

[C AUG 1964]  
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MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC  
PARTY  
1017 Lynch Street  
Jackson, Mississippi

I. Basis for the Development of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and for challenging the seating of the regular Mississippi Democratic Party at the Democratic National Convention:

A. The Mississippi Democratic Party discriminates against Negroes who wish to participate in the Party and in state political affairs.

The Mississippi Democratic Party has control of the state executive, legislative and judicial branches. All 49 Senators and all but one of the 122 Representatives are Democrats. All state executive officials such as the governor, secretary of state, and attorney general are Democrats.

The state legislature has consistently passed laws and set registration standards which exclude Negroes from the registration rolls.

The state executive was elected to office on the basis of a campaign which was largely directed to keeping Negroes from registering to vote.

The state judicial system does not give Negroes judicial relief in voting cases. Only cases carried to the federal courts have resulted in any measure of relief for Negro applicants.

County registrars are elected to office and all county registrars are Democrats. These registrars often refuse to register Negroes even though they are qualified under Mississippi standards.

Only registered voters can vote in the Democratic primaries and attend Party precinct meetings. Thus, exclusion from the right to vote means exclusion from the political process and from the Democratic Party.

In addition, the State Democratic Convention is being held in segregated facilities.

B. The Mississippi Democratic Party has consistently devoted itself to the perpetuation of segregation, racism, and the oppression of minorities. The Party has made it impossible for Negroes of the state or white people who consider all people to be citizens to find it in their interest to participate in the Democratic Party of the state as it is now constituted.

C. Mississippi citizens who are in sympathy with the goals, platform, and national candidates of the National Democratic Party cannot support these goals, platform, and candidates by becoming a part of the Mississippi Democratic Party.

The Mississippi Democratic Party platform is in direct opposition to that of the national party.

The Mississippi Democratic Party has in party literature stated that it is not a part of the national party.

The Mississippi Democratic Party did not support the Kennedy-Johnson in 1960 and shows indications of not supporting the Democratic ticket in the coming election.

## II. The Development of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party:

Because of these facts, the Council of Federated Organizations (a coalition of all the national and local civil rights and citizenship education groups in the state) decided to aid local citizens in setting up a Democratic Party structure to challenge the existing party and to give Mississippi Negroes an experience in the politics from which they have been excluded. This party is open to citizens of all races and encourages political participation on the part of all. It will support the platform and candidates of the National Democratic Party.

Registrars are being established in every county in the state; registrants will fill out a simplified voting form, the Freedom Registration form, based on the voting application used in several Northern states. The only requirement for registration is that the applicant be over 21 years of age and a resident of the state. Over 100,000 people will be registered in this manner by August. Any citizen who is registered in this manner is eligible to vote in the Freedom Democratic Party conventions and to take part in the party's affairs.

## III. Challenging the Seating of the Mississippi Delegation to the National Democratic Convention:

The Freedom Democratic Party is officially established. At a meeting on April 26, approximately 200 delegates established a Temporary State Executive Committee of the Freedom Democratic Party. The Temporary State Executive Committee will be responsible for supervising the calling of meetings throughout the state, which will parallel the meetings through which the regular party selects its candidates to the National Convention. These meetings will follow the pattern stipulated in the Election Laws of Mississippi as closely as possible.

The election of the delegates and alternates of the Freedom Democratic Party will proceed in the following manner:

Precinct Meetings: These may be attended by anyone who has been registered on the FDP registration books, including persons who may or may not be registered on official books. (They need not be officially registered voters because in many precincts where meetings will be held no Negroes have been allowed to register.) These meetings will elect delegates to the

County Conventions: At these meetings, delegates are selected for the State Convention. Prior to that Convention, delegates will meet in

Congressional District Caucuses: Here about half the delegates from the state to the National Democratic Convention will be chosen.

Members of the State Executive Committee will also be chosen. Delegates then go to the

State Convention: Here the national convention delegates chosen by the District Caucuses will be presented for approval; the remainder of the delegates to the national convention will be selected; the State Executive Committee will be presented for ratification; the National Committeeman and Committeewoman will be elected.

The delegates and alternates so selected will attend the national Democratic Convention, where they will challenge the credentials of the presently-recognized Mississippi Democratic Party delegation. The Freedom Democratic Party delegation will consist of 46 delegates and 22 alternates--the number allotted to the State of Mississippi by the Democratic National Committee.

(In order to test the regular Party, Negroes will also attend precinct meetings of the regular party throughout the state. While they are likely to be admitted in some areas, they are not likely to be allowed to participate fully in the meetings. The discrimination that is sure to occur at these meetings on June 16, particularly in the "hard core" segregationist areas of the state, will be an additional basis for the convention challenge.