On September 17, 1965 the challenge to wrest the white Congressmen from Mississippi was dismissed from the House of Representatives, by a vote of 228 to 143. The motion for dismissal, coming from the Chairman of the House Elections Subcommittee, did not acknowledge any of the real issues of the Challenge.

Instead the motion called for dismissal on "technical" grounds. The Mississippi Congressmen had valid certificates of election on file in the office of the Clerk of the House. They had taken the oath of office administered by the Speaker of the House.

Moreover, as the official report for dismissal complained, "The fact is that the contentants did not avail themselves of the procedures provided by law for holding elections; they sought exclusions from the registration books and ballots prior to election, nor did they even attempt to challenge the Governor's certificate of election, in Federal District Court, after the election was held."

**Dodged the Issue**

The Minority Report of the Elections Subcommittee recommended that the Challenge be sent back to the subcommittee for more open hearings, in Carroll County, Mississippi. The official report from Congresswoman Hawkins from California stated, "Mr. Speaker, the committee majority found that the principal question facing the challenge was, "Was there an election?" and it found that there was none. No one has denied that, but the issue raised by this challenge is whether the Mississippi election was valid, constitutional election and whether qualified citizens could avail themselves of the electoral and political processes of the state in which they lived...that is the question which the committee should answer."

**Lawrence Guyot, Chairman of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, commented: "It is true that the Congressman re-elected in the state represented by the vote taken...had little to do with the major issues we raised - the anti-endorsement disfranchisement of more than 60% of the Negroes in Mississippi render the Congress elections illegal." Thus the Congress of the United States going to allow for may sit among them elected by a system of murder, terror and economic slavery? Rather than face these questions, Congress...

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**STRIKE IN THE GRAPES!**

CARROLL COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

The drive was begun by Mrs. Leola Carroll, among them, have formed what is called "The Team." They travel from place to place, often in small groups, and carry information from one to the other.

Larry feels that state-wide coordination of the FDP is very weak. Where there are two offices, one for COFO and one for the FDP, there is much working against integration and there is considerable confusion. SNCC has taken steps to remedy this, but there are still some of the old SNCC staff members, like John Harris, among them, have formed what is called "The Team." They travel from place to place, often in small groups, and carry information from one to the other.

The challenge of the MFDP failed to capture the active intervention of the FDP movement. There are two offices, one for COFO and one for the FDP, but there is much working against integration and there is considerable confusion. SNCC has taken steps to remedy this, but there are still some of the old SNCC staff members, like John Harris, among them, have formed what is called "The Team." They travel from place to place, often in small groups, and carry information from one to the other.

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The Washington D.C. Challenge

I sat and watched while the Congress of the United States of America voted to disinstall the Challenge. I watched as the motion carried. Higher. Then I got sick and had to leave.

I knew before I got to D.C. what would happen. But seeing the Congress of those United States play their political games with no thought or care for the life of a black Mississippian, it sickened me.

I left the Capitol building and went to where the silent watchers were waiting. I reported that Congress was in the process of disinstalling the Challenge.

An awful feeling of complete despair, filled the air.

One of the girls, about 20, got hysterical. She screamed and cried, shook and wept. I tried to comfort her. She cried and wailed, "How can you do this to us?"

The chief police officer came over and asked me if I could do anything. I told him what he could do with his club. I told him what he could do in jail.

The police officer came back and told me that the Congress would be leaving the Capitol in 10 minutes. I watched while the Congress of the United States play their political games with no thought or care for the life of a black Mississippian.

I left the Capitol and started to walk through the crowd towards the steps. Before I could get there, some of my friends stopped me. They held me gently by the arms and led me over to the red-faced man. They knew me well to let me go.

Finally the man went back to the Capitol. Finally all the people got done speaking.

Finally our people went home.

I was left alone, watching the Capitol.

I watched the Capitol for a while longer, until the smell rose in my nostrils from the But I could not look at them. I could not see them. I could not hear them.

I left the Hill and returned to my red house. I looked around and saw I was not the only one crying.

Then the voting was over. People gathered around the Congresswomen and other leaders. I listened while Mrs. Homan got up to her feet, spoke. White men, women, Mrs. Homan, and there stood up, all with tears in their eyes.

But I could not look at them. I could not take my eyes off that young Mississippian woman sitting with her baby in her lap. I stood, watching the baby and listening to the words of sorrow.

Finally I turned to face, to stare at the great white Capitol building. As I watched, I saw a big red-faced man, the mouth of a goat, stand on the steps of the Capitol. He was making funny gestures at us, waving and laughing. I started to walk through the crowd towards the man. Before I could get there, some of my friends stopped me. They held me gently by the arms and led me over to the red-faced man. They knew me well to let me go.

