

N.A.A.C.P. Newsletter, Galesburg Branch

Canton, Mississippi
July 17, 1964

To the Editor:

I live in a small town, Canton, Mississippi with about four Negroes to every white. The Negroes outnumber the whites, but the white people still run Canton. The Negroes are afraid to try to vote because of what might happen to them. Bombs have been thrown at the CCFO Office, a church and two houses. People have been beaten and nothing has been done by the police to stop this. The Negroes here are boycotting the stores to protest these things.

A lot of people don't know the truth about Mississippi. I wish more people would come here and find out the truth about this state and try to do something to help the Negroes here in Mississippi. Our schools are overcrowded. On an average we have about forty-five students in one class room. I hope that this will change in the future.

From a boy, Age 14

To the Editor:

We don't have a good school in Canton, Mississippi. We have good desserts for lunch. The books are not good because the pages are out. Our clothes are not good. Here in Mississippi, churches have been bombed.

From a boy, Age 8

Dear Editor:

I am a negro girl. I am 11 years old. I am going to Freedom School. I have learned many interesting facts. Someone attempted to bomb the Freedom House, but they were not successful. But a church was bombed. Nobody was hurt. The church is on Walnut Street. About the three Civil Rights men who are missing--they have found something in a river.

In the colored section, there are no sidewalks, but in the white section there are sidewalks. One of our teachers told us why a song is so important. He said there were about 50 people in jail. Two white girls were in a cell by themselves and with a boy in another cell they started to sing. The police were friendly to them. After they go out they were put back in. The police asked them to sing for them.

To the Editor:

I live in Canton, Mississippi. We don't have good schools in Canton. We don't have desks or lunches. The books are not good. The pages are out of them. We don't have any lockers to put our things in. We don't have many erasers or crayons. The white and colored people can't worship together. I hope someday we will be free.

From a boy, Age 12

The letters above were assigned to the children in one of the Freedom School classes taught by JoAnn Ooiwan from Galesburg, Illinois in Canton, Mississippi this summer. The names of the children who wrote these letters are being withheld at the request of their parents, who fear reprisals.

REGISTERVOTE***REGISTER***VOTE***REGISTER***VOTE***REGISTER***

MORE ABOUT MISSISSIPPI: If you are interested in hearing more about the life in "the Closed Society" of Mississippi from a Negro's point of view, hear Mrs. Alison, President of the Jackson, Mississippi Branch of the N.A.A.-C.P. speak at Carver Center, at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, September 11, 1964. Tickets are 75¢ for adults and 35¢ for students and may be obtained from any Executive Board member or at the door that night. We must charge admission for this particular speaker as we are sharing the cost of her transportation up from Mississippi with two other local chapters. A program of Freedom Songs by Professors Douglas Wilson and Fred Newman will be included.

THE MISSISSIPPI PROJECT: Several members of the local branch have received letters from Brian Leekley and JoAnn Coiman, the two Knox graduates who participated in the Mississippi Summer Program after the local chapter raised their subsistence allowance. The Mississippi Program is being extended into the winter and we are happy to report that Brian and JoAnn are among the 35 college students out of the hundreds who went to Mississippi, who have volunteered to stay on and continue their work there. Joann has done this at considerable personal expense, relinquishing a graduate fellowship in History at John Hopkins University in order to continue teaching her Freedom School students in Canton, Mississippi. Brian writes of many ambitious construction projects now underway which will require additional funds, and the Galesburg Chapter will be contacting you soon on how you can help. Both Brian and JoAnn write of the great need for clothing for all ages of the "forgotten and neglected people of Mississippi", so if you are preparing to get rid of some old clothes, hold on to them as we are planning a clothing drive for Mississippi in the near future.

THE TUTORING PROGRAM: Plans are already underway to repeat another successful year with our tutoring program for junior and senior high school students here in Galesburg. Registration forms for the tutoring program may be obtained from any member of the Youth Group or from the various churches. They must be returned, either to Mr. Lehmann, Education Chairman, or Mr. Malone, Director of the Youth Group by the 20th of September. For further information about the tutoring program, you may call Mr. Lehmann at 343-8976.

IMPORTANT: If you are not already registered to vote, please do so immediately. The Voter Registration Office in the City Hall is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you need transportation to get down there, or someone to watch the children while you go down to register, call Mrs. Settle, 343-5584, or Mrs. Lehmann, 343-8976 and arrangements will be made. Deadline for registration is October 5, 1964. Besides the all-important presidential election, there are also many important issues of vital interest to everyone on the ballot, so BE SURE TO REGISTER AND VOTE!

STATE CONFERENCE OF BRANCHES: October 23rd, 24th and 25th, Waukegan, Illinois. This is the meeting where the state officers are elected and we will be needing delegates to attend, so please give thought to the possibility of attending this meeting.

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