

October 28, 1965

MEMO to Friends of SNCC:

In Mississippi--The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party has initiated a crash program on Voter Registration in counties where the Justice Department has sent federal registrars. The first county FDP is concentrating on is Bolivar County, in the heart of the Delta. Federal registrars have left the county on agreement with local registrars that they would register people according to federal regulations.

Bolivar is such a big county that it has two county seats--Cleveland and Rosedale. It has a 68% Negro population. One of the most important members of the Mississippi Legislature, the Speaker of the House Walter Sillers, comes from Rosedale and has been a member of the House since 1916. In 1962, only 612 Negroes out of 14,920 eligible voters were registered to vote. As of last Monday there were approximately 1,600 Negroes registered to vote.

Since the crash program has begun 70 FDP workers have come into the county and 200 more people have been registered to vote.

Next Monday, the FDP plans to go into Jones County, in the Fifth Congressional District.

There are nine counties where federal registrars have been designated in Mississippi. FDP plans to have intensive voter registration drives in each county. There is a strong possibility that Friends of SNCC and volunteers who have returned from this past summer and from summer before last will be asked to spend their Christmas and Thanksgiving back in the field in one of these counties.

The Mississippi Freedom Labor Union and the MFDP have called for a "Black Christmas," in the state of Mississippi. All the members of the union are asking all the Negroes in the state to order Christmas presents either from the Poor People's Corporation or from mail order houses. FRIENDS OF SNCC CAN HELP THE UNION PEOPLE IN THE DELTA BY COLLECTING TOYS AND SENDING THEM TO THE VARIOUS LOCALS. There is also a great need for food and clothing to be sent to the Delta. We suggest that the toys and food and clothing be sent to individual locals. A list of addresses is enclosed along with a list of food union people have specifically asked for.

Most of the people who were striking during cotton chopping season have been forced to go back to work during cotton picking season. They decided that their most effective striking weapon was during the planting (chopping) season and that in order to survive, they would work during the fall. Winters are hard and cold in the Mississippi Delta. Many of the people who were thrown off their plantations have no place to live and are on the point of starvation. The children are suffering the most. Their parents are asking you to help them.

Please begin now collecting toys, food and clothing in your community. Please send these supplies directly to the projects and not to the Atlanta office.

In Baker County, Ga--Many of the people who were active in the demonstrations last summer have suffered severe economic reprisals. As is the case in Mississippi, the children are suffering the most. They need clothes very badly--both high school students and grammar school students. Please send clothing to The Miller Family, Route 2, Box 74, Newton, Georgia.

The MFDP in Jackson is setting up a speakers bureau with a list of 30 local leaders who are willing to come anywhere in the country and tell the story of what is happening today in the south. They are willing to do fund raising for SNCC and FDP. If you need a speaker, please get in touch with either the Atlanta office or--Jesse Harris, FDP, 507 $\frac{1}{2}$ North Farrish Street, Jackson, Mississippi.

Freedom.