

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

360 Nelson St., SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
688-0331

for the week ending March 30, 1966

NEWS OF THE FIELD #6

Note: Bob has been asked to manage the campaign of Robert Cook, independent running for U.S. Congress from New Haven, Conn. on a peace-labor-civil rights platform, and we are going to New Haven until November on a temporary leave of absence from SNCC. Gren Whitman will be doing all further reports. Please call for him in the office and address queries to him.

---Dorothy Zellner

ALABAMA

About 1000 people attended the first anniversary meeting of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization March 27 in Hayneville. The enthusiastic crowd heard several speakers, including Julian Bond, Mrs. Rosa Parks and Stokely Carmichael. Bond said: "Parity politics operates on the principle of majority rule. People have told Negroes that they must do things the way white have done them. Look at the Irish and the Italians and see that they attained a percentage of the vote. But Negroes don't have to play parity politics. The way politics works, the majority takes all. You're the majority, so you can take it all." The crowd, which some said would have been larger had a funeral not been taking place that day, was 98% local people from Lowndes County, and is one of the largest local meetings in a county which SNCC has helped organize. Five people from Detroit, members of the Detroit Friends of Lowndes County (originally all from Lowndes County) also attended the meeting.

Julian will also speak at an outdoor rally in Dallas County on April 11. Bernice Reagon and Bennie King are scheduled to sing.

Stokely Carmichael reports that students are talking about organizing to go to all-white schools in Ft. Deposit (Lowndes County).

Picketing still continues in Tuskegee against those merchants who will not post a fair employment pledge. So far no black people have been hired as a result of the selective buying campaign. Voting machines are being placed on the Tuskegee campus for use in up-coming student body elections so that students can learn how to use them and teach friends and relatives in the rural areas.

Work continues in Lowndes County and other Black Belt counties to pull people together for the big May 3rd meetings, those where local candidates will be nominated.

The following is from a report compiled by Stokely Carmichael, Bob Mants, Tina Harris, and the Alabama staff. It is entitled Proposal for a "Poor Peoples Land Corporation":

LOWNDES COUNTY		GREENE		WILCOX	
Population		Population		Population	
Negro	12,425	Negro	11,079	Negro	14,592
White	2,992	White	2,521	White	4,147
Voter Eligibility		Voter Eligibility		Voter Eligibility	
Negro	5,122	Negro	5,001	Negro	6,085
White	1,900	White	2,521	White	2,634
Median family income		Median family income		Median family income	
Negro	\$935	Negro	\$971	Negro	\$1,081
White	\$4,400	White	\$4,400	White	\$2,571
Farms over 1000 acres		Farms over 1000 acres		Farms over 1000 acres	
86		65		89	
Yearly income over \$10,000		Yearly income over \$10,000		Yearly income over \$10,000	
Negro	4	Negro	4	Negro	7
White	74	White	68	White	89

Who owns the land?	Who owns the land?	Who owns the land?
Negro	Negro 69,783 White 224,552	Negro
% of farms tenant farmed	% of farms tenant farmed	% of farms tenant
50.2%	60.6%	47.8%
% of population	% of population	% of population
Negro 81% White 19%	Negro 81% White 19%	Negro 77.5% White 22.1%

ARKANSAS

A staff meeting will be held April 1 to make concrete plans for the forthcoming statewide meeting to form a statewide political organization.

The staff has also rejected a grant from the Voter Education Project on the following grounds: VEP granted only \$4200 for six weeks, when the staff had asked for \$4300 per month; no administrative expenses were included in the grant; telephone expenses were limited to \$10 per month for the project phones; salaries were cut from \$35 to \$30 per week. Staff members resent the apparent VEP attitude that it is all right for SNCC people to starve to death. Meanwhile VEP will give a grant to the Arkansas Council on Human Relations, whose director will receive \$600 a month salary.

GEORGIA

Picketing continues at the One Hour Valet by members of the Atlanta project. The demands include that: all four stores of the Valet chain have Negro managers; each worker is to be paid \$1.25 per hour; formal notice should be given before any worker is dismissed; there should be Negro help at the front counters; all persons fired during the past week and replaced by white workers should be re-hired. On March 29 three members of the Atlanta project were arrested for singing on the picketline. John Clarke and Mary Alice Smith were charged with disturbing the peace; Bill Ware was charged with interfering with an officer.

