



# MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY NEWSLETTER

No 4 JUNE 5 1965

"Let this natural war... let this struggle  
proceed go on, till slavery is dead-dead."





THE CHURCH AND THE FDP IN NATCHEZ

The Churches nationally have supported the idea of equality in voting, in housing, in education, and public accommodation. In the South the churches response to Civil Rights has varied from open hostility to fear.

This is true in real way of the churches in Natchez. The churches are still segregated, and no Negro church, as yet, has opened its doors to a COFO, or Freedom Democratic Party meeting. This dates from last July when COFO workers first moved into Natchez.

On Friday night, for the second time in eight days, an FDP rally had to be held on the steps of a church -- rather than inside it.

More than 200 people stood around the Zion AME chapel to hear John Lewis, executive chairman of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, and other speakers. Over on the other other side of the road, a group of 20 or so Klansmen heckled and jeered.

A week last Friday an even bigger crowd (estimated at 800) gathered for a meeting in the Macedonia Baptist Church. But when people arrived they found the church doors locked. The Minister had changed his mind, instead and the meeting was held/on the church steps.

What had happened. It was said that the Minister of the Baptist Church had been talked out of letting the FDP have the church by the Chief of Police. Apparently the Chief had argued that if the meeting went ahead inside the church, something might happen to the mortgage.

The situation has become so bad that COFO and FDP are planning to ask Ministers from across the country to come to Natchez, to speak to the Natchez Ministers.

They are also thinking of organizing pray-ins on church steps during services, to emphasise how the use of churches has been denied them.

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THE FDP VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE IN SUNFLOWER COUNTY

Since Judge Clayton ruled against the State voter registration Board in Sunflower County, knocking out the interpretation section, and calling for the Registrar to end all discriminatory practices, about 800 people have become registered to vote. The registration drive began 5 weeks ago.



FOR FREEDOM LABOR UNION

DEMANDS.



OFFICIALS TRY TO STOP STRIKE

BY ARRESTS.  
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The Freedom Labor Union spread from Shaw. It worried White farmers and officials, and this week police began arresting Union officials. They arrested Sammy Sugar, and a white COFO worker, Mary Sue Gellatly, while they talking to choppers on a truck, and Mr. Andrew Hawkins, Shaw FDP chairman, Eddie Short, and Mac-Arthur Claiborne, on a charge of obstructing a road.

Police also have warrants out for other people.

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THREE DAYS....

THURSDAY:

Cleveland: Sixty people from Cleveland walked off Thomas's plantation, east of Duncan. Owner offered \$4 then \$5 a day, but the people turned him down.

Five hundred people attended Union rally during the evening. Mrs. Hamer spoke and so did others, and afterwards 70 stayed on for a strategy meeting. It didn't break up until four in the morning.

Indianola: About 300 people didn't go to the fields today. Fifteen people walked off Senator Eastland's plantation, and walked the 20 miles back home to Indianola.

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(cont. page 5)

By the end of this week (Sunday) I,000 people in the Delta were not going to the cotton fields to chop. They had gone on strike in support of the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union's demands - for a minimum of \$1.25 an hour, and a shorter working day, among other things.

A Jackson Newspaper called the strikes "unusual"; another newspaper printed in Memphis said White farmers were very concerned about the situation. The paper said farmers were afraid that if the strikes spread, the most serious economic crisis to hit the mid-South since 1929, might result.

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What caught the Press's attention was a strike on the Andrew's plantation last Monday (May 31st).

Twelve tractor drivers stopped work on this large plantation near Tribbett, in Washington County. Mr. Andrews, the boss-man, refused to listen to demands for higher wages - the men walked off their job.

Andrews then got an injunction to have the men and their families thrown off the plantation.

Trustees from Greenville moved their furniture and belongings out onto the roadway and left it there.

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But the strike on Andrews place was not the first. People had been on strike in Shaw, Cleveland and Indianola for weeks. Some struck almost as soon as the Freedom Labor Union was organized late in April at Shaw.

