

Stanford Speech

October, 1963

(Beginning of speech missing in recording) in Mississippi hasn't
(LAUGHTER)
gotten very far. It made me feel like the guy who used to play halfback
for Cumberland University in the days they used to lose to Georgia Tech
106 to nothing ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ and that was their good day.
And the papers said that so and so, who was the star quarterback, or half-
back carried the ball around right end and won a sensational gain for the
day when he was only spilled for an eight yard loss.

I have a feeling when I come back to Stanford which is always over-
whelming; its a privilege - to use a word that I understand is in vogue
around here not anyway (laughter) - to be back at Stanford, and I have a
feeling ~~xxxx~~ that as long as I live there will always be a part of me ~~that~~
that will feel at home here - which I'm sure will spread joy at many places
at the University X (laughter, applause). One reason I love to come back
is I always get the most fascinating tales about myself, even more fascinating
than the ones in Mississippi. In Mississippi I'm just sort of a ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
Communist agitator ~~xxxx~~ that comes in and has to be gotten rid of, but here
it's always more sophisticated. Since I've been back this time I've heard
so many things I feel like George Jessel, who was sued by some girl who ~~is~~
accused him of being the father of her child, and he's paying support on
the ground that, at his age, its worth accepting the guilt. (LAUGHTER)

So far since I've been back here I've discovered that I'm banned from
coast-to-coast from 30 campuses, at least two of which have offered me jobs,
and I thought I'd better phone and tell them that... (laughter) But I think

my favorite ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ rumour of the day, which I'm told is the imaginative contribution of one of my greater admirers in the political science department is that my present ambition is to become the first Jewish President of the United States. (laughter) That would probably be very good for fund-raising ~~XXXXXXXX~~ ^{for} Stanford since I guess its better to have a President of the United States who was ^{even} in disrepute on the faculty at Stanford than to have the nearest connection someone who was here for about two weeks in the summer once, or who was a Republican who presided over a Depression. (laughter). But I should say I want to deny the charge simply because of what Harry Golden said, which I agree with, in connection with the present campaign which is that I've always known that the first Jewish President ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ of the United States would be an Episcopalian. (laughter)

Anyway it is really a privilege ~~XXXXXXXX~~ to be here and to be back where such extraordinary people as the student body at Stanford and people like the ~~XXXX~~ Craigs and the Guthbertsons and ~~XXXX~~ Dwight ~~XXXX~~ Clark and others are from at a university where so much has been done and can be done for the things that matter most.

The topic listed tonight is ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ "Mississippi: ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ (Is it?) A Foreign Country in Our Midst." And I hasten to say that I've never heard ^{before} the suggestion ~~XXXXXXXX~~ made before that Mississippi was a foreign country in our midst. The nearest I'd seen was the Chronicle editorial some time ago ~~XXXXXXXX~~ which said that Mississippi should be proclaimed a National Wilderness Area. (laughter) It said "warned by the near extinction of the whooping crane, should we not safeguard the remaining specimens of the whooping Southern governor?" (laughter) I don't think that Mississippi is a foreign country in our midst and I think one reason its important to talk about Mississippi it is very much ourselves in our midst.

Mississippi is a place where America is at its worst, but its also a place where anyone who is an American can see himself at his worst.

Try it on yourselves: How many of you, even when you sympathize with the Civil Rights Movement in your theory have thought to yourselves: Well, of course, its impossible to give the Negroes the vote in the Delta, because, after all, they outnumber the whites. How many of you haven't said to yourselves, obviously its really asking too much to expect the white people in the ~~Delta~~ Delta to allow the Negroes to vote overnight, because, after all, they might elect Negro Mayors, they might even elects ~~Negroes~~ Negroes as Sheriffs? How many of us haven't in our own hearts accepted the implications in the fact that because Mississippi is 42% Negro ~~and~~ - and parts of it 70% Negro ~~that therefore~~ - that therefore Mississippi does have special problems which excuse the white behavior, not because we like brutality or because we agree with white supremacy but because ~~x~~, after all, we have to expect that the white race is always really going to be ruling things? I think most of us are guilty of this kind of thinking.

