



NOW !



The Voice Of Freedom

No. 1

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COLLEGE STUDENTS CONVENE

On April 25 approximately 100 students representing 7 colleges in Mississippi: (Tougaloo, Jackson State, Alcorn, Miss. Industrial, Mary Holmes, and Rust) gathered on the campus of Tougaloo College for an all day conference.

Ella Baker spoke on the role of the student in the movement; Staughton Lynd and Harold Bartinelli spoke on student civil liberties; several COFO workers spoke on the COFO programs.

The students held workshops in the afternoon, discussing "What Can We Do?" After reports from the workshops a state-wide student structure was set up to plan for further action.

Particular attention was paid the problem of the Alcorn students- their dismissal had occurred just three days earlier.

HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCE

On May 2, 200-300 high school students attended a state-wide conference at Tougaloo. There were representatives from all over the state, from rural as well as urban areas.

The program started off with Free Gom songs, followed by a speech by Gwen Gillon on "The Role of the Students in the Movement." Then workshops were held on "What Can You Do?"

In the afternoon a speech, "The Role of the Church in the Movement" was given by Rev. Grady Paulson.

Jerry Austin spoke on the Mississippi Union, and led a discussion. Students from different areas of the state participated in the discussion about what they as students had done in the Movement.

COFO SETS UP FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The most recent state-wide COFO convention held in Jackson April 26 at the Masonic Temple was devoted entirely to the COFO political programs. Approximately 150 Mississippians from all over the state gathered for the four hour session. Candidates Victoria Gray, J.M. Houston, and Fannie Lou Hamer spoke. A brief explanation of the COFO programs was given.

During the afternoon a large political workshop was held. People were seated by district, country, and precinct in the hall. Precinct conventions were held to elect people to attend the county conventions. County conventions were held to elect people to the district conventions. At the district conventions each district elected three people to serve on the temporary Freedom Democratic Party Executive Committee. This committee will serve as the guiding body for the COFO political programs until a permanent Executive Committee is chosen through precinct, county and district meetings of the Freedom registered voters this summer.

This process of the mock conventions was used as a means to show people in the state just how these different level political meetings are run. This was an introduction to Mississippi politics as it really is.

ALCORN FOLLOWUP

On Wednesday, April 22, approximately 1,000 students left the campus of Alcorn A. & M. College. Most of them were sent home by the administration for alleged poor conduct.

A letter dated April 29, 1964, was sent to these students. The letter reads as follows:

Dear Student:

You have been suspended from Alcorn College for conduct on the campus, unbecoming a student. You may petition in writing for readmission. Your petition will be considered, and you will be advised when to appear for a hearing. You and a parent may come and get your property left in your room. Kindly come at an hour we can assist you.

Yours very truly,
J.D. Boyd (signed) President.

Information received May 3, 1964, states that at least three teachers one in the English Department and two in the Physical Education Department, have been fired for supporting the students' boycott of the Union building. Another teacher is said to have resigned in protest.

FIELD REPORTS

In future issues, this section will contain a rundown on the activities of each area of the field.

HARASSMENTS

Liberty - A letter from a local citizen describes several people forced to leave town or to leave their jobs, a house being shot at six times, and several crosses burned.

Ruleville - Mrs. Hamer's house is watched. If more than one car is parked at the house, police keep the house under surveillance until the guests leave. Mrs. Hamer's husband is no longer given regular work although he has not been formally fired.

Greenwood - Three shootings directed at the homes of civil rights people were reported as Byron De La Beckwith returned home. Some people who tried to register early in April were thrown off the plantation last week. The COFO office continues to receive threatening phone calls.

Camden - A bus transporting 50 people to the COFO convention in Jackson was prevented from passing through Camden. The police forced the bus to turn around and to go back; no reason was given.

NEW LAWS

Columbus - Municipal ordinance making any picketing or demonstrations on the streets or sidewalks a misdemeanor with a maximum sentence \$300 and 90 days.

Jackson - Similar law with \$100 and 30 days. The State Sovereignty Commission has sent a copy of this ordinance to all mayors in Mississippi with a suggestion to pass a similar law in each town.

House Bill 64 - Authorizes cities to restrain movements of groups and individuals.

House Bill 546 - Prohibits the unlawful picketing of all public buildings, streets, sidewalks, and other places belonging to the city, county or state.

Senate Bill 1517 - Increased penalties that may be assessed by city courts.

Senate Bill 1526 - Authorizes municipalities to pool personnel, manpower, and equipment.

