



For Big 'N Small . . . IT'S TIME FOR B-BALL

Fixing his sights on the basket is 12 year old Joseph Pringle, determined to show all the boys standing behind him how well he can shoot.

Walk into the YMCA any day after school, and you will see a gym-full of young boys, some in shorts and tennis shoes, others in pants and socks, but all of them taking advantage of the various athletic programs offered by the Y.

Although many boys between the ages of nine to nineteen use the gym, Coach Willy

Belt, the Y's Physical Education Director, has had some difficulty starting an Industrial Basketball League for adults. "I can't get enough cooperation from the men to get started," Coach Belt stated.

The Industrial League would meet on Monday nights to play Church and other community organized teams. All young adults interested in forming a basketball league contact Coach Belt at the YMCA on Farish Street.

Mississippi

FREE PRESS

"The Truth Shall Make You Free"

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\$2 Poll Tax

Pay Now — Vote Later

For Secure Jobs

Jackson Gas Men Begin Walk Out

To maintain job security, the working man must be protected against arbitrary firing by a company. When a company threatens to establish a pattern of arbitrary firing, workers have one weapon with which to fight for their rights—the strike.

Two hundred workers at the Mississippi Valley Gas Co. used this weapon when they did not show up for work Monday morning. The workers struck after the company refused to include a clause for fair firing in its contract offer to the International Chemical Workers union, local 503.

Union Wants Just Firing

According to Hubert Mills, president of the local, a clause providing that workers would only be fired for a just cause was included in the old contract with the company. However, when the company refused to keep the clause in the new contract a dispute arose, he said.

"We are in favor of having an impartial arbitrator settle the dispute, but Mississippi Valley Gas will not agree," Mills declared.

Strike 'Until We Win'

Mills declared that the union members are prepared to continue the strike "until we win." He said it would affect

(Continued on Page 3)

COFO Launches Drive; Put Up — Don't Shut Up

To all registered voters: the deadline for paying your poll tax is February 1. In order to qualify to vote against the political forces that have kept the state in chains, pay the tax immediately.

Embarking on a campaign to reach all the state's registered Negro voters, COFO (the Council of Federated Organizations) has announced a poll tax drive to go hand in hand with voter registration efforts.

Since the \$2 fee presents a severe burden to a large number of Mississippi citizens, COFO has launched a program to raise money to pay the tax for citizens who can not afford it themselves.

This aid program gives all Mississippians the opportunity to fight the crippling effect the poll tax has had on the state's progress. All fund donations should be addressed to 1017 Lynch St., Jackson, Miss.

1964 is the year when all congressional

representatives are elected to their posts. Unless the Negro shows up in large numbers at the polls, the tragic facts of Mississippi history will continue unchecked.

The poll tax is one of many methods of disfranchisement used in Mississippi. Devised expressly to exclude poor Negroes from voting, its effect has been to keep working class, white and black, from a position of political power. For the Negro, the poll tax goes hand in hand with discrimination in denying him the right to vote.

Although a constitutional amendment to abolish the poll tax is on the verge of ratification, it would apply only to federal elections. Poll tax receipts for two years are still required for voting in state and local elections.

Among the states which still require payment of the poll tax as a prerequisite for voting, are Texas, Virginia, Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi.

PAY POLL TAXES NOW

Editorial Page

WE STAND FOR . . .

- GOOD GOVERNMENT
- HIGHER LIVING STANDARDS
- BETTER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
- SOCIAL JUSTICE . . . IN MISSISSIPPI

Promise Us Anything . . . But Give Us Jobs

"(My program) is designed to continue the progress and prosperity of our state and lead it to an even greater plateau of agricultural, industrial and commercial growth."
 —Governor-elect Paul Johnson

Sounds nice. Our newly elected governor makes the state look like a garden of blossoming roses. Standing tall on his plateau of prosperity he looks out on a scene in which the rich plants of agriculture, industry, and commerce have already borne delicious fruit and promise to bring forth in greater abundance for the future.

Looks good.

