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NEWS FLASH NEWS FLASH NEWS FLASH June 11 2 pm

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party held a demonstration today in Jackson to protest the opening on a special session of the Mississippi State Legislature. They contended that the Legislators were elected illegally since so many thousands were barred from voting; and that, therefore, the Legislature has no right to sit and pass laws. They also called for free elections in Mississippi and for stronger provisions in the federal voting bill presently being considered by the House of Representatives.

Shortly after noon, 30 pickets were taken to the state capitol in cars where they were to march in front of the building with signs calling for free elections in Mississippi, and end to police brutality, and freedom for all in Mississippi. As the pickets got out of the cars they were arrested.

Around the same time, 450 people began marching from the Morning Star Baptist Church (about a mile from the capitol). They marched in the direction of downtown, two by two, along the sidewalks. They were not harrassed or molested for 10 blocks. Suddenly a street was blocked off and the police moved in, arresting all 450. They were loaded into flat bed trailer trucks with animal cage-like wire enclosures and taken out of town. At this moment we do not yet know where they were taken, what the charges are or what the bail is. Three people were hospitalized at Jackson University Medical Center as a result of injuries from police beatings. Two nurses from the Medical Committee on Human Rights were arrested. Arrested, too, was Lawrence Guyot, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

The marchers were MFDP members plus about 150 striking members of the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union. People who were not arrested are now meeting at the church to decide a further course of action and calls have gone out to people all over the state to come to Jackson as soon as possible.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Mobilize support by keeping pressure on newspapers to print what is happening in Jackson -- let them know you are interested in detailed accounts of MFDP activity.

Mobilize support by asking people in your community to send telegrams and letters to Congressmen -- particularly those who did not vote for the challenge -- pointing out that this is another example of repression of legitimate political activity in the state of Mississippi and urging them to vote for the challenge so that free elections will indeed be held in the state.

Help in any other way to get information on the challenge and on the Jackson events out to people in your area...

We will send or call any new information to you -- but calling your local wire services for information is one way you can get up to the minute news (it also tells the wires that people in your town want to know...and encourages them to keep their reporters on the story).

Eshter, Margaret, Betty, Shirley

[Friends of SNCC]