

## PRESS RELEASE

# NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATIONAL FUND

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ATLANTA, GA.--Two new moves were made here yesterday to secure release of a group of student civil rights workers jailed in Americus, Ga. since August 8th.

Donald Hollowell, attorney for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, filed two actions in the Georgia State Supreme Court on October 16th:

\* an appeal of a petition for writ of habeas <sup>corpus</sup> against Americus's Sheriff Chappell, which was denied in Sumter County Superior Court.

\* a motion for immediate admission to "reasonable bail".

Mr. Hollowell, of Atlanta, and C.B. King of Albany are working with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in defense of four of the five students.

These are Donald Harris, John Perdew, Ralph Allen and Thomas McDaniel. Messrs. Harris, Perdew and Allen, all 21 years old, are field workers for the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee.

Another student, Zev Aelony, a representative of the Congress of Racial Equality, is being represented by Mr. King and other attorneys.

They are among more than 250 persons arrested and jailed on numerous "charges" growing out of antidiscrimination demonstrations in that part of the state since July.

The four youths being defended by NAACP Legal Defense attorneys were in the midst of a voter registration drive to increase Negro voters in Sumter county. They were also seeking to expand the use of jim crow public facilities.

Negroes outnumber whites 12,980 to 11,672 in Sumter county.

NAACP Legal Defense attorneys also filed a suit in Federal District Court on October 11 asking that white leaders in Americus



be stopped from "intimidating, discouraging...and preventing" Negroes from "exercising their rights...guaranteed by the Constitution...."

This complaint was signed by Mr. King, Jack Greenberg, Constance Baker Motley and Michael Meltsner, of the Legal Defense Fund.

If this action is successful, legal precedent will be established to block misuse of the law by local communities to thwart civil rights efforts.

Defendants named in the Legal Defense Fund federal court suit include the Solicitor General of the state of Georgia for the Southwestern Judicial District, State Director of Police, the Mayor of Americus, the Vice Mayor, the City Council, Chief of Police and Sheriff Chappell.