

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee
360 Nelson Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia

April 27 to May 8

NEWS OF THE FIELD #11

ALABAMA

Wilcox County: At 8:45 SNCC staff arrived at Rome Pettaway's store in Boykin, Alabama. Practically the entire community of Boykin has the last name Pettaway after the former plantation owner. The Negroes own their own land now, and have since the depression. It has always been a militant community.

The Wilcox County Freedom Organization decided to hold its mass meeting in Boykin at the school house where the regular balloting was taking place. People gathered around to ask questions--If they had voted for the petition for independent candidates could they vote in the freedom primary? According to the law even if they had voted in the Democratic primary, they could vote in the freedom primary. The chairman of the Wilcox County Freedom Organization opened the meeting (Monroe Pettaway the recording secretary, Mrs. Evelyn Ross led a song "Bless be the Names"). Nominations began. Mrs. Mary Lee Allen was nominated for tax collector. James Austin, a former SNCC worker who married one of the Pettaway young ladies, was nominated for road commissioner. Alex Pettaway was nominated for tax assessor. The nominations were seconded and voted on. Mrs. Evelyn Ross moved that the meeting be closed.

Green County: The meeting was opened by Mr. Wiley Bell, now a resident of "Tent City" in Forkland, Alabama. They have been given a room in the courthouse to hold their meeting. When entering the probate judge's chamber, the secretary announced "The Panthers are here.". Percy McShan was nominated for tax assessor,; Mrs. Alberta Branche was nominated for tax collector. Mr. Pete Kirshy

was nominated for board of education. Miss Wynette Bell, the recording secretary, made a motion that the meeting be closed after the vote was cast. NOTE: All of these candidates were running on the Democratic ticket, and all of them LOST. Fortunately for them, the Freedom Organization gave them a SECOND Chance.

Dallas County: The courthouse officials refused to let the Dallas County Freedom Organization hold their meetings there. It was held in the SNCC office which fitted the legal requirements of distance according to Alabama law.

NOMINATED AND SECONDED

SHERIFF	SAMSON CRUM
TAX ASSESSOR	ADDID LILY
TAX COLLECTOR	MR. HORACE GRIFFIN
BOARD OF REVENUE	
SELMA DISTRICT	MRS. AGATHA HARVILLE
WEST DALLAS DISTRICT	MR. ROOSEVELT McELROY
SOUTHSIDE DISTRICT	MR. WILMER WALKER
FORK DISTRICT	MR. A. D. BUSH
DALLAS COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD	MR. GEORGE SALLIE
	MRS. NONA N. DAY
CORONER	MR. NATHAN PAYNE

Landlord Hope Hamlett of Dallas County told tenant George Clarence Smith he had to "Get out of his house". Hamlett told several other families who had either voted or had a member of their family vote, to leave his land. Hamlett told Smith "If you don't get out by tonight (May 4th) I'm going to take the top off your house". Mr. Edgat Armstrong, Mrs. Victoria Allen, and Mrs. Evelyn A. Lewis were given 30 days to get off Hamlett's land.

In a similar move, Landlord J. Brown told Mrs. Martha Stanfield she must move from her Dallas County home. Some tenants in Dallas County have already planted their cotton crops but are afraid they will be told to move anyway. Several Dallas County tenant farmers, anticipating the move by the owners, have already purchased land for a tent city site.

Lowndes County: About 2,000 people attended the mass meeting of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization. 850

voted for the freedom candidates in the freedom primary.

By accident 125 Negroes went to the courthouse and were told to come in and vote by the white officials; not realizing that they were voting in the Democratic primary, they went in. However, out of a voting population of 5,122 only 125 voted in the Democratic primary.

