

LOUISIANA SUMMER PROJECT

1964

I. PRE-SUMMER ACTIVITY:

The Louisiana delegation to the National Democratic Party convention will be chosen by the Democratic State Central Committee in early May. It is important to protest the fact that both the State Central Committee and the delegation will be all-white, and will therefore not represent a sizeable minority of Louisiana's population. As part of the freedom registration, we plan to organize a "Freedom Delegation" from the Sixth Congressional District which will challenge the seating of the Louisiana Delegation at the National Convention.

Fourteen committeemen were elected at a meeting of the Capital Voters' League in St. Francisville, La. When the State Central Committee convenes in early May in Baton Rouge, it will have to face the challenge of the "Freedom Delegation" and if it refuses to seat the Negro Delegation, the latter will meet separately and elect 3 to 6 delegates to the National Democratic Convention (i. e. 1/8 of the 24 to 48 delegates usually selected by the State Central Committee to the National Convention. The exact number of delegates from the State Central Committee will be decided at their meeting in early May; either 24, which with a whole vote or 48, each with a half vote will be elected.) We hope to send the delegates representing one Congressional District in Louisiana jointly with the Mississippi delegation, which will represent the whole state.

II. "FREEDOM REGISTRATION":

The first state-wide law suit against Louisiana voter registration procedures filed by the United States Department of Justice attacked the constitutionality of the registration application form contending that it is valid only as an application form and cannot be used as a test. Additional law suits against individual registrars clearly point out that the constitutional tests, old and new, are unconstitutional.

Therefore, we contend that all potential registrants meeting the following qualifications be registered: 21 years of age, American citizen; and residency requirements as outlined in the laws of Louisiana. Moreover, they must fill out in their own handwriting (without or with the assistance of the "Freedom Registrars) a regular application form. In the case of those who are unable to do so (illiterate, disabled, etc.) and who are able to give the information to the registrar, they should provide the registrar with the requested information.

The application suit is now pending before the U. S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. We plan to get every potential Negro voter who can fill out the application form in the manner described earlier to do so, sealing it in a blank envelope before a "Freedom Registrar who will present it to the Parish Registrar for acceptance. If the application is rejected, then it will be held in a central and protected place later to be presented with approximately 1,000,000 others to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The presentation at the Fifth Circuit will be as follows: 5 to 10 "Freedom Registrars from each parish will carry all the applications to the chambers of the five judges of the court asking that the Court declare the applicants registered as a part of the lawsuit filed by the U. S. Department of Justice. If the judges order the "Freedom Registrars" (numbering approximately 120-to 240) to leave, taking the applications with them, they will refuse to do so, risking contempt of court.

In each of the parishes of the Fifth and Sixth Congressional Districts we plan to send in teams of voter registration workers who will serve and/or recruit local people to serve as "Freedom Registrars", commencing a freedom registration campaign. This will involve setting up "Freedom Registration" posts in churches, grocery stores, club houses, Masonic Halls etc. Each registrar will sign notarized statements that they will carry out registration procedures in the above manner, and will appoint local people to serve as deputy registrars. The registrars and their deputies will carry out the general objective of reaching every unregistered Negro and getting him to fill out an application form which will go through the channels described above.

In the "Freedom Registration" campaign we plan to reach 24 parishes, 48 to 56 communities, and two Congressional Districts which geographically cover 1/3 of the state. It is clear that this will be the most progressive organizational step by CORE toward setting up a state-wide program in Louisiana for the future.

III. STAND-INS:

In several communities of the Fifth and Sixth Congressional Districts we plan to have lines of Negroes flooding the registrars' office on the three days when the registration books are open between the first and second Democratic primaries. This endeavor may result in a few more names being added to the registration rolls.

IV. POLITICAL CAMPAIGN:

We plan to have candidates for Congress and local public office to enter the Democratic primaries.

V. SCHEDULE:

- June 10-15; Training in Iberville Parish-Actual registration (books opened)
- June 16-25: Mass voter registration drives in both districts and kick-off of political campaigns. Actual registration (books opened).
- June 26-July 26: "Freedom Registration", political campaigns concluding July 25, and preparation for stand-ins, (books closed).
- July 27,28, 29: Stand-ins and mass voter registration drives-actual registration, books opened
- July 30-Aug. 6: "Freedom Registration" (books closed until August 29,1964)
- Aug. 7: Presentation of application forms to parish registrars.
- Aug. 10: Presentation of application forms to federal judges at New Orleans, requesting that Federal Referees be appointed to process the application forms collected by "Freedom Registrars. If rejected by judges, we plan to make the rejection a part of our protest at the National Democratic Party Convention..
- Aug. 11: Terminate project.
- Aug. 12: Project evaluation.

NOTE: Actual registration will be conducted whenever Voter Registration books are opened.

VI. PRACTICAL ASPECTS:

Although the plan for a summer project may be interesting and dramatic, we are concerned about several practical aspects.

Community interest in such a project cannot be overlooked. And we have problems in this regard in both the Fifth and Sixth Congressional Districts, particularly in North Louisiana. With present staff we have been unable to fully scout North Louisiana and our work has been limited to a couple of parishes. Resistance on the part of the whites in this area will be especially stubborn and work will be dangerous, recall Mike's being run out of Tallulah. Thus, reaching and inspiring the Negro communities will be an arduous task and we can only be hopeful of success.

Before "Freedom Registration" could begin and little of any work could be done on the "Freedom Election" worker could most probably be arrested, intimidated, and even severely injured by members and associates of the White Citizens Council and the KKK.

VII. FOLLOW UP PROGRAM AND STAFF:

We hope to have a staff of at least 18 persons left in Louisiana for follow-up purposes.

