

POLITICAL REPORT

The political program had come to a standstill after the General Election. At a staff meeting it was decided to have a meeting with the various people in the Meridian Community who the staff felt were the potential grass-roots leaders. A list was made of about 35 people and a meeting was called for on November 22. At this meeting the people decided that the best way to get Meridian moving was through testing. They were very enthusiastic and excited. The Freedom School was also conducting testing and it was decided to let both groups work on this project provided that they go to non-violent workshops with ~~with~~ Eric Weinberger. The COFO staff was rather hesitant about this project since the Jackson office had set a policy about no testing. It was decided to let the people go ahead and do what they wanted to do but try to keep as little staff participation as possible until the state staff meeting in Hattiesburg where a policy would be set down. The testing was conducted mainly by the students and an incident happened at the Toddle House which was reported in an earlier page.

The Steering Committee had their next meeting the next Sunday and talked about Maids Unions and economic plans they could set up. At their third meeting the committee decided to have a Silent Prayer service before the hearing of the 21 men arrested in the Neshoba Case. Unions were further discussed and Mary Slote said she would write various people to find out what could be done. After the Hattiesburg meeting and the information about the Challenge the staff began talking to the people about the importance of the challenge. As has been mentioned before, the FDP has not been running in Meridian, due to the Uncle Tomish leadership from the President of the Executive Committee. However, an FDP Executive committee meeting was called for Friday, December 10. Mr. Young the chairman of the Executive committee was present along with four other ladies on the committee. This committee decided to push the Congressional Challenges through the precinct organization and to donate the money raised at the LBJ fund raising dinner to the Washington D.C. trip. The committee also decided to have new elections for the Executive Committee at the County Convention which will be held December 18. The importance of re-registration was also discussed.

The steering Committee met Sunday, December 13, and discussed the Challenge. Three local people attended the workshop in Batesville and discussed the Challenge explaining it to the other people present. It was decided to have workshops up until the County Convention on the 18th. As it stands now, workshops are being set up all over the city with local people and staff people explaining the Challenge to the people. There will be a County Convention on the 18th. to choose people to go to Washington.