SHERIFF
TAX COLLECTOR
BOARD OF EDUCATION

SIDNEY LOGAN JR.
FRANK MILLS JR.
MR. JOHN HINTON
MR. ROBERT LOGAN
MRS. WILLIE MAE STRICKLAND
MRS. ALICE MOORE
MR. EMORY ROSS

TAX ASSESSOR
CORONER

Sumter County: Mrs. Mary Coats, chairman of the Sumter County Freedom Organization, moved to nominate Robert Cook for sheriff; Mrs. Betty Mae Lake, secretary, seconded it. It was unanimously endorsed. Mr. Robert Cook nominated Connie Lee Ruffin Jr. for tax assessor. She was unanimously endorsed. Mr. Robert Cook nominated Annie B. Williams to tax collector. Mr. Robert Cook nominated Samuel Little for board of education; it was endorsed. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

CALIFORNIA

The National Farm Workers Association is planning a summer project and asking for volunteers. The Farm Workers would like to make use of some of the people who offer their volunteer services to SNCC for the summer to be used in any SNCC project.

The NFWA has begun a boycott of DiGiorgio. But the Negroes, American and West Indian, and poor whites working in the large plants and citrus groves in Florida are also affected.

SOUTHWEST GEORGIA:

587 students will transfer to integrated schools in Albany next year. There will be about 200 at Albany High, about 30 at E. Dougherty High. The school board is operating

under court order, but voluntarily decided to open grades 7-9 available to transfer, because they feared another lawsuit if they didn't.

In Baker County, the peanut mill, which is the biggest industry in the county, won't hire Negroes. A whole bunch of people have made application and haven't been hired, so now they are thinking of taking action against it.

The school system got two new school buses. The students were supposed to go on a trip, but the high school principal cancelled it, so the students, veterans of the demonstrations last summer (which helped lead to cut-off of federal funds to Baker County) organized a committee on their own and went to see the principal. They frightened him into calling the superintendent, telling him that the students were coming there to see him, the superintendent, next. The superintendent immediately gave in, said "let them go anywhere they want", and so they got their trip.

Also in Baker County, Mrs. Josie Miller has been trying for some time to find out how many Negro students applied for transfer. She'd called the superintendents office, asking after the number of students and teachers. His secretary said he would call back. He didn't. So today she and Mrs. Coe went to see him, and all he did was show them some sort of book of rules which said they weren't supposed to give out such information, so now they will bring Attorney C. B. King of Albany, their lawyer, into it, to see if they can get the figures.

Also the Baker County Movement has been trying for some time to get students 18 and over to go from school to register to vote. They talked to the superintendent, and he said they could use a school bus, but the driver was busy. Since no one else had insurance for it, this constituted a runaround pressure on him, and forced him to say that he would get 2 off-duty teachers a day to carry a carload of students apiece

apiece down to register after lunch daily. The school officials have apparently been quite shaken up by what's been happening to them since the beginning of the year.

Cordele: Rufus Hinton, convicted of "Desecrating a U.S. flag", after demonstrations in Cordele, is out on an appeal bond of \$1000 after being sentenced Monday to one year at hard labor. The sheriff tried to intimidate people we carried down to go bond, saying they didn't seem to him to be "that kind of people", that their property wasn't worth \$1000 anyway, that Rufus would run off as soon as he was bailed out, that we would have to get our lawyer to draw up a new bond form, and so on.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA: (a memo of m. Phyllis Cunningham)

Approximately 200 investigators for HEW were oriented in Atlanta last week. These investigators were detailed from the Social Security Administration and the Public Health Service to work on the "crash program" of investigating hospitals specifically to see that they are in compliance with the Civil Rights Law of 1964. The investigators will be trying to sell the hospitals "cooperation Medicare". Unless hospitals are in total compliance, they cannot receive money under the Medicare law. This means that a person, Negro or white, cannot receive medical care in any hospital which is not in full compliance with the Civil Rights Law. Miss Cunningham says, "I am certain that this will mean that many of the hospitals throughout the South especially will not care for persons who have signed up for Medicare. Again, this means that the elderly poor, who have rarely received adequate medical care but, who have hope of receiving it under the Medicare Law, will again be disillusioned." Medicare, concerning hospitals, goes into effect on July 1, 1966.

