

NEWS FROM USNSA CIVIL RIGHTS DESK

WHY WAS SAM YOUNGE KILLED?

January 21, 1966

Sam Younger was a student at Tuskegee Institute, a veteran of the United States Navy, and a member of the Tuskegee Institute Advancement League (TIAL). On January 4, Sammy Younger was murdered--for participating in a voter registration campaign, for demanding the enforcement of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, for being a Negro.

The United States National Student Association joins the family and friends of Sammy Younger and the world to mourn his senseless death. In a letter to Attorney General Katzenbach, USNSA asked that a federal registrar and federal Marshalls be located in Tuskegee and stated,

There are many of us who have participated in the civil rights movement. There are many of us who wonder what Sammy Younger's crime was; we wonder why he died; we wonder when there will be sufficient enforcement of extant legislation to end senseless killings in Alabama.

What will be the aftermath of the death of Sammy Younger? Will there be action by the federal government to prevent the future occurrence of racial murders in Tuskegee and all over the South? Will there be positive preventative action or only punitive reaction?

MEMORIALS

On Tuesday, January 11, Washington SNCC and approximately 100 friends held a memorial service at the Lincoln Memorial. Afterwards they marched to the Whitehouse to ask the above and other questions of the President. Students at Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia gathered on Tuesday to memorialize Sammy Younger. On Wednesday services were held at Virginia Union in Richmond; on Thursday in Greensborough, N. C.; Friday, Raleigh, N. C.; Saturday, Columbia, S. C.; Sunday, Orangeburg, S. C.; Monday, Atlanta, Georgia; and on Tuesday, January 18, services were held at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. On February 1, John Lewis and SNCC will call for a world-wide day of mourning. Students who take an interest in the civil rights movement should gather to commemorate the death of Sammy Younger, to write letters to their legislators urging further civil rights legislation, and to list their names among the many who offer condolences to Sammy's friends and family in Tuskegee.

The question now is whether we will progress from this tragedy to a safer and more tolerant South--or mourn our loss and await more southern violence.

THREE THINGS WE CAN DO

1. The United States National Student Association will establish a Samuel Young Memorial Scholarship to aid a Tuskegee student or recent graduate to carry on the work that Sammy Young began. A grant of \$520 will support one worker for a full year in Alabama. The officers of USNSA Metropolitan New York region have already undertaken to raise the funds for one such scholarship. We urge students at other schools to undertake sponsoring civil rights workers from Tuskegee in the same manner. If you can raise money let us know so we can help in the arrangements.
2. President Johnson has requested that Congress enact legislation "making it a serious Federal crime to obstruct public and private efforts to secure civil rights." Such legislation is badly needed. We intend to follow the development of such legislation and to inform our Senators and Representatives of our feelings. It is important that all of us begin working now for the most effective legislation and the most rigorous enforcement of present laws.
3. Attorney General Katzenbach has voiced his support of the civil rights movement time and time again. He has promised full enforcement of the Civil Rights Act and of the Voting Rights Act. The local registrar in Tuskegee is reportedly "tired of fooling around". He says he is going "to spill...guts all over the floor." Does this indicate compliance, Mr. Attorney General? Over 650 counties are under the jurisdiction of the Voting Rights Act. Thirty-six counties have federal registrars. When will the Justice Department act? You can help by writing the Attorney General asking that he assign more federal registrars.

NEWSLETTER

SOUTHERN CORE 1966

This Newsletter is a periodic service to college students. It is compiled and edited by the Civil Rights Desk of USNSA which is responsible for its content. Views representing the official position of USNSA are so labeled.

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The Congress of Racial Equality is beginning its 1966 programs with a heavy emphasis on political issues. CORE plans to spend most of the time between now and the spring primaries doing voter registration, political education, and support work for Negro or moderate white candidates in Louisiana, the 4th district of Mississippi, South Carolina and Northern Florida. A special effort will be made to provide strong opposition to Senator Strom Thurmond in the '66 elections.

Student volunteers who are available for a considerable length of time are welcome in any of the above areas. Application should be made to Dave Dennis, 2209 Dryades, New Orleans, Louisiana.

JULIAN BOND

Denied Seat

In 1964, Julian Bond was denied a seat in the segregated gallery of the Georgia House of Representatives. Now, two years later, the Georgia State House of Representatives has refused to seat Julian Bond, representative elect of the 136th district, because of his views on Vietnam. Bond, who was elected on June 16, 1965 by 82% of his Atlanta constituency, was refused his seat by a vote of 184 to 12 on January 10, 1966.

The following facts are important:

- ** The Constitution of Georgia enables the House to determine the qualifications of its members, but the use of this clause to silence unpopular opinions has no precedent!
- ** Bond has committed no crime nor has he urged the violation of any law.
- ** A lawyer for the white representatives who moved to bar the seating, Denmark Groover, said, prior to a four-hour committee hearing on the issue, "Mr. Bond said that he was eager and anxious to encourage people not to participate in war for any reason. I think that's treasonous."
- ** Lawyers for Bond will be filing a suit charging Georgia House is unlawfully constituted since it does not contain a representative from the 136th district. The New York Times reported that, "the law-suit relies heavily on what it calls a deprivation of Mr. Bonds right of free speech as guaranteed by the first amendment."

