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On August the 16th a year ago, a drive to encourage Negroes to register to vote was begun in Naloville, Mississippi. During this past year, the Negroes in Naloville have run the gamut from verbal threats to shootings. 11 have voted. On August the 16th of this year, the Negro people of Naloville invited the voter registration workers in the Mississippi delta to come to Naloville, and celebrate with them a year of activity. This brief article is my salute to their efforts.

About the time SNCC field secretary Sam Black was running across a reef in Greenwood, Mississippi, in order to escape from a white mob, in a little town of not quite 2000 people, another escape was being effected.

Naloville, Mississippi: located in Sunflower County - the heart of the delta - home of Senator James O. Eastland, Foreman of the Senate, and birthplace of the White Citizens Council. Where one year ago, to speak of voting to a black man, was to ask him to risk job, family, and life. Where even today, there are only thirteen Negroes registered to vote. A town where 11 black people voted this year for the first time since reconstruction.

Reportedly, the Mayor of Naloville once said: "We don't need no one to teach our niggers how to vote". Not too long ago, Negroes would have said "yassuh" to that. However, the black man's revolution sweeping the south and the country, and the world, has reached even tiny Naloville, and spread through the rotting houses on the rutted roads, and a rural share-cropper can now say: "I'm in the B class now; I'm gonna BE here til it's over"; or a lady can stand up and say: "We'll go down (to the circuit clerk's office to register to vote) by ourselves, to show him we're just not satisfied". Despite the threats, harassment, economic pressures, and shootings, change has continued in Naloville, Mississippi.

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Finally, one year later, in this little Mississippi delta town, one finds NAACP draped over the pulpit in a rural church, and FREEDOM tacked on the wall, as the people honor "our boys" in song and food. The "boys", the "co-workers", somewhat embarrassed at finding a tear trickling down, and a voice cracking as they sought to express, not their glory, or their heroics, for as one of them put it, "we can go home at anytime, but you are the ones who are fighting, the ones who will be here", but their inexpressible joy at what the people of Haleville have shown three hundred thousand black people in the Mississippi delta. Even though out of the corner of an eye, one could still see the police fruitlessly circling (unable to intimidate), as words of freedom sung to tunes of despair and hope combined to inspire, drifted out of the window and across the flat ugliness of a delta cotton field dotted with hunk black backs broken and bent by sun, age, and oppression, one knew that the next day, or week, or year, it was going to get outside of that little church, and reach down into that cotton field, and into all the cotton fields across the delta, until everyone realizes that the only place and thing large enough to contain the courage, hope, determination, and love being expressed, is the whole world.

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