I think Mississippi is a sick place, its so sick that to go to Mississippi is to leave America in the way that we think of America and to see America in ~~every~~ grotesque mirror in which all the warts are magnified. But it is our warts. It is us. It is our racial sickness. It's not some foreign breed, though you do feel occasionally surprised when you go into a store and ~~discover~~ discover that you don't have to change currency to buy something. But you do feel as you stay in Mississippi more and more, I think, that this could be anybody, that this group of students at Ole Miss whose behavior astonished the conscience of the country are the students at most places given the kind of atmosphere they live in, the kind of atmosphere they live in, the kind of training that they've been raised on, and the kind of fears that all of us

as white people are subject to when we're raised in a culture in which inherent is the notion that somehow we are superior.

I've thought very hard about what ~~was~~ the most useful thing is I could do in, say, a half an hour to tell about Mississippi, and what I did was to jot down 15 or so little episodes. I've brought with me a number of documents ^{had} that I ~~thought~~ at one point I'd read you about the socio-economic situation in Mississippi, but I think that that's guiding the lilly at Stanford. I don't think ~~that~~ anybody here needs to be reminded that the Negro income in Mississippi averages about 35% of the white, or that the Negro illiteracy, because ~~they~~ ~~understand~~ their schools are simply unable to teach reading and writing and the people are unable to afford going even to free schools even when they exist and are there for the teaching process, that the illiteracy rate in Mississippi in some areas still runs as high as four out of five adults. These things are blots on our escutcheon that are statistical ~~anixix~~ and that ~~XXXXX~~ we know about and we hear over and over again. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ And I've felt that the most useful contribution a person can make who has been in Mississippi to people who have not been in Mississippi, perhaps, is to go into the specifics of what is now going on in a little detail, and hope that out of this will come more than a statistic, will come in your hearts a feeling that you are involved in Mississippi not only for the residual reasons of world prestige and not only because your conscience bothers you to know that there's injustice, but because this is the most egregious part of America, the most egregious travesty on the things we say we believe in and because you are of the most privileged part of America and are the most ~~privileged~~ privileged products of the greatness of our society, and that therefore you have particular involvement in the situation and that perhaps in telling personal things about it, it will evoke from you a wish to be involved in any way that you can.

My involvement in Mississippi, let me say, is minor because we leave. ~~XXX~~ You go ~~XXX~~ across the boarder even into Louisiana - now don't misunderstand me - Louisiana has Plaquemine Parish and Leander Perez and other things that need to be talked about too, but still when you cross into Louisiana you don't need your American passport anymore, you go back into a society in which the state police, the state government are moderated by the presence of New Orleans, by the existence of a tradition of discussion across racial barriers, where the Plaquemines are the exception and are inevitably losing. In Louisiana, progress comes. But in Mississippi, and this is the ~~xi~~ point of departure in any discussion any discussion of that state, progress does not ~~XXXXXXXX~~ in any visible way to the people living in it, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ because the sense that resistance is going to be successful dominates the white community, and those who don't agree are intimidated into shutting up or leaving.

The Episcopal Bishop ~~ix~~ ^{of} Mississippi, in his home in Jackson, soon ~~after~~ after he'd had a stroke, having said that he deplored the violence in Oxford or made some other radical pronouncement, was beaten up. Officially, he was beaten up by people who were deranged. I think this is probably accurate. The trouble is that if that is what being deranged is then a substantial percentage of the white population of Mississippi is in a stage ~~ix~~ right now that borders on derangement. When Mr. Beckwith shot Medgar Evers there was ~~ix~~ a revulsion against the assassination, I'm told, even in the white community. But by the time I got to Mississippi four weeks later, the citizens of LaFleur County in one day had collected \$1500 in a fund for Mr. Beckwith ~~XXXXXXXX~~. And this does not indicate to me a continuing guilty conscience over the assassination of Medgar Evers by someone whom he had never met.