This week strike action mounted in three counties of the Delta - Bolivar, Sunflower and Washington. (cont in next col.)

HOW MANY ARE "OUT"  
AND WHERE ?

CLEVELAND :	Over 210
SHAW :	Over 350
INDIANOLA :	About 450
ROSEDALE :	35
TRIBBETT :	17 (80 people are involved).



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I AM A NEGRO

I am a Negro, born in the state of Mississippi on September 4, 1888. I was with the Mississippi delegation in Washington that challenged the seating of the Congressmen from the State of Mississippi. First, I was impressed with the sight of those large Capitol City astride the Potomac River. I thought of this country, with the Atlantic Ocean on the east and the Pacific Ocean on the west, the Great Lakes and Canada on the north, the Gulf of Mexico and Mexico on the south, the great highways and railroads, tying the States and Industries together in Oneness, and the teeming millions marching to and fro within its confines, making this country the greatest Republic in the world. The I thought of descendants of Ham and the great part they played in the World's history and the history of this country. The Negro was here before the English speaking white.

Negro sailors, sailing back and forth on the Mediterranean, got acquainted with an Italian sailor known in history as Columbus and assured him that there was land on theis side of the Atlantic. Negro sailors were with Columbus and when they came out of the Straits of Gibraltar and got on the Atlantic, they sailed down the Northwest coast of Africa to the Canary Islands, taking on more supplies and sailors on their way west to the Bahama Islands.

Later, the 13 English colonies complained of England taxing them when they had no one to represent them. They were holding to the principle of taxation without representation is unjust. This is one of the great principles that this Republic is founded on.

Negroes fought, bled and died to perpetuate this and other great principles that are imbedded in the structure of this country. Christopher Attocks, the leader of the band that was in the Boston Massacre, was the first to die for American independence. Peter Salem, a Negro Patriot, fought in the battle of Bunker Hill and fired the shot that killed Major Pilcharen. Negroes fought in all of the wars of this country.

While looking around, I saw the greatest thing that is in this country, the Constitution of the United States of America and its various amendments. The Negroes fo the Freedom Democratic Party only want simple justice and the rght to vote. Why we have Negro ex-soldiers that were in World Wars I and II that were afraid to go to the courthouse to register (they can read and write). It is true that many white people can;t fill out the registration form, can't read and write and yet the clerk has let them pass and willfully not let Negroes pass who can fill out the form correctly.

We are asking the Congressmen to see to it that the Constitution of the United States becomes more that a piece of paper. Destroy the Constitution and this Government is destroyed. The fellows that are harping for States rights just want the right to to ignore the United States Constitution and its Amendments, jus want to do as they please. The bulk of the Negroes in Mississippi are afraid to register; they think of Rev. George Lee, Mr. Lamar Smith, Emmitt Till, Medgar Evers, and many more. They think of police burtality, the beating of women and many other bad things.

We are humbly asking that you honorable Congressmen see to it that the US Constitution and the Federal Laws are enforced.

Yours truly,

W. G. Middleton

Rt. 5, Box 13  
Batesville, Mississippi



Three days in the Delta....Three days in the Delta  
cont. from page 3.

Greenville: Strikers from Andrews plantation met with 3 Union members from Shaw at 7a-m. Last evening they picked up furniture and belongings piled onto roadway by trustees, and took them to Greenville. they planned setting up a tent city near Andrews place.

FRIDAY.

-Cleveland: Two more plantations hit by strikers today-W.H. Howards, and Thomas Givens. About 90 of the strikers are new Union men. There was another meeting this morning to discuss plans for getting all of the 600 choppers out on strike in Cleveland.

Rosedale: Meeting last night in the town. People decided to go out in to the fields and talk about the strike.

Indianola: There are now 400 people "out", quite a number of them usually go to plantations in Washington Co.

Tribbetts: This morning strikers persuaded choppers who were going on to Andrew place, to turn back. Police- were present, but didn't interfere. Strikers are canvassing Greenville with idea of extending strike to other plantation in the Delta.

