



# FREEDOM NEWS

ISSUED BY PITTSBURGH FRIENDS OF COFO

## TRUCK TO HATTIESBURGH

On Sunday, April 24, a 40-foot tractor-trailer truck left Pittsburgh for Hattiesburgh, Mississippi, loaded with 27,000 pounds of supplies. The truck was driven by Mr. Obhilde Sheppard of Coraopolis who donated the vehicle and his and a helper's time for the trip. This shipment is the largest to date, and helped to empty our depots of stored material.

When Mr. Sheppard returned to Pittsburgh, he told how he was threatened and harrassed in Mississippi on the way to Hattiesburg because he is a Negro. At a truck stop where he refueled his truck, he was told that he could only get food service in the kitchen. He insisted that he be served at the counter in the front, and then went into a phone booth to make a call. When he emerged from the booth, four white men were waiting for him. They threatened him with physical violence if he didn't move on at once. Mr. Sheppard, not trained in non-violent techniques, happened to be armed with a monkey wrench, so the four men did not make good their threat. However, deciding that discretion was the better part of valor, he paid for the fuel (\$30.00) and left.

At the next truck stop, Sheppard was met by a group who had been called from the first stop. They told him to move on, and this was the situation all along the way, each place calling ahead to the next.

When Mr. Sheppard reached his destination, very hungry, he told his story to the Freedom workers who were frankly surprised he had made it without being badly injured or killed. He had taken the same route where the three freedom workers were murdered last summer.

## THE MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY

### The History

Negroes in Mississippi were totally excluded from voting until 1868, when the Reconstruction Constitution made provision for universal male suffrage. However, when this Constitution was adopted, the Ku Klux Klan came into being, with its lynchings and terror tactics to prevent the Negroes from voting. In 1890, a new constitution instituted a literacy test, a poll tax, a Constitutional Interpretation test, selective use of disqualification of criminals, and unlimited exercise of discretion by the voting registrar. Almost every Southern state followed the lead of Mississippi, and violence and terror on a large scale were no longer necessary to prevent Negroes from voting. Today, 94% of voting age Negroes in Mississippi are not registered voters (whereas 67% of the voting age whites are), and voter registration workers report that most Negroes are unwilling to undertake the risks involved in trying to register and vote without some hope that their voice may be effective. The MFDP provides such hope.

In anticipation of the 1964 national elections, the MFDP presented Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, Mrs. Victoria Gray, and Mrs. Annie Devine as candidates for Congressional seats. Each candidate qualified for the regular elections by gathering petitions with 300 valid signatures of registered voters, thus meeting the requirements of Mississippi law. These petitions were rejected by the Secretary of State, Heber Ladner, who when questioned under oath by MFDP lawyers, finally admitted, "We just don't have any precedent for independent candidates on the ballot." Efforts to place MFDP candidates on ballots for local elections have met with similar frustration. On election day last November, the MFDP held an election, the "Freedom Vote", open to anyone. Almost 70,000 people, denied their voting rights in the national election, "elected" Lyndon Johnson and Hubert Humphrey for President and Vice-President, Aaron Henry for State Senator, and Mrs. Hamer, Mrs. Devine, and Mrs. Gray for Representatives in Congress.

The 14th and 15th Amendments of the Constitution guarantee the right to vote regardless of race, and the 1870 Congressional Compact between Mississippi and Congress readmitted Mississippi to Congressional representation on condition that it never "deprive any citizen or class of citizens of the right to vote". The MFDP is challenging the right of the five Congressmen from Mississippi - Thomas Abernathy, John Bell Williams, William Colmer, Prentiss Walker, and James Whitten - to represent the citizens of Mississippi in Congress on the grounds that the November elections were held under conditions which blatantly violated these ordinances.



