HUNDREDS WANT TO VOTE IN GREENWOOD

Ask The Federal Government For Protection; Attempts To Register Will Continue Every Day

In spite of shootings, arrests, dogs and police harassment, Negroes in Greenwood continue to apply to register at the Leflore County Court House.

Eight voter registration workers, all members of SNCC, are in the County Jail serving sentences of four months and $200 on charges of disturbing the peace. They have vowed to remain in jail, without appeal, until the federal government acts to get them out.

A Greenwood minister, Rev. D. L. Tacker, was bitten by a police dog Thursday as he left the Court House with a group of Negro citizens who had attempted to register.

U. S. Judge Claude Clayton Monday temporarily denied a federal request for an injunction to free the jailed workers and to keep registration officials from preventing Negroes from registering to vote. A hearing was set for Thursday.

Police continued to break up groups of Negroes walking to and from the Court House to register. Several Greenwood people were arrested Tuesday when police split up a group returning from the Court House; however they were later released.

A day by day account of the recent events in Greenwood follows:

Guns Shot

Tuesday, March 28: Two shotgun blasts shattered the front door and bedroom window of George Greene’s home moments after he had entered the house near midnight. Greene, a student at Broad Street High School, said he had been followed while being driven home after working with voter registration workers.

Mrs. Greene and her oldest daughter applied to register at the Court House the next day without charge.

Wednesday, March 29: A group of 100 Greenwood citizens walked to the City Hall to ask police protection for Negroes seeking to register to vote.

Mayor Sampson met them on the steps of the City Hall and threatened to turn the police dog loose on them if they did not disperse, they said.

The group started toward the Court House four blocks away in order to make another attempt at registering. Ten policemen reportedly blocked their way and they then walked a few blocks; a fire truck also pulled into the intersection.

Police ordered the group to break up. When vote workers tried to lead them toward the Court House, two of them—Lawrence Gayot and James Forman—were arrested.

Dog Loosed

Then a police dog was set on the crowd. Matthew Hughes was bitten (see photo) and required hospital treatment. Bob Moses’ leg was scratched and his pants torn to the knee.

Moses, a member of the group confined to the Court House in groups of five, gathered on the steps of the Court House steps. They left in groups of two and three after a crowd of whites formed.

Nine people were arrested at the Voter Registration office. As people were entering cars to return to the Court House to again attempt to register, Police, with drawn guns,

Greenwood Voter Classes

Voter registration classes are being held daily, beginning at 9 a.m. and lasting all day, at the Sanders Building, 708 Ave. N. on Broad Street. Everyone who wants to learn how to register is invited to attend.

Reverend Crain

Registers; Loses Home

Rev. Jessie Crain and his 14 children and grandchildren were ordered off a Leflore County plantation last Friday because he refused to erase his name from the voter registration lists.

Rev. Crain, 61, has been a sharecropper on the plantation for 13 years. He filled out a voter application a month ago and has attended or spoken at all the mass meetings held in Greenwood.

He got his wife, Rebecca Crain, 50, and three daughters—Roberta Harris, 20, Rebecca Crain, 23, and James Ella Crain, 31, to apply to register too.

Never

Joe Turner, manager of the plantation, owned by W. B. Bond, even offered to drive Rev. Crain to the Court House. Rev. Crain said, “He asked me to take my name off. I never will. I’ll the first.”

“I’ve been waiting to register all my life, but I didn’t have the courage. Now I’ve got somebody to help me,” he declared.

“I’m happy letting you know I’m out of a home,” he said, “Now I have a real home.”

No Work

The five adults in the family and two children—a girl 15 and a boy 11—work in the fields hoeing and picking cotton during the season, but there’s been no work to do all winter.

Mrs. Crain was receiving money from her husband through the Welfare Dept., but it was cut off after she applied to register. James Ella (Continued on Page 3)

Citizens Charge Greenville Hospital Maintains Inadequate Accommodations

Several Washington County citizens charged recently that Greeneville General Hospital maintains “inadequate accommodations,” especially in the wards for Negro patients.

In support of their claim, they brought forth the fact that when Negro patients are forced to sleep in the halls since the 54 beds normally given to Negroes are not enough to handle all the patients.