SATURDAY:

Cleveland: No trucks went out into the fields today. By next week the Union hopes all 600 choppers will be on strike.

Yesterday they received a check for \$500 from AFL/CIO group in Wisconsin. A community Relief Fund to help people who set back by the strike, has been set up.

Indianola: Union says that 500 people didn't go to the field today, but some may not have been on strike. The position will be clearer on Monday.

Ruleville: Plans are being discussed as to how strike action can be started in this town.

THE  
MARCH  
BN

BRANDON.....400 people arrive in Brandon at end of a protest march

Between 135 and 250 Negroes and a few whites marched unmolested through rural Ranklin County, a segregationist stronghold, on the first leg of a 2 day, 20 mile protest march from Gannin to the County seat of Ranklin County, Brandon.

The marchers were protesting the seating of the five Mississippi Congressmen, police brutality, and unfair voter registration laws.

Police protection was provided by the State. Gov. Paul Johnson instructed the State Highway patrol to see that no disorders occurred. Gov. Johnson is reported to be nervous over the possibility of incidents that would add fuel to the Freedom Party's Challenge in Washington.

The marchers had their lunch, the first day, besides the backwaters of the Ross Barnett reservoir, a new 43 mile long lake named for the former Gov. of the State. While the marchers ate and sang a group of white fishermen stared in disbelief, or contempt?

Four, or five, FBI agents accompanied the march along with a dozen State policemen, and several officers from the Rankin County Sheriff's dept; and it was a sight to see them driving ahead and scanning the woods and fields with their binoculars, to make sure snipers weren't lurking out of sight.

(cont. page 6)



Brandon march (cont.)

The marchers camped for the night in a pasture owned by a Negro. After breakfast they stepped off for the remaining miles of the hike that ended in Brandon. Their ranks had swelled to 400 when they entered Brandon, singing and chanting. They were welcomed by city officials. About five police officers armed with shotguns, stood watch as the two block-long line of demonstrators tramped down Government Street, the town's main thoroughfare, while crowds of whites gathered across the street from the courthouse to watch.

James Farmer, the CORE director, did not make the march with the demonstrators, but arrived in town about two hours later. While waiting for him the crowd sang freedom songs. March director, George Raymond suggested that everyone wanting to vote should go into the courthouse. About 50 responded. The Sheriff T.H. (Red) Shriver invited the demonstrators inside the courthouse. They had presented petitions to Mayor Harvey and Circuit Clerk, J.R. Bradshaw, asking among other things for a Registrar's office which could register 300 people a day.

After Mr. Farmer arrived the people gathered outside the courthouse. Mr. Farmer predicted that in six months, two million new Negro voters would be added to the voting rolls in the Southern States.

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WASHINGTON WORKSHOP

Among the group of people from Mississippi attending the political workshop in Washington D.C., during the last fortnight, were: Mrs. Etta Hampton of West Pont; Mrs. Dora Carter, Meridian; Mrs. Lizzie Baldwin, Sharon; Mrs. E. Williams, Batesville; the Rev. H.C. Anderson, of Greenville; Mr. Napoleon Tatten, Holly Springs; Mr. Roosevelt Vaughn, Starksville; Mr. Sam Carr, Aberdeen; Mr. Leon Prowell and Mr. Julius Coleman, both from Columbus; and Mrs. Susie Ruffin, laurel.

The workshop dealt with Federal programs - how they operate, and people in Mississippi can get benefit from them. The workshop was a great success, and will now close until the Fall. However, workshops of a similar kind will be held in Mississippi over the summer.

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MISSISSIPPI PRESS CRITICISES "PROJECT HEADSTART".

Editorials in the Hattiesburg papers' have blasted what they describe as the way the Movement is operating Operation Headstart - the project to help the poor.

They say that children of non-Civil Rights Negroes are being screened out of the program. The paper did not produce any facts to back up its allegation.

A Jackson paper complained, on the other hand, that the project would lead to undesirable race-mixing.

