TELT OF SHEECH GIVEN AT WASHINGTON MARCH BY JOHN LEWIS AUGUST 28, 1963

3182

1963-64

We march today for jobs and freedom, but we have/to be proud of. For, immdreds and thousands of our brothers are not here. They have no money for their transportation, for they are receiving starvation wages . . . or no wages at all. While we stand here there are sharecroppers in the Delta of Mississippi who are out in the fields working for less than three dollars a day for twelve hours of work. While we stand here there are students in jail on trumped charges. Our brother, James Farmer, along with many others is also in jail. We come here today with a great sense of misgiving.

OCT

Libre

Sopo to supp.

It is true that we support the present civil rights bill in the Congress. However, we support it with great reservations. Unless Title three is put in this bill, there is nothing to protect young children and old women from police dogs and fire hoses, their penalty for engaging in peaceful demonstrations. In its present form this bill will not protect the citizens of Danville, Virginia, who must live in constant fear in a police state. It will not protect the hundreds of people who have been arrested on phoney charges. What about the three young men-SNCC field secretaries--in Americus, Georgia who face the death penalty for engaging in peaceful protest.

As it stands now, the voting section of this bill will not help thousands of black people who want to vote. It will not help the citizens of Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia who are qualified to vote but lack a 6th grade education. "One man, one vote," is the African cry. It is ours, too. It must be ours. Let us tell the Congress: One man, one vote.

We must have legislation that will protect the Mississippi sharecropper who is put of of his farm because he dares to register to vote. We need a bill that will provide for the momeless and starving people of this nation; We need a bill that will ensure the equality of a maid who earns \$5 a week in the home of a family whose income is \$100,000 a year. We must have a good FEPC bill.

Let us not forget that we are involved in a serious social revolution. By and large, American politics is dominated by politicians who build their eareers on immoral compromises and ally themselves with open forms of political, economic, and social exploitation. There are exceptions of course. We salute those. But what political leader can stand up and say, "My party is the party of principles". The prty of Kennedy is the party of Dastland. The party of Javits is also the party of Goldwater. Where is our party? Where is the political party that will make it uncessary to have Marches on Washington?

Where is the political party that will protect the citizens of Albany, Georgia. Do you know that in Albany, Georgia, nine of our leaders have been indicted, not by Dixicrats, but by the Federal Government for peaceful protest. But what did the Federal Government do when Albany's Deputy Sheriff beat Attorney 2. B. King and left him half-dead? What did the F deral Government do when local police officials kicked and assaulted the pregnant wife of Slater King, and she lost her child.

To those who have said, be patient and wait, we must say that we cannot be patient, we do not want to be free gradually. We want our freedom and we want it now. We are tired of being beaten by policemen. We do not want to go to jail, but we will go to jail if that is what we must pay for love, brotherhood, and peace.

All of us must get in this great social revolution sweeping our nation. Get in and stay in the streets of every city, every village and every hamlet of this nation, until true Freedom comes, until the unfinished revolution of 1776 is complete. In the Delta of Mississippi, in Southwest Georgia, in Alabama, Harlem, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and all over the nation---the black masses are on the march. You must go home from this March and help us to get our Freedom.

We will not stop now. All of the fordes of Eastland, Barnett, Wallace, and Thurmound will not stop this revolution. If we do not get meaningful legislation out of this Congress, the time will come when we will not confine our marching to Washington. We will march through the South-through the streets of Jackson, Danville, Cambridge, Nashville, and Birminghamwith dignity and spirit we have shown here today. By the force of our demands, our determination, and our numbers, we shall splinter the segregated south into a thousand pieces and put them together in the image of God and democracy. Wake up Americal