Friday, May 19, 1967

To: Friends of SNCC

From: Atlanta Northern Coordination Office

Re: Hammermill, 350 Nelson, "The Challenge"

HAMMER MILL BOYCOTT STATUS

May 11 was Hammermill's annual stockholders meeting, and we had demonstrations at the Erie plant and other plants and offices in Philadelphia, New York City, Chicago, Detroit, Washington, Hamilton, Ohio, Lockhaven, Pa., and Springfield, Mass. The result of the demonstration in Erie which stopped the plant from functioning for two hours was that Devitt agreed to meet with representatives of SNCC, NAACP and SGC.

It is important to remember that the SNCC representatives were students from Friends of SNCC groups who stated that they could not speak as SNCC.

At these negotiations Devitt promised that he would do everything in his power to see that voter registration for Negroes would be stepped up in Dallas County. A two week moratorium on pushing the boycott was called. Although SNCC did not officially endorse this, we refrained from issuing action names out of the Atlanta office.

That has Devitt done since May 12. He said that he went to Selma and talked to the local White Citizens Council and told them that Hammermill would use its influence to secure full protection of the law for equal employment opportunity, the right to register and to vote without intimidation. Devitt said that he was told that on May 17, 200 Negroes were registered to vote. However, we have not been allowed to see the same source of information that he had access to. So there has been NO tangible evidence that Hammermill is PRESSURING Selma officials to discontinue their racist policies. In fact the Dallas County Voters League has found only 17 persons who were registered May 17 and has written Devitt to that effect.

At the Executive Committee meeting held last weekend, it was decided that we no longer actively pursue the Hammermill boycott. There were several reasons for this decision: 1) we want to put every effort into making the Challenge successful 2) the whole question of what do you do with a corporation... where do you really move. This is the first time we ever really pursued an economic boycott and would appreciate your suggestions.

So far we will not actively pursue the boycott. However you should all make a conscious effort to not buy Hammermill products at or any of the Hammermill trade name papers.

350 Nelson, S.

We finally made the big move, yet although we are ready for new building...it is not ready for us and Northern coordination will have no office in which to actually work for the next few weeks. Please forgive all unanswered phone calls, unheaded letters and unfilled orders for the next few weeks.

IFDP DEPOSITIONS TO BE PRINTED

On June 2 lawyers for the IFDP and for the Mississippi congressmen met with the Clerk of the House in order to discuss how much of the evidence submitted by the IFDP as part of its case to unseat the Mississippi Congressmen should be made public. The Mississippi congressmen's lawyers took their usual position, that the entire challenge had no legal basis, and a therefore no evidence at all should be printed. Lawyers for the IFDP held that the entire body of evidence should be made public, because the entire proceeding was being conducted according to federal law. The chairman said that he was unable to decide either way so he recessed the meeting and said he was unable to decide and would announce his decision in 48 hours.

The IFDP felt this to be a testing period...through your quick and strong support a decision was reached...Monday representatives of the IFDP and the government printing office will meet to decide details of printing the depositions. Round one has been won...thank you.