kelley...1116 Harrison St., Vicksburg
J. P: A. E. Patterson........214 Washington St., Vicksburg
Consb: L. C. Kizziah.........Vicksburg

4th District:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>Negro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,832</td>
<td>4,053</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sup'vr: Paul A. Pride......Parkside Dr., Vicksburg
J. P: Alfred C. Biakley...314 Folk St., Vicksburg
Consb: Roy Yerger.........Vicksburg

5th District:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>Negro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,243</td>
<td>2,318</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Sup'vr: J. L. McCaskill....Porters Chapel Rd., Vicksburg
J. P: A. L. Hoxie, Sr......Gibson Rd., Vicksburg
Consb: Joe B. Scott, Sr.....Old Highway 61 S., Vicksburg

Warren County has three Representatives; H. L. McKnight, 63, who lives at Redwood and serves on the Ways and Means Committee; G. W. Rogers, 34, who lives at Vicksburg, and is Vice Chairman of the Education Committee; and F. A. Shanahan, Jr., 38, Vicksburg.

The Senators, who serve both Hinds and Warren Counties, are

1. H. V. Cooper, 71, Vicksburg. He is vice chairman of the Child Welfare Committee, Commerce and Manufacturing, and Education. He serves on the Committees for County Affairs, Penitentiaries, and Universities and Colleges. He is chairman of the Committee on Municipalities.

2. Ellis Codron, 38 Vicksburg, serves on the following committees: Chairman of Banks, Vice Chairman of Insurance, Judiciary, Oil and Gas, Water and Irrigation, and Corporations.

3. Hayden Campbell, 57, Jackson, serves on the committees for Banks Eleemosynary Institutions, Fees and Salaries, Finance, and Public Health, is chairman of Forestry, Vice chairman of Oil and Gas, and Vice chairman of Printing.

[Signature]
Dear Fellow Citizen:

Below you will find information needed by you as a citizen, to help weigh the issues involved in this campaign, become a qualified elector, and vote intelligently in every election in the area where you live.

As you well know, the officers of your county are elected by the majority of the votes cast on the day of election. You should make sure that you follow through in this matter with intelligence and courage. If you do this, you will certainly be doing your share for a better community and state.

The truth is that democracy needs this kind of patriotism and attention from all of us. Ever keep this in mind, if democracy is to be real here, you and I must do our part to make it real.

The following information concerns Warren County, County Seat: Vicksburg.

County Population:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>white</th>
<th>Negro</th>
<th>% Increase</th>
<th>% Non-white</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42,206</td>
<td>22,447</td>
<td>19,760</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sheriff: J. H. Henderson
Chancery Clerk: J. G. Sherard
Circuit Clerks: W. J. Foley
Tax Assessor: Henry B. Haas
County Attorney: George Chaney
Coroner and Ranger: Dave West

County Board of Education:
Supt. of Education: J. Noel Nutt
Members:

E. P. Opperman.....Redwood
C. J. Henry, Jr.....Rt. 3, Vicksburg
Homer Douglas.....4238 Warrenton Rd., Vicksburg
W. M. Alexander.....Rt. 2, Vicksburg
Allen Carlisle.....Rt. 3, Box 70, Vicksburg

1st District:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>Negro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,725</td>
<td>3,998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sup'vr: S. M. Moody.....Myrtle
Const: Loyd Edward Hearn.....Kings
J. P: Lucy Brown Dillion.....Watersville
District 15: Washington, Issaquena, and Sharkey Counties
Headquarters: Elephant, Mississippi

District 16: Yazoo, Humphreys and Holmes Counties
Headquarters: Yazoo City, Mississippi

District 17: Leflore, Carroll and Montgomery Counties
Headquarters: Greenwood, Mississippi

District 18: Bolivar, Sunflower and Tallahatchie Counties
Headquarters: Cleveland, Mississippi

District 19: Coahoma, Tunica and DeSoto Counties
Headquarters: Clarksdale, Mississippi

District 20: Quitman, Panola and Tishomingo Counties
Headquarters: Marks, Mississippi
Breakdown on the 3rd Congressional District

Note: If the redistricting plan now before the Mississippi legislature goes into effect, it will create a third Congressional district in the South-west corner of Mississippi, with eleven counties, with a white voting age population of 117,122 and a Negro voting age population of 78,452.

I. Statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>White No.</th>
<th>White registered</th>
<th>Black No.</th>
<th>Black registered</th>
<th>% Reg.</th>
<th>% of County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>10,688</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>9,340</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amite</td>
<td>4,449</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3,560</td>
<td></td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claiborne</td>
<td>1,688</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>3,969</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copiah</td>
<td>8,153</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6,407</td>
<td></td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin</td>
<td>3,403</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>1,842</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinds</td>
<td>67,836</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>36,118</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>1,666</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,540</td>
<td></td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>statistics not available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pike</td>
<td>12,163</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>6,936</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walthall</td>
<td>4,536</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,490</td>
<td></td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilkinson</td>
<td>2,340</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>4,120</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>117,122</td>
<td>6,672</td>
<td>78,452</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of statistics:

There are two counties in the district, Hinds and Adams, in which Negroes may vote without fear of economic reprisals and physical violence, and may register if they persist in their efforts.

Further, these areas of increasing population and will become more important as the years pass: Hinds county increased its population by 31.5% and Jackson, the county seat and state capital, by 17.0%, in the years 1950-1960. Adams county experienced a 27.0% increase and Natchez, its county seat, a 4.6% increase, in these same years. (cf. United States Census Population, 1960)

II. Proposed Industrial Basin.

The new four lane thru-way from New Orleans to Chicago will parallel highway 51 through the south-west portion of Mississippi. Several small cities along this highway deserve separate attention-Crystal Springs, Hazelhurst, Brookhaven and McComb. They are all increasing their population in an area which is otherwise decreasing. They reflect the Southwide trend of movement from rural to urban areas, and are located in a basin designed for ex-
tensive industrial expansion.

Statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>% increase '50 - '60</th>
<th>% non-white</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crystal Springs</td>
<td>4,496</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazelhurst</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookhaven</td>
<td>9,885</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McComb</td>
<td>12,020</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In these cities and counties (Copiah, Lincoln and Pike), local leadership will probably not lend their name in public to a voting program though they will push it in the Negro community by word of mouth and through the churches. The publicity and projection of the program should be carefully worked out with these Leaders.

We anticipate in these areas covert white resistance, taking the form of economic reprisals and whisper campaigns. It is not likely that physical violence will erupt over voting in these counties. (Note: This is so, even though a man was shot and killed on the courthouse lawn of Brookhaven a few years ago in a case connected in the people's minds with voting. Recently, however, several people have been registered in Brookhaven and the registrar was not hostile, nor was there any other trouble).

We have contacts in two of these cities, McComb and Brookhaven, who are interested in voting registration drives and McComb is ready to receive a group of student and adult workers. We hope to make sufficient preparations across the spring to enable similar groups to work in Brookhaven, Hazelhurst and Crystal Springs.

III.

The remaining counties, Walthall, Attie, Wilkinson, Franklin, Jefferson and Claiborne are rural, without any urban areas at all. The chief institution in the rural community in which we may find leadership and support will be the Church. The chief leaders, however, will not be ministers, since, in most cases, they do not live in the community and only offer service once a month, their active support is, however, indispensable.

In these areas any sustained voting drive successful in getting Negroes to attempt to register, is likely to be marked by physical violence, as well as economic reprisals. It is these areas of Mississippi which are accurately described by the following section of a report on voting issued by the Southern Regional Conference:

All forms of violence, intimidation, and discrimination reported from other states were found here. Where other sections usually rely on one or two means of limiting Negro registration, Mississippi, home of the White Citizens Council, apparently uses them all. As a result, the state which has the highest percentage of Negroes in the country has the lowest percentage registered.

It is in these areas that the questions of accompanying persons to the registrar's office and continuing a drive in the face of terrific tension built by white resistance and threats and acts of violence, should be carefully threshed out.

We have made contacts in every rural county, except Wilkinson and Franklin.

We have started classes in Atie, Claiborne & Jefferson and anticipate using the spring to establish personal contact in the communities and locate areas where students will be able to live during part of the summer & conduct voter registration classes.