## The Challenge

On December 4, 1964, Mrs. Devine, Mrs. Gray, and Mrs. Hamer, from the Second, Fourth, and Fifth Congressional Districts, filed for the MFDP a Notice of Challenge under a procedure for contesting elections outlined in Title Two of the United States Code, Sections 201-226. Notice was served on the five Congressmen now representing Mississippi in the House of Representatives and filed with the Clerk of the House. Thirty days later, the representatives answered these challenges. The MFDP then had forty days to gather evidence. At present, 15,000 pages of sworn testimony have been gathered from Mississippi Negroes, White Citizens Council officials, and the Justice Department. This evidence must be submitted to the Clerk of the House, who, in consultation with the lawyers for both sides, decides what material will be publicly printed and presented to the Subcommittee on Elections and Privileges of the House Administrative Committee. Each side then has thirty days to file briefs. All material will be put before the Subcommittee, who must make their report by July 4. Their report is in the form of a simple resolution, requiring a majority vote in Congress. If the Challenge succeeds, the present House delegation will be unseated, and a new election will be called.

In accordance with the Challenge Procedure, A Fairness Resolution was introduced into the House on January 4, 1965, requesting temporary unseating of the present delegation while the Challenge itself was being determined. This Resolution was defeated, but it received 149 votes, an unexpectedly large number. This widespread support for the Challenge alarmed Mississippi. Gov. Paul Johnson called for a moratorium on violence for "at least six months". He and other officials warned voting registrars not to openly oppose the registration of qualified Negroes. They sent out letters to law enforcement officers and local officials asking that incidents of mass arrest or terrorism be suppressed to avoid unfavorable publicity that would help the Challenge. The Challenge has received no notice in the national press; events in Alabama and the voting bill have drawn attention away from Mississippi, but passage of the bill will not decrease the importance of the Challenge since local officials have been largely responsible for Negro disenfranchisement, and legislation alone will not correct this. If the Negroes are to vote, they must have candidates who will represent their interests as well as those of the White citizens. The months ahead must be used to push Negro voter registration in Mississippi.

## What Can We Do?

The fate of the Challenge lies in the hands of the Subcommittee on Elections and Privileges which will make the final decision on whether to hold formal hearings to document the claims of the challengers. All members of the Subcommittee voted against the Fairness Resolution. Pennsylvania Congressman Willard Curtin is one of the four Northern Congressmen on the Subcommittee; as Pennsylvanians, we should bring special pressure to bear on him. Representatives from this area who voted to seat the present Mississippi delegation are Robert T. Corbett and James C. Fulton, Republicans, and William S. Moorhead and Elmer J. Holland, Democrats. All letters may be addressed to the Congressmen, House Office Building, Washington, D. C. All letters should request information about the Challenge to encourage your Congressman to become familiar with it. Telegrams and personal visits to Congressmen will be necessary, too, as the next vote will take place sometime during mid-summer. If the Challenge is to succeed, our messages must sustain the 49 Congressmen already committed to it and reach 70 more Congressmen. Inform your Congressmen that you wish him to vote for the Ryan resolution to the Mississippi five and against the Albert resolution for seating them.

The MFDP needs the same broad support for its Challenge as the Negroes of Selma recently got from Americans all over the country. The struggle for the enfranchisement of Southern Negroes continues. We can do much to help in the struggle by asking our Congressmen to support the Challenge.

### FOLK SONG CONCERT

Pittsburgh Friends of COFO sponsored a folk song concert on May 5 for the benefit of the bail and defense fund for Civil Rights workers. The concert, which was held at Carnegie Lecture Hall, was attended by approximately three hundred people. The net profit is expected to be \$600.00, which includes fifty dollars donated by the Eero Davidson Memorial Fund.

### PUBLICITY

Joan Friedman asks that she be notified by people seeding publicity for their projects. They should get in touch with her two weeks prior to the time they want their publicity. This is necessary to give her enough time to make the proper contacts. Write to her at the Freedom Center, 145 South Highland Avenue, Pittsburgh 6, or call and leave a message for her at the Center, 361-2189.