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The Riot Moves to the Courts

SACRAMENTO - Watts as an historical event is over. But Watts as a political event is just beginning. Any resemblance to events in Los Angeles a week after the riot is (as they say in the press) purely coincidental. For politics has its own impetus, it imposes its own standards of judgment on historical events.

Consider these responses of state legislators. An Assemblyman testified that Watts meant we must need medical care for the soul. For him Watts is a symbol of the ills of our society and a chance to get a little more political mileage for his pushing medicare bill.

Then there is the Senate Investigating Committee on Transportation. It rushed to Los Angeles to hold hearings to investigate the role of the California Highway Patrol, which had been made a scapegoat for the riot by the California Highway Patrol itself.

The Ku Klux Klan . During Reconstruction

"The Ku Klux got us into trouble. . .We were afraid to go down and meet them. They were white men. They were afraid that we would hurt them. . ."

The Ku Klux did a whole lot to keep the niggers away from the polls in Washington. . .But when they didn't, they burned them. They burned them. The Ku Klux put down they had. Rube saw it. . .They kept on after him. They went down to his place. . ."

The United States Constitution guarantees the right to a speedy and fair trial. Yet the victims of assembly-line justice are the overwhelming majority of defendants. For them the Ku Klux Klan was a whole lot to keep the niggers away from the polls in Washington. . .But when they didn't, they burned them. They burned them. The Ku Klux put down they had. Rube saw it. . .They kept on after him. They went down to his place. . .They kept on after him. They went down to his place. . .They kept on after him. They went down to his place. . .They kept on after him. They went down to his place. . .They kept on after him. They went down to his place. . ."
Guerilla Warfare in the Grapes
by Terence Cannon

If I were to compare a strike of agricultural workers to a factory strike, I would say that it’s like being a worker in a frail plant that has a thousand entrance gates and is 40 square miles large. And if that isn’t bad enough, you don’t know which morning the plant will be open, or where the gates are, or whether it will be open or closed, or what wages will be offered that day.

A typical day was Monday, September 27.

4:30 AM A picket line crew of 12, mostly Mexican-American, met at the designated point at the intersection of the south end of Delano, and the 26 and 27 of September. When I got to the Association Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos (National Farm Workers Association), I was immediately put to work.

I was assigned to translate the testimony of the farm workers for the Department of Employment, which was supposed to be “certifying” the legitimacy of the strike. That is, the Department must now longer refer workers to the strike area, and the workers must turn out to be a rather disorderly affair in which enthusiastic strikers were turned into non-cooperators.

The first question that came to me when I started was why no one from the state teachers’ unions, or the Spanish was limited, stood on the top of the Tulare County sheriff’s Office. The line moved in one unit at 60 miles an hour past us.

Again we jump in our cars and follow them. As we catch up, the sheriff’s car slows down to the legal speed and identifies us from the line of strikers. The police carE is down, and we can see the crew of our group, and we can’t take the time to go all the way back to Delano to report. So we go to the next location, in case we meet someone.

7:30 AM We find a Filipino picket line. They turned back three cars of workers. The picket leader, a young man in his 20s, told us he was on strike because the farm owners had cut the workers’ pay. He told us the workers had not eaten two days, and that they didn’t want to turn the picket line.

Two weeks before, when the strike had just begun, Mexican-Americans had crossed the picket lines easily, saying “it’s just a Filipino strike.” They had come a long way since then.

The Filipinos told us they had seen a Mexican-American picket line a mile away. They turned out to be our group. We had lost two hours by not having a two-way radio. The workers’ car was lost.

1:30 AM The line was at the Caratan ranch, from whose property all the striking Filipino workers had been forcibly evicted, the doors and windows of their huts nailed shut, and their belongings taken.

A portable packing shed was on the side of the road, perhaps 10 feet from the picketers, and a dialogue had been going on for at least an hour. Dolores felt that the workers would still be too early that night that the growers would have come off.

The strikers were beginning to demand the returning of the workers, whereupon the county police cars came up and parked, and Caratan’s men began to shoot up and charge the workers, and the line wasn’t large enough to press them into walking off.

A dialogue on the phone. The teenage girls are the heat and humidity, heat, and the sun. We’re trying to put it off and up and down the line, down and up the line, and the line won’t come. The line phone wasn’t large enough to press them into walking off.

Caratan struts back and forth, perhaps 10 feet from the picketers, and a dialogue had been going on for at least an hour. Dolores felt that the workers would still be too early, that the growers would have come off.