Part of the project in Mississippi is being run by the Mississippi Child Development Group. The group has just received a Federal grant of \$1,250,000, and will take the program to 5,000 pre-school children. Free mental and medical care are part of Project Headstart.

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# COMMENT

After a night meeting here in Jackson with legislature leaders and attorneys, Gov. Paul Johnson announced that a special session of the Mississippi Legislature will be called for June.

The Gov. said that there will not be very many bills calling for voting law changes but said that he hoped to name at least some of them soon.

Our Governor seems to be hesitating over naming an actual date

for the Legislature, so I am wondering if the Voting Bill passage has got anything to do with it. Yours truly is very anxious for him to name the date, so that we can find out just how many more tricks the lawmakers of Mississippi have up their sleeves, to

try and keep the Negroes from voting. I also think we are wrong for staying home and letting them pass laws against us. We don't have any Representatives in the House or Senate to speak for us, so I think all of us should put everything aside on that day and come to Jackson, and PROTEST any voting law that is on the books, or trying to be made into law to get round any of the rules in Federal Voting Bill.

So far the Bill has passed the Senate. The House of Representatives are still considering the Bill.

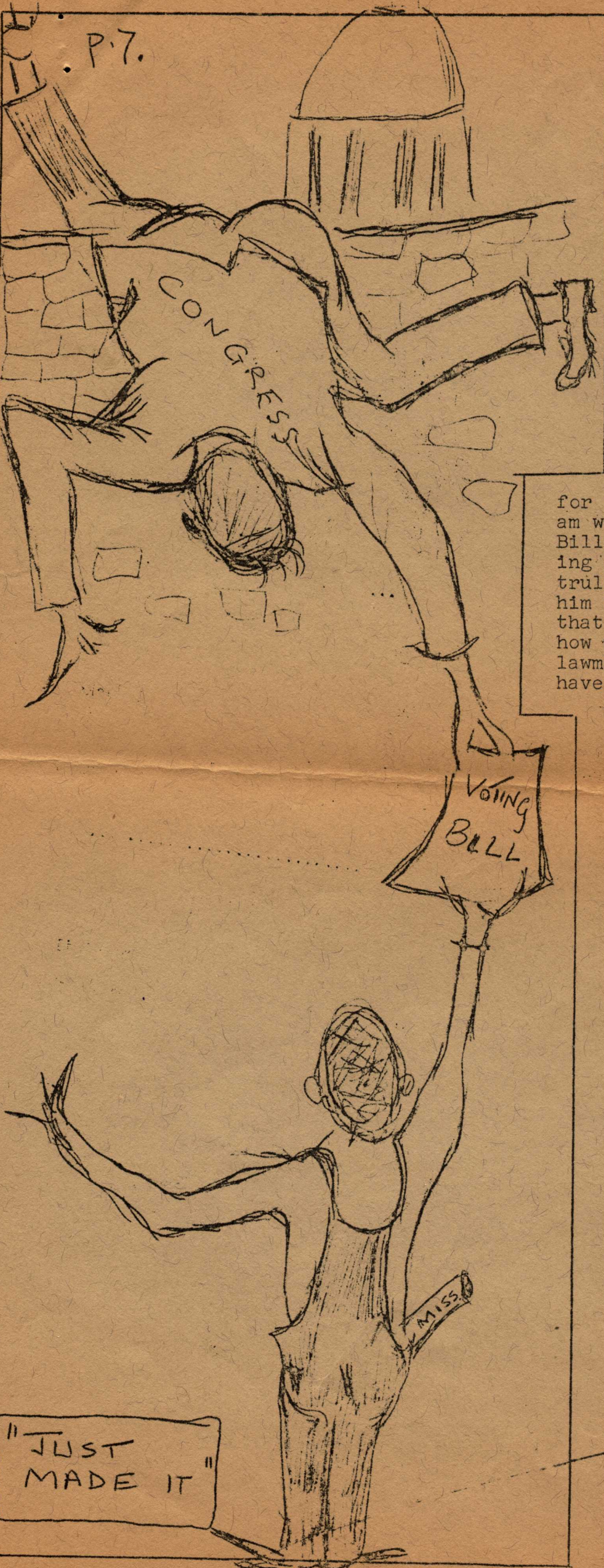
I do hope to see all of you Mississippi Negroes at the Legislature.