Now, Medgar Evers was assassinated. But Medgar Evers' assassination ~~ix~~

was not an ~~an~~ exception, and its for that reason that his assassination, I think, needs to be understood. In Mississippi this summer, during ~~the~~ three weeks that I was there, there were four Negroes killed - three of them by officers of the law. In one instance, in a town called Chula in Mississippi, a voter drive was being conducted in Holmes County. Twelve Negroes - in Mississippi the law requires that anybody who goes down to try to register has his name published in the public press for two weeks, prior to his registration being consummated. Thus any Negro who does down to register is immediately known about. An in Chula, of the twelve Negroes who tried to register to try to vote, one of them was a man called Trubo, who was a tenant farmer in his 60s, a quiet, almost an ~~XXXX~~ "Uncle Tom" person in the context of the Civil Rights movement, gentle, he'd never marched or done anything very militant. He just simply went down to register. And the next day his home was blown up and his house shot into, ~~XXXX~~ his plot of land disrupted, the work he'd put ~~ix~~ into painting his ~~sixxi~~ stairs(?) and his lifetime of effort to have a little better place to live than most tenant farmers in Mississippi destroyed. But ~~what~~ what was extraordinary again was not that Mr. Trubo's home was blown up ~~xxx~~ but that the following day the sheriff of Holmes County arrested Mr. Trubo. And he was taken to the county courthouse ~~also~~ along with four people who were in his house when the sheriff came. The four people were photographing the destruction and they were accused of impeding an investigation. ~~XXX~~

And when the local newspaper in Lexington, the nearest town with a newspaper, published the news, "Negro Home Hit With ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Firebomb^s; Three White Men Fire Shots", and so ~~XXXXXX~~ forth - I might say that this newspaper is published by the only person in the state of Mississippi, the only person in the state of Mississippi who publishes this sort of information in the state of Mississippi, who publishes this sort of information in local newspapers, an extraordinary woman called Hazel Brannon Smith, who is

now being sued for libel for \$100,000 for publishing this, even though the affidavits are conclusive and who will undoubtedly lose the suit before a Mississippi jury, and who is being - who has now lost all of her advertising and therefore probably will not be publishing her newspaper^s even within the month. ¶ But the gentleman arrested in Coala Mississippi along with the people found photographing his house after the bombing is again important for the same reason Medger Evers is - that it is not an exception, that in town ~~at~~ after town in Mississippi when someone attempts to register to vote, the most fundamental of the rights that we start out with in all other parts of the United States, their homes are not safe.

In Jackson, during the time that I was there this summer, the number of people arrested, or beaten and then arrested, or ~~xxx~~ arrested and then beaten, exceeded ~~xxx~~ 1200. One day, if you go in Jackson down to try to register to vote, one thing that happened was that as the voter drive was picking up steam and Negroes were going down in numbers to register to vote, they closed the voter registration books, suddenly, despite the constitution ~~mandate~~ of Mississippi which provides that they shall always be open. The books are simply closed, until such time as the intimidation began to take its effect. ~~xxx~~ Negroes who were fired from their jobs for trying to register to vote are countless in Mississippi. Negroes whose ~~x~~ children have been picked up - in Jackson usually the time is close to midnight, 11:30 at night, in the tradition of a police ~~state~~ state, and taken off to what's ~~euphemistically~~ euphemistically called the state ^(?) fairgrounds motel, runs into the hundreds. So that the parent knows that the parent know ~~it~~ not only that he may be struck at but that he may be struck at through his job, through his home, through his children, and that in the end the likelihood of his being successfully registered is remote anyway, because the way in which registration is conducted in Missi-

Mississippi, as the Civil Rights Commission has ~~reported~~ at length, makes it almost impossible for anybody to register, who the registrar does not wish to have registered.