The following are portions of an affidavit by Willie Williams (please see News of the Field #5):

My name is Willie Williams. I live in a tent at the corner of Markham and Haynes Streets, in Atlanta, Georgia. This morning when I went to bed I turned the light off at about 2:30 a.m. and started going to sleep. I was just in a slumber and I heard a cutting noise. I turned over on my stomach and I saw a man's hand with a knife in it cutting the tent open very near my head. I grabbed his hand and the man pulled away and ran....

In my opinion the person who cut the hole in the tent tried to kill me. He probably was a spy and was put up to the incident. But this won't stop me. I will continue to wage this war for human rights with the Markham street people.

The above statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

/s/ (Mr.) Willie Williams

Large-scale demonstrations have been held every day since March 28 in Cordele. Upwards of 500 junior high and high school students have boycotted their schools and marched to the board of education protesting miserable school conditions. They described the schools: at Clark Training School, there are no chemistry labs; at Southview school, there are no bathrooms, no playgrounds, poor ventilation, windows broken down, and the facilities, such as laboratories, libraries, etc., are very poor. A fence also surrounds the Southview School topped by three strands of barbed wire. On March 28 one student was arrested and another threatened by a white holding a shotgun. On March 30, four students were roughed up by newly-deputized white citizens. Protests have been made to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and to the Justice Department.

MISSISSIPPI

200 poor people from Mississippi left March 30 from the Tribbett Tent City to Washington to protest lack of funds for a building project. The people charged that officials of the Office of Economic Opportunity had promised them a grant to build 100 homes but that no money had been sent.

Mrs. Youther Keyes, chairman of the Harrison County FDP and leader of the drive to include poor people on the staff of the Headstart Program, is organizing a Poor Peoples Club which will work toward making reforms in the next Headstart program, in six months. Mrs. Keyes and others will continue to protest the economic make-up of this Headstart Program, but says that "we'll be ready for the next one". This club will require members to make less than 3,000 dollars a year, and have a card saying that they are registered voters. The by-laws state: you must be concerned about other poor people; you must work together as close as possible; you must elect your chairman for the good he can do and not from friendship; you must think of what good you can do for the club and not what the club can do for you, and don't get so poor that you can't help them. Dues will be 50 ¢ a month, to be used to help people buy food when their food stamps run out.

A protest march is scheduled in Kosciusko in April to present demands to improve conditions in the city. The people will meet at 2 p.m. at the Christian Liberty Baptist Church and march downtown and then back, demanding that: 1. Negroes hired for decent jobs in the stores; 2. registrar obey the federal laws and register people; 3. put Negroes on the school board; 4. give Negro policemen police cars; and 5. hire Negro postmen, and 6. improve school conditions.

A church was burned in Sidon March 26 after a Pray-In about the war in Vietnam was held. About 30 people attended the pray-in during the afternoon; the church was burned to the ground that night, and two Negroes were arrested. However, FDP workers said they saw two white men hanging around the church asking questions that very day, and one of them the son of a Klansmen.

The FDP congressional candidates will be: Rev. Whitley (1st district), Robert Hayes (2nd district), Rev. Edwin King (3rd district), Rev. Collins (4th district), and Lawrence Guyot (5th district).

The Jackson office reported that Aid to Dependent Children checks will be cut to \$26 per month. This is the second time checks have been cut since August. Mrs. Annie Devine of the FDP was scheduled to discuss this at a press conference on March 31.

Andrew Lee Green writes from Leake County: "A young lady went to the doctor in Leake County. She was expecting a baby and the doctor charged her \$75. He sent her to the hospital and the doctor refused to wait on her because she didn't have \$50. After they got the \$50, the doctors put her to bed, and after the baby came the only way they would release her, her husband had to pay \$50 more. He didn't have the money Friday. She had to stay there until Saturday, they wouldn't fee her, they wouldn't let the baby be named, and they even wouldn't write out a birth certificate for the baby. They had taken the identification card off the baby's arm. The hospital isn't integrated, the FBI and lawyer went to talk to the people at the hospital but they were afraid they would lose their job. The lawyer in Jackson is working on this."

The student protest group at Tougaloo College is now called Tougaloo Action Committee. Its program will include: college reform, civil rights, U.S. foreign policy discussion and protest, distribution of information on crucial problems of the world, information on protest and reform activities on other campuses.

