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 tights above, 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 Bell, 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 Bell 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 Bell at the YMCA on Parish 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 605.

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 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 2)

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 force that have kept the state in chains, pay the tax immediately.

Embracing 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 barrier to a large number of Mississippi citizens, COFO has launched a program to raise money to pay the tax for citizens who cannot 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 Negros 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
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 period of industrial, agricultural, and industrial commercial growth."

—Governor-elect Paul Johnson

Sounds nice. Our newly elected governor makes the state sound like a garden of blossoming roses. Standing tall on his platform of prosperity he looks out on a scene in which the rich fruits of all endeavors are ripening and everyone has already been blessed with fruits and promise to bring forth in greater abundance for the future.

Looks good.

Except that the vision of prosperity that the governor envisions is one that is not in the memory or the experience of my state. The bounteous garden of Mr. Johnson's imagination is actuality a field of weeds and cutover land that is the heritage of the population.

Two-thirds of the Negro families in the state had incomes under $2000 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 farmers in other parts of the country.

Looking behind these figures in a way of life which denies to the Negroes 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 not only dilapidated and in need of repair, but they have the money to do anything about it.

"The Dollar only enters on the average less than $500 a year. Stripped of his independence, living in financial slavery, he is kept alive on credit extended by "The Man" which he is forced to clear, bear, and struggle in the monthly cotton picking season, without the financial security to escape his condition and heeding the training to find work even if he could flee to the city, be paralyzed in his poverty.

The independent Negro farmer, usually working a small farm, is often the best of the lot, but even then, it often means his poverty.

Since he operates on a small margin of profit the failure of any crop can easily spell the end to him as well as 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 the state have incomes of less than $2000; only 20 per cent make over $4000.

In the state, part of the actual economic structure of the state is not included in Mr. Johnson's vision of "progress and prosperity." These are some of the conditions he chooses to ignore so that he can be induced to vote in the direction of his wishes. At the same time he uses a political power that is not matched in the South. He has the means to influence the conditions; for in effect, the state's poverty and accompanying ignorance election.

Poverty and ignorance did not cast ballots in the last election, but were defeated 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 that they can vote, in many cases, and is paid for by the typical biased circuit clerk.

Whether Mr. Johnson's vision 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 much to hope for.

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Jackson Gas Man...

181 communities in the state area north of Hwy. 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."

Expecta Victory

"The workers' strike involve 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 Oct. 28 when the company was forced to rehire employees 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 has had good relations with the company; I'm sorry they are trying to change this now," he said.

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Chureh 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 play at Cole. An the back of my brother's hand. No, but rather with great joy in the love of Christ manifested in us," Rev. E. C. Cornelius.

ADAMS CHAPEL 631 Page St.
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3:00 Sunday Evening Worship Service
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414 North St.
Rev. R. L. White, Pastor
1:00 Sunday Worship Service
ST. JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH
111 S. Farish St.
Rev. E. M. Martin, Pastor
11:00 Sunday Morning Worship Service
HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
617 E. Farish St.
Rev. J. B. Bryant, Pastor
11:00 Sunday Morning Worship Service
HILL STREET AME ZION CHURCH
1235 Pearl St.
Rev. O. A. Calvin, Pastor
11:00 Sunday Morning Worship Service
CHURCH STREET AME ZION CHURCH
1237 Pearl St.
Rev. O. A. Calvin, Pastor
11:00 Sunday Morning Worship Service
HOMETOWN BAPTIST CHURCH
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Rev. E. J. Smith, Pastor
11:00 Sunday Morning Worship Service
GREENORE BAPTIST CHURCH
3540 Longview Ave.

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Tender Chuck
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Red Potatoes
10-lb.
39¢

Glorioso Super Market
1038 Woodrow Wilson
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. You! Over there. (Moaning to "Colored" seats.) Now, what do you want?

Scene II — At the bus station.
Policeman: What you don't even sit in this waiting room, boy. Remember where you sit doesn'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.
Principal: (Shaking his shoes) You're expelled. You fight for your rights outside of school. Don't think I'm being 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.
Officer: All I was doing was "We'll Build on Your Lot"
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