Crowing Pigeons Danger

According to Dr. Royal Williams, director of the Washington County Health Department, “over-crowding in the Negro wards poses a constant danger of an outbreak of contagious diseases.”

Dr. Leon Lenoir, Hospital Chief of Staff, said, “The shortage of beds is more acute in the Negro wards,” although 45 per cent of the population of Washington County is Negro, only about 1/5 of the beds in the hospital are in the Negro ward.

Dr. Matthew Page, a local doctor, said, “The Negro is not getting a fair deal from the space standpoint.” He added, “We need a more adequate distribution of beds in regard to race. It can be done if the right people make up their minds to do it.”

He went on to point out that there are only two night nurses on duty in the Negro section. He labeled this “an impossible situation.

Mid-Wives Still Practice

Page also noted that last year 314 infants were delivered "by midwives in shacks and poverty-territory homes." Thirteen of these children died at birth. Washington County has 25 practicing mid-wives who are licensed by the State Department of Health.

Many pregnant women do not receive hospital or doctor's care since they are not able to pay

(Continued on Page 1)

Students Help Out Clarksdale's Needy; Receive Jail Terms

Three University of Iowa students were arrested in Clarksdale Saturday after they had delivered a truckload of food and clothing to needy Negroes.

Civil rights leader said Aaron Henry identified the trio as John Goulet, Roswell Donaldson, and Donald Fishart. Goulet and Donaldson were charged with running a red light and failing to signal as they were leaving the city.

Arrested On Return

Flash still turned the truck to Henry’s Drug Store where police arrested him as he drove up, charging him with failure to signal and resisting arrest. Henry said he recommended that the truck be returned to his drug store where he could observe it and prevent additional harassment of the sort that had greeted the students all day.

The students’ case will come for trial before the city court April 12. They will be represented by the NAACP, which also posted bond for them.

Put Off

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Mrs. Crain was receiving money from her husband through the Welfare Dept., but it was cut off after she applied to register. James Ella (Continued on Page 3)
Songs Of Freedom

What is the sound of freedom? What is it that fills all of our lives with the hope for the future?

"It's time that Negroes stopped fighting."

"I believe in prayer, but it's never put a governor in office." We need the vote. Get your freedom. Become a registered voter.

And songs tell the story too: "Which side are you on?" "Driver can you stand it? Oh tell me how you can. Will you be an Uncle Tom or will you be a man?"

Voices Of Hundreds

These are the words of Wiley Branton, Rev. James Bevins, and the voices of the hundreds of Negroes who attend mass voter registration meetings nearly every night in the town of Greenwood, Miss.

Nearly 400 people jammed the church Wednesday night, March 27. Another 1000 gathered outside listening to the meeting on loudspeakers.

They heard Rev. James Bevins

Lowndes Bar Urges No Help For FBI Probe

The Bar Association of Lowndes County has urged people here not to talk to the FBI's new civil rights investigators.

It passed a resolution which said, "A citizen is under no legal obligation at any time to answer any questions about anything except in a court hearing or a court-connected process."

The Justice Department has (Continued on Page 2)
We're On Our Way

The classes also talk about the benefits of social security, cooperatives and aids given by local and national governments to improve the living conditions of the people.

150 In Classes
Miss Annell Ponder, head of the Greenwood school, said that about 150 people are attending citizenship education classes in the Delta. Eight teachers now lead classes—four in Greenwood, two in Itta Bena and two in Ruleville. Classes are also being held to prepare fathers and others. Twelve new teachers will begin classes in Leflore County next week.

In Shaw, in Bolivar County, 300 people attend regular mass citizenship education meetings.

Special Classes
There are also beginners classes for young people 12-14 years of age, but who want to become educated about voting and politics. Special classes are set up for people who aren't able to read and write.

Miss Ponder, a graduate of the Atlanta University School of Social Work, said that the first had trouble getting a meeting place for the classes. Now, however, eight churches have invited her to use their buildings for meetings.

We Want To Register... We Want To Vote!