A black woman in Moss Point is awaiting trial in the shooting of a white store owner who assaulted her. Mrs. Elizabeth Ann Curtis supposedly shot a Mr. Clark after he hit her during an argument in his store over the price of turnip greens. The grocery store owner had run up to her car and punched her; then his son-in-law tried to pull her out of her car. She shot at the two of them, wounding Clark.

Six families set up a tent city near Greenwood at the McGee home (Silas McGee was wounded in the face in the summer of 1964). The McGee home is surrounded by white families, and has been fire-bombed and shot at three times. The group includes 27 children.

The FDP in Rosedale is calling for a boycott of all white-owned stores over the Easter period. The boycott is to bring pressure on the City Council for the following demands:

1. That jobs be provided in white-owned stores.
2. Use of courteous titles
3. A pledge from the power structure not to block poverty programs.

Registration figures are now available throughout the state. We will include them in News of the Field #7.

NEW YORK

Nine SNCC staff were arrested March 26 at the S. African Mission in New York. They were waiting to see the Ambassador when they were suddenly asked to leave; when they refused, they were arrested and charged with resisting arrest and trespassing. The nine were bailed out on their own recognisance.

NORTH CAROLINA

Larry Fox reports from Weldon that mass meetings will be held in every precinct in Halifax County to get people down to register to vote the last Saturday in April. This is one of the three Saturdays in which the registration office is open before the primary elections.

TENNESSEE

The Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC) is continuing to focus on organizing southern white students into the movement; however, more and more organizing among black students is taking place. Fifteen staff members work out of Nashville, in Louisiana, Texas, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Contact have also been made with white students in Mississippi (see News of the Field #5). In fact a conference was held February 25 - 27 in Mississippi where 75 students discussed campus organizing. A spring folk festival is planned, featuring Len Chandler, Bernice Reagon, and others.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Five civil rights workers were arrested at the South African Embassy March 29 in a sit-in protesting apartheid from 4:30 to 11:30 p.m.. They were told to leave by an official of the Embassy and then arrested on Embassy territory by city police on a charge of "unlawful entry".

TO ALL FIELD STAFF:

The Campus Coordinating Department of Atlanta office announces a southwide student conference to be held April 28 - May 1, Waveland, Mississippi (tentative) on the theme of "The Freedom struggle and its new direction for college students" Among the subjects to be discussed will be: freedom schools in the Northern ghettos; the meaning of the FDP; the concept of the Freedom Organization (particularly in the Black Belt); the Poor Peoples Corporation; and organizing in Southern urban areas. FIELD STAFF ARE URGED TO RECRUIT AS MANY BLACK STUDENTS AS POSSIBLE TO THE CONFERENCE. Food, transportation, and housing will be provided. Please send all names to William Porter. (Note: because the number of people who can stay at Waveland is limited, staff are urged to come ONLY IF YOU HAVE SENT YOUR NAME TO PORTER IN ADVANCE.)

TO ALL STAFF:

Accommodations are also limited for the staff meeting, to be held at Waveland May 9 - 15th, so the meeting WILL BE FOR STAFF ONLY. If you plan to attend, please send your name to PORTER.

July 30, 1965

In Southwest Georgia, demonstrations are stepping up and a call has gone out for people in the north to join in these demonstrations. Several Congressmen are planning to go on a brief tour of SW Ga. projects early next week. Today, in Americus, Negroes will hold three demonstrations. Last night Lester Maddox spoke at a rally sponsored by the White Citizens Council. Tension in the town has mounted since the killing last Wednesday night of the 19-year-old white youth.

In Baker County, Ga., the white man who assaulted Charles Sherrod last week had Sherrod arrested for assault and battery and attempted murder. This arrest occurred on July 29, and is Sherrod's second arrest of the week. He is still in jail. Demonstrations are being held in Newton (Baker Co.) and representatives from the National Council of Churches are in town.

SNCC is urging that federal troops be brought in to Southwest Georgia to restore order, that the four ladies who were arrested on July 20 for standing in the white voting line be released immediately (although a federal court has ordered their release, they are still in jail), and that officials who allowed the segregated polling places in the past election, be arrested and prosecuted under the federal statute which they violated (instead of an "investigation," which the federal government has promised). The Justice Department has admitted that segregated polling places violate federal laws; however, federal officials are typically reluctant to enforce their laws where the rights of Negroes are involved.