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-The Editor.

507 1/2 North Farish St  
Jackson,  
Mississippi.

948-4038.





NEWS

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OKRA MARKET

The White produce buyers of Batesville are very unfriendly to Negro producers, so the Okra-Co-op is in great need of a market in which to sell the crops that will be harvested in the next few weeks.

No definite large scale buyer has been found yet, and contacts are being sought in Memphis. Over 100 negro farmers make up the Co-op.

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BELZONI - attempted sit-in

About 25 teenagers went to the Dairy Bar at Belzoni on Thursday night, June 3. The owners immediately moved the seats, unplugged the juke box and took out the pinball machine.

They were served ice-cream inside, but couldn't sit anywhere. Later about 30 kids went back to the Dairy Bar. This time cars were parked where seats usually are (its an outside bar). Police turned hoses on the kids and pushed them away with billy ~~clubs~~ clubs. The kids dispersed and went to the street and on to a FDP meeting. A truck tried to run one of them down. Police, who saw the incident, took no action.

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HOSPITAL / SCHOOL FUNDS

The Washington Co. NAACP has asked the Federal Gov. to withhold federal money from the Washington Co. hospital and schools.

The Greenville school district has begun to desegregate. It will throw open 2 grades this Fall. The Government asks for 4 to be integrated.

SECOND DISTRICT FDP MEETING,

About 200 people attended the Second District MFDP meeting on Sunday, May 30, at Batesville. Counties represented included Sharkey and Issaquena, Holmes, Desoto, Tippah, Marshall, Carroll, Yalobusha, Tallahatchie, Sunflower, and Panola.

The people at the meeting discussed what should be the rules for the FDP, and drew up a District Constitution. They decided that people of 18 should be able to vote.

The meeting also discussed the plans for the summer project - how and where volunteers should work.

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GREENWOOD WORKSHOP

Mrs. Lula Bell Johnson, of Greenwood, has contacted the FDP office at Jackson asking for help with a 5 day workshop in Greenwood.

Its good to know that Mrs. Johnson is now back on her feet and is resuming work.

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HOLLONDALE ATTEMPT

A group of local people and civil rights workers attempted to eat at the Pink Hat restaurant at Hollondale, on May 29th. The door was locked when they arrived. But they could see that people were eating inside. There have been several attempts at desegregating this restaurant.

SEND NEWS ITEMS TO THIS OFFICE :-

507½ North Farish Street,  
Jackson, Mississippi.





WAKING - UP.

.....Susie Ruffin.

The Negro Race has finally awakened. He was put to sleep by his masters in

slavery time so that he would be satisfied with his Master having all the material wealth and political power. Then the Civil War was fought and the Negro was partly emancipated. I say this because they did not have enough education to go on after Proclamation. They had to depend on advice from the White Man so the Negro masses were put to sleep again through lynchings, starvation, and intimidation etc.

World War I. and World War II, and the Korean Conflict, really awaked the Negro again. So the Negro began getting shots of dope to keep him from thinking - fine homes, fine cars, a few Negroes given higher wages; then the ruling came down to integrate the schools (1954) and the Negro people learned that nice homes, pretty school buildings, big cars and churches, even nice wages, are not worth anything as long as they were second-class citizens. Second class citizens because of not having a say in the running of the Government of which the Negro is part.

That is why the Freedom Democratic Party was BORN so that the the Black citizen who has been entirely excluded from Mississippi politics, could have a say in the making of the laws of the Land.

The White people of the State have tried to keep the FDP from operating, but we have struggled, and are still struggling to give our citizens old and young, and those that haven't as yet been born, a better chance in the great country of ours'.

