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Congress of Racial Equality
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement by James Farmer, National Director, CORE

CORE unequivocally supports the historic challenge of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and calls for a great coalition of civil rights, political and civic organizations and individuals to join this struggle. CORE pledges its fullest support of MFDP on this 11th Anniversary of the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in the public schools.

The chronicle of brutality to be presented today in these petitions has no equal in the parliamentary history of our nation. These are real voices of the real Americans who have been blooded and even murdered in their efforts to exercise the right to vote.

As we take these depositions to the Congress, I ask of the Congress fast remedial action and the rejection of the regular Mississippi Congressional pretenders who have been elected on a platform of blood and disenfranchisement.

CORE is prepared to take whatever steps may be necessary to support this challenge. Discussions are underway as to a schedule of massive demonstrations if the Congress fails to act and act quickly. These demonstrations will be in large part directed at Congressmen across the nation who have opposed this challenge. For example, on June 20, a major demonstration is planned for Brooklyn, New York calling attention to Congressman Emanuel Celler and the Brooklyn Congressional delegations vote against the Fairness Resolution on January 4, 1965.

As to the voting rights bill before Congress at this moment, these depositions bear tragic witness to the need for this bill -- and more specifically to the need for a bill with real legislative and judicial teeth.

May 17, 1965