

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Mr. White:

Louis Martin called to say that a committee of 8 has been chosen to call the Attorney General or his designee at Justice Department in connection with the three missing people in Miss.

A Resolution was passed approx.
2:30:

"orderly demonstrations for Wed. morning, June 24, to be conducted around the Justice Department and/or the White House at the committees discretion so that the people of the U.S. and the Attorney General will know of our determination that he use the full arm of his department to investigate this cruel incident".

Mrs. Chaney

Mendota Miss

E.F. Young
Hotel

485-9132

Mrs. Rita
1017 - Lynch St.
not you

~~Meridian~~

W y v Cong ed.
Cofdy

Jackson, Miss
" Cofdy

WASHINGTON
THE WHITE HOUSE

Zober

Rita Schuerner
Miss. Freedom
Demo. Party

1353 U St NW

2nd Fl. DC 20009

copy & cover

Steven Currier
PL 75920
ny

Schwann
2000
483-9500

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Leinbaugh

197-9537

James G. ...

by

161 W. 86th

Post W.

Mrs. Fannie Lee
Chaney

614 39th Ave.
Meridian, Miss.

Ben Amos

sep. but
not divorced

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Arnold Grunther from Brooklyn, N. Y.
called June 26, 1964 to speak with the
President about marshalls going to Miss.
and about the three lost boys - he spoke
with Helen Colle and made a point of
getting her name, etc.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

7/21/64

TO: Lee White

FROM: Jack Valenti



Proceed

Ant
12/1/60
11:00
Thurs
Jul 30

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 21, 1964

TO: Jack Valenti

FROM: Lee C. White

Burke Marshall is in Atlanta, but Nick Katzenbach and I have discussed Farmer's request for Mrs. Chaney and him to meet with the President. We both agree that it would be impossible to refuse an opportunity for Mrs. Chaney to meet with the President. However, Farmer has requested that Mr. McKissick of CORE join them, and it seems clear that he would want to use the opportunity to talk about problems other than the three missing boys, e.g., Harlem.

Farmer is quite responsible and would respond well to suggestions as to what the press should be told following any meeting. Nick and I agreed that we should make an effort to limit the meeting to Mrs. Chaney and Farmer, but if that were impossible, the meeting should be held in any event.

I will be glad to call Farmer's assistant and attempt to arrange this if the President wishes me to do so.

OK. L -

7/23

*Advised Farmer's Office.
Asked that no announcement
be made.*

Lcw

IN RECD TO WRITING FILE

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 20, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR

LEE WHITE

Talk to Burke Marshall -- see if he thinks it is
okay.



Jack Valenti

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 17, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR

Mr. Jack Valenti

The assistant to James Farmer of CORE called to request an appointment with the President for Mr. Farmer, Mrs. Chaney (mother of the missing Negro boy in Mississippi) and Mr. Floyd McKissick of the CORE organization.

About 10 days or two weeks ago when Mr. Farmer asked whether the President would see Mrs. Chaney if she were to come to Washington, I checked with the President who advised that he certainly did not want to encourage Mrs. Chaney or any other parents to come to Washington, but I could advise Farmer that if she were in town, we would make every possible effort to arrange a meeting even though it might be brief. I passed this word on to Farmer, and we would have perhaps been able to do it on Monday, July 6, except for the fact that the President remained in Texas on that day.

In any event, I assume I have to respond to the specific request from CORE headquarters. The preferred time is early next week.

Lee
Lee C. White

OK

2

back to B Marshall

THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

ROUTE SLIP

(To Remain With Correspondence)

TO Harold Reis
Exec. Asst. to the AG
Dept. of Justice

PROMPT HANDLING IS ESSENTIAL.
WHEN DRAFT REPLY IS REQUESTED
THE BASIC CORRESPONDENCE MUST
BE RETURNED. IF ANY DELAY IN
SUBMISSION OF DRAFT REPLY IS
ENCOUNTERED, PLEASE TELEPHONE
OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL COUNSEL.

