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MERIDIAN PROJECT REPORT

October 10 - 16 [1944]

This report includes a political report compiled by Joe Morse, Community Center Report by Eric and Blaine Weinberger, Day nursery Report by Linda Allenstein and a general office and financial report by Sandra Watts, plus a Freedom School report by Gail Falk - co-ordinator of the School

The staff had a meeting on October 13. Alvin Packer was told of the decision concerning his schooling. It was decided by Gerry Wilson in Jackson that Alvin should return home to Mattiesburg to attend school since Mr. Reed the school principal at Harris Jr. College would not let him attend that school. Several Discipline problems were discussed and it was again repeated that anyone breaking any of the rules would be asked to leave the project. We also discussed the coming Freedom Day. It was agreed that there should be a more intensive effort to concentrate on getting people down to the court house on October 29th. This will be accomplished by a much greater concentration on each precinct. We decided to do canvassing at greater lengths of time. It was also decided to start a FDP campaign headquarters at the office since no building was available to the local FDP committee. This headquarters will be manned by local people and since we received an abundance of material from the Democratic National Committee, there will be no problem of furnishing Johnson campaign material to the local citizens. We also discussed plans to find as many polling stations in each precinct as possible in preparation for the Freedom Vote. The staff also talked about how to tie in the Freedom Day, the Freedom Election and the General Election. A leaflet will be prepared and will be distributed at the Mass Meeting on Wednesday and throughout the city. (see enclosure) We also discussed ways of making the public aware of the Three elections. Plans for this will include the possibility of public street meetings, using a bull-horn, and decorating a car to drive throughout the city. It was generally agreed that we should get down to "old-fashioned campaigning".

At the weekly Mass Meeting held on Wednesday, October 14 at the New Hope Baptist Church the Freedom day and the Freedom Election were discussed. Jim Collier, Project Director in Philadelphia was the main speaker. Local people in the FDP discussed the plans for a fund raising dinner for Johnson and Joe Morse discussed the Freedom Day and the Freedom Vote. Preston Ponder then gave a brief talk on how the three campaigns tied together and how people may vote by affidavit in the General Election. Approximately 85 people, not including staff, attended this meeting and it was judged to be one of the most successful meetings of the past several months.

We have now settled down to a somewhat permanent staff:
Preston Ponder - Project Director
Joe Morse - Head of political programs

- Marjerie Henderson - Political Programs
- Eddie Dess - Political Programs
- Gunter Frentz - Political Programs
- Ken Slete - Political Programs
- Pinky Slete - Political Programs
- Eric and Elaine Weinberger - Head of Community Center
- Gail Falk - Co-ordinator of Freedom Schools
- Linda Allenstein - Freedom Schools and Day Nursery (tem. will be going into Clark County eventually)
- Sandra Watts - Office

Financial Report

This report will include the expenditures for the past week.

The new bank account in the name of Meridian COFO started with \$360. \$190 of this money was from Jackson (\$90 as part of budget and \$100 in repayment for the bus we had to hire to go to FDP meeting in Jackson) The other \$160 was from private contribution raised in Chicago specifically for the Meridian Project by a woman lawyer who worked in Meridian during the Summer Project. The following is how the money was spent:

October 12: (* - Check)

Miriam Kerster	*12.00	repaid loan
Meridian Community Center	*80.00	Split the \$160.00 of private contributions between the Office and the Center
Fielder and Brooks	*40.00	Rent on Office
Jimmie Payne	*65.00	Rent on Freedom House
Cash for office	20.00	
Meridian Baptist Seminary	*35.00	For repairs incurred during the summer for the Freedom School
Southern Bell	*8.07	Bill for pay phone
Shadwick's Service Station	*7.80	Repairs and gas
Gas company	1.10	
Dimes for pay phone	5.00	
postage	*4.28	
Ken Slete	6.00	repaid for traffic ticket
gas	6.41	

October 13:

Cash for office	*15.00	
Gunter Frentz	1.00	repaid loan
Presten Pender	1.00	loan
Office supplies	.50	
Eddie Dess	*5.00	Loan to be repaid
feed for staff lunch	4.65	

Alvin Packer 3.25 Bus fare to Nattiesburg

October 14:

Cash for office	*10.00
Feed for staff lunch	4.39
Feed for dinner	2.00
gas	3.00
Bill for repairs on car (paid part of the bill - total bill was \$54.14)	*25.00

This week's expenditures were high because the bills for the first of the month had to be paid. We also came up against some unexpected expenditures like the repair bill for the car and the repair bill for the Baptist Seminary. Receipts for these expenditures will be turned in at the end of the month to Jackson.