Just prior to Christmas 1965, the Office of Equal Health Opportunity was established. The staff was composed of two persons. The office did not have any investigators but,

on occasion, was able to "pull" personnel from other agencies to do investigations. In many instances, the investigation was very inadequate and there was not follow-up. The approximate 200 investigators who are now in the field, will be involved in this work at least until July 1, 1966. It is true that HEW does not ultimately have the power to cut off federal funds to institutions and, due to the political structure and power in this country, no real honest assurance can be granted. People around the country have been asserting pressure on Congress and the Senate concerning the whole issue of the lack of enforcement of the Civil Rights Law and this must increase at an even more rapid and forceful speed. 'Exposure' causes things to move, generally. The U. S. Commission on Civil Rights has done a notable expose on the irresponsibility of HEW. It is called TITLE VI...ONE YEAR AFTER and is a survey of desegregation of health and welfare services in the South. (There has been little change.) The expose was released in late February of 1966 and is available from the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights.

If you get word that investigators are in your area, and that they have not made any effort to talk with people in the Negro community, please let the Medical Committee know or contact the Office of Equal Health Opportunity. Also, check to see if 'things' change after the investigator leaves town with the 'word' that the hospital will comply with the Civil Rights Law. Too frequently, hospitals have put on 'good acts' for investigators and continued their same practices after the investigator left town.

The hospitals which will be given priority for investigation will be those who have complaints registered against them with HEW. There are very few hospitals which have complaints registered against them in comparison to the number of hospitals which I am certain have obvious and de facto policies concerning segregation and discrimination.

The complaint, when possible, should be made by a person from the community who has knowledge of the institution. A person employed by the institution would probably be the best source of information.

For further information write: Medical Committee for Human Rights
507 1/2 North Farish Street
Jackson, Mississippi

MISSISSIPPI

Sharkey County: Jim Smart, 61, a veteran of the 1st World War, who suffered from shell shock was shot twice and killed by Deputy Sheriff of Sharkey County, Mr. J. K. McNeil, at about 6:30 yesterday evening (April 27th). The killing took place in Money Montgomery's store, at Blanton. Witnesses say that Smart came in and started talking foolish, saying he wanted the money owing him etc. This went on a little then Montgomery apparently called for the Sheriff.

Deputy Sheriff McNeil came alone. Smart at this time was sitting on a bench. Dep. Sheriff McNeil came up to him and told him that he was going to handcuff him. Smart said "No you are not." McNeil backed off, and as Smart moved toward him, shot him in the thigh and then in the side. Smart was dead on arrival at a Rolling Fork hospital.

Witnesses say that this was a cold blooded killing. McNeil has a reputation for being a killer.

Smart lived on Mr. Burt Darton's place at Blanton.

The sheriff of Sharkey was involved in a beating about two days ago. According to FDP report, Sheriff Brown hit a Negro, home on a 21 day furlough from the Army. The Sheriff had stopped a car driven by a friend. The Negro, who suffers from asthma, got out for fresh air. He was told to get back in the car by Brown, then hit on side of head with pistol. The Negro is due to go to Viet Nam at the end of his furlough.

Gulfport, Mississippi: The names of three schools have been changed in North Gulfport. MFDP worker, Mrs. Keys, thinks this was done to confuse the Negroes parents who want to register their children in the formerly white schools.

She asked Mr. E. C. Smith about this, he said that it didn't matter since he would decide which school students went to.

Mrs. Key is going to write out a statement for the lawyers.

West Point, Mississippi: The MFDP of West Point was having a sale on clothes, while the sale was going on, Mrs. Ely Hampton was arrested for handing clothes without a permit and no health card. The money was to be used for getting people out of jail and to help the West Point MFDP office. While the sale was going, the Chief of police came up and asked Mrs. Hampton if she had a card, or a permit; she told him that she didn't have one and he then took her to the police station. She was then charged \$100. Today about 4 cars of people went down to the jail just to stand around. They had a meeting at the home of Mrs. Hampton to see what they could do about these arrested. The people decided that they would have a mass march this Saturday. There will be another meeting at the Mary Holmes Jr. College this Wednesday night. This meeting will also be about the boycott and school desegregation.