Date May 18, 1964

FROM THE SPECIAL COUNSEL

ACTION: Comment _____

Draft reply xx . It is very important that we get this ltr
back quickly. If there is any delay
For direct reply would you please notify us.

For your information _____

For necessary action _____

For appropriate handling _____

See below _____

Remarks:

Ltr dated 5/4/64 to the President from C. J. Harris, 167 West Greenwood
Avenue, Lansdowne, Pa.

By direction of the President:

Lee C. White
Associate Special Counsel
to the President

THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

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(To Remain With Correspondence)

TO Harold Reis
Exec. Asst. to the AG
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For direct reply would you please notify us.

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For necessary action _____

For appropriate handling _____

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**Ltr dated 5/4/64 to the President from C. J. Harris, 167 West Greenwood
Avenue, Lansdowne, Pa.**

By direction of the President:

Lee C. White
Associate Special Counsel
to the President

Tell Justice it is very
important that we get
this back quickly.
If there is to be a
delay, they should
return the letter.

2-7-86
20.9.10
LCW-~~See~~

Send Justice
for draft -

or then add
paragraph saying
"no" to request
for mtg w/Pres.
- or do you want
to meet w/ them?

kn

B.A.

Refer to Lee White
to be answered at same
time as ltr to the Pres?

yes

1413

OFFICE 5/11/64

167 W. Greenwood Ave.
Lansdowne, Penna.
May 4, 1964

Dear Mrs. Johnson:

I have been requested by those whose names are contained on the enclosed petition to forward this copy to you. The petition is self-explanatory. These parents and relatives desire an audience with your husband immediately. They would also appreciate an opportunity to discuss this problem with you as one parent to another parent of young Americans. They are extremely concerned regarding the safety of those referenced in the petition. I concur with them completely that this matter is urgent.

Most sincerely,

Clarence J. Harris

27 April 1964

President Lyndon B. Johnson
White House
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

As parents and relatives of young Americans who plan to participate by nonviolent and constructive means in the civil rights effort in the Southern United States this summer, we are very deeply concerned about the safety and welfare of these individuals whom we hold dear. We, therefore, turn to you for advice and immediate assistance. The events in the South during the last several years have served only to amplify our fears that injury and abuse may befall our loved ones as a result of repressive measures that will be adopted by the local authorities in the South. We are aware that these local authorities, particularly in Mississippi, have increased their capacity to suppress the efforts of the Negro population to attain their rights as well as the efforts of those, such as our loved ones, who choose to support their fellow Americans. This preparation for continued repression and suppression is evidenced by the acquisition of large quantities of highly effective armament by local Southern police authorities. These weapons include tanks, guns, and troop carriers.

Therefore, our prime reason in petitioning you as a group is because of our individual and combined fear of the harm which may be incurred by our loved ones due to the foregoing situation. A situation of which you are fully aware. We therefore petition you as head of the executive branch of our government to act as an immediate and effective interface or buffer to prevent violence and harm. It must be remembered that while the constructive work which our loved ones will be doing causes us great apprehension, it is work in keeping with the teachings and doctrines of democracy which have been expounded continually to them since their youth. Your recent suggestion of Peace Corp type of activity on a national level further supports these teachings.

It is therefore your solemn responsibility to see that they are neither deceived in their belief in American democracy nor that their lives are needlessly put into jeopardy while attempting to put these democratic concepts into practice within the confines of the United States. Because of our anxiety in this matter, we desire an immediate reply and further we request an early opportunity (prior to June 1, 1964) to speak with you personally.

cc: Mr. Lee C. White
Assoc. Special Counsel to President

Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson c/o Mrs.
Richard Bolling

Senator Joseph Clark

Senator Hugh Scott

We the undersigned do fully endorse the attached petition addressed to
President Lyndon B. Johnson

Mrs. Berphy J. Hall 1631 W. Girard Ave.
Phila. Pa.

Kathleen M. Henderson 275 N. Highland Ave.
Lansdowne, Penna.

William N. Henderson 275 N. Highland Ave.,
Lansdowne, Penna.

