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FOR RELEASE  
10:00 AM JULY 27

STATEMENT OF THE FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY  
ON SEN. DOUGLAS' COMPROMISE PROPOSALS

Senator Paul Douglas (D-Ill.), in an interview on July 23 on the CBS radio program "Capitol Cloakroom" offered what he called a "conciliatory suggestion" regarding the seating of rival Mississippi delegations at the coming Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City.

Senator Douglas suggested that the National Convention either seat no Mississippi delegation at all, or that a hybrid group be seated - half Dixiecrat, half Freedom Democratic.

In our opinion, this proposal fails to deal forthrightly with the real issues facing the 1964 National Convention, because either course of action represents, at best, a compromise with racism. This suggestion in no way represents the position of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

The basic reason for the formation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party was the need to provide representation for the hundreds of thousands of disenfranchised Negroes in Mississippi. Over the years a combination of discrimination and intimidation has deprived them of any voice in either the state or national government. To refuse to seat any delegation would, therefore, be in part to perpetuate the situation we have organized to combat.

As for sharing seats with the Dixiecrats, we do not believe that a state party whose Gubernatorial campaign literature states that "...it long ago separated itself from the National Democratic Party and ... has fought consistently everything both national parties stand for..." deserves even one seat at the National Convention. Nor do we believe that a systematic denial of civil rights can be half-condemned, half-condoned. To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln, we are dubious of the value of a delegation that is half slave, half free.

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