Quitman County: Reverend McRainey, head of the five County CAP board, held a meeting. A local lady had written to Rev. McRainey asking about this meeting and he had answered the letter giving her the date of the meeting and not the time or the place of the meeting. Several of MFDP people spent a great deal of time trying to find out the time of the meeting and the place of the meeting. Finally they called the McRainey office and his secretary told them that the meeting would be at the Court house at 7:00 p.m. Leaflets were given out and a mass meeting was held at 5:00 p.m. About 25 cars of Negroes (about 125 people) drove to the Courthouse and presented a proposal for CDGM for Quitman

County. When Mr. McRainey said that he didn't have time to talk about the proposal until he had a chance to read it, Rev. Colman and about 100 people left the meeting. After the 100 people left the meeting an Advisory council was elected. The Council consists of 6 Negroes and 6 whites and one MFDP person is on it.

West Point, Mississippi (con'd): Concerned with a boycott against discriminating West Point stores, Woolworth had public relations expert Bob Brown of B & C Associates contact the Atlanta SNCC office. Brown painted a good public relations picture for the West Point, Mississippi Woolworth -- his customer.

The Highpoint, North Carolina public relations firm representative said SNCC was mistaken in assuming the Woolworth store had one Negro clerk out of four who swept half the time. He told of Woolworth's Jr. Executive training program which out of 120 trainees has 70 Negroes. He said Woolworth has been strongly for integration of its staff all over the country. Five new managers are Negro, he said emphasizing that the Woolworth program was an aggressive one.

Mrs. Terry Williams, a SNCC worker, says "When the Negro woman was first hired she was sweeping. I talked to her Saturday and she said she's being trained for the cash register but she doesn't use it. We want Negroes hired in the same jobs as whites."

Sunflower County: The Black people of Sunflower City have won a great victory. They have won the right to a new election.

On March 12, 1966, a Federal Court reached a decision on a Freedom Democratic Party suit. The Court ordered new elections for town officials. This happened because the Negroes had not been allowed to register and vote.

The people of the Freedom Democratic Party think that this is the most important election in a long time. The black people of Sunflower may now choose who they want to represent them.

For 100 years Negroes have been kept out of Mississippi politics. In Sunflower this has always been true. There was no weapon of voting for the Black people...Now this is changing...There are about 130 Negroes registered, and 160 whites in Sunflower City.

There are five other places in the county that can also have a new election. They are Draw, Ruleville, Doddsville, Moorhead, and Inverness, Mississippi. These elections will come about the same as they did in Sunflower. Someone in the movement will file a complaint just like Mrs. Annie Mae King did with the lawyers for Sunflower.

MOZAMBIQUE

It is an unfortunate reality that people in the United States are unaware of the existence of Angola and Mozambique let alone have an appreciation of their political turmoil. While a great deal of publicity has been given to the Republic of South Africa and her deplorable system of apartheid, almost no recognition of a similar problem in these two Portuguese colonies exists in this country. The "New York Times", one of our finest newspapers for the reporting of international events, has carried only "tidbits" of news from these countries during the past six months. Therefore, it is perhaps necessary to orient the reader to these countries and their problems.

Mozambique, a Portuguese overseas province (colony) is located on the eastern shore of southern Africa on the Indian Ocean. Its port of Beira is in the news of late since it is involved in the shipping of oil to boycotted Rhodesia.

Angola is also run by resource-starved Portugal, but is located on the other side of southern Africa. Revolutions have been going on for several years in both of these countries.

We must expose the reality of the unjust treatment of the Africans in these two countries. Through this exposure, pressure will develop to encourage or force the Portuguese to change their position politically, economically, and socially.

We summon all the support that can be mustered and strongly recommend the writing of letters to diplomats of both the American and Portuguese embassies. Freedom is not and can not be a provincial concept. Please support the freedom of the oppressed majorities in Mozambique and Angola.

The management of the overseas-province-colonies of the Portuguese government violates basic unalienable human rights. Self-determination, the rights to strike and to form political parties have been denied. The socialization process of "Assimilado" (de facto integration) is unrealistic and does not permit the full expression of the majority of the population.