PLEASE PRESSURE THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FOR FULL PROTECTION OF THE CITIZENS OF SOUTHWEST GEORGIA. Prior to the killing of the 19-year-old boy last Wednesday, the Negro community had been terrorized by whites riding through at high speeds. Whites had thrown rocks at the demonstrators, and at the Tuesday night demonstration a menacing mob of 500-600 whites stood opposite the demonstrators. Also on Tuesday night two SNCC workers, Bill and Emory Harris, were fired at about 17 times.

Last year, in March and November, civil rights workers complained to the Justice Department and to the FBI about segregated polling places and there was no action.

The Justice of the Peace, JW Southwell, whose election on July 20 we consider illegal, has twice beaten civil rights workers in the court house in Americus in the past year. The special squad of state troopers which Governor Saunders called in to Southwest Georgia called "the Blue Angeles," is the same group of cops which beat heads and jabbed demonstrators with cattle prods last year. For these and many other reasons the local people in Americus despair of any help from any law enforcement officials.

In McComb, Mississippi, the MFLU has organized the maids at the Holliday Inn who were making 39¢ an hour. As many as 30 demonstrators have picketed at the Holiday Inn demanding a legal minimum wage and longer lunch hour (they were getting a 15 minute lunch hour and had to eat in the back of the kitchen). One porter and five maids are now on strike. City policemen have escorted scab labor through the picket line and about 30 city, county and state policemen stand around and watch the demonstration. The cops say they have to protect the property of the Holiday Inn. Protests and indignant inquiries at your local Holiday Inn would be appreciated by the McComb MFLU. So would any other community action you could organize.

In Washington, DC, the Clerk of the House has officially submitted to the Speaker of the House the printed depositions--everything submitted by the FDP was printed. The Challenge is now officially in the hands of the House Subcommittee on Elections and Privileges. So far enough copies of the depositions have been printed for the Subcommittee and later copies will be available for each House member. The authority for printing more

copies (for the public) rests with the House Administration Committee, and although the Clerk's office has received requests from thousands of people, copies may not be available unless continued pressure is applied to individual Congressmen and to members of the House Committee on Administration.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION:

Dems	Reps
Burleson, Tex. (Chmn.)	Lipscomb, Calif.
Ashmore, SC *	Corbett, Pa.
Fridell, Md.	Chamberlain, Mich.
Hays, Ohio	Goodell, NY *
Jones, Mo.	Curtin, Pa. *
Thompson, NJ	Devine, Ohio *
Abbitt, Va. *	Erlenborn, Ill. *
Waggonner, La. *	Dickinson, Ala.
Perkins, Ky. *	
Dent, Pa.	
Gibbons, Fla. *	
Nedzi, Mich.	(* indicates member of Subcommittee on Elections and Privileges.)
Brademas, Ind.	
Davis, Ga. *	
Gray, Ill.	
Hawkins, Calif.	
Bingham, NY.	

If you live in one of these Congressmen's districts, please begin another letter-writing campaign to him--urging him to see to it that more copies of the depositions are printed up. If not, write to your individual Congressman again for a copy of the depositions and ask him to see to it that enough copies are printed up so that all the people who want to be fully informed about the Challenge can read the evidence in this case. Stepped up pressure around the challenge will be needed during the next few weeks.

In Mississippi during the next few days, FDP workers are canvassing for voter registration under the new voting laws passed by the state assembly and are planning Freedom Days throughout the state. The purpose of the Freedom days is to show that the people will want to register and to vote. On August 17th a state-wide referendum will be held on the new voting laws which will, probably become amendments to the state constitution. FDP is supporting the passage of the amendments.

Lists of grievances and petitions demanding the unseating of the white Mississippi Congressmen are also being circulated among the local people in preparation for the last days of the challenge--which should be around the last of August. Over 1,000 Mississippians are planning to come to Washington to stand vigil during these days. Please don't forget to help them get there. Copies of the enclosed Nation article are available in bulk from the Washington FDP office for circulation in your community. Printed copies of the Christian Century article are also available from Washington FDP, 926 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Washington, DC.

Freedom,

Margaret
Margaret Lauren

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