This is the Mississippi State Constitution, on which the quiz is given. The constitution, which runs two pages, back to back, single spaced, for 34 pages. Naturally, the state of Mississippi doesn't provide you with the constitution. This is the work of the civil rights movement in Jackson, mimeographing these, so that people who will do so can spend the time attempting to go through the constitution, article by article, absorb enough of it to give the Negro, or potential registrant, who is willing to risk the retribution to himself or to his family, enough ~~of the~~ information so that he has some chance of answering questions when he's asked ~~and~~ them when he tries to register.

In Ruleville, Mississippi, Negroes who tried to register discovered suddenly that the water had been cut off not only from some of ~~the houses~~ their homes but also from the church in which they had met, where they had had their meetings to plan on the effort to register. There isn't any protection against this ~~kind~~ of thing in Mississippi because, first of all, the state ~~courts~~ courts are ^{same} all controlled by the people who do the arresting. And it is no secret, I think, that the way that Mississippi juries behave is an extraordinary ~~in~~ indication of the fallibility of a tried ~~x~~ Anglo-Saxon system designed to bring justice. I sat in a trial in Oxford, Mississippi, where ~~x~~ a witness after witness testified about the fact that the man being tried molotov cocktails at the United States Marshalls during the Meredith episode. There wasn't even any contradictory ~~evidence~~ evidence that I could hear, except that the man himself denied that he'd thrown the cocktails. But not on the witness stand. He never was put on the witness stand, because they didn't want him cross-ex-

ained. Also because they didn't need to put him on the witness stand; they knew their jury and he was acquitted. If a man can be acquitted after witness after witness has testified to seeing him throw Molotov cocktails at United States Marshalls, you don't have to worry too much about what's going to happen to you even if you are arrested in Mississippi for violating someone else's rights. ^A And the federal courts in Mississippi aren't any better, at least not much better because the two judges in Mississippi that one has to deal with, Judge Cox, the most notable of them, Judge Cox, was Senator Eastland's law partner and was appointed to the United States District Judge in Mississippi because it was necessary at the time - or so the Attorney General thought - to appoint somebody that was acceptable to Eastland in Mississippi in order to get other judges cleared through the Judiciary Committee, of which Eastland was E chairman, in the rest of the country. Right or wrong, Judge Cox now sits in Jackson. And if you want to know what that means, I think you might want to hear about the extraordinary case that occurred not very long ago in Rankin County, Mississippi. In fact it happened this summer. In Rankin County, a Negro got registered, and went back with two other Negroes to try to register them. And when they got to the office of the sheriff, where the registration was to occur, they were manhandled, and ~~is~~ ultimately evicted physically from the place of the registration, with sufficient injury so that it was necessary for them to ~~seek~~ receive extensive medical treatment. This matter was taken into federal court because its a violation of the federal law to beat people up who are trying to register. And in the federal court, the deputy sheriff of Rankin County performed the astonishing feat of denying he'd been present when the beatings-up occurred, under oath. Well, sufficient evidence was brought in, witness after witness, that the deputy sheriff had indeed been present, and that indeed he had participated in the beatings-up. And Judge Cox, having heard all the evidence, a federal district judge, having heard all the evi-

gence, not only dismissed the suit against the sheriff and deputy sheriff
 for having beaten up the Negroes, on the grounds that there was no proof that
 the beating up was connected with the effort to register to ~~VXIXY~~ - although
 nobody ever adduced any evidence that it was connected with anything else -
 but also dismissed the perjury of the deputy sheriff of Rankin County on
 grounds that, after all, the evidence he had given had been improperly re-
 ceived in the courtroom, and therefore it was improper to consider whether
 perjury had been committed in improperly produced evidence. So if this
 doesn't invite the sheriffs of any county and deputy-sheriffs of any county
 to do what they can in a federal court, I don't know what it does do. And
 if that isn't impeachable proceedings of the ~~VXIXY~~ part of a judge, I don't
 know what is. But he is the federal judge.

