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TO: Mr. Richard Haley, Director, Southern Office, CORE
FROM: David S. McVoy, Task Force, Florida
**SUBJECT: Election report for Gadsden County, Florida, from
the North Florida Citizenship Education Project**
DATE: November 5, 1964

One week before election day sample ballots were printed. We immediately began a door-to-door campaign of canvassing all registered Negro voters in the county. Rather than work in separate areas, as we had in registration, we concentrated in one area at a time, starting with the Havana-Concord-Jamison area. We then moved to Quincy, then to Chattahoochee. In that week we canvassed, explaining the ballot and transportation arrangements to some 3000 voters. It is expected that another 800 were reached by residents in the household explaining it to them. On Saturday, October 31, we concentrated on downtown Quincy. A car was set up with election materials and a large sign on top reading "VOTER INFORMATION". Several volunteers handed out newsletters and informed people of the voter information car. During the day, the ballot was explained to approximately 400 people. This was an important segment, since mostly farm people are in town on Saturday, and we were unable to reach this group during door-to-door canvassing.

On Sunday morning we spoke at churches, and Sunday afternoon we held a get-out-the-vote motorcade. Approximately ten cars participated, all decorated with signs urging people to vote. The motorcade toured the entire county, starting at 2 p.m. and ending in Chattahoochee at 6:30 p.m. All along the route people lined up to watch us pass, and the reception was extremely impressive.

Monday was spent in last-minute preparations, including a final check of transportation plans. A tour was made of all of the county's precincts, and of all the pre-arranged pickup points. Final information was distributed to the area transportation leaders, and a check of each area's transportation status was made. That evening a meeting between all of the various groups participating the election day activities was held at Freedom House, and final plans were made.

Election day was a magnificent success. According to the count made by our observers, over 90 per cent of Gadsden's registered Negro voters turned out at the polls. This compares with about 65 per cent of the white voters. Johnson lost to Goldwater by only 190 votes (4566 to 4376), and the outcome in Gadsden is still uncertain because of absentee ballots. Voting in most cases went well, and the carpool, composed of 90 cars, all with signs reading "vote today", and flying white flags from their radio antennas, transported over 2000 to the polls. The whites staged a "phone-in", calling each of our listed phone numbers, and the telephone company apparently did their part to help by cutting our lines off periodically all day. We received many threatening phone calls, and many frustrated calls from Goldwaterites after the election was over.

There was considerable police harassment in Quincy, and election officials invalidated many ballots cast by Negroes. Complaint forms covering these incidents have been sent to Carl Rachlin and the FBI.

Jewel J. Dixie, Negro candidate for sheriff, polled approximately 1600 votes, out of about 8000 cast, or about 20 per cent of the vote.

Tuesday night Freedom house became a gathering place for those who had worked on the registration drive and election day preparations. An election board was ~~xxxx~~ set up, and returns from the county were posted as they came in.

A very important effect of the election was that people who had previously been afraid to even come near Freedom House were actively helping in transportation. For the first time it seemed that we were receiving the support of 100 per cent of the community, and there seemed to be no reluctance. Perhaps this may make the future success of the project easier.