Senate Bill 1545 - Provides maximum penalty of \$500 and/or 6 months for printing and circulating materials promoting a boycott.

JAILINGS

Meridian - Sam Brown has been indicted by the grand jury on a profanity charge. The trial is 9 AM Thursday. Leroy McCall was arrested Monday for vagrancy. Trial is Wednesday 9 AM. Mickey Schwerner was arrested Monday on 2 counts of "blocking a crosswalk." Lenore Thurman was arrested Monday for "interfering with a man's business." Att'y. Moore is coming down from Atlanta to defend all four. The arrests were in connection with a boycott of Bill's Dollar Store.

Hattiesburg - Pete Stoner, in jail since Feb. 5 and the victim of 2 beatings, will probably be out this week on bond, pending appeal to the Federal Fifth Circuit Court. Jimmy Jones is in on a charge of rape; the charges may be dropped. Milton Hancock is still in jail on the perjury charge. It is hoped that the case will be brought to trial Thurs.

SUMMER PROJECT

Penny Patch reports that over 500 applications have been received in the Jackson office from Northern students who want to come down this summer for the MSP. In addition, over 100 applications from Southern Negro students have been received in Atlanta. At this point, 200 applicants have been accepted; the rest are still being interviewed. Penny says we expect to have 800-900 applications in all, with probably 700 students coming down to work. The above figures do not include Nat'l. Council of Churches workers, or lawyers, teachers, researchers, etc. Atlanta reports around 15 or 20 applications from Southern whites, some of them Native Mississippians. Roughly 50% of all applicants have indicated they want to work in voter registration, most of the rest in freedom schools, and a smattering in Community centers, legal work, theater, etc. A great number of the applicants have indicated that they have some experience in tutorial programs and civil rights demonstrations.

FREEDOM SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY CENTERS

Mendy Samstein reports that the Freedom School and Community Center projects are coming along smoothly. The syllabi for the various subjects to be taught in the schools are expected to be finished by the 15th of May. Buildings, mostly churches, for the Schools and Community Centers have been arranged in all but four or five of the 25 areas.

FREEDOM REGISTRATION

Dona Moses reports we now have registrars in only 21 of the 82 counties. Deputy registrars have been obtained in most of these counties. Hattiesburg and Greenwood are using their block captains as deputies; Madison county has 13 deputies, but most of them are in Canton. Our goal is 300,000 registered by August 15th.

LIBRARY PROJECT

Larry Rubin and Emmy Schrauder have arrived on the scene and have already begun the tremendous task of organizing the close to 100,000 books that are at present stored in various places in the state. This week Larry is hauling all the books to Rust College, where we have a place large enough for the job. After sorting and cataloguing, the books will be distributed to twelve libraries, hopefully well in advance of the opening of school this summer. The Rust location will be used as a storage depot for all materials arriving from the north for the Freedom schools.

POLITICAL PROGRAM

Jesse Morris reports that the political campaign for Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer is moving along well; Mrs. Hamer's schedule is filled with speaking engagements. Last week she spoke in Greenville the 27th, Greenwood the 28th, Itta Bena the 29th, and Kilmichael on May 3rd. On May 6th Mrs. Hamer and Mr. Houston will be in St. Paul, Minnesota. Mrs. Hamer will return in time for the picnic at Grenada Lake on Saturday.

The other campaigns are going poorly; speaking engagements are not being made, funds are not being raised.

So far approximately 6 Jackson precinct meetings and 6 state mass meetings have been devoted to the convention challenge.

NEW CIVIL RIGHTS NEWS SERVICE

Robert C. McNamara of the Civil Rights Information Service in Chicago has set up a new, potentially very useful, service--an Audio News Service. McNamara will tape-record telephone calls regarding any newsworthy event in the movement. These recordings will then be broadcast by a network that presently includes nine radio stations. The communication department in Jackson will be funneling news to McNamara on a regular basis, but if an event of particular and immediate significance occurs in your

area, it would be best if you would phone him directly with the story. Chances are good that this network will be expanded, and it could become a very effective means of carrying our story to the nation. McNamara can be called anytime, collect at Area Code 312, 664-8707. The address is: Civil Rights Information Service, 1810 N. Larrabee St., Chicago.

USE OF LASH APPROVED

A House-Senate committee, named by the Mississippi legislature to iron out differences on a pending prison-reform bill, has approved the use of the lash on convicts at Parchman, announced Sen. C. L. Patridge of Schlater. The Senate version of the bill had originally banned the use of the lash on convicts, and there is some doubt whether or not the Senate will accept the recommendation of the committee. This recommendation must come as good news to prison guards at Parchman, deprived as they are of the fringe benefits of their jobs due to the recent outlawing of the Black Annie.

