

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATOR DENOUNCES TWO-PARTY
GOVERNMENT

COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI - A Mississippi Congressman declared here that if Mississippians "split the conservative vote, we're sunk!"

Representative Thomas Abernathy, in a speech to the Columbus Civitan Club November 24, said Republican-elect Congress Prentiss Walker "may be a good man but he lacks the seniority to gain the important committee posts his defeated opponent Arthur Winstead held."

Abernathy said he had received valuable assistance from Winstead, who used his fourth ranking position on the powerful House Armed Forces Committee when he sought funds for the Columbus Air Forces Base. "Now who's going to look after Columbus?" Abernathy asked.

Abernathy said "our only opportunity to preserve the seniority system is to continue the one-party system in the South."

In Jackson, Lawrence Guyot, State Chairman of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, the group mounting a challenge against the seating of Mississippi Congressmen, said "Abernathy put his finger on the source of Southern power when he spoke of the seniority system. He and Winstead have both been in the House over 20 years and have risen to positions of power where they've been able to block legislation affecting the entire country. The only reason they have been around so long," Guyot said, "is because they and the entire Mississippi Democratic Party have been responsible for excluding Negroes from the ballot."

-30-

BYRON DE LA BECKWITH'S SON HELD IN PIG THEFT

GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI - The son of Byron de la Beckwith, the accused slayer of civil rights leader Medgar Evers, pleaded guilty to charges of stealing a pig and was given a suspended sentence here.

Circuit Court Judge Arthur Clark suspended a \$100 fine and a three-month prison term for young Beckwith and three companions when they admitted stealing and slaughtering a local farmer's pig. The judge ordered the youths to replace the pig.

Also freed this week were two white men charged in the 1963 machine-gunning of a Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) field secretary.