

1964  
Freedom  
Democrats

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ROUND-THE-CLOCK VIGIL SUPPORTS FREEDOM DELEGATION

Atlantic City, N.J., Aug. 27--A round-the-clock, silent vigil in support of the Freedom Democratic Party delegation to the Democratic national convention was conducted on the boardwalk in front of Convention Hall by CORE and SNCC August 24-27.

The number of participants reached a peak of over 1500 during the August 25 convention session. That evening the silence of the vigil was broken for a rally at which members of the Freedom delegation, including Aaron Henry and Rev. Edwin King as well as CORE National Director James Farmer, spoke. Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, a member of the Freedom delegation, led a spirited session of Freedom Songs.

There were other brief periods of speeches and songs. During a heavy thunder shower, a session of Freedom Songs started. Having decided against taking shelter, the group decided to sing until the rain stopped. The vigilers alternately stood and sat on the boardwalk throughout the days and nights of the convention in view of thousands of boardwalk strollers. Many eastern CORE groups dispatched buses and cars of participants to Atlantic City.

Throughout the demonstration, the CORE-SNCC sponsoring committee was in consultation with the Freedom delegation and followed their advice as to tactics. The Freedom delegation rejected a compromise reached by the convention's credentials committee to seat only two of its delegates, but decided to attend the convention, nevertheless. So, at the session following the credentials committee's decision, a group of Freedom delegates walked into the hall and took the seats vacated by the Eastland delegation. By the next session, these seats had been removed, so the Freedom delegates remained standing in the same area and joined the in the vote of acclamation for President Johnson.