Endre C. Barrett

112 E. 49th St Phila 39

Aaron H. Rubin

5300 W. Offord St

Leona Rubin

5300 W Offord St

Jauretta B. Quest

6246 N. Woodstock St Phila 38

Robert Board

3708 W. Oakdale St.

Elizabeth Board

2228 W. Oakdale Street Phila Pa

Mildred Board

6237 Limekiln Pike Phila 41

Haywood H. Board

6232 Limekiln Pike Phila 41 Pa

George Van Hook

2056 Watkins St. Phila, 45

Catherine Van Hook

2056 Watkins St. Phila 45

Joseph Fitzhugh

6246 N. Woodstock Phila.

Rebecca B. Christian

6246 N. Woodstock St.

2056 Watkins St Phila, 45, Pa



Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson
c/o Mrs. Richard Bolling
White House
Washington, D.C.

167 W. Greenwood Ave,
Lansdowne, Pa.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 10, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR

MR. LEE C. WHITE

I think Noel Day's letter
makes it clear what action is expected
of us.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cliff".

Clifford L. Alexander, Jr.



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

608-8331

387-7445

3418 11th Street, N. W.
Washington 10, D. C.
June 9, 1964

Mr. Clifford Alexander
Executive Offices
White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Cliff,

It was good talking with you this morning. As I told you, a number of prominent Boston area citizens asked Dr. Robert Coles, Dr. Howard Zinn, and myself to deliver to President Johnson a letter expressing concern about the Mississippi situation and urging the use of Presidential powers to guarantee the safety of the students participating in the "Mississippi Freedom Summer" project.

A copy of the letter is enclosed. We have mailed the original directly to the President with a carbon copy sent to Attorney General Kennedy.

It is our feeling that a state of emergency exists in Mississippi already and that this will be heightened as the summer proceeds. In the past, as you are well aware, federal intervention has come only after a direct challenge to the implementation of court orders and in the presence of the threat of force and violence. We believe that it is both possible and politically desirable for the Administration to take preventive or deterrent action in this instance. That is, it is our belief, based on information we have gathered both in the field and from testimony offered at informal hearings like the one here in D. C. yesterday, that unless preventive action is taken now it will be necessary to undertake more militant forms of federal intervention later in the summer. Our concern is both for the damage to the administration's image in this eventuality, coming as it will closer to the Convention or the general election, and for the lives and welfare of those whose death or disfigurement would make intervention inevitable.

We are suggesting, that in the absence of workable guarantees from Governor Johnson of Mississippi, that President Johnson assign a substantial force of federal marshalls to Mississippi with specific instructions to enforce the constitutional rights of the civil rights

workers and the people of Mississippi, and empowered not only to investigate constitutional violations but also to arrest civilians and local law enforcement agents involved in or aiding and supporting such violations. The President has both precedents and adequate authorization for this, and the use of marshall's in civilian dress, might be expected to express federal determination, encourage those who are becoming increasingly alienated by the current ineffectiveness of the federal government in Mississippi (a rather widespread feeling according to the testimony of native Mississippians and sharecroppers we heard yesterday), and prevent the more flagrant constitutional abuses and distortions with more effectiveness and less irritation than the presence of uniformed federal forces or even nationalized units of the local National Guard.

We would appreciate any influence you might bring to bear in emphasizing the critical nature of this situation.

Best regards to your family.

Sincerely,



Noel Day

ND:mmm

Mr. President:

You are undoubtedly aware that this summer almost 1000 Americans will travel to Mississippi under the auspices of the Council of Federated Organizations in that state. The purpose of their trip will be to carry on educational activities, community center programs, and voter registration work, in order to insure equal opportunity for all. Among these volunteer workers will be 45 students from Harvard, Brandeis, Radcliffe, and Boston University, whose names are appended to this appeal.

As you know, the record of the past several years indicates that the liberties, and the lives, of these people will be in jeopardy this summer. That record is full of intimidations, arrests, beatings, shootings, and even murder, inflicted upon Negro and white citizens. It is clear beyond doubt that they cannot depend upon the State of Mississippi for protection.

