

Report from Moss Point--Pascaougoula
November 25 to November 21

1. Relations with the community

a. We have as yet made no definite conclusions about what our relationship to the NAACP will be. The president of the branch says that he is doing some thinking about it, too.

b. We held a mass meeting on Thursday. There were about a dozen people there. We didn't dwell on why the rest of the people weren't there, but rather tried to make the meeting so interesting that the people present would tell their friends about it. We held the meeting in a church in a different area of town than we usually meet in, in an attempt to interest the people in that area. There were a few new faces.

We told the people about the Freedom Schools, and about the food and clothing shipment which we will pick up from Gulfport in a few days. The rest of the meeting was devoted to the situation in the two Moss Point Foodtown grocery stores on Main Street. At those stores over half the business is from Negroes and yet the only Negro employees are the boy who bags groceries in each store. We all decided that there ought to be at least one Negro person clerking in each store, considering that so much of the business is from Negroes. On Friday, two girls went to the Foodtown to ask for a job. At one store they were told that the same employees were there from three years ago and that no new ones were needed. At the other store they were told that they would be called on Monday after a new female checker who started on Friday had the weekend to "work out" or fail. Two other girls were supposed to go to the Foodtowns on Saturday, but they changed their minds. Another meeting will be called when a new development arises.

2. Personnel. The new girl's full name is Nancy Sours.

3. M.S.U. No meetings were held.

4. F.D.P. There were no activities or meetings.

5. Voter registration. Harold Kelvin, Barry Utt, Harry Swan and Rufus Mosley, Jr. (Jock) canvassed all week, mainly in one Pascaougoula housing project. Three people from that project took the registration test this week and two of them passed. Mary Larsen and Nancy Sours also canvassed for the mass meeting.

6. Community Center possibilities. We have a good physical set-up for a community center--two large oblong rooms in the local Masonic Hall. In one we have a library and office; in the other our Freedom School meets.

In the library we have a large number of unarranged, useless books and also some good fiction and non-fiction which we try to keep in order. All the books are shelved; none have check-out cards. We have had some trouble with the best books being taken out and never being returned. Community people use the library pretty faithfully. So far we have had no community people work with us to try to arrange and catalogue the books. We're going to work on that.

We have plans for two newspapers--one coming from the younger children, including all their writings, to be called The Freedom Press the other, The Freedom Legend, run by the MSU, is directed mainly

at students Two issues have come out so far. We hope that sessions will produce a lot of writing for this paper.

At this point, the Freedom School-Community Center program could not be called successful. There is too little community participation. Perhaps development and wide circulation of both newspapers will help.

We are also considering opening one room for tutorials and study hall from 4 to 6 or 7 p.m. every day. We have no definite plans for adult classes as yet, but hope to get adults involved in improving the library.

There are now two staff people working on Community Center-Freedom Schools: Mary Larsen and Nancy Sours.

7. Freedom School activities. Every morning (except Friday because the cold surprised us) at 9 a.m. from ten to twenty 2nd, 4th, and 6th graders descended upon us. The children painted, drew, wrote, worked on ABC's, sang Freedom Songs, and talked about segregation-integration-agitation for about an hour, then went out in the backyard and screamed and fought and played volley-ball.

Every afternoon (including Friday, even though it was cold) at 1 p.m. from ten to twenty 1st, 3rd, and 5th graders did the same thing as the morning group.

We are trying to increase attendance both mornings and afternoons and involve community adults.

Sunday (Nov. 15) at 3 p.m., Freedom School for high school students began. We had a rousing class where staff outnumbered students. We're all reading J.D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye. The class was held in the Moss Point COFO office.

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