The Party had an injunction - a court order - thrown at it from the beginning, on account of the name "Mississippi Freedom Democrat". The purpose was to keep the delegates, FDP delegates, from going to the Democratic National Convention. The plot failed to succeed and our delegates went to the Convention in 1964, and made history. After leaving the Convention they came back to the State and arranged the Freedom Vote to show to the people of the United States how many Negroes would vote in Mississippi if they were allowed to. In this election Mrs. Hamer, Mrs. Gray and Mrs. Devine were elected Congresswomen for the 2nd, 4th and 5th Congressional Districts.

The vote turn-out was so great that it was decided these women were the duly elected Congressional representatives from the State of Mississippi. They were the only people whose election had been an open and FREE one.

So the five Congressmen who were elected on November 3rd last year were challenged by the FDP. We were, and are still, asking that the 5 men be unseated, because their election was illegal.

On the 4th day of January this year a delegation of Negroes from all over the State of Mississippi, with friends and sympathisers from other States, demonstrated on the Capitol Hill at the beginning of the new session of Congress.

The Congressmen voted on the Challenge and we got 149 votes for the unseating of the Mississippi Congressmen, but we lost the first round. We needed 68 more votes then to get the majority required.

We need 67 more votes for the second phase which will come when Congress votes again - sometime in July.

During January we had a hundred lawyers to come into the State to take depositions - that is, to get Negroes to tell under oath

#### CHICKASAW COUNTY VOTER

#### REGISTRATION SUIT

About two weeks ago Judge Clayton decided in a case brought by the Justice Dept. that Negroes who had tried to register to vote in Chickasaw Co., had been discriminated against.

He ordered the County Registrar to remove the interpretation section from the Test, and to register Negroes at more than one at a time.

Of 25 white witnesses called by the Justice Dept., 23 said they couldn't read or write. All were registered.



WAKING-UP (cont.)

how the White man has kept them from voting through threats, violence, intimidation, even death. All this evidence was taken to Washington D.C. to be put into print so that Congressmen and women from the fifty states could see that we are not represented by the five Congressmen from Mississippi.

The officials of Mississippi tried to ignore the Challenge as they have been ignoring us for over 300 years, but they had overlooked the fact that we are organized. So they had to change their attitude when they commenced feeling our strength. The lawyers have done all they can do for us in filing the Challenge. They have caused our Governor to call for law and order for 6 months in the State, so that the State will seem to have a new image.

Now it is up to us to get up and demand every right that is due to us under the Constitution and see if the State of Mississippi will balk at letting us have them. If they do, it will help us on the Challenge. They know all of this, and that's why the Governor gave the word for the Brandon marchers not to be harmed.

The Freedom Democratic Party is the greatest thing that has ever happened to the Mississippi Negroes, because it is lifting the Negroes Dignity up and up.. and this is even so on the plantations of the State where the plantation owners have been a law unto themselves for so long.

I am hoping that every Negro in Mississippi will come on and join the organization, and let's go just as Moses took the Children of Israel out of Egypt. Can you just see and imagine the preachers, teachers, maids, cooks, mechanics and children and everyone following his advice.

Lets all of us follow the MFDP and make it STRONG.

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YOUNG DEMOCRATS ..... Second planning meeting

The Second planning meeting of the Young Democratic Clubs of Mississippi was held Friday, June 4, at Tougaloo College, with Mr. Emmett Morris, President of the Hinds County Young Democrats, presiding.

A Young Democratic Clubs convention is scheduled to be held between mid-July and August. A convention committee was elected. It is made up as follows : Cleveland Donaldson (Ole Miss); Doris Green (Indianola); James Anderson (Canton); Lucie Luckett (Shanon); Robert Oswald (Pascagoula); Grady Hawthorne (Hattiesburg); Hunter Morey (Jackson); and Thelma Ewbank (McComb). They are to pick a place in Jackson for the convention.

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LAUREL FDP MEETING

People of the Laurel FDP had a meeting scheduled at the Sweet Hope Baptist Church, Thursday night, June 3rd. The meeting was to have begun after a service at the church, so most FDP people arrived at the church before the service was ended, and waited on the church lawn.