And so to get justice in Mississippi, you have to go not to a state court,
 you have to go not to a jury, you have to go not to the federal district judge,
 you have to get to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. And to
 do that normally requires at least, even under an emergency situation, four
 months, sometimes as much as eight months. So what happens now? Kids will go
 downtown in Jackson to try to ~~VXI~~ picket in Mississippi, you don't have the
 right to picket although the state constitution gives it to you, as well as the
 federal. Any Negro who sets foot on Capitol Street in Jackson, Mississippi,
 instantly upon setting foot upon Capitol Street there is there a placard
 kind indicating he is about the picket, or there is in any of the civil
 rights cars is picked up and arrested. They don't even get a chance to walk
 down the street. They're hauled off to the link. If they're arrested two or
 three times, varying depending on the charge involved in the situation, they're
 then sent off to the state penitentiary at ~~VXIXY~~ (Parksburg?), and they
 stay there until they're eighteen, under a provision in Mississippi put in,

oddly enough, by people who are supposed to be liberal and who thought they were at the time, designed to protect juvenile delinquents. So that when they're arrested several times before they reach the age of 18, under the juvenile delinquent statutes, they don't even have the right to ~~command~~^{DEMAND} a trial, even if the trial could be a fair one; they're simply detained almost in perpetuity till they reach the age of 18. So that you can't picket.

In Clarksdale, Mississippi, as well as in other ~~towns~~ towns, there is an injunction in effect today that's so sweeping that it almost makes it illegal to breathe if you happen to be a Negro. The injunction enjoins everybody - I have a copy of it with ~~ME~~ me, perhaps some of you would want to hear it - but in any case the injunction makes it very plain that anybody who does anything, advocates a boycott, pickets, advocates any kind of demonstration, takes part in any public manifestation of displeasure with the current social situation, or conspires to do any of these things - meaning discusses ~~any~~ of this with anybody - is violating an injunction, served by the court of Coahoma County. And if you violate this injunction what happens to you? You're hauled off and arrested. And then what's your recourse? Your recourse is to the federal courts - but not to ~~JUDGE~~ Judge Cox. You have to get through Judge Cox first, who takes these appeals under advisement and they're never heard from ~~again~~ again. Then you've got to get them out from him to the Circuit Court in New Orleans. And it may be six months, it may be eight, before you're out of the jail again for having gone downtown in Coahoma County and violated an illegal injunction which tramples on the most fundamental safeguards of the American people.

So that you have - if I can just summarize what I'm trying to say - you have a situation which not only is the registration to vote, the most minimal

kind of political right, ~~is~~ dependent on the courage of people to take believable risks with their lives, their jobs, their families, and with the fact that in the end they probably won't get registered anyway. Not only that, but the other forms of protest are almost equally foreclosed. ~~XXX~~ Picketing is foreclosed by the fact that you end up ~~spending~~ almost inevitably spending a lengthy period of time in a jail. Do you know how much bond money is now up in Jackson Mississippi for people who have been arrested ~~for~~ for things as shocking as carrying the American flag on Flag Day? They arrested 57 people for carrying the American flag on Flag Day, and to get them out of jail the NAA had to put up ~~in~~ bond money, not just for those 57 but for the total in Jackson so far, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ four hundred and fifty thousand dollars, in bond money in Jackson Mississippi with nothing to show for it except that these people are now rotting in jail because they're out of bond, pending their cases being tried. And then when they're convicted ~~XXXXXX~~ there'll be the expense of the appeal, until finally they get to the U.S. Circuit Court in New Orleans where eventually all these ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ convictions will inevitably be reversed.

