

[SUMMER 1964]

duplicate

Parents Mississippi Emergency Committee, L. A. Area
P. O. Box 2212, Culver City

1. WHY THE PRESS CONFERENCE IS BEING CALLED:

It is important in a democratic nation that people be informed of facts -- not sensationalism not rumors, not even murder alone. The Parents Committee, comprising 100 parents of Southern California student civil rights volunteers to the Mississippi Summer Project, do not want to wait until more young people vanish before the rest of the nation becomes aware of what is transpiring in Mississippi today.

2. THE PARENTS MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY COMMITTEE of LOS ANGELES AREA.

The L. A. Committee was a spontaneous organization of parents, built, first of all, around their mutual concern for the safety of their own sons and daughters, of whom they are intensely proud and for whom they are frightened. Their primary effort is to protect these young Northern volunteers, and the people who are housing them, feeding them, and welcoming their assistance in the Mississippi citizens' efforts to exercise their simple democratic rights and to crack the repressive measures which have continued the disenfranchisement of the days of slavery for more than one hundred years. Such committees have been organized in nearly all major cities.

Specifically, Parents' Groups' efforts have directed to (1) increased Federal protection for the summer volunteers and those who remain after the summer -- volunteers and Mississippi citizens alike -- involving (a) legal aid from the U. S. Department of Justice; (b) Federal marshals assigned to each county and to each civil rights center for as long a period as anyone remains in danger; (c) active enforcement of Federal law by Federal authorities; (d) the presence of the U. S. Civil Rights Commission at all civil rights hearings in Mississippi; and (e) the full implementation of the recently-passed Civil Rights Bill.

(2) Support of these young people in their efforts to teach skills essential for living in the world today: reading, writing, arithmetic, crafts, how to register to vote, how to mobilize and educate local communities. They are risking their lives to help the most oppressed portion of our "free" nation's people to gain not only the right but the tools to live as citizens, to select their representatives in government, to go or stay where they please, to do whatever work they want to do, to fulfill themselves as human beings. They have entered only communities to which they were specifically invited by local citizens.

(3) Financial support both for the Mississippi Summer Project and for continuing activity during the winter months. This involves not only emergency bail money, but funds for the continuation of the Project after the summer. Fund-raising is an essential part of the Parents Group activities.

NEW PROJECTS

At the latest meeting of the Parents Committee, approval was given to a proposal for a delegation of parents from all major cities. It is anticipated that these parents will converge on Mississippi at the climax of the Mississippi Summer Project, view conditions, and interview the Governor, Mayors of major cities, and civil rights workers. It is anticipated that they will reach Mississippi August 20, remain for three days, and fly to the Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City. There, the Parents' delegation will present to the Convention the Parents' views on Mississippi conditions, on what is needed in Federal aid and interest to implement the work of student volunteers and Mississippi citizens this Summer. Mr. Harold Light of the San Francisco Parents Committee accepted the responsibility for contacting other parents throughout the country to join the delegation both in their coverage of Mississippi and to present their case to the Democratic Convention in Atlantic City. To date six people have committed themselves to the trip.

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At the Convention the parents will urge the ousting of the official Mississippi delegation which has been illegally and undemocratically elected, and the seating instead of the Freedom delegation elected by the Freedom Democratic Party in Mississippi. Freedom registration is presently being conducted by civil rights workers in Mississippi.

As long as 40% of the population is disenfranchised our votes in California are worth only 1/2 the votes of each vote cast in Mississippi, so we are actually being disenfranchised by their disenfranchisement. Many of the Congressmen and Senators in Mississippi are in charge of important committees and have evidenced records which are not in the interest of the majority of the American people. The only way they are able to maintain this power within their own state and the Federal Government is to deprive nearly half of the potential voters of Mississippi of their right to exercise their constitutional rights.

3. WHAT CONCERNED PERSONS CAN DO.

(a) Adopt a Mississippi volunteer at \$10 a week for 1 to 6 weeks. Each volunteer is paying his own way and, most of them, being students, find even \$10 a week a tremendous sum.

(b) Donate to the financing of books, supplies, transportation, etc. for the project. This is education on wheels - taken to the people where they are, but the wheels must be there to roll and carry the volunteers to outlying churches where they conduct classes.

(c) Money for the excessive and repressive bail is also needed. Arrests without cause continue daily.

(d) Wire or write the President, your Congressman, asking for protection of our sons and daughters and all those they seek to help to establish their inherent democratic rights.

(e) Urge the Democratic Convention to not seat the illegally elected Mississippi delegation and to seat instead those Freedom Delegates who have been elected during the Freedom registration.