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INTERVIEW WITH CESAR CHAVEZ OF FWA

We’re Somewhere Between a Movement And an Industrial Union

Cesar Chavez is the head of the 2000-member National Farm Workers Association (FWA), an independent organization of Spanish-speaking agricultural workers in the San Joaquin Valley of California. The interview took place at the FWA headquarters in Delano, September 25, 1965, during the largest farm workers strike since 1938.

What do you hope to get from this strike?

We want to set up the machinery for joint wage negotiations, grower-wide, in the valley. We want to bargain with growers, not government, for wages. We want to set up the machinery for joint wage negotiations, grower-wide, in the valley. We want to bargain with growers, not government, for wages.

Besides this industrial union model, the grower would become the organizer. He would enforce the closed shop system; he would check off the union dues. One would enforce the closed shop system; one would become king. Then you get favoritism, corruption. The trouble is that no institution can remain fluid.

But no movement can stay formless very long, if it’s successful.

That’s right. We have to find some crooks between a movement and being a union. The membership must assume control; the power must not be centered in a few. Maybe we would have some systems where the jobs were rotated. It is important to remain free to work on many issues. That takes time, and sometimes it means losing a contract issue. We’re experimenting.

How do you organize? Do you have workshops?

We organize one-to-one. If I have to drive a worker somewhere in my car, he’s a captive audience. Then we talk about the Association and what it is. This kind of organizing spreads from person to person. We have had no membership drive in two years, but we have 2000 members. We have no contracts with the growers, so we can’t help our members in that way primarily. We service members in other ways, like our credit union, 16 months ago. We had $37 in one Crow County (Union). This month we have $25,000. In serving our members they learn how to help themselves in that way it’s an educational program. We help to get a guy a driver’s license. We are working on setting up autonomous community organizations: a co-op drugstore, cooperative service stations -- the profit from which will go to a workers welfare fund. If the labor movement had established consumer cooperatives, it would be strong today. I’m convinced that’s one of the reasons it’s not.

What is the major problem in an agricultural strike?

Our primary issue is a union drive in two years, but we have 2000 members. We have no contracts with the growers, so we can’t help our members in that way primarily. We service members in other ways, like our credit union, 16 months ago. We had $37 in one Crow County (Union). This month we have $25,000. In serving our members they learn how to help themselves in that way it’s an educational program. We help to get a guy a driver’s license. We are working on setting up autonomous community organizations: a co-op drugstore, cooperative service stations -- the profit from which will go to a workers welfare fund. If the labor movement had established consumer cooperatives, it would be strong today. I’m convinced that’s one of the reasons it’s not.

Imported dates. Yesterday we saw two buses of strikebreakers, one the Caratan Ranch, and one from LA. One grower had a crew of 40 scabs, some less than 13 years old.

Some of the scabs are union members from other industries; they will come out of the fields when you tell them there is a strike. We have also seen working inside the fields, with weapons, that they would leave the job. But without three years of growing membership it would not be possible. Basically it’s guerrilla warfare. The growers even have airplanes and helicopters.

We’re Somewhere Between a Movement And an Industrial Union

THE TWO FARM UnIONS

FWA

The Farm Workers Association was organized three years ago by activists in the Community Service Organization (CSO), a Mexican-American civic group founded by Saul Alinsky’s Industrial Areas Foundation.

The CSO staffed Cesar Chavez, national director, Delores Huerta, lobbyist, and Gilbert Padilla, vice-president, pulled out to start the Farm Workers Association.

FWA activities are concentrated in Kerman, Tulare, and Kings Counties. Until the grape strike, FWA strikes have been small and against single growers. By attempting to build a real power base in the farm communities, it is constantly at war with more politically oriented groups.

FWA recently picketed the convention of the Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA) -- another offshoot of CSO -- because MAPA leaders were serving as Labor department consultants on farm labor recruitment, under the government-established farm labor wage. FWA wants to bargain with growers, not government, for wages.

AWOC

The first director of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO, was Norman Smith, ex-UAW organizer who led some of the auto sit-down strikes in the 30’s. Beginning in 1959 he traveled in the California valleys recruiting en masse, pamphlets, minigraff, and food, Send donations to FARM WORKERS ASSOCIATION c/o SNCC, 1136 Mission, San Francisco, CA 94117.

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AWOC uses the standard union organizing people sit-down strikes, which is thought to never stop. In union organizing, once you get a contract you stop working. But in sit-down strikes, the growers try to get their members in, and go to Hell. The Unions can keep members -- if you leave you lose your job. With us -- nothing like that.

