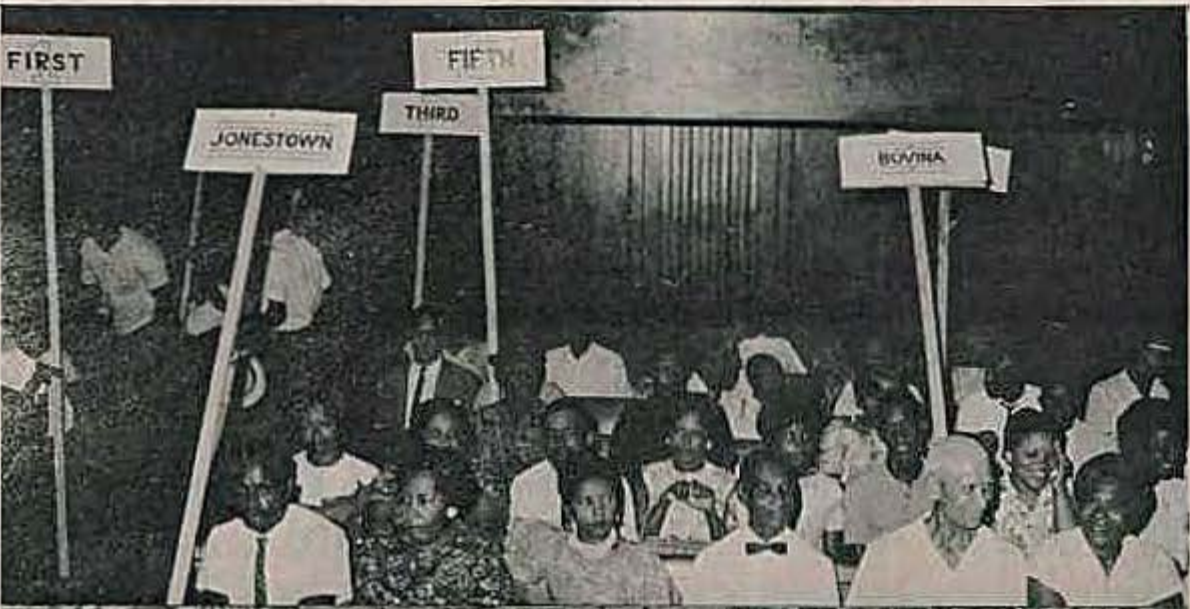


DELEGATES AT...

**MISSISSIPPI
FREEDOM
DEMOCRATIC
P A R T Y
CONVENTION**

JACKSON, MISS.



**C A L L
to a**

**CONFERENCE
on
FREE ELECTIONS
in 1965**

Sponsored by:
MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY

**MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY
153 U STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

FDP CONFERENCE

SAT. APRIL 24

[1965]

THE CHALLENGE

Over 400,000 Negroes of Mississippi are denied the right to vote by an oppressive system of official sanctioned racism. For a century now our Congress has accepted the pretense that the men from Mississippi who sit among them are representatives of the people.

The Challenge of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party asks of this Congress and of the American people, to put an end to this mockery; to say that the people of Mississippi are not now represented in the United States Congress and will not be until the alleged representatives are unseated and free and open elections are held. As Representative James Roosevelt said on the opening day of this Congress, "they cannot win 'elections' based on murder and then claim the right to govern free men."

On December 14th, in accordance with a Federal Statute which governs procedure for controlling congressional elections, representatives of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party served proper Notice of Challenge on the five Mississippi Congressmen and to the Clerk of the House claiming those congressional elections were illegal by fact of systematic disenfranchisement of Negroes by the use of terror, violence and terrorism.

On the opening day of Congress 151 members, only 75 votes less than a majority voted against a motion to seat the Mississippians who were seated tentatively pending the outcome of the Challenge.

Since that time over 125 volunteer lawyers from throughout the Nation went into Mississippi and collected testimony from over 700 witnesses including local Negroes, Justice Department Officials, and State and Citizens' Council officials. This impressive body of evidence proves conclusively the almost total disenfranchisement that exists. The Mississippi Congressmen have been able to submit no evidence whatsoever to refute this testimony.

In July the House of Representatives must again vote on the status of the Mississippians to sit. The Negro people of Mississippi who have risked much in participating in this challenge, will be waiting eagerly for the verdict of the Congress. The evidence of mass terror, economic slavery and police violence is conclusive.

It will be up to us, the American people, through our Congressmen to decide whether men elected by fraud and oppression will continue to sit in Congress, or whether the Congress will call upon Mississippi to hold free and democratic elections for those seats.

FREE ELECTIONS IN 1965

Place: METROPOLITAN A.M.E. CHURCH
1618 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Time: 8:30 A.M. Conference Registration

PROGRAM

MORNING SESSION: REPORT FROM THE SOUTH
Mississippi's New Image: Myth and Reality. Reports will be given on evidence gathered by the MFDP for the Challenge, including testimony of former Governor Ross Barnett, Attorney General Joe Patterson, and officials of the White Citizens' Council. Discussion of the developments of political activities in Mississippi and throughout the South, and the implications of the Civil Rights Bill in terms of real political democracy.

AFTERNOON SESSION: MAKING VOTING LEGISLATION MEANINGFUL

How strong will the voting legislation passed in this Congress be? How can we aid in its implementation to ensure that the right to register and to freely exercise the vote will be a reality in the South. How can we aid the Southern Negro in organizing politically for long-needed social change. How is the effects of the voting legislation and the Challenge relevant in the Northern Ghetto?

ORGANIZING FOR THE VOTE AND THE CHALLENGE

Discussion groups, on regional basis, to discuss organizing in the north for FREE ELECTIONS IN 1965. How do we mobilize and focus the aroused conscience of the nation so that the shock of Selma, Montgomery and Mississippi will be translated into action in their home communities.

EVENING SESSION: CONGRESSIONAL REPORT

The Challenge and Voting Legislation are now before Congress. Those leading the fight will report on activities and developments.

SPEAKERS *

JAMES FARMER, Executive Director, CORE
JAMES FORMAN, Executive Secretary, SNCC
DR. ROBERT SPIKE, Director, Commission on Race & Religion, National Council of Churches

MFDP REPRESENTATIVES

LAWRENCE GUYOT MRS. VICTORY GHAY
MRS. FANNIE LOU HAMER MRS. ANNIE DEVINE

* Partial List