Except that the vision of prosperity that the governor conjures up has nothing to do with the reality of our state. The bounteous garden of Mr. Johnson's imagination is actually a field of poverty for much of the state's population.

Two-thirds of the Negro families in the state had incomes under \$2,000 in 1960 with the median family income at \$1400. Even if this figure presented the average individual income it would still be well below the average individual income for Americans in other parts of the country.

Lurking behind these figures in a way of life which denies to the state's poor not only the comforts of American affluence, but the necessities of decent living in any society.

From the ramshackle-quarters of day-laborers on cotton plantations to the run down shacks of the unemployed in the city, the Negro knows poverty as his most constant companion.

Two-thirds of the Negro families in the state live in houses that are classed as deteriorating or dilapidated by the U. S. Bureau of Census. More than half the families do not have piped water in their homes. Nor do they have the money to do anything about it.

The Delta day laborer on the average earns less than \$500 a year. Stripped of his independence, living in financial slavery, he is kept alive on credit extended by "The Man" who takes to have him around in case he needs him for the cotton chopping and picking seasons. Without the financial security to escape his condition and lacking the training to find work even if he could flee to the city, he is paralyzed in his poverty.

The independent Negro farmer, usually working a small farm, faces a less catastrophic situation, but often fares little better. Since he operates on a small margin of profit the failure of one crop can easily spell the end to his independence.

In the city, where a high wage scale is normally expected, Mississippi Negroes remain appallingly poor. Over one-third of the Negro families in Jackson earn less than \$2,000; only 20 per cent make over \$4,000.

This is part of the actual economic picture of the state not included in Mr. Johnson's vision of "progress and prosperity." These are some of the conditions he chooses to ignore so that he won't be bothered with doing something about them when he takes office. At the same time he owes a political debt to the situation reflected in these conditions; for in effect, the state's poverty and accompanying ignorance elected him to office.

Poverty and ignorance did not cast ballots in the last election, but coupled with the state's enforcement of democracy for the few, they prevented thousands of citizens from voting. Economically vulnerable, the poor are reluctant to face the possibility of losing their jobs when they attempt to register. Even if they have registered they must pay the poll tax before they can vote, and for many there is no money to pay it with. The low level of education fostered by the Mississippi school system does not provide the state's citizens with an understanding of the necessity for voting. In addition, the schools do not equip him to pass the constitutional interpretation test especially when it is given by the typically biased circuit clerk.

Whether Mr. Johnson's view of the state will begin to show a concern for the poor remains to be seen. We can hope that the new governor will act to change the impoverished condition of Mississippi's citizens, and accordingly, we will observe a "wait and see" period. But from what we have seen so far, there is not much to hope for.

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Vocational Guidance

Good Social Workers Can Make A Difference

(Editors Note: It is more difficult to speak of the goals of social work within the Mississippi society than of any other vocation. A caste system contradicts the base upon which social work is built; the individual as the primary concern of our society. This article then is directed to students who realize the importance of this field, and who are aware of the opportunities that will open to Mississippians if Mississippi is to progress.)

The social worker is the doctor of his community. It is he who must develop knowledge about human behavior in order to guide human growth.

Coming directly to grips with an individual's inability to understand himself or to get along with others, the social worker participates in a wide range of social organizations—from welfare agencies and schools, to juvenile courts.

To understand what is required to become involved in this field of work, the FREE PRESS interviewed Miss Thelma Sadberry, of Jackson, a recent graduate of Tougaloo College, who is completing her first year at the Graduate School of Social Work of the University of Denver in Colorado.

Remarking that the most important requirement is also the most simple, Miss Sadberry commented, "The social worker must be interested in people. And this can be exciting as well as awfully discouraging. The more I learn about the field, the more I become aware of the problems of people in a community."

Interest in people is, however, not enough. Two years in graduate school leading to a Master of Social Work degree is the least amount of preparation needed to become a certified social worker.

"Uneducated social workers—those who are not trained but who call themselves social workers—are crippling the success of social work today," Miss Sadberry stated. Out of 105,000 social workers in the United States, only 21% have completed two or more years in social work education.

Case & Group Work

Study of social work during the first graduate school year can be divided into two important methods of observing individual behavior: casework and group work.