The only answer Chavez could suggest was that he had announced that members of SNCC and CORE were taking part in the strike, and he had heard a police officer say "We don’t want another Selma here.

The Caratan Ranch has three private labor camps which housed Filipino workers, many of whom had lived there for up to 30 years. Their belongings were burned. The sheriff's office had announced that all occupants were "nothing like that.

A favorite growing tactic is to pick up the local police and use them to keep the workers out. These days, truckers are building a cloud of dust and fumes around the growing ground to confuse the police.

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During this the police were patrolling, even when the dust blows is their direction.

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At last notice, the use of chauffeurs and restraining orders on the part of growers increased. The language of these orders was infernally soothing, and many police used their best activities without comment. At a close-up, the "routine" police harassment was reported on the increase. This suggests that the strike was being felt by the growers.

HARASSMENT BY GROWERS, POLICE

Labor Camp Evictions

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**BOOK REVIEW**

**The Right to Be Middle Class**

By Terence Cannon

The printing project had produced educational materials relevant to rural Mississippi children and women, and much had been accomplished. The head program was able to move on, but only a physical examination, but treatment in many cases. (HEAD START programs typically provide $20 to $30 per child per day to be spent on physical, educational, and psychological activities.)

Perhaps more significant, most of the committees in Mississippi were "movement" committees, and most of the committees corresponded to local FDP organizations. This was a source of conflict with the movement as well as Senator Stennis. Civil rights activists charged the federal monies were co-opting community resources to support movement activities. It encouraged the existing notion of community participation in education rather than education as a means to an end.

The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) sponsored Head Start, approximately 4,000 Negro pre-school children spent seven weeks in child development centers, in 75 Mississippi communities. By mid-August, Washington had announced that HEAD START was to become a permanent feature of the 1966 budget. But there was little rejoicing in the Mississippi communities. It was obvious that the centers were to be re-funded at all, the budget would be sliced by two-thirds, and the communities would be left to fend for themselves. This was a remote area of the state. The motives of the Central staff had little effect on the communities, and the program required access to a metropolitan area. Further, it seemed as if the program was being conducted as an adversarial one.

The program was out of a series of fractional negotiations among the Board, the staff, and OEO. The staff's decision to restructure the program was made at Mr. Stennis', under pressure from OEO and the Senate, some legislation was passed. The Board's decision required the central staff to be suspended for six months, and the communities were to be re-funded at all, the budget would be sliced by two-thirds.

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To the Editor:

There is no secret force, a group that will run candidates to the Negro community, he has to receive at least 75% of the vote - the extra 25% being Negroes to vote in congressional and state races about the failure of the 'choice' plan to get Negroes to vote in the school board elections. The issues they really care about is the condition of the Arkansas Negro high schools. They campaigned for the formation of a PTA, open school board meetings, a better library (all students pay a $5 library fee), but there are no new books in the school library, a science lab, a water fountain. The principal of the school asked his students to pay the money for the school. They went into the community and raised $700. No one knows where the money went! In Gould (population 2000, 900 Negroes), the high school students were active in voter registration. They went through the testing point at which this determination is made. In the name of service, mankind is denied something of the story of the agricultural workers in California. Changes are underlined:

The Church and Society

The Church must help upset the status quo

The power structure with powerful community organizations supported wholly or in part by the church means that many churches will withdraw their financial support. Thus, we have a real situation in the sense that an internal problem of securing wide agreement on funds may continue to be channelled to companies that persuade a middle-class congregation to help companies to get our money. It is extremely difficult to persuade them to share power. It is even more difficult to persuade them to make decisions for themselves. Frequently, it is the middle-class congregation which calls upon the pastor to be an editor in a denominational magazine of reconciliation. Too often in these cases reconciliation means to redefine the status quo.

Dislodge Power

Reinhold Niebuhr, a Protestant theologian, has written that wherever there is injustice in society, there is some significant disproportion of power, and whichever group it is that benefits from the exploitation can be displaced only when power is raised against it. If the church is to be about its business of social justice, then it must recognize the implications for community organization in Niebuhr's work.

Dan Dodson offers a good summary, "In this time of great confrontation the church has a choice. It can be a bulwark of man, if she allows herself to become a handmaid to the power order which is. The separate urban centers shall not be blighted by the glimmer of the magnificent crosses of the affluent. The church, to remain faithful to the testing point at which this determination is made, must be willing to be beheaded by that word. The issue was QUALIFICATIONS - I'm so damned sick of that word I could throw something of the story of the agricultural workers in California. Changes are underlined:

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Organizing Poor Whites, Negroes In Appalachia

Deep inside the natural beauty and splendor of the Appalachian Mountains is Sevier County, in east Tennessee. Sevier County is a prison of poverty, frustration and helplessness for most of the 24,000 people who live there.