The issue is not what Julian Bond believes or says. The issue is free speech, and whether that constitutional right can be abridged, without due process, by a legislative body. Can a duly elected public official be stripped of his office because he does not share the views of the majority?

USNSA president, Philip Sherburne, sent the following telegram to Governor Carl Sanders:

"The refusal of the Georgia State House of Representatives to seat Julian Bond, representative-elect from the 136th district, is an outrage. It is punishment for the expression of an unpopular opinion.

When it is within the power of a state government to deny a constituency its duly elected spokesman because of his opinions, democracy has become a sham. When members of any organization are arbitrarily excluded from public office, the political process itself is in the gravest danger.

If anything unconstitutional has been done in this situation, certainly it is not any statement of Mr. Bond's, but the decision of the legislature to deny Mr. Bond his seat because he exercised his right of free speech.

The United States National Student Association urges you to exercise all the powers and influence of your office to rectify this situation immediately."

If this was a treason trial, the place for it was in the court, not the state legislature. In that no court action has been taken against Julian Bond, there seems little doubt that there is no legal basis for such a case. Freedom of speech has long been a right held precious in the college and university. If controversial opinions cannot be spoken in our legislative halls, if, in fact, the holding of such unpopular opinions is cause for refusal of a seat, freedom of speech can hardly be called a constitutional right. It is incumbent upon all of us to speak out NOW to maintain the right of free speech throughout America. In the long run, it is to our own defense that we are rising.

What you can do:

- 1) To keep yourself informed, write or call USNSA, 2115 S. Street N. W. Washington, D.C.
- 2) Contact your representative and senators. Tell them your opinions on the matter, urge them to speak out publicly and privately to correct this outrageous situation.
- 3) Write or telegram the Georgia legislature (George Smith, Speaker) or Governor Sanders.
- 4) Keep your campus informed through newspaper, flyers and rallies. Lend your support in every way to Julian Bond, 360 Nelson Street S. E., Atlanta, Georgia. Let us know what you are doing and how we can help.

KLAN INVESTIGATION:

Legislative or Judicial Problem?

The declarations of the 1962 National Student Congress states the the House Un-American Activities Committee is "...defective and inherently contrary to our democratic tradition...has directly and indirectly encroached upon...autonomy and on ...legitimate freedom..."; and the "...Congressional investigation of 'propaganda' can serve no legislative purpose which is consistent with the Constitutional guarantee the 'Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech...'". In keeping with this declaration, USNSA has made a statement with regard to the HUAC investigation of the Ku Klux Klans. In a letter to Representative Edwin E. Willis, Chairman of the committee, Philip Sherburne, the Association President stated,

"HUAC has used large amounts of public funds to harrass people for holding unorthodox opinions and to create mountains of self-serving publicity. It has produced no useful legislation. The House Committee on Un-American Activities is a threat to American liberties and a stain on the dignity of the Congress."

The use of House investigation of the Klan represents the same misuse of legislative power as that of the Georgia Assembly which refused to seat Julian Bond. If he has committed a crime, let it be taken to the courts. If the Klan has murdered, burned, pillaged, let the Klan be taken to the courts. If courts do not do their duty, let legislation be enacted to improve the judicial system. But do not let our legislators sit in kangaroo sessions.

MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM CHRISTMAS

Intercession Planned

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party reports that the Freedom Christmas voter registration drive was a major success in the ten counties where volunteers were working. Between the FDP and CORE, forty-three volunteers registered 914 persons over Christmas vacation in Leflore, Newton, Clay, Holmes, Leake, Walthall, Jasper, Madison, Lauderdale and DeSoto counties. From past experience it is likely that a carry-over of enthusiasm will raise the total considerably during the next month.

Beside the field effort to register voters, a number of letters and calls were directed to the Justice Department during the time span of the project. These communications explained to the Attorney General the nature of the project and the need for their cooperation. On December 20 the Justice Department announced that federal registrars would begin working in Warren, Simpson, Newton and Carroll counties at the beginning of the new year and that the hours of registrars already assigned would be extended.

Unfortunately these counties received registrars too late to be included in the Freedom Christmas Project. The drive was so successful in the counties where volunteers were working, however, that MFDP has announced its intention to use volunteers again during scholastic intercessions at the end of January. Students from the University of Wisconsin, Western Reserve University, Oberlin and Bucknell Colleges have already raised forty volunteers. Although the task force of the intercession drive will be small, there is still room for workers, especially if they can provide cars. Students who can arrive in Jackson, Mississippi, on the morning of January 18, 24, or 28, should get in touch with their NSA coordinator or call the civil rights desk of the United States National Student Association, (202) 387-6133.

STANDARD OIL PROTEST

The gas station where Sammy Younge was killed has a franchise with Standard Oil. Students and their parents across the country have begun a mass protest in which letters are being written to the company demanding that the station where Sammy Younge was killed lose its franchise, that fair hiring policies be adopted, that all facilities be integrated. Protestors are putting teeth in their requests by including their Standard Oil credit cards in the letters.