

U R G E N T

MEMO TO: SOUTHERN STUDENTS, FRIENDS OF SNCC, AND SUPPORTERS EVERYWHERE

FROM: JAMES FORMAN, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

RE: FREEDOM WALK

FRIENDS:

WE ARE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY, BEGINNING A FREEDOM WALK FROM CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE, TO JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM MOORE, THE BALTIMORE POSTMAN WHO WAS SHOT TO DEATH ON APRIL 23, 1963, OUTSIDE ATTALA, ALABAMA, WHILE EN ROUTE TO JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, TO PRESENT A LETTER URGING HUMAN DECENCY TO GOV. BARNETT.

THE WALK WILL BEGIN ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, AT 7 A.M. FROM CHATTANOOGA. AT THIS TIME, SEVEN MEMBERS OF CORE HAVE VOLUNTEERED: AND SEVEN FROM SNCC WANT TO PARTICIPATE. THE GROUP WILL INCLUDE NEGROES AND WHITES.

THE WALKERS WILL GO FROM CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE, THROUGH THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF GEORGIA, AND INTO ALABAMA---THROUGH ATTALA AND BIRMINGHAM ON THE WAY TO JACKSON.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH DECISIONS ESTABLISHED AT AN EMERGENCY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING ON APRIL 28, THE WALKERS WILL REMAIN IN JAIL WITHOUT BOND UNTIL THEY ARE RELEASED. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAS STATED: "BY CONTINUING THE WALK WE HOPE TO SHOW THAT, AS MOORE SAID, 'TO ILLUSTRATE THAT THE MOST BASIC OF FREEDOMS OF PEACEFUL PROTEST IS NOT ALTOGETHER EXTINGUISHED' IN THE SOUTH. WE HAVE INFORMED ALABAMA GOVERNOR GEORGE WALLACE AND PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY OF OUR INTENTION AND HAVE REQUESTED PROTECTION FOR OUR WALKERS."

WE ASK YOU TO:

1. REGARD THIS AS A VERY IMPORTANT AND HISTORIC VENTURE IN THE MOVEMENT FOR EQUAL RIGHTS, AND TO WATCH THE SITUATION CLOSELY. WALKERS WILL REMAIN IN JAIL WHILE NATIONAL PRESSURE IS GENERATED TO INSURE THE RIGHTS OF ALL CITIZENS TO WALK ON ANY ROAD IN ANY STATE IN THIS COUNTY.
2. ORGANIZE PROTEST AND SYMPATHY DEMONSTRATIONS WHEN THE WALKERS ARE ARRESTED, AS THEY ARE CERTAIN TO BE, AND TO HELP GET PRESS COVERAGE FOR THE WALK.
3. WRITE LETTERS TO YOUR CONGRESSMEN, TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALABAMA, TO THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, TO INSIST THAT AMERICAN CITIZENS HAVE THE RIGHT OF PEACEFUL PROTEST AND THE RIGHT TO WALK ANYWHERE THEY CHOOSE WITHOUT FEAR.
4. CONTINUE YOUR FUND EFFORTS. THIS WILL BE A CRUCIAL EFFORT FOR US, AND WE DO NOT INTEND TO CURTAIL ANY OF OUR OTHER PROJECTS. ENCLOSED YOU WILL FIND A SUMMARY OF OUR FIELD WORK WHICH WILL AID YOU IN GIVING SPECIFIC FACTS TO ALL INQUIRERS. PLEASE TRY TO REPRODUCE IT FOR DISTRIBUTION TO PRESS AND FUND SOURCES.
5. WE ASK ALL ORGANIZATIONS TO INFORM THEIR MEMBERSHIPS AND CONSTITUENCIES OF THIS EFFORT. WE ARE ASKING THE RIGHT TO PROTEST, WITHOUT WHICH THE OTHER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO VOTE, ARE MEANINGLESS. ... WITH YOUR HELP.

W E S H A L L O V E R C O M E