### DO YOU WANT TO GO SOUTH THIS SUMMER?

The Freedom Center has application blanks for those who wish to volunteer for one of the projects to be held this summer in the South. Call 361-2189, or stop in at 145 South Highland Avenue.

### FREEDOM CENTER

The window of the Freedom Center has been broken four times. There is a collection of rocks on display in the office, each marked with the date it was used to break the window.

On Wednesday evening, May 5, Detective Harry Dunn was on the scene when the window was broken for the fourth time. He saw three youths, two girls and a boy running away. Unable to apprehend them at the time, Detective Dunn and other officers later located one of the girls in an East Liberty pizza parlor. She identified her two companions, and all three teenagers were released later in their parents' custody, pending a hearing in Juvenile Court.

People in increasing numbers are making use of the Center. A mimeograph machine has been acquired, although a typewriter is still needed, as are all-day office volunteers. (The telephone number: 361-2189.)

### ALABAMA BOYCOTT

The following list of companies has been compiled by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and includes only companies with plants or subsidiaries in Alabama.

It is felt that these companies, as a result of their prominent position in the state's total economy, could, were they so motivated, effect significant and long-overdue progress toward:

- Securing for all citizens 21 and older, their civil right to in fact register and vote in all elections, and
- Ending finally the brutality and violence, both sanctioned and condemned by elected officials, which has been consistently used to discourage the Negro citizens of Alabama from fulfilling their responsibilities to take an active part in this democratic government.

Carefully chosen from the entire business community, these 144 companies represent those businessmen in Alabama who have most abdicated their responsibility to the communities they serve and support, and from which they derive benefit.

It is conceivable that individuals and local groups across this land who have in so many ways supported the drive of Alabama's Negroes for the right to vote, would want to reexamine the economic support they have been giving to these companies and, therefore, to the brutal and systematic exclusion of Negroes from the government of Alabama.

#### COMPANIES ARRANGED BY HOME OFFICE

##### ALABAMA

###### Birmingham:

Alabama By-Products Corp.  
Alabama Power Co.  
Hayes International Corp.  
Vulcan Materials Co.

###### Leeds:

Anderson Electric Co.

###### Mobile:

Alabama Drydocks & Shipbuilding  
Southern Industries

###### Montgomery:

Whitfield Pickle Co.

###### North Birmingham:

Alabama Gas Corp.  
U. S. Pipe and Foundry

###### Opelika:

J. Herbert Orr

###### Selma:

Bushhog, Inc.  
Southland Corp.

###### Sylacauga:

Avondale Mills

###### Woodward:

Woodward Iron Co.

##### CALIFORNIA:

###### Beverly Hills

Litton Industries

###### Fullerton:

Hunt Foods and Industries

###### Oakland:

Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Co.

###### Redwood:

Ampex Corporation

###### San Francisco:

Foremost Dairies, Inc.  
Standard Oil of California

##### COLORADO

###### Denver:

Ideal Cement

##### CONNECTICUT

###### Bridgeport:

Warner Brothers, Co.

###### Stamford:

Huyck, Inc.

##### DELAWARE:

###### Wilmington:

Hercules Powder  
Pullman, Inc.

##### GEORGIA:

###### Atlanta:

Fulton Industries, Inc.  
Oxford Corporation  
Southern Company

###### West Point:

West Point Mfg. Co.

##### ILLINOIS:

###### Chicago:

Allied Mills, Inc.  
Allied Paper Corporation



American Bakeries  
Armour and Co.  
Beatrice Foods Co.  
Ceco Steel Products  
James B. Clow & Son  
Consolidated Foods Corp.  
Container Corporation  
McGraw-Edison Co.  
Quaker Oats  
Stone Container  
Swift and Company

Evanston:  
Calumet & Hecla, Inc.

Kewanee:  
Boss Manufacturing Co.

Oakbrook:  
Chicago Bridge & Iron Co.

INDIANA:

Columbus:  
Arvin Industries

Indianapolis:  
P. R. Mallory & Co.

Muncie:  
Marhoefer Packing Co.