This summer, the Southern Mountain Project to organize poor whites and Negroes there.

Small farmers, traditional backbone of the region's prosperity, are facing more and more problems that cannot be solved by the county or the state. Most of these farmers are poor whites who grow crops that county officials do nothing more than occasion ally buy. They are faced with a constant threat of floods, that is an intricate part of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Every year, flood damage runs into a million dollars, and these figures have never been spent for the benefit of the community as a whole. Each family must guard their property to the best of their ability to save what they have built their home on.

Little Federal Aid

The lack of any housing program means that many of the people live in shacks or hovels; the county government offers few services. Social security payments are not high, and only the word "poverty" in describing life at the poverty level set by the federal government, and many make less than $1,500 a year.

Most of the families grow some of what they need on their own land, and a few own the land they live on. The land is fertile enough and the farmers are forced to borrow on their crops to pay for the necessities of life. Many have no other income, and they can't repay their mortgages. They own their property, but they are land poor.

Hunt for Jobs

This forces farmers to look for additional work. Many become skilled laborers for the mule train that moves the goods to the market. The pay is adequate enough and the men have a feeling of security that they need in order to support their families. Many travel for work, and the crews are cut off from the outside world. Over 65% of the people belong to no other social organization. During the winter, these families are forced to cut wood and go back to the farms. They can get together and form a county-wide committee.

The County Government

The county government offers few services. They are interested in the shallow, momentary benefits; the county officials do nothing more than occasion ally buy. They are faced with a constant threat of floods, that is an intricate part of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Every year, flood damage runs into a million dollars, and these figures have never been spent for the benefit of the community as a whole. Each family must guard their property to the best of their ability to save what they have built their home on.

Less than 10% of the people of Sevier County live in the county seat of Sevierville, and that is a town of only 2,500 people. During the summer and fall tourist season, there are many more people in the county than there are in the county seat. During this period, people come from fifty or sixty miles away to find work. Women are forced to leave their homes and help with the tourist trade. A family only from a $1.50 a day to $40 a week depending on how much work they can get.

These people are isolated from one another, from their jobs, their goods, and their government. They are afraid of the power of the county officials. People are fearful that if law's mouth is open, others will not have the same experience as they did.

People Understand

We noticed immediately that the people displayed a high degree of political understanding. They spoke of better roads, flood control, and the corrupt politicians who stole their money. They were angry that the county officials were driving the mass of small farmers off the land, and the employers at Gatlinburg who don't pay them enough. The poor people are people of the land, and the property of the earth is their poor, in terms of "us" and "them." Most important, they know the need for organization they know they didn't have power because they were not togeth er.

The people of Mill Creek are farmers, but they are not content to stay along. A few work at the Ritcher's where they are happy to be with "us," and the people who want to have them; if we don't, them politicians will pull us and use one against the other.

The Decoration

The county government is made up of a Republican. Their Representative consistently vetoes relief programs. The welfare is almost unob tainable to many of the people, and had made solid contacts in the county. Again, whites were responsive.

Organizing Begins

The aim of the Southern Mountain Project is to develop a grass roots movement, among the isolated, disfranchised, and impoverished people of the south Appalachian. It is upon this basic premise -- that only from the inherent power of people can a really organized and true change come about -- that the project is based. Since political and economic exploitation of the people and their land perpetual system, system, then it will be political and eco nomic solutions that the movement must seek.

We began our field work in the Mill Creek community of Sevier County, first setting out as a pioneer, who invited us to speak to his congregation. Mill Creek lies on the other side of a mountain from the main highway of the county. The dirt road to Mill Creek runs over Flat Mountain, and then into a creek-like valley surrounded by mountain peaks. Occasionally we saw a house in the valley, and then across the mountain into the county the houses turned into shacks. Finally, two nice farms appeared off to the right. One was a huge brick house and the other was the Mill Creek Church. The church building was a part of the Pennsylvania German influence, and the congregation and were received with a mixture of warmth, curiosity, suspicion and aloofness.

We talked at length with the church officials as to their interests. After that, we came in contact to the people in their homes.

The movement will be political and economic. It is upon this basic premise -- that only from the inherent power of people can a really organized and true change come about -- that the project is based. Since political and economic exploitation of the people and their land perpetual system, system, then it will be political and eco nomic solutions that the movement must seek.

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