The Constitution of the United States vests responsibility in you, Mr. President, to enforce the laws of the nation. For this purpose you have both inherent and statutory powers. We urge you, in the name of that humanity which the nation espouses, and that equality of rights to which you have pledged support, to use the plenitude of your Presidential authority to take preventive and corrective measures to protect the lives and the constitutional liberties of all persons within the State of Mississippi. We ask that you station in Mississippi, in advance of trouble, federal marshals sufficient to deter, prevent, or immediately suppress actions which would deprive Americans of their constitutional rights.

The eyes of the nation, and of the world, will be on Mississippi this summer. Let them see right and justice prevail in that state through the authority and dignity of the Chief Executive of our nation.

Affiliations of the signers of this appeal are
for the purpose of personal identification only.

This letter has been endorsed by the following:

Prof. Albert O. Beisel, Boston University Law School

Edmund C. Berkeley, Editor Computers & Automation

Rt. Rev. John M. Burgess, Suffragan Bishop Episcopal Diocese
of Massachusetts

Dr. Ross Cannon, Reverend

Dr. Robert Coles, Harvard University

Prof. Paul Deats, Jr. Boston University

Prof. Robert F. Drinan, S.J., Dean Boston College Law School

Prof. Sanford J. Fox, Boston College Law School

Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn

Mr. & Mrs. John Chipman Gray

Rabbi Albert I. Gordon

Prof. Oscar Handlin, Winthrop Prof. of History, Harvard Univ.

Prof. Mark DeWolfe Howe, Harvard University Law School

Mary Howe

Prof. Richard G. Huber, Boston College Law School

Kivie Kaplan

Prof. William J. Kenealy, S.J., Boston College Law School

Prof. Leonard W. Levy, Dean of Faculty, Brandeis Univ.

Dr. Bernard Lown

Mrs. Herbert Marcuse

Prof. Bernard McCabe, Tufts University

Prof. John D. O'Reilly Jr., Boston College Law School

Mrs. John B. Paine, Jr.

Rabbi Samuel Perlman, Hillel House, Boston University

Katherine B. Perlman

Prof. Douglas Reynolds, Tufts University

Mrs. David Riesman

Mr. & Mrs. Edward Ryerson

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Prof. Emeritus Harvard University

Rabbi Steven F. Schwarzschild, Chairman Social Action Comm.
N.E. Region, United Synagogue

Dr. Bradbury Seasholes, Tufts University

Prof. Richard S. Sullivan, Boston College Law School

Rev. Francis W. Sweeney, S.J. Boston College

Rev. Richard L. Twomey, S.J. Boston College

Prof. Harold Weisberg, Dean of the Graduate School, Brandeis Univ.

Prof. Victor Weisakopf, Mass. Institute of Tech.

Prof. Joseph P. Witherspoon, Jr. Univ. of Texas Law School

Rabbi Leonard Zion, Assoc. Dean for Student Affairs, Brandeis Univ.

Prof. Howard Zinn, Boston University

Affiliations of the signers of this appeal are for the purpose of

STUDENTS TRAVELING TO MISSISSIPPI FROM NEW ENGLAND
COLLEGES -- SUMMER 1964

Harvard and Radcliffe

Cummings, Peter
Dolgoft, Robert
Ganz, Marshall
Gerber, David
Goldstein, Barry
Holdes, Bill
Kelley, Parrish
Kindermann, Gibbs
Levine, Madeline
Levine, Stephen
Levy, Betty
O'Brien, Tony
Ohls, James
Morgenthau, Thomas
Strickland, John
Toda, Yasushi
Vogel, Lise
Whitman, Grenville
Harper, Philip
Tushnet, Mark
Orris, Peter
Wiley, James
Thomas, Morton
Cowan, Jeff
Frank, Barney
Livingstone, David
Hymer, Robert
Voore, Philip
Archibald, Larry
Wright, Robert
Fallon, Frank
Churchill, Michael
Lake, Ellen
Ryerson, Sue
Amatnick, Kathie
Ellis, Evelyn
Falk, Gail
Leonard, Marilyn
Mendelsohn, Janet
Schlesinger, S.

