

freedom information service *

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November 6, 1967

Dear Friends,

The Freedom Information Service has been operating nearly two and a half years on a variety of research, writing, and library-building projects. In this time we have been financed by a few small foundation grants and a number of individual contributions.

It appears now that if we are to continue to support a staff of seven part-time people and, hopefully, take on two new, full-time people with special skills, an in-person fund raising effort is necessary at this time.

We hope you, who are familiar with our work and in most cases have been financial supporters yourselves, will help us make fruitful contacts in the shortest possible time.

My tentative travel schedule begins as follows:

November 17 - to Nashville, Tenn.
November 18 - to Louisville, Ky.
November 19 - to Chicago, Ill.
November 21 - to Detroit, Mich.
November 23 - to Syracuse, N.Y. (hometown)

After this, I will go to New York City probably by the 25th, unless a fund-raising affair is organized for the 24th. I hope to be able to return to Mississippi by about December 8th. So in those days after November 25th will be flexible, depending on what YOU can arrange, in the northeastern U.S.

If anyone can get definite plans in the mail to me by the 13th of November, please do so and I will reply immediately. Otherwise, please contact Miss Carol Hanisch, 27 West 82nd Street, New York 10024; phone 212/475-8775. She is a former staff member of FIS and has agreed to set up appointments for me, particularly in the New York area.

Please try to let Carol or me know just what kind of presentation will be expected and what sorts of people will be there. Also, if written materials could be particularly important, let us know as soon as possible and what topics should be covered.

Our major concerns in F.I.S. are the following:

- 1) The writing and distribution of a weekly Newsletter of current events relevant to the Movement; letters from readers; articles from other sources giving views on the Movement in Mississippi, Black politics, international problems involving oppressed peoples, etc. Present circulation is 900 by mail throughout Mississippi, 150 by mail outside Mississippi, 450 in bulk to Jackson area colleges and neighborhoods and to Mississippi cooperatives.
- 2) The continuing development of a library of newspaper clippings, pamphlets, books, visual materials, etc. which will be useful to Mississippians, black and white, who are involved in movements for change or are doing research. About 50 hours of work per week is now being done on this.
- 3) The researching, writing, and distribution of short and long articles on Mississippi politics and government, economics, Movement topics, Negro history, etc.
- 4) The availability of office machines and technical assistance in preparing materials for use within the Mississippi movement. Our facilities have at one time or another been used by nearly every Movement group in the state and are available to all. In most cases, we expect groups to cover costs of work done for them, since we could not possibly, to date, have paid for all the supplies and staff time.

Briefly, my own background is this: Miss Jan Hillegas, age 24, native of Syracuse, New York. Former member of Syracuse CORE. Graduate of Syracuse University, psychology major, in August, 1964. Civil rights work in Mississippi since August, 1964, for the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. Founder in July, 1965, of the Freedom Information Service (then Center), and currently treasurer and coordinator of F.I.S.

We will need to raise, in checks or pledges, about \$10,000 on this trip in order to carry through next June or July. The FIS staff does the work here and we very much need your help where you are to provide the wherewithal to do it. Please let us know just as soon as possible (Carol or me) what you will be able to arrange and when and we will do our best to meet your schedule (best of course to indicate alternatives if you can).

Thank you all very much for your help in the past. I'm looking forward to meeting with as many of you as possible.

For Freedom and Peace,

Jan Hillegas
(Miss) Jan Hillegas