But in the meantime, the harrassment, the financial debilitation is something which you can't believe until you try to figure out what to ~~say~~ to do about it. What do you try to do about it? What is there to do? In Jackson the other day, the kids got impatient, nothing had happened in Jackson for a long time, since Medgar was ~~shot~~ shot, since the books were closed on registration, since the kids had been picked up trying to picket downtown. So they tried a mass demonstration. It came out of a Negro Church and started parading downtown in Jackson, Mississippi. Now in Jackson, the Negro headquarters are on ~~XXXX~~ Lynch Street (Lafayette) which (comes into ~~x~~) a place called

Terry Road, and they forked together in a place from which you have to ~~walk~~ walk into the white business community. At that ~~place~~ place, when the kids got there the other night in Jackson, Mississippi they found police, but they weren't standing there with dogs or hoses, there wasn't anything like that, or tear gas: there were ~~rifles~~ rifles. And the rifles were pointed at the kids. And the police lieutenant said: "Another step and we shoot." And if you want to know what Mississippi can mean to people ~~x~~ you should have heard the kids standing there yelling "shoot us, shoot us." "Shoot us." Until the older Negroes turned them around back to the church. So that they don't march in the street in Jackson anymore.

One night in Clarksdale - I think my most valuable contribution to civil rights anywhere occurred this particular day in Clarksdale. I appeared in this suit, which is black, as you can perhaps observe, and is not my normal attire, as some of you may recall. And I had with me a briefcase; I'd ~~been~~ been called to come to Clarksdale ~~quickly~~ the day after this injunction was served. We can't get any lawyers up there. ~~XXI~~ - I might ~~additionally~~ tell you, incidentally, just in passing, that there was one white lawyer in Jackson who took Civil Rights cases. He was driven, literally driven, out of the state in the most extraordinary fashion. A boy stole his car and wrecked it. After the boy stole the car and wrecked it, the police dropped the charges against the boy for stealing the car and having an accident and he pressed charges that he had had improper, immoral advances made on him by the man whose car he had stolen. And confident with the certainty that he'd be convicted on a morals charge, the lawyer left Mississippi. And that removed the one lawyer who had been handling civil rights cases. In any case, I was called to come up to Clarksdale and I got there wearing my black suit

- it was a very hot day - and I had on dark sunglasses, and we were standing on the steps of the church at which Martin Luther King was supposed to appear to make a speech. And with this briefcase and the sunglasses and the black suit I was visible. I'm not given to melodrama in these things - after South Africa and whatnot you expect that something may go wrong somewhere - but that day I said to Tom Boyson who was in Oxford, Mississippi that if I didn't get back that night it would be good if he would be so kind as to telephone to find out if I were in a jail or a hospital, and whichever it was to find out ^{whether} ~~if~~ I could be removed and brought someplace else. And I drove into Clarksdale with some melodramatic premonitions that I might not get out that night, the last white person who had gone to ~~Clarksdale~~ Clarksdale in such a situation not having gotten out for ~~two~~ weeks. And I got to Clarksdale and I went up ~~the~~ to the church steps and ~~there~~ I was standing in this attitude, in the hot sun and police were driving ~~around~~ in their helmets and ~~carrying~~ Confederate flags (laughter) and ~~some~~ ~~sort~~ of ~~serried~~ (?) ranks and what. And I really was astonished to discover that as the day wore on and things got worse they got more and more polite. And this whole thing justified me until finally a Life(?) photographer came over and said to me "Is it true that you're in the FBI?" (laughter) The local gendarmes had told them this. They said "those goddam feds've even got an FBI agent standing up there with all them niggers." (laughter) Well, there were 300 people besides me there and none of them looked like they were in the FBI, so I suppose that - as I say - this was my most useful contribution to civil rights because it kept anybody from being beaten up that day. Not even the Negroes were mistreated let alone the whites present. And we got through that day.