Boston University

Kravetz, Janet
Schumann, Bettina
Mutnick, Barbara
Hurst, Christina

Brandeis

Joffe, Carole
Gelfand, David
Zellner, Bob
Davies, Jon

Smith College

Clark, Ann
Black, Edith
Zuckerman, Leda

University of Massachusetts

Myers, Virginia
Tompkins, Natalie
Eisenberg, Elliot

Amherst

Williams, Christopher
Norall, Peter

Mt. Holyoke

Treusch, Karen

Clark

Trimble, David
Ashe, Marie
Chaiklin, Henry

Babson Institute


Schaefer, Peter

Pembroke

Dobbie, Margaret
Gladstone, Susan

University of Rhode Island

Allen, John



June 2

Mr. White

When you have done
whatever you are going
to do with this, send
it thru Mr. Moyers as
he talked to one of these
men today.

leb

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 1, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR

Lee White

For your handling.

Ken O'Donnell *Ko*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 13, 1964

To: Lee White

From: Ken O'Donnell

KOD

5-R
Interviewed
June 8, 1964
5/28



Council of Federated Organizations

1017 Lynch Street

(601) 352-9605

Jackson, Mississippi 39203

May 25, 1964

President Lyndon B. Johnson
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear President Johnson:

We are writing on behalf of the Mississippi Council of Federated Organizations, composed of the staff members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Congress of Racial Equality, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee working in Mississippi and local Mississippians.

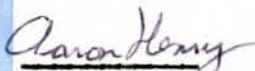
The Council has planned a summer project involving 1,000 college-age volunteers from across the country who will encourage Negroes to register to vote, teach in Freedom Schools, and man community centers.

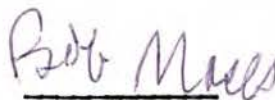
During the past three years, civil rights workers and local citizens in Mississippi have faced violence and brutality when they have tried to exercise their constitutional rights.

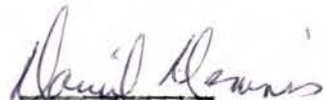
A Mississippi delegation from the Council of Federated Organizations and representatives from the national civil rights organizations composing the Council, and a delegation from the National Council of Churches would like to meet with you to discuss preparations for the summer.

We realize, of course, that your schedule might not permit such a meeting in the near future, but we are concerned that we meet with you before the summer program begins. Might we suggest June 18 or 19 as a date?

Sincerely,


Aaron Henry


Robert Moses


David Dennis

Aaron Henry
President

Robert Moses
Program Director

David Dennis
Assistant Program Director

Congressional District Coordinators

Frank Smith, 1st
Columbus

James Jones, 2nd
Greenwood

Jesse Harris, 3rd
Vicksburg

Matteo Suarez, 4th
Meridian

Lawrence Guyot, 5th
Hattiesburg

State Office Coordinator
Charles Cobb, Jackson

Welfare and Relief Committee
Vera Pigeo, Clarksdale
Annette Ponder, Greenwood

Political Program Committee
Lawrence G. Guyot, Hattiesburg

Finance Committee
Rev. R. L. T. Smith, Jackson

Federal Programs Committee
Jesse Morris, Jackson

THE WHITE HOUSE

MAY 29 11 54 AM '64

RECEIVED

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

RECEIVED TELETYPE UNIT

MAY 29 1964

TO THE PRESIDENT
FROM THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
SUBJECT: [Illegible]

[Illegible text block]

[Illegible text block]

[Illegible text block]

[Illegible text block]

[Illegible text block]

[Illegible text block]

June 20, 1964

Dear Mr. Harris:

Your letter to the President and the copy which was sent to Mrs. Johnson discussing the forthcoming program of voter registration in Mississippi to be undertaken by a group of college students was referred to the Justice Department when it was received. The information that has been received from the Department indicates that its representatives have been in close and continuing touch with the Council of Federated Organizations which is the sponsoring group. In addition I have talked to Mr. Aaron Henry, the President of the Council.

