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APPENDIX B  
"HOW NEGRO DEMOCRATS FARED"

(The following is a summary of a longer report by the same title describing, through the affidavits of the participants, the experiences of Mississippi Negroes who attempted to take part in Democratic Party precinct and county conventions this summer.)

This past June, Negroes in several parts of Mississippi attempted to attend precinct meetings of the Mississippi Democratic Party. These meetings, in which all registered voters are theoretically entitled to participate, form the base of a pyramid which culminates in the Democratic State Convention. It is in the course of this series of meetings that state party officials and National Convention delegates are elected. In this Presidential election year the Negro Democrats were not only fighting for their right to be included in the party. They also sought to insure that the state party would remain loyal to the candidates of the National Democratic Party in November. To accomplish this, they pressed for the election of delegates who shared their views, as well as for the adoption of resolutions affirming loyalty to the National ticket.

The amount of Negro activity in the precinct meetings was sharply circumscribed at the outset by the outstanding fact of Mississippi politics: the massive disfranchisement of Negro voters. The climate of fear that pervades the state acted as a further check: a sworn affidavit from a resident of Neshoba County, for example, explains that no Negroes went to precinct meetings there "because it was impossible...to make the attempt ...without suffering great economic and physical harm."

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In eight precincts (in six different counties) Negroes went to their polling stations before the time legally designated for the precinct meetings (10:00 AM), but were unable to find any evidence of a meeting. Inquiries addressed to public officials proved futile: some officials denied knowledge of any meeting, others claimed that the meeting had already taken place. In these precincts, Negroes proceeded to hold their own meetings and elected their own delegates to the County conventions.

In three precincts (in six different counties) Negroes found the white precinct meetings, but were excluded from the meetings. In Hattiesburg, Negroes were told that they could not participate without poll tax receipts, despite the recent Constitutional amendment outlawing such provisions.

In ten precincts (in five different counties) Negroes were allowed to attend the meetings, but were restricted in some way from exercising their full rights: some were not allowed to vote, some were not allowed to nominate delegates from the floor, others were not allowed to take part in choosing those who tallied the vote. In several meetings the Negroes were unable to