

REPORT ON A MEETING OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS IN MISSISSIPPI
held in Jackson, Mississippi, on October 29, 1966

The meeting was held because people in the state shared certain feelings about what was happening in Mississippi:

Since the end of 1964, the movement has become more and more fragmented.

The Congressional races this year are not organized and may well hurt the movement by showing its weakness.

The F.D.P. has lost personnel and has never reached the stage where it could keep up a WATS line and provide subsistence for an office staff.

There are, however, the resources in the state to make a significant impact on the 1967 local elections, if those resources are organized.

Therefore, a start could be made by calling together those Movement forces.

Jesse Morris, who chaired the meeting, made the point that black conservatism was taking over.

Rev. Ed. King stated, along the same lines, that the NAACP was building a machine that could deliver votes and bring federal programs, and that people might not want to wait for the slow development of "democratic leadership."

Mrs. Devine and others stressed the importance of a good turnout for the November 8 general election.

However, at this time the decision to work on the November 8, 1966, election is a personal one - people may or may not do so.

But for 1967 it is necessary to have a unified approach to the local elections. We cannot afford to repeat this year's experience.

Roberta Galler reminded people that at one time we were glad to see people leave the state. We believed local people could handle all problems. But this has proved not to be the case. Jesse Morris and John Buffington also spoke on the reassessment of the role of the local people.

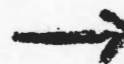
Ted Seaver presented some proposals for central direction and/or coordination, but no decision was reached on this.

There was general agreement about the PRIORITY OF POLITICAL EDUCATION IN PREPARATION FOR THE 1967 LOCAL ELECTIONS over other programs.

County workers and people from various organizations reported on the programs and problems they are involved with.

FDP Executive Committee members present included Mrs. Annie Devine, Mrs. Hazel Palmer, Mrs. Unita Blackwell, Rev. Ed. King. Counties represented included Attala, Clay, Bolivar, Sunflower, Leflore, Carroll, Hinds, Clarke, Issaquena, Washington, Lauderdale, Holmes, Madison, and Forrest.

Organizations included FDP, CDGM, Delta Ministry, Poor Peoples Corporation, Neighborhood Developers, Freedom Information Service, Community Development Agency, Hinds County Community Council, CORE, Citizens' Crusade Against Poverty, Federation of Settlement Houses, Inc Fund, SNCC.



The programs and problems were broken down into four general areas and a committee assigned to report on each.

Political Education - It was the consensus that this was the single most important area. The committee will prepare a report for the next meeting on a program of political education built around the races for local office in 1967.

Members of the committee: Hollis Watkins (Chairman), Harry Bowie, Henry Lorenzi, Lawrence Guyot, Mrs. Annie Devine, Rev. Ed King, Mrs. Unita Blackwell.

Fund Raising - This committee is to report back on ways and means of raising money especially from the local community. John Buffington discussed Clay County's experience.

Members: John Buffington (chairman), Sue Lorenzi, Eliza Hampton, Fred Lowry.

Economics - This committee is to develop an economic program, dealing with the problems of building a black economy.

Members: Frank Smith, Bob Beech, Jesse Morris, Ted Seaver, James Mays.

Federal Programs - CDGM will assume responsibility for this area.

The question of a central office was discussed. There was some feeling that a WATS line was not worth the cost, but that it would be best to locate the office near a WATS line.

For the pre-election period until November 8, Harriet Tanzman will go to Edwards to make WATS calls.

People with problems about the November 8 elections should call the FDP office (352-9128). There will be someone there to take calls and relay them via Edwards.

FDP distributed November 8 campaign leaflets and sample ballots for each district.

County government manuals and A.S.C.S. materials were distributed by FIS. Any county which wants this materials should call via FDP or write P.O. Box 120, Tougaloo, Miss. 39174.

It was decided to meet again at 10 o'clock at Medgar Evers Neighborhood Guild, 1525 Booker Street, Jackson, on November 12, 1966, the Saturday after the election.

Committees will meet in the interval and draw up reports for discussion at the meeting.

You are urged to be present.

Notes by Sue Lorenzi and Alex Shimkin