

[June 10, 1965]

Philo Office

## FOURTH DISTRICT OFFICE

### Research

Hopefully, the law students which Dick Jewett has made contact with can make deep inroads into the political and legislative structure of the state this summer. And their work can be converted by local and northern staff into educational materials.

If local talent, such as that of Eva's and Johnny's is available, perhaps the law student researchers could have a couple of apprentices at least part time, who could learn more and become practiced in using the CODE and other such resources which we now are still leary of.

A few days set aside for work in the Mississippi Room of the Meridian Public Library might still be valuable. Persons going there should go early in the morning, decide from the card catalogue what books they want to use, apply at the desk for those books. The books will be available 3 hours later and could be used for the remainder of the day, or whatever part of the day is necessary.

The idea of a newspaper file should not be long neglected. Perhaps some sort of cataloguing system could be set up -- a card listing the topic, page, name and date of the newspaper for every pertinent item in every paper. Since most of these county papers are 9/10 balderdash and only 1/10 substantive the job of making such a catalogue shouldn't take over 4 or 5 hours a week, and since there will be much repetition and similarity about the things that interest us, a fairly simple topical arrangement should emerge.

As much as the new invisible budget allows, the office's own library should be developed. The background titles listed in Jack Mimmis' article should be gotten, also other government publications (it might be well to write the clerk of the House for a copy of the congressional challenge evidence as soon as it comes out in the next two weeks or so), as well as materials like the League of Women Voters stuff. Mr. Bill Hope, Knox College Bookstore, Salesburg, Illinois might be of help on questions of how to obtain certain books and how to get them at reduced costs. A subscription to the legal digest which comes out, I think, bimonthly would be a very good investment. An edition for each section of the country is put out; the one we'd be interested in is, I believe, for the mid-South. These digests summarize all the important state court cases, as well as federal court cases relating to state concerns. Someone at Edwards asked if the District Office could provide a current knowledge of legal developments. This would be a good way to try it.

### Education

If staff from this office begin themselves to use their workbooks they should supply themselves before every workshop with pencils, sturdy backing for people to write on, black board and chalk. Probably more than one persons will be needed to conduct the workshop; it would be well to have "helpers" who could assist with finding the place, with writing, etc.

Since staff in Madison and Rankin Counties will probably use the school booklet and attempt the workshop idea before anyone else, a meeting with them about their success or lack of it should be held fairly soon. If it looks as if staff of the several counties will do most of the workshop-running themselves, a briefing session with them, based on what is learned from Madison and Rankin, would be a good idea.

If adult freedom schools develop over the summer they might be able to make use of the booklet materials. Again, the freedom school teachers should be given some sort of advice, based on experience, about using them.

The short demonstration Dick made at Edwards was instructive mainly in how long and tedious these workshops will in reality be. Maybe tedious is the wrong word, but certainly they'll call for some courage and much sticktoitiveness. I'm still envisioning day-long sessions with generous breaks. If these prove impracticable perhaps the booklets should be restructured so that they could be used across 2 or 3 meetings, each meeting ending, maybe, with the selection of a committee whose ~~WORK~~ findings will start off the next meeting.

I think this is a minor point, but I did notice at Edwards that people did not personalize their question-asking as much as we assumed they would. So many of their questions were "why's" and "what's" as well as "who's." This somewhat muddies the process of thinking about who is responsible. Certainly it requires more time to get around to pinpointing individual officials. Maybe the booklet should be more directive in getting people to ask "who" questions.

Further work should be done soon on the employment booklet. And a natural follow-up on employment workshops emphasizing job-seeking would be workshops on the increasing disappearance of jobs for everybody, i.e., an expansion of Schiffman's outline on automation and cybernation. A possible follow up on that would be a booklet on farming, a survey of the various federal programs open to farmers and, if possible, of some of the new techniques etc being taught through these programs. Certainly it should include encouragement to keep pressuring county agents, ASCS, etc. Perhaps it could germinate preparations for the next ASC elections coming up in December. It should also, incidentally, include that information on cotton grading which we found in that marketing book in Jackson (the notes are on the bulletin board).