Greenwood Social Notes

The FREE PRESS had a per- spective on Greenwood covering that story, but it really wasn't necessary to get the story, I read the first real story. For instance, when we first heard about the fire, we thought it was the fire that was the one they had used. The police were saying that the way they had burned to the other had been so good to them.

During this time, Mc Dow was observing, "You white folks are just too smart. You have to get up pretty early in the morning to out smart you folks." Someone is going to be surprised when these pictures of the workers in jail get developed.

Many of the members of the Greenwood social committee were presented with an information booklet put out by the local business men that are trying to attract industry. Certainly these men have the granduacity to point out all the many benefits of their happy little community to the industrialists of the nation who are looking for attractive communities to set up.

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Lynch Addition, Jackson

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415 N. Parah St.
Jackson, Miss. FL 3-577

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THOSE WHO WANT AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE MONEY...WHO WANT TO JUST WANT TO MAKE A SALARY...WRITE AT ONCE...

INTERNATIONAL

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JOHNSON'S LOCK AND KEY SERVICE

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Phone 315-5702

Lynch Addition, Jackson

SMITH'S

SUPER MARKET

Valley Street at the Railroad Crossing
What Is A Labor Union?

Right To Organize

The Free Press has frequently printed articles about the activities of labor unions in Mississippi. Some readers have asked us to explain just what labor unions are and why they are important. This is the fourth of a series of articles about unions and what they mean to you.

Fourth in a Series

Sometimes in the process of setting up a labor union, the company, in an effort to keep the union out of the plant, will use various means of intimidation against those who are leading the campaign.

Any such harassment against an employee can be declared unfair labor practices.

Intimidations Illegal

Such intimidations are illegal. If the National Labor Relations Board finds a company guilty of these unfair labor practices, it may intervene and see that the worker is protected.

Prior to the great depression of the 1930’s, there were very few such laws to protect the worker when he tried to organize.

Legislation which was part of the New Deal added many laws that permitted the Federal Government to protect a man’s right to form a labor union without intimidations.

Partly due to the increased strength of trade unions, the country was able to come out of the depression, and now Mississippi has not really ever come out of a permanent depression because few unions were ever formed.

Miss. Makes It Tough

Though most Northern states have passed state laws that help workers to get a fair deal, Mississippi has tried to make it difficult for men to raise their standard of living through unionizing.

The existence of the Federal laws, however, means that if a company does try to interfere with a worker’s attempt to organize his fellow workers, that the company has to pay the damages.

The union that is trying to form in any particular plant will always do everything to see that any worker that is trying to help the union will not suffer for his dedication.

Union Lawyers

If the company does intimidate him, or tries to, the union will have its well-trained lawyers bring the situation to the attention of the NLRI.

If a man is fired for his union activity, for instance, the NLRI will see that he is rehired, with the same pay and the same seniority that he had, AND at back pay that he would have received plus 6% interest.

Even though Mississippi is definitely in need of state laws that will make it easier for workers to organize, both the Federal laws and the International union will protect the workers in event of foul play on the part of the company.

Contract Protections

Once the union is formed then the contract protects the workers from being fired without reasonable cause. In addition, the contract assures the worker that he will have a better wage and that he will only have to work certain specified hours unless he is to be paid an extra overtime wage.

The contract will probably include provisions for sickness, accident, vacations and retirement.

Often the struggle to establish a union is difficult in Mississippi, but the benefits are important and many. It is here that the worker is treated as poorly that the need for unions is greatest.

Hospital Conditions Bring G’ville Protest

(Centuried From Page 1)

The NLRI directed the company to rehire the men and pay all the back wages that they would have received if they had been permitted to work. The company must also pay 6% interest on the wages the men would have received.

Three of the seven men had been with the company for over thirty years James Jones, representative of the Carpenter’s Union, said, “This is just proof that the company does not have any concern for their workers even after they have worked for them for a great length of time.”

Need Security

He pointed out that this lack of security is the very reason that the men want to organize a union.

The union is awaiting a decision from the NLRI which would permit the holding of another election. The union expects to be given the right to hold another election to decide if the men want the union to represent them at the bargaining table.

The previous elections have been declared void because the company was guilty of unfair labor practices.

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