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Mississippi presents not only many sharp contrasts to the rest of the nation, but within its orders circumstances and conditions vary widely. Bringing about change in Mississippi will therefore have to occur in a variety of ways.

Last Thursday, July 16, was Freedom Day for the Second Congressional District, the northwestern quarter of the state and informally known as the Delta. In the county seats of Cleveland, Greenwood, and Greenville, there were attempts at mass registration and picketing. In Greenwood about 110 people were arrested. In Cleveland 40 people attempted to register, 25 actually took the test and another 30 picketed. Because the Greenwood story has been adequately reported due to the arrests and because of my personal involvement in the Cleveland demonstration, this report will only describe the latter.

Preparation for the Freedom Day in Cleveland was confined to three areas. Technical difficulties included getting enough cars to bring the people to the courthouse from all over the county and making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for lunch. Publicity took care of itself by a mass meeting and word-of-mouth. Although the Freedom School offers daily classes in citizenship, no educational work was done specifically to prepare people to pass the literacy test, and the reason for this is that COFO holds that given the general availability of radio and television and that even an illiterate voter can know whether a local candidate will give him what he wants, any literacy test is an unreasonable requirement. Thus, the "no man - One Vote" slogan.

We did, however, prepare the local high school students who were to be in the picket line. Since this was to be the first time a public building in Bolivar County had been picketed, we all had to prepare for any eventuality. Instruction was given in the Freedom School Wednesday afternoon and consisted mainly of a discussion of the meaning of Freedom Day and non-violent workshops. A mock picket line was set up and various situations, such as heckling, arrest, and attacks by a mob were acted out.

Thursday morning came and the first group arrived at the courthouse about 10 o'clock. County Sheriff Charles Cane had been informed in advance and had not only cleared the driveway in front of the courthouse for our use but also employed 40 special volunteer police, each armed with billy clubs, pistols, and shot-guns. Dressed in khaki uniforms and white helmets, these men were stationed at every entrance to the courthouse and on the four surrounding sidewalks. No one who did not have explicit business in the courthouse was even allowed on that side of the street.

Crowds, of course, did get on and just watch. Once a group of teenage boys and young men crossed the street and attempted simply to watch from the curb, but the police asked them to cross back over. If he had wanted to, Sheriff Cane could have enforced the state's anti-picketing law and thrown us all in jail. But because he does not want to hurt Mississippi's image the way the attention to the Greenwood Freedom Day arrests did, and because he wants to prove he does not need federal marshalls to enforce the law

law with some sense of equity, he not only allowed us to picket

but gave us real protection.

I am confident there would have been trouble if the white helmets and shotguns had not been present. On several occasions I accompanied our communications officer to a public telephone four blocks away. Once we were followed by three men who, as we passed by on another trip called us "white niggers". Cars with young toughs cruised by all afternoon yelling similar pleasantries.

When we saw that the picketing was being protected we decided to see how far we could push the demonstration. We began in the morning to sing Freedom Songs quietly as we walked the line. After lunch we went one step further and began to shout chants, such as "Freedom NOW" and "One MAN-one VOTE". After two 10 minute bursts, Sheriff Carns asked us to be quiet, and we went back to singing. Then, obviously trying to see how far he could push us, he asked that the singing be stopped also. We did not immediately. A local Negro woman on the line began reciting the Lord's Prayer and we all joined her. Our duel with the sheriff ended in a draw, but he even asked us if we were coming back the next day. He said he wanted to know ahead of time so he could have his men ready.

Despite the radically different results of the Greenwood and Cleveland Freedom Days, they both were successes. The fact that in the middle of the Republican Convention, the nation's attention could be focused on the mass arrests in Greenwood served the very important function of nagging the consciences of the American people. The fact that not only was a demonstration in Cleveland

permitted but actually given grudging support of the country sheriff clearly shows how changes will eventually come from within Mississippi. Eventually America will feel so guilty about Mississippi and the rest of the Deep South, that it will demand changes, and as white Southerners sense the growth of this demand, they will change, or peacefully accept changes imposed on them.