Casework focuses attention upon counseling of the various problems of an individual or of a family. "We try to understand how to help different people help themselves," Miss Sadberry said. Casework involves juvenile delinquency, unemployment problems, child welfare work, and many of the problems easily found in community recreation and rehabilitation centers and schools.

"Group work concerns helping a person through group association. Human nature causes us to need other people, so we study how satisfaction can be derived from companionship, and how groups can be guided



ON HER WAY to make a dream come true, Miss Thelma Sadberry, 22, is in her first year at the Denver Graduate School of Social Work. The FREE PRESS could find no prettier example in Mississippi to act as a model for students interested in social work as a career.

to contribute to the good of the community," Miss Sadberry explained.

Miss Sadberry was marked as a social worker while in high school, when she began cutting out newspaper articles about delinquency, and family problems.

He must be prepared to go to school and to work out of state, to prepare himself, she continued. "Negroes are unable to get the proper training in Mississippi."

Scholarships

However, there are numerous scholarships and aid available in other states. Mental Health Traineeships are offered at many schools, and special scholarships for Negroes are also available.

Miss Sadberry encouraged students interested in social work to inform themselves about the opportunities of different schools. "A letter to these schools stating one's interests and one's financial position is certain to get good results," she recommended.

"The fact that crime rate, delinquency, and divorces are always growing means that the need for competent social workers is increasing," she said.

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Jackson Gas Men . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

131 communities in the state area north of Hgwy. 80, including Jackson, and the area around Natchez.

Speaking for the workers Mills said, "If we let the company have what they want, the whole purpose of the union in maintaining job security would be undermined."

Expects Victory

The workers on strike include service and maintenance men. "With these trained people gone, I don't see how the Gas Co. can maintain normal service," Mills declared. He indicated that he expected this to bring enough pressure on the company to agree to the inclusion of the fair hiring clause in a new contract.

Apparently, the company's action was prompted by an arbitration case in October when the company was forced to rehire an employee it had fired. An impartial arbitrator judged that he had been fired without just reason. "I think that's the origin of this whole thing," Mills stated.

Mills said he was surprised and disappointed at the company's stand. "In the past, the union had good relations with the company; I'm sorry they are trying to change this now," he said.

Church Activities

"When we come together as a church, do we not come with the same spirit that Christ came? With deep love and interest for all mankind which compels us not to pray as Cain, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' No, but rather with great joy the love of Christ constraineth us." Rev. E. C. Cornelius.

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1038 WOODROW WILSON

FREEDOM WRITER

Andy Mitchell

Voting Scenes

This week I thought I'd dramatize the importance of getting the vote to change the Mississippi "Way of Life."

Scene I — At the registrar's office.

Registrar: Sit down there. Yes! Over there. (Motioning to "Colored" seats.) Now, what do you want?

Scene II — At the bus station.

Policeman: What you doin' in this waitin' room, boy. Remember where you sit don't change what you is. So, you might as well go on back.

Scene III — At the Hospital.

Nurse: I don't care what's wrong with you, you can't use

this hospital.

Scene IV — At school.

Student: Teacher? Don't you think we should get biology books?

Teacher: I never used one when I went to school. You think I got this job for something?

Scene V — In the principal's office.

Student: I demonstrated because.

Principal: (Shining his shoes) You're expelled. You fight for

your rights outside of school. Don't think I'm being too harsh. I understand how you feel being colored too and all that.

Scene VI — On the bus.

Rider: Oh, most kind and gracious bus driver, please tell me whether I can use the bathroom at the next restaurant?

Bus Driver: There ain't no bathroom at the next restaurant.

Scene VII — At the police headquarters.

Offender: All I was doing was

20 mph in a 25 mph zone. . . Policeman: Well, I reckon in C. P. time, that about 40 mph. You're charged with speedin', talking back, interferin', lookin' ugly, and standin' too tall when talkin' to an officer. \$50 or 5 years in jail.

Last Scene: the same scenes all over again, unless we do something about it now. If you don't want to make this scene, register and vote.

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