

MISSISSIPPI READIES LAWS FOR "FREEDOM SUMMER"

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI - With the help of the State Legislature, Mississippi's police officers will be more than ready to deal with civil rights groups planning a "Mississippi Freedom Summer."

The summer drive, sponsored by the Council of Federated Organization (COFO), involves 1,000 workers in programs of voter registration, Freedom Schools, Freedom Registration and Community Centers.

Governor Paul Johnson has already signed into law five bills designed to halt demonstrations. They prohibit picketing, ban distributing boycott literature, allow cities to extend police aid to other municipalities, permit cities to restrict the movements of groups and to set curfews, and increased penalties for violating city ordinances.

Governor Johnson has asked the legislature to enlarge the power of the state police.

The five bills signed into law by Governor Johnson are:

House Bill 64 - Authorizes cities to restrain movements of groups and individuals;

House Bill 546 - Prohibits the unlawful picketing of all public buildings, streets, sidewalks and other places belonging to the city, county and state;

Senate Bill 1517 - Increases penalties that may be assessed by city courts;

Senate Bill 1526 - Authorizes municipalities to "pool" personnel, manpower and equipment;

Senate Bill 1545 - Provides a maximum penalty of \$500 and/or 6 months in jail for printing and circulating material promoting a boycott.

The State Sovereignty Commission - the official segregation watchdog - has suggested the use of other laws to halt anti-segregation protests. They are:

Section 2087-5 - Congregate and refuse to disperse when ordered by a police officer;

Section 2087-7 - Prohibits any person interfering with customers or operation of any business venture;

Section 2089-5 - Disturb the peace or peace of others;

Section 2155-4 - Make false statements to Federal authorities;

Section 2155-4 - Issue false complaints to Federal authorities;

Section 2292-5 - Obstruct by force or threats lawful arrest;

Section 2296-5 - Willful obstruction of public streets;

Section 2409-5 - Encourage any person to remain on premises of another when forbidden to do so.

The Sovereignty Commission has distributed copies of the old and new laws to state law enforcement officers.

COFO is composed of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).