MARYLAND:

Baltimore:  
Commercial Credit Co.  
Mt. Vernon Mills

MASSACHUSETTS:

Boston:  
Kendall Co.

Easthampton:  
United Elastic Corp.

MICHIGAN:

Dearborn:  
Ford Motor Co.

Detroit:  
Chrysler Corp.  
Fruehauf Corp.

Jackson:  
Acme Industries

Southfield:  
Guerdon Industries

MINNESOTA:

Austin:  
Geo. A. Hormel & Co.

Minneapolis:  
Munsingwear, Inc.  
Pillsbury Co.

St. Paul:  
Minnesota Mining & Mfg. Co.

MISSOURI:

Kansas City:  
Butler Mfg. Co.  
H. D. Lee, Inc.

St. Louis:  
Bemis Brothers Bag Co.  
Monsanto Co.

Ralston Purina Co.

NEBRASKA:

Omaha:  
Nebraska Consolidated Mills

NEW JERSEY:

New Brunswick:  
Johnson & Johnson

Passaic:  
Botany Industries

NEW YORK:

Buffalo:  
National Gypsum Co.

New York City:  
Allied Chemical Corp.  
Amerace Corp.  
American Brake Shoe  
American Can Co.  
Avco Corp.  
Beaunit Corp.  
Central Foundry Co.  
Cluett, Peabody & Co.  
Continental Can Co.  
Dolly Madison Foods  
Electric Bond & Share Co.  
General Electric Co.  
Glen Alden Corp.  
Indian Head Mills, Inc.  
International Paper Co.

Kayser-Roth Corp.  
Lone Star Cement Corp.  
Lowenstein & Sons  
Marlene Industries  
Martin Marietta Corp.  
National Dairy Products  
Olin Mathieson  
Philadelphia & Reading Corp.  
Phillips-Van Heusen Corp.  
Ruberoid Co.  
St. Regis Paper Co.  
Stanley Warner Corp.  
Stauffer Chemical Co.  
Union Bag-Camp Paper Co.  
Union Carbide Corp.  
U. S. Steel  
Ward Foods, Inc.  
Warshaw & Sons  
Worthington Corp.  
Pelham Manor:  
Exquisite Form, Ind.  
White Plains:  
Reichhold Chemicals  
NORTH CAROLINA:  
Greensboro:  
Blue Bell, Inc.  
Burlington Industries  
OHIO:  
Akron:  
B. F. Goodrich  
Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.  
Canton:  
Union Metal Mfg. Co.  
Cleveland:  
Cole National Corp.  
Diamond Alkali Co.  
Lamson & Sessions Co.  
Republic Steel Corp.  
Toledo:  
Eltra Corp.  
PENNSYLVANIA:  
Allentown:  
Lehigh Portland Cement Co.  
Bristol: Thiokol Chemical Corp.

Chester:  
Scott Paper Co.  
Easton:  
Alpha Portland Cement Co.  
Erie:  
Hammermill Paper Co.  
Philadelphia:  
Bayuck Cigars, Inc.  
Rohm & Haass Co.  
Pittsburgh:  
Harrison-Walker Refractories  
Natco Corp.  
H. K. Porter  
Westinghouse Electric  
Wyomissing:  
Vanity Fair  
RHODE ISLAND:  
East Providence:  
Fram Corporation  
TENNESSEE:  
Chattanooga:  
Dorsey Corp.  
Standard-Coosa-Thatcher  
Memphis:  
Federal Compress & Warehouse  
Nashville:  
Genesco Corp.  
TEXAS:  
Dallas:  
Campbell Taggart Bakeries  
Diversa, Inc.  
Houston:  
Tennessee Gas Transmission  
VIRGINIA:  
Danville:  
Dan River Mills  
Richmond:  
Reynolds Metals Co.  
WISCONSIN:  
Neenah:  
Kimberley-Clark Corp.  
West Allis:  
Allis Chalmers Mfg. Co.