Another type of booklet might take its lead from the League of Women Voters, and encourage people into survey work. Such booklets could be adapted for young adult freedom school use. If and when some communities reach a point beyond the need for ~~XXXX~~ just elementary knowledge, the district office should return to the Minnis article ("Care and Feeding of Power Structures," excerpts of which are in the manila folder in the office library) and attempt to get some more sophisticated and potentially powerful surveys going.

We have received a good quantity of the CITIZEN'S GUIDES TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT. Some meaningful use of them should be devised. The GUIDE is used now in the rough draft of the employment booklet, but since it relates to so many other problems besides jobs some wider use of it should probably be made.

Communication

As we've often said, the mass mailing list should be expanded to include northern contacts and parts of the state outside the 4th district.

Whatever correspondence the mailings bring in should continue to be answered promptly. It would probably be a good idea to keep copies of the answers and to set up a filing system for office correspondence. (Right now, most of the letters, both out-going and in-coming are alphabetized according to the person who wrote or to whom we're writing.)

Since it would be nice to have some kind of state wide staff unity someday, it might be well to encourage and aid all mediums of state-wide communication. For example, we got a note a few days back (Johnny has it now, I think) about a COFO newsletter, soliciting information to include in it. This office should cooperate with that and send in a description of our booklets, our mailings, etc.

In making up our mailings the WATS reports can be used to some extent for leads on stories for our mailing. Someone, then, should make it a point to skim all the WATS papers.

Because there's something pathetic about the way Haley wanders around trying to figure out what's happening, it would be an act of kindness to send his office, and the N.Y. office a regular (say every 2 weeks) report on what this office is doing -- that is, as soon as this office begins regularly doing.

Budget

Allotments of money to this office are needed for:

- telephone
- stamps (for correspondence beyond the mass mailings)
- newspaper subscriptions
- legal digest subscription
- other library materials
- mimeograph machine
- typewriter
- paper
- ink
- workshop materials (pencils, backing, etc.)
- blackboard and chalk
- misc. office supplies (staples, pens, paper clips etc.)

This, of course, does not include the envelopes being printed up for the mass mailings.

Administrative Details

Eric Weinberger once told me that he had a new filing cabinet in Meridian which this office could have. I keep forgetting to ask the COFO people there about it. Somebody should.

Whatever the implications of Dick Jowett's announcement in Edwards that he was going to become mostly program director and let George Raymond do the district directing, I recommend watching for them carefully. Having worked under, for, against, and beside of George, I know his talents are several and that they do not include administrative ones. I would particularly guard against his being given authorization powers for money distribution. He's both too careless and too unable to say "no" to be trusted with such powers.

### Meshoba Project

The affidavit I took from Mr. Buddy McGowan has now been removed from this office to the project files, ditto the correspondence which followed it. If he ever shows up again I guess he should just be put in touch with Aronson.

The carbon of the letter out of this office of Mitchell about a headstart program in this county has also been transferred to the project files. Mitchell's reply should come addressed to Sandy.

Val is supposed to have followed up the information this office got for him about the state diabetes program. As soon as he comes back, if not before then, he should be prodded to carry on with whatever he was doing (trying, I think, to get a Negro enrolled in the program). The state dept of health took such obvious pains in replying to us, going so far as to send a carbon of their reply to the county board of health, that I'd hate to have the thing just neglected and forgotten. The materials on it are in this office in the hospitals and health slot.

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Any mail addressed to me with a government or ~~some~~ publications bureau return-on-it (except the Dept. of Internal Revenue!) just ~~XXXXXX~~ open and add to the correspondence file, to the office library or whatever.

My forwarding address for the time being: 418 South West.  
Galesburg, Illinois  
c/o John L. Stipp

Phone: 342-1345

Even after I get to Calif. the people in Galesburg will know how to get hold of me.

JoAnn Downan  
June 10, 1965