

mississippi freedom schools

Under the slogan of "each one-teach one," Mississippi Freedom Schools are still struggling to maintain a minimal, but extensive, program of remedial instruction, citizenship education, adult literacy, pre-school activities, manual skills, and cultural enrichment, in 29 towns and cities throughout the state.

The skeleton staff of "winter soldiers"—volunteers who remained in the state to continue the program started this past summer—are working under unbelievable handicaps. In addition to the chronically acute shortages of money, supplies and materials, plus the makeshift facilities, there is the ever-present reality of bombings, beatings, jailings and every conceivable kind of harassment.

Last month a dynamite bomb exploded in the Vicksburg Freedom School, destroying an 8000 volume library, built up with great difficulty since last June. The Antioch Baptist Church, which housed the Holly Springs Freedom School, was burned to the ground . . . as were similar schools in McComb and Canton. The incidents of violence, persecution and retaliation go on and on.

"WE NEED MONEY DESPERATELY"

UFT members' continued support to the on-going Mississippi Project has brought many acknowledgements, such as the following received from the Freedom School in Greenville, Miss.:

"This past week we've been in rather dire straits: all of us were sick with a virus and general run-down condition. Dr. Page says (as if we didn't know) that it's because we weren't eating proper-

ly. Actually we had practically stopped eating altogether because there wasn't enough money for both food and bill paying.

"Words can't say how much we appreciated receiving your check. Although we need money desperately, it's especially psychologically good for us all to know that the rest of the world and our old friends are still thinking of us."

ADOPT A FREEDOM SCHOOL

Besides contributing to the general UFT-Mississippi Freedom School Fund which sustains our five volunteers who are continuing to teach in the state and helps provide supplies and materials, UFT chapters and school faculties are strongly urged to participate in the UFT Adopt-a-Freedom School project.

This project is a way of helping to meet the basic needs of people caught in a bind of unemployment (due to automation), unemployability (due to lack of education), and official indifference to their plight.

But beyond that, it affords a means through which an exchange of ideas, beliefs and experiences of people with different backgrounds can mutually enrich and better their lives.

JHS 136, M. and JHS 64, K. have "adopted" Freedom Schools in Shaw and Greenville respectively.

In addition, JHS 118 M has adopted a school in Indianola, and JHS 136X has adopted a school in Vicksburg.

Each of the "parent" schools has pledged to send a monthly contribution to the "adopted" school. They are also establishing a pen-pal correspondence between their pupils. JHS 136 M, furthermore, is organizing a canned food collection among its students which the UFT has agreed to ship to Mississippi.

If your school is interested in participating in the Adopt-a-Freedom School project, please communicate with:

Norma Becker / Adopt-a-Freedom School •

United Federation of Teachers • 300 Park Ave. South • N.Y.C. 10010

Contributions to the general fund should be sent to the UFT-Mississippi Freedom School Fund at the same address.