Plan:

September-Voter Registration in the 24 parishes of the 5th and 6th Congressional Districts.

6th Congressional Districts

IMPORTANT-LAST MONTH FOR REGISTRATION BEFORE THE PRESENTIAL ELECTION.

October-Voter registration, chapter development, and direct action in same parishes. Preparation for write-in-vote.

Nov. 3, 1964: Write-in election for "Freedom Candidates" on the date of the general election.

Nov. 4, 1964: Voter registration, direct action to implement civil rights bill, and chapter development.
Rallying communities to file suit to desegregate all public facilities.

VIII. GENERAL SPECIFICS:

"Freedom Registration",

1. In the first two weeks of May, Ronnie Moore will hold a press conference at which he will release to the public our summer plans. At this time, he will release a telegram, to be sent to Governor John McKeithen. In this telegram, the governor will be asked to do the following:
 - a. Appoint an impartial and bi-racial Board of Registration, and to include on the board leading citizens of the 5th and 6th Congressional Districts.
 - b. Fire the registrars of the 24 parishes of the 5th and 6th Congressional Districts because of their discriminatory practices, and use his moral and political influence on the 24 Police Juries involved to appoint new registrars who will not deny to anyone the right to vote on the basis of race. Moreover, he should use his influence on the Police Juries to get them to appoint Negro deputy registrars. Copies of this will be sent to the 24 registrars and police juries, Gov. McKeithen will be given one week in which to reply before we take the situation into our own hands.
2. In the event that Gov. McKeithen refuses to comply with our demands, a Board of Freedom Registration, will be selected at a 24 parish leadership conference in late June to be held in Plaquemine, La.
3. At the end of the training session, the Board of Registration will appoint a "Freedom Registrar" to each parish where there will be "Free-

dom Registration.

4. On the last day of the training session, the registrars will be sworn in a public ceremony by a notary public. A procedure will be used similar to that used in real registration.
5. The "Freedom Registrars" will appoint deputy registrars in the communities they are assigned to, and the deputy registration. All registrars and their deputies must have proper identification.
6. The procedure for "Freedom Registration" is as follows:
 - a. Every applicant must fill out an LR-1 form and the Registrar is required to provide assistance.
 - b. The registrar must record the name, address, age, and ward and precinct of every applicant in two books: one with an alphabetical list of names, the other with names arranged according to ward and precinct.
 - c. The registrar must file all completed LR-1 forms.
 - d. The registrar must provide a "Freedom Registration" card to all successful applicants. (fill out forms and meet La. residence requirements)
7. The Board of "Freedom Registration" has overall responsibility for the LR-1 forms.
8. "Freedom Registrars" shall present the LR-1 forms to the parish registrar asking that all persons who filled out a form be registered.
9. On being turned down by the Registrars, the "Freedom Registrars" will go to New Orleans and approach the judges of the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals with the forms, asking that they take the following action:
 - a. Enjoin the holding of the election (second primary) on the grounds that Negro citizens were denied the right to register.
 - b. Appoint federal judges to be referees and register those persons who have been turned down by the Registrars in their respective parishes.
10. In the event the court is unwilling to take these actions, the "Freedom Registrars" will refuse to leave the judge's offices until their grievances are remedied.
11. "Freedom Registrars" will then take up residence in the local jails.

Political campaign: June 10-July 25

CANDIDATES:

Congressman, 6th Congressional District: Dr. Bertrand Tyson
Campaign Manager: Capt. Tolbert Harris

Local: To be announced.

Methods:

1. Posters-quantity: 5,000 (as a start).
2. Throw-aways - quantity: 20,000 (as a start).
3. Buttons-quantities 2,500.
4. Hand cards (6 inches long, with ruler along top).
5. Pencils, balloons, etc.
6. Newspapers-press releases (ap, upi); ads in local papers.
7. TV- five 3-minute spots on 2 Baton Rouge stations day before election.
8. Radio-WXOK, WLCS-Free and paid announcements.
9. Rallies-churches, public meetings, meetings of civic groups.
10. House-to-house-canvassing by candidates and task force workers.

Manpower and transportation: We need 48 workers, two to each parish, plus, the present staff. We also request that an official of National CORE take permanent residence in Louisiana for the summer project like last year. The purpose of this is that this will be an independent CORE endeavor and we will need additional professional know-how in community relations and in organization.

We need at least 12 cars plus the cars now in operation, one car to every two parishes. We hope that with 12 cars and a staff of 48 we will be able to secure additional transportation and volunteers from local communities.

IX. BUDGET AND FUND-RAISING:

1. Five-day training session (June 10-15) 50 workers	
A. Food \$2.00 per day per person, totaling	
\$100 per day for five days-----	\$ 500.00
B. 12 cars, costing about \$7.00 per day per car	
\$84.00 per day for five days-----	420.00
C. Housing \$1.50 per person per day	
\$75.00 per day for five days-----	375.00
D. Miscellaneous--\$25.00 Per day for five days-----	125.00
2. Remaining weeks-June 16-August 12, 1964	
A. Food for 50 workers	
\$2.00 per person per day	
100.00 per day for 62 days-----	6,200.00
B. Housing \$1.50 per day per person	
\$75.00 per day for 62 days-----	4,650.00
C. Transportation-12 cars	
\$10.00 per day per car-----	7,440.00

3. "Freedom Registration" (application forms and related material)-----	2,500.00
4. "Freedom Election (ballott, buttons, etc.)-----	1,500.00
5. Other:	
A. Stationery-----	350.00
B. Telephone-----	1,200.00
C. Miscellaneous-----	500.00
TOTAL BUDGET FORECAST-----	<u>\$25,760.00</u>

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