

FROM: NORTH JACKSON YOUTH COUNCIL  
 TO: OUT-OF-STATE FRIENDS  
 RE: SITUATION IN JACKSON - MASS ACTION AHEAD

Extremely Important!

JKS 5/20/63

It has been some time since you heard from us. The reason for this is simply that we have been busy indeed -- preparing for an intensification of our boycott movement that may well turn into the biggest civil rights upheaval in the history of Mississippi.

It has been eight months since our Youth Council passed its resolution authorizing a study of discrimination against Negro shoppers and Negro workers in the Jackson area -- and also authorizing, if necessary, a far-flung boycott to correct the rampant injustices. It has been well over five months since the boycott movement began on downtown Capitol Street with the arrest of our first six pickets by 50 to 100 Jackson city police.

Since the beginning of the boycott, twelve pickets have been arrested. About 70,000 boycott leaflets have been distributed. Thousands of pieces of mimeographed literature have been mailed out to people in the Jackson area. We have had countless speakers in the churches and at other meetings. Our effort has been tremendous -- the effectiveness of the boycott has held steady at between 75% and 80% -- and let us assure you that our efforts are going to continue right along until we win. But what has happened before now won't hold a candle to what is going to happen from now on until that victory comes.

In April, two staff officials from the National NAACP in New York City came down to look our situation over -- and they made an extremely favorable report to their headquarters. On May 12, Youth Council Advisor John Salter made a formal motion before the meeting of the Mississippi State NAACP Board of Directors to the effect that the Board endorse the boycott campaign going on in Jackson -- and that intense direct action be instituted if the businessmen and politicians refuse to negotiate in good faith and if the equalitarian demands are not met by them. The motion was unanimously passed and, later that day, was publicly announced at a large mass meeting in Jackson. The next day, May 13, we sent out letters, by certified mail, to prominent political leaders in the City and State and to business organizations asking for good faith negotiations and stating that, if such negotiations did not occur, heavy and intense direct action -- such as picketing and mass marches -- would be engaged in very shortly.

Immediately, an old enemy of ours, Mayor Allen Thompson of Jackson, called together a large-scale meeting of the businessmen and made it very clear that there would be no negotiations and no alteration in the Jackson status quo. He further said that, if there would be such demonstrations, the City would meet the demonstrators with every policeman and police dog, with every sheriff and deputy in the state, with firemen and hoses, with the state police, and with the National Guard. That evening, the Mayor went on state-wide TV to denounce us as being "outside agitators" and to reiterate what he had said earlier in the day. The local newspapers picked up his cry and have since been denouncing the idea of negotiations with us -- and have been making it very clear that the racism of Jackson will be maintained. We have made it very clear that that racism is going to be discarded -- forthwith.

On May 14, the Executive Committee of the National Board of Directors of NAACP, passed the following policy resolution:

"We pledge the support of the national organization to the Mississippi state NAACP board of directors in its announced intensified program against racial discrimination and segregation in Mississippi and specifically we authorize the Executive Secretary to secure from whatever sources available the necessary sums to take care of the costs that may arise in connection with aiding

the current selective buying<sup>2</sup> campaign of our North Jackson Youth Council and the general drive toward the objective of putting an end to all forms of racial discrimination and segregation in Jackson."

A day later, top NAACP staff officials began arriving from New York City and some of these will be remaining with us to assist in the campaign. Within the boycott movement, a formal Strategy Committee has been formally organized with Miss Earlene Lewis and Mr. John Salter -- both from the North Jackson Youth Council -- as co-chairmen. Another organization has developed -- the Jackson Citizens Committee for Human Rights -- which is made up of leaders from every section of the Jackson Negro community, and which has gone on strong public record as endorsing the position taken by the NAACP. On Monday night, May 20, Mr. Medgar W. Evers -- State NAACP Field Secretary -- will go on TV to address the city. (Mr. Evers secured this time, the first occasion in the history of the state that an NAACP official has been able to do so, after requesting such TV time, from the FCC, in order to answer Mayor Thompson.) On Tuesday night, May 21, we are having a large mass meeting in Jackson and many representatives from national publications and from national TV will be present.

The Governor of Mississippi, Ross R. Barnett, has gone on public record as supporting Mayor Thompson. The White Citizens Councils have passed resolutions supporting the Mayor. If good faith negotiations commence very shortly, our mass demonstrations will not occur at this time. But if the good faith negotiations do not take place, or if their results are intangible and non-substantial -- then we are prepared fully for the most large-scale type of demonstrations. We are mobilizing now for heavy action in the very near future.

In other areas, one of our lawyers -- William M. Kunstler -- arrived in Jackson in mid-April from Birmingham where he was defending the demonstrators of that city. The hearing to determine whether or not the trials of the first six pickets would be held in Federal court (as we wish) or in state court (as Mississippi wishes) had been scheduled -- but, at the last minute, was once again postponed. Attorney Kunstler has subpoenaed Mayor Thompson and many other high officials for the hearing -- whenever it finally takes place. Our attorneys, which besides Mr. Kunstler include Mr. R. Jess Brown of Jackson, Mr. Clarence Jones of New York, and Mr. Melvin Wulf of New York, have filed -- on behalf of our arrested pickets -- large scale damage suits asking for \$10,000 damages for each picket. The suits are filed against City of Jackson, Mayor Thompson, Police Chief Rayfield, Police Captain Hataway, and Police Judge Spencer. Our attorneys are also asking for a three-judge Federal court to convene to issue an injunction to prevent City of Jackson from arresting more pickets. The attorneys have filed additional motions also -- and plan on filing more litigation.

We have also been conducting our other projects -- and have been participating in voter registration activities. Several of us, who are connected with Tougaloo Southern Christian College, have made attempts to attend the lectures and theatre productions given by all-white Millsaps College, of Jackson, and advertised as being open to the "public." The first time we tried, we got in to hear Miss Eudora Welty -- a nationally known writer -- and thus we broke a century old precedent at Millsaps. The next two times, they called the police and the police dogs on us after we "stood in" at the ticket line when they wouldn't sell us tickets. A majority of the Millsaps students and faculty have protested this exclusion of our part of the public -- and things look favorable for a real breakthrough at Millsaps before long. We plan to keep on trying.

We're going to win all the way around. It'll be an interesting next few months for Jackson, Mississippi.

- Officers of North Jackson Youth Council  
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<sup>2</sup>Selective buying means boycott