

Clare → Kelly 1964 c11

Report on Sunflower County  
From: John Harris.

We have project offices in Indianola (main office), Ruleville and the town of Sunflower. In Ruleville and Indianola there are voter registration, freedom school and community center programs. In Sunflower there are voter registration and freedom school programs.

There are local civil rights organizations. The organization (Ruleville Citizenship Club) in Ruleville has been established for two years. In August the Indianola Citizen's League was formed and the Sunflower County Citizen's League was formed in September. All groups have been very active. Mass meetings are usually well attended. There is a mass meeting each week in Ruleville, Sunflower and Indianola. We are working on finding a place in Moorehead (pop. 1,000) to hold meetings. An average of 380 people attend mass meetings in the county each week.

The voter registration work has been encouraging. Since we set up the Indianola office in July, approximately four hundred Negroes have attempted to register to vote. Only ten passed.

The freedom schools have been well attended since the summer, with a lull during the cotton picking season. Since the freedom school was burned in Indianola, classes and mass meetings were held on the outside until the weather became too cold last week. Night time adult classes will be held in a neighborhood house this week. The school should be repaired by next week. Freedom school is held in the town of Sunflower twice a week. Teenage classes are well attended. We teach Negro history, government and politics, and citizenship. There are also workshops in which we discuss the movement, government and politics, and citizenship. There are also workshops in which we discuss the movement, freedom vote, canvassing, freedom primers, etc.

The F.D.P. in the county is strong. There were three delegates to the Democratic National Convention from the county. There was good participation in the "freedom vote". There were more freedom votes cast in Indianola than were regular votes. There were 2770 freedom votes cast in the county.

We are planning a mock election, via FDP, in January. Candidates will run for sheriff and other county offices, as well as for mayor, alderman, etc., in each town in Sunflower County. The purpose of the mock election is to extend FDP principles and to develop county-wide leadership. Precinct meetings will be held in the near future and in three or four weeks the delegates from these precinct meetings will attend a county meeting in Indianola (the county seat).

Of course, since September, there have been numerous incidents of violence and harassment around the county.