The President has asked the Justice Department to keep fully informed on every aspect of the program and to advise him of all significant developments as the program unfolds in the coming weeks.

The President's schedule has been so difficult in the past few weeks that a meeting of the type you have requested was simply not possible to arrange. However, as indicated, the Federal Government is fully informed about the program and will continue its close liaison with those who are conducting it.

Sincerely,

Lee C. White
Associate Special Counsel
to the President

Mr. Clarence J. Harris
167 West Greenwood Avenue
Laneshawne, Pennsylvania

June 20, 1964

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Sincerely,

**Lee C. White
Associate Special Counsel
to the President**

**Mr. Clarence J. Harris
167 West Greenwood Avenue
Landowne, Pennsylvania**

June 23, 1964

MEMORANDUM TO THE FILES

Subject: Disappearance of Three Participants in Mississippi Project

Yesterday morning at about 11:30 James Farmer of CORE called to advise that three of "their people" had been missing since Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. The three were Mike Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chayney, the last a Negro. They had departed from Meridian for Philadelphia, Mississippi, 37 miles away. Apparently there were conflicting reports as to whether the three had been arrested for speeding on Sunday evening. One report had it that they had been arrested and released at 10:30 p.m. Sunday night. In any event, they were reasonable and well trained individuals who would have been in contact with their Meridian office by telephone.

Farmer had talked to John Doar at the Justice Department and had been assured that the FBI would do everything possible to find the young men. Mr. Farmer called here for purposes of notification and to urge our assistance in any way possible. I advised him that I would be in touch with Justice to be sure that everything possible was being done. I then called Burke Marshall who informed me that they were well aware of what was going on and that the FBI was cooperating fully.

Farmer called again late in the afternoon to say that his information was that there appeared to be no activity on the highway between Meridian and Philadelphia. He did, however, suggest that there was a Naval Air Station within seven miles of Meridian that might have equipment that could be used in a search. I relayed this to Burke Marshall who got in touch with the Navy and the equipment was made available to the FBI. The last information that I had at

8:00 last night was that a full scale search was on.

At 12:00 last night Congressman Ryan tried to call the President and finally got in touch with me. He wanted to be sure that this matter had been brought to our attention and to indicate that word had reached him that the FBI and Federal government generally were not particularly aggressive in their efforts to find the three boys. I assured him that my information was to the contrary, that we were as anxious to find them as he believed he was and told him that any specific suggestions and recommendations that he had would be most welcome.

Lee C. White
Associate Special Counsel
to the President

AIR MAIL

SPECIAL DELIVERY

June 18, 1964

Dear Mr. Henry:

As I indicated to you in our telephone conversation yesterday, the President's schedule at this particular time is unusually heavy. Accordingly, it is most unlikely there will be any opportunity for the President to meet with you or the other representatives of the Council of Federated Organizations before your program begins the latter part of this month.

The President, of course, has given the full support of his office to encouraging the broadest possible participation in voting by all Americans. Moreover, as you know, the Civil Rights Bill, which has been so vigorously supported by the President, has one of its principal titles devoted to obtaining equal treatment for all prospective registrants. The Administrations of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson have been most energetic in bringing judicial actions under existing law to achieve equal opportunity for registration without regard to race, color or any other improper standards.

I understand that the Justice Department, through the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Civil Rights Division, Burke Marshall, has been in close contact with your organization and will certainly keep us advised of events as they unfold during the coming weeks.

If there is any specific or detailed information that you believe should come to the attention of the President, please feel free to write directly to him at any time or to me.

Sincerely,

Lee C. White
Associate Special Counsel
to the President

Mr. Aaron Henry
President
Council of Federated Organizations
1017 Lynch Street
Jackson, Mississippi

CALLER'S STATEMENT

Mrs. Rita Schwerner
Western College for Women
Oxford, Ohio
Area code 513
523 - 6161
523 - 6265

DATE: _____

CALLER'S SIGNATURE

REMARKS


Subject called re her husband, Michael Schwerner, and two other men, James Chaney and Andrew Goodman, who had been in Mississippi for the past six and one-half months as voter registration workers. These men, working in Neshoba County Mississippi, have been missing for 37 hours, according to Mrs. Schwerner. She stated that she had called the Justice Department and the FBI, who were reluctant to enter the case, but had, after persuasion on her part, agreed to conduct an investigation.