They were very surprised when the service ended to see the lights turned off, and one man locking the church door, without letting the MFDP people in. The FDP people decided not to be outdone and started singing Freedom Songs in loud tones, and I think that made the man locking the door ashamed. He came back and unlocked the church, after which the FDP had a great meeting.

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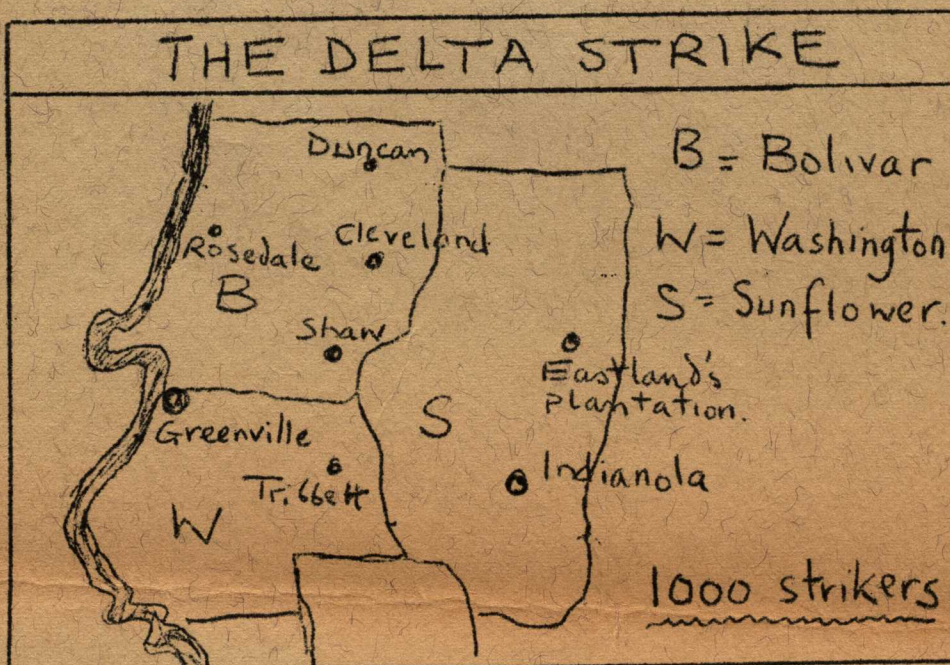


The Municipal Elections.....June 8th.

The MFDP is asking the People to go to the Polls, June 8th, and try to vote in the Municipal elections. Ypu are eligible ...according to the new Voting Bill proposals .... if you have lived in the State for two years, and in the city for one year, ...have not been convicted of a serious crime; ...and are able to read and write.

The MFDP feels that if Mississippi really intends to obey the Voting Bill it will let everybody vote, who comes to the polls and asks to vote.

The MFDP feels that it is the right of any person living in any town or city in Mississippi, to be allowed to vote for the



officials who will govern them - and their town - for the next four years.

If the officials at the Polls refuse to let Negro people vote they should make out affidavits, and these will be PROOF that the June 8th elections were illegal. Then the MFDP will file a suit in Federal court asking that the June 8th elections be declared illegal.

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THE STRIKE

The colored men on the Delta plantations should leave the plantations with their families instead of staying their, and helping the White man get richer.

Now is the time to really make our voices heard, and to let the plantation bosses know that we are tired of being paid such pitiful low wages. In some places the wage has been the same for the last 15 years. That means the boss has paid out the same amount for our work, but he has got very much more for his cotton. Is it in fact "his" cotton? Who planted it, who chopped it, and who is going to pick it?

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EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

Appeals have been sent to the North asking for food and supplies. They will be used to help people on strike. A Community Relief Fund has been set up in Cleveland with some money that was sent down by a Union group in Wisconsin.

The people of Ruleville should be thankful to have had Mrs. Sally Carthen spend so much time in Washington because she was able to get clothes to be distributed to the people in her community. She should be commended.

In the main the Shaw office of the Labor Union will be handling supplies sent down.

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