LBJ BACKS DOWN ON CIVIL RIGHTS BILL

Senator Humphrey, the floor manager of the Civil Rights Bill, has announced that President Johnson will accept some changes in the bill, despite earlier statements that he wanted the bill completely intact. This may mean that Johnson will accept the amendment providing for jury trials in criminal contempt trials involved with civil rights cases. At present federal judges try such cases, but a southern white jury would presumably never agree on a guilty verdict, so this amendment would represent a large set-back from the present situation. If the present leaders and the president acquiesce on this and other amendments now pending, we

STUDENT ANTI-CIVIL RIGHTS GROUP

Six Delta State College students have formed ATAC, the Association of Tenth Amendment Conservatives. The group has announced plans for forming chapters all over Mississippi and the South to "meet the impending invasion" this summer of northern students coming to work in the Mississippi Summer Project.

DR. BEITELL TO RETIRE

Dr. Beitell, the president of Tougaloo college has announced that he will retire as of Sept. 1, for reasons of health.

WALLACE FEELING HIS OATS

Alabama's Governor Wallace, after his very strong showing in Wisconsin, says he may decide to become a serious candidate for the President of the United States. He is carrying out an active campaign for the Indiana primary on May 5 and the Maryland primary on May 19.

may conclude that the civil rights bill represents little progress.

HOOVER, LOUISIANA SAY CR MOVEMENT IS SUBVERSIVE

Two reports have recently come out emphasizing the great danger to this country from the civil rights movement because of extensive "Communist influence." One is a report by a joint committee of the Louisiana legislature, the other a report of testimony given by J. Edgar Hoover to a house appropriations sub-committee. These reports have been the basis of a large number of articles, columns, and editorials in the Jackson Press. The Louisiana report states that "known Communists (are) right in the agitation center" of the Movement, that SCLC, SNCC, and SCEF are all "linked by...common membership" to the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, "a Castro front." The report concludes: "Evidence before us is quite conclusive that the civil rights movement has been grossly and solidly infiltrated by the Communist Party... The Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, from all the evidence before us is substantially under the Communist Party. Hoover's testimony indicates that he believes that the thing that is "vitally important" about the CR Movement is its "Communist influence."

COFO PUBLICATIONS

Following is a list of some of the selected publications available at the main COFO office in Jackson. There are two types of publications available - one is a formal report in the series entitled "COFO Publications", the other is a report issued by a certain section of the office but of possible general interest.

Cofo Publications

- #1 General Condition of the Mississippi Negro. 17 pages. Extensive charts and compilation of data on health, employment, housing, education and voting.
- #2 The Mississippi Delta, Part I
- #3 The Mississippi Delta, Part II. Extensive statistics on the Delta and some attempt to suggest remedies for the difficulties.
- #4 Conference on Jobs and Job Training held at Tougaloo, January 25, 1964.
- #5 Adopt a Freedom School. 5 pages
- #6 What is COFO? 8 pages. History and explanation of COFO along with brief discussion of projected program for summer of 1964.
- #7 The Canton story. 12 Pages. Compilation of reports. Some background material, but heavy emphasis on the time period January to March, 1964.
- #8 COFO's proposed Community Centers. 20 pages.
- #9 Free Southern Theatre. 5 pages.
- #10 Report to Mississippi Advisory Committee of the US Commission on Civil Rights. 18 pages. Describes intimidation and harrassment in the fall, 1963, particularly during the Freedom vote for Aaron Henry.

Miscellaneous Reports:

- General Summer Prospectus. 7 pages. Describes all the proposed programs for the summer, 1964, in some detail. Most up to date detailed discussion of the specific plans for the summer.
- Case Studies of Intimidation. 13 pages. 8 examples of intimidation in Mississippi. Taken from cases all over the state, both black and white, worker and sympathizer.
- Report Concerning the Louis Allen Case. 12 pages. Extensive compilation of accounts of the background and murder of Louis Allen in Amite County.
- COFO Political Program. 3 pages. Most up to date explanation of the COFO political program as it is seen from now through the summer, 1964.

May 6-8 or 9: Staff Meeting, Greenville

May 9 : Picnic Grenada Lake, 11 AM . Mrs. Gray & Mrs. Hamer will speak.

May 14, 8 PM: NAACP Benefit, Closed Circuit TV, Masonic Temple, Jackson

May 17: COFO Convention, Masonic Temple, Jackson, Political and Campaign Program.