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MISSISSIPPI

Freedom Democratic Party

1017 LYNCH STREET
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI - 39203
Telephone: (601) 352-9605

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1353 'U' STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20009
Telephone: (202) 332-7732

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI--The Washington office of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, announced today that delegates to the Democratic National Convention from twenty-five states had received letters urging them to vote for the seating of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party delegation at the National Convention next month in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

The letters, signed by Miss Ella J. Baker coordinator of the Washington Office of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, referred to the three civil rights workers now presumed dead in Philadelphia, Mississippi and stated that "If they have paid with their lives for believing in the right of the governed to have a voice in the election of those who govern them, all Democrats who can register and vote with freedom are now challenged as never before. The long and systematic denial of the Negroes right to vote in Mississippi, and the flagrant disloyalty of the "regular" Mississippi Democratic Party to the principles of the National Democratic Party demand that new channels be created through which all the people of Mississippi can be represented in the 1964 Democratic National Convention."

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These letters are part of the continuous program of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party to bring political meaning to one million disfranchised Negroes in the State of Mississippi. The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party is a recently formed party which plans to challenge the seating of the regular Eastland-Barnett delegation at the National Convention. The Freedom Democratic Party maintains that the fact that only 5% of the eligible Negroes are registered to vote in the State of Mississippi, is dramatic proof that the state has denied Negroes the right to vote and participate in Party affairs. The party also maintains the "regular" delegation, because of its steady record of disloyalty to the National Party's principles and candidates, cannot qualify as a bona fide delegation to the Convention. A Freedom Democratic Party spokesman in Jackson said that with "more and more of the regular Mississippi Party politicians coming out for Senator Goldwater, it is clear that between a Freedom Democratic Party delegation, pledged to support the nominees and platform of the convention, and a "regular" party delegation, standing on their past record of disloyalty, the convention has little choice but to seat a loyal democratic delegation."

The Freedom Democratic Party's contention that the regular Miss. Democratic Party is not loyal to the National Party is supported by various Democratic Party leaders. Governor Edmund "Pat" Brown of California

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recently stated that the Mississippi delegation was so far out of tune with National Party principals that it should not be allowed near the Convention hall. In addition to this voiced support, nine delegations (Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, New York, Massachusetts, California, Oregon, Colorado, and the District of Columbia) have passed resolutions in support of the seating of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

Delegates from the following states have received the attached letter: ALASKA, COLORADO, CONNECTICUT, HAWAII, IDAHO, ILLINOIS, IOWA, MAINE, MINNESOTA, MONTANA, NEBRASKA, NEVADA, NEW HAMPSHIRE, NEW JERSEY, NORTH DAKOTA, OHIO, PENNSYLVANIA, RHODE ISLAND, SOUTH DAKOTA, UTAH, VERMONT, WASHINGTON, WYOMING, CANAL ZONE, NEW MEXICO.