

From: Jon Else, SNCC Northern Campus Coordinator  
To: All returned Summer Volunteers  
Re: Freedom Vote, October Incident Summary, Fast for Freedom

Nov. 3, 1964

As I write this letter, election returns are coming in, both from the regular state and national elections and from the Mississippi Freedom Vote, which has been underway for the past two weeks. It now appears that the total response to the Freedom Vote will be somewhere in the neighborhood of 60,000 ballots from 49 counties. This year's Freedom Vote differed in several respects from the Mock Election of 1963. First, staff energy this year was largely directed towards opening up new areas (Northwest -- 1st Dist.) and getting increased local participation in canvassing, as opposed to working for a larger number of votes in those areas which have already been well organized. Second, people had to register beforehand in a Freedom Vote book and cast their ballots in an open polling place, whereas last year the Mock Election did not include giving one's name and address, and many of the polling places were in private houses. In short, the fact that this year's Vote was much less secret than last year's acted as a deterrent in many cases. And lastly, the 1964 Freedom Vote carried with it much more harassment (119 arrests and a number of beatings) and less Federal presence than that held in 1963.

Like last year's Mock Election and the Convention Challenge, the Freedom Vote was an effort on the part of the people of Mississippi to make known their political views, views which are consistently denied expression within the existing political structure of the state. It was one more case in which Mississippi Negroes have made themselves heard after the government of the state has refused to listen to them.

Enclosed is an incident summary for the month of October. It is not intended to be complete or detailed, but only to indicate patterns of continued violence and intimidation in Mississippi. We hope that in the future we will be able to prepare summaries on a weekly or biweekly basis, so you won't be left up in the air for quite such long periods of time.

As you may know, the National Student Association, in cooperation with the Northern Student Movement and the United States Youth Council is conducting a THANKSGIVING FAST FOR FREEDOM this fall. Students throughout the country are being asked to forego the evening meal on November 19 and donate the money for that meal to a fund which will be used to buy food in bulk and send it to Mississippi to help compensate for job dismissals and suspension of state and county-portion Federal aid which come as a result of voter registration activities. As we move on into the Winter and the close of the cotton season, the need for food becomes serious. If your school is not already participating in the FAST FOR FREEDOM, you should either contact the Atlanta SNCC office or the National Student Association, 3457 Chesnut St., Philadelphia, Pa., so that you can be supplied with the necessary posters and other material. Please do so as soon as possible, as the Fast is less than three away.

For Freedom,  
Jon Else