

COUNCIL OF FEDERATED ORGANIZATIONS - Sunflower & Bolivar Counties  
Box 275, Ruleville, Mississippi  
Phone: 756-4619

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### REGISTRAR ACCEPTS NEGROES AT INDIANOLA

June 24. Indianola, Mississippi. Nine Ruleville Negroes experienced no difficulty in taking the application test for voters in Sunflower County's Courthouse today. The group took the test as part of a Council of Federated Organization's (COFO) voter registration project in Sunflower County.

The nine, all from Ruleville, were: Mrs. Roberta Hackett, Mrs. May B. Campbell, Mr. David C. Smith, Mrs. Gertrude Rogers, Mrs. Aileen Foster, Mrs. Martha Conley, Mr. Willie Purnell, Mrs. Fannie Lee, and Mr. Holman. For Mr. Smith, it was his 13th attempt to register.

The Negroes were not harrassed in any way and received good treatment from local officials. While they were taking the test, seven white teenagers were picked up by the Sheriff's deputies and taken to the County Jail to be released shortly thereafter. The youths had been making nuisances of themselves in the Courthouse Square.

The Ruleville citizens were accompanied by three white COFO summer volunteers, Lester Galt, Donna Howell, Jerry Tecklin, Negro project director Charles McLaurin, and white adviser Rev. James Corson.

Several of the civil rights workers had interviews with Sunflower County Sheriff W. I. Holloway and with Chief of Police Bruce Alexanders. The Workers were offered protection in transport and during activities in Indianola. Chief Alexander offered to keep an eye on local hotheads.

All applicants were advised to return in two weeks for the results of the application. The process of registering the nine Mississippians took four hours. At that rate, it would take approximately  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years to register the 13,324 eligible Negroes in Sunflower County. Currently, approximately 1.2% of the Negroes are registered.