Mrs. Schwerner sounded quite upset and requested that the President be notified immediately. Said she wished to know how many agents of the FBI were working on the case and where they were working. She felt that the lives of these three men were ultimately in the hands of the President (since he over-see all federal agencies) and that if harm comes to these men the President must share responsibility. I advised her to keep in contact with the FBI, that I was sure they were doing everything possible to locate the men, but she said she was unable to learn anything as to the progress of their investigation.

I identified myself as an agent of the U.S. Secret Service, and advised her that I could not awaken the President at this time as she requested. She then stated that if I did not act her request to the President, she would hold me responsible for whatever happened to the three men. I advised her that this responsibility was not mine, but that I would pass her request and a write-up of our telephone conversation on to my superior and that was all I could do.

Mrs. Schwerner said she respected the President, but that if anything happened to her husband she would consider the President lax if he does nothing to push the matter and take a personal interest in it. She said she will hold a new conference in the morning (6/23/64) and then proceed to Mississippi to personally search for her husband. Mrs. Schwerner sounded quite serious, and could possibly cause emotional damage to the President.

DATE: June 23, 1964


(INTERVIEWER'S SIGNATURE)

June 23, 1964

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Yesterday morning at about 11:30 James Farmer of CORE called to advise that three of "their people" had been missing since Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. The three were Mike Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chayney, the last a Negro. They had departed from Meridian for Philadelphia, Mississippi, 37 miles away. Apparently there were conflicting reports as to whether the three had been arrested for speeding on Sunday evening. One report had it that they had been arrested and released at 10:30 p.m. Sunday night. In any event, they were reasonable and well trained individuals who would have been in contact with their Meridian office by telephone.

Farmer had talked to John Doar at the Justice Department and had been assured that the FBI would do everything possible to find the young men. Mr. Farmer called here for purposes of notification and to urge our assistance in any way possible. I advised him that I would be in touch with Justice to be sure that everything possible was being done. I then called Burke Marshall who informed me that they were well aware of what was going on and that the FBI was cooperating fully.

Farmer called again late in the afternoon to say that his information was that there appeared to be no activity on the highway between Meridian and Philadelphia. He did, however, suggest that there was a Naval Air Station within seven miles of Meridian that might have equipment that could be used in a search. I relayed this to Burke Marshall who got in touch with the Navy and the equipment was made available to the FBI. The last information that I had at

8:00 last night was that a full scale search was on.

At 12:00 last night Congressman Ryan tried to call the President and finally got in touch with me. He wanted to be sure that this matter had been brought to our attention and to indicate that word had reached him that the FBI and Federal government generally were not particularly aggressive in their efforts to find the three boys. I assured him that my information was to the contrary, that we were as anxious to find them as he believed he was and told him that any specific suggestions and recommendations that he had would be most welcome.

Lee C. White
Associate Special Counsel
to the President

June 20, 1964

Dear Mr. Harris:

Your letter to the President and the copy which was sent to Mrs. Johnson discussing the forthcoming program of voter registration in Mississippi to be undertaken by a group of college students was referred to the Justice Department, when it was received. The information that has been received from the Department indicates that its representatives have been in close and continuing touch with the Council of Federated Organizations which is the sponsoring group. In addition I have talked to Mr. Aaron Henry, the President of the Council.

The President has asked the Justice Department to keep fully informed on every aspect of the program and to advise him of all significant developments as the program unfolds in the coming weeks.

The President's schedule has been so difficult in the past few weeks that a meeting of the type you have requested was simply not possible to arrange. However, as indicated, the Federal Government is fully informed about the program and will continue its close liaison with those who are conducting it.

Sincerely,

Lee C. White
Associate Special Counsel
to the President

Mr. Clarence J. Harris
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