

SNCC STATEMENT: ~~SUPPORT~~ ADAM C. POWELL

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 9, 1966

At the present moment, the United States Congress is trying to decide if Congressman Adam Clayton Powell should be seated, and, if so, should he be allowed to remain as Chairman of the (House Labor, Education and Welfare Committee. This is an irrelevant issue. Congressman Powell has been returned to Congress by his constituents and he is Chairman of a Congressional Committee by virtue of seniority, the method by which all committee chairmen are chosen.

Therefore, it is apparent to us, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, that these attacks on Congressman Powell are punishment for an Afro-American doing what every other Congressman does, and for doing it with more style. These attacks on Congressman Powell are consistent with the high-handed manner that the Democratic Party has always used towards Afro-Americans in this country. Their civil rights bills were not worth the time and energy some secretary spent in typing them, because they were obviously designed to pacify Afro-Americans, shut them up, keep them off the streets, but we will not be pacified. We will not shut up. We will not ~~stay~~ off the streets.

Lyndon Johnson, we remember the challenge of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. Afro-Americans from Mississippi were not represented in the Congress of the United States, and, challenged the seats of four Congressmen. The Democratic Party told them to go back to Mississippi. Remain unrepresented, without a voice in the United

Government. The Democratic Party told them that if you want representation, accept these men, elected by the racists of Mississippi. If you want representatives, accept these men, accessories before and after the fact, to the exploitation, subjugation and murder of Afro-American men, women and children.

Lyndon Johnson, we remember your Democratic Party, when it twice refused to seat Julian Bord in the Georgia State Legislature. We remember your Democratic Party for refusing to allow an Afro-American, duly elected, not once, but twice, by Afro-Americans, as their representative. We remember what your Democratic Party did.

Now we see once again your Democratic Party operating, as it has always operated. With its mouth, hungry for votes, it feeds on the needs of Afro-Americans. We, the nourishment of the Democratic Party, are given in return, racist vomit and are expected to swallow it, grin, shuffle away saying thank you Boss Man.

We remember, Lyndon Johnson, that our votes, the votes of black men and women across this nation, are responsible for Democrats sitting in Congress and in the White House. We remember, Lyndon Johnson, and we will remember when the Democratic Party comes into the black community in 1968, with its platitudes and promises, its words of sympathy and its posture of being the Afro-Americans friend. We will remember, and we say now, will it be Powell in '67 or Johnson in '68? If the one goes today, it follows as does the day the night, the other will go tomorrow. Take away Powell and we will take away Johnson. And if you don't believe it baby, just try us.