But what happened in Clarksdale the next day is what I started to tell before I got off on this sidetrack. I was standing just inside the church,

there was an ~~unknown~~ woman - I found out that she was 64 later but she was standing right in front of me looking on while people were being hauled off in paddy wagons. The ~~XX~~ president of the Mississippi NAACP, Dr. Aron Henry, who's an extraordinary person in his own right and president of the national druggists association ~~xx~~ has served a good deal of time in jail in Mississippi, mostly on garbage detail, for violating the injunction I spoke of before. But, anyway, as people were being hauled off that day, I was standing just inside the church, and I heard this old woman standing there, and she was saying - I don't guess I can ever recreate it right, and ~~XXXX~~ I'll do the best I can with it, but it was something like this: "What did ~~ix~~ we did, ~~XXXXXXXX~~, what did we did that made 'em hate us?" And she was talking to herself, then she said, "I gave them my two boys, one of them they took off into a war and killed, and now I can't even go on the streets of my own city." And I reached over and - just took her hand, and she, I think, for the first time saw there was a white person ~~xx~~, white ~~and~~ at least, present. And she - broke up, and I did. ~~XX~~ And we went in and sat down in the church. And then she told - one wishes that one could have the ~~xxx~~ poetry that comes naturally to some people, but she told the story of her life in Clarksdale from the time, 64 years before, that she recalled it, up ~~to~~ through the present, and I suppose that if there's anything permanently ~~xxxx~~ from ~~MISSISSIPPI~~ Mississippi, ~~XXXXXX~~ that: this woman, "what did we ~~xxxx~~ that made 'em hate us?" ~~XXXXXX~~ had been cleaning white people's houses through the year ~~xxxx~~ years, whose ~~xxxx~~ children, one of them ~~xxxx~~ had been ~~xxxx~~ her country to take, but who was unable to walk, as she said, in the ~~xxxx~~ of her own town.

She had been, incidentally, arrested, and was not bailed out.

dale they started on the policy of "jail without bail." The idea behind jail without bail is that it will hit the conscience of the white community in due course, if enough people are arrested ^{that ultimately} ~~also~~ the ~~XXXXXX~~ pocketbook - as Martin Luther King once ~~said~~ remarked, the only book Americans can read is the pocketbook. In Clarksdale they tried this until it was discovered that everybody who was arrested was put in the same cell. Now the consequences were that in Clarksdale, in a cell designed for six people or eight people there ended up ~~xx~~ sixty people ~~xxx~~ with Mississippi heat and with the Mississippi prison ventilation and sanitation facilities producing very close to an epidemic among the prisoners. And finally they sent out an urgent message with(?) the first one that got out - "For heaven's sake, stop flooding the jail because you're only flooding one cell." It's(?) a very effective way, of course, of making it difficult for people to appeal to the conscience, even assuming ^{that} there remains a conscience in the white community to appeal to.

And I'm not too sure, in Mississippi, that that conscience is appealable to. I am for most of my life a southerner and I don't want to over-simplify the problem - there are good white people everywhere, as there are good ~~every-~~ ~~XXXX~~ bodys everywhere. In Mississippi, for instance, you have Hazel Brannon Smith publishing this paper, publishing the news ~~xxxxx~~, as she did recently about a sheriff who shot a Negro from behind and saying that the sheriff ~~was~~ is unfit to hold public office, and losing her advertising and her husband his job as a price for it. There is the Reverend King. The Reverend King leads an interesting life. He, on one trip into Jackson one day was given four ~~xxx~~ traffic tickets. He, as you know has been in this odd accident in which a ^{the(?)} car ramed into him in the middle of ~~x~~ demonstration and left him on his back

for a long period of time. He one time decided to - he's a Methodist, I should say, and his application for affiliation with the Methodist conference of Mississippi came up before the white ministers of Mississippi, the white Methodist Ministers, and they voted down allowing him to affiliate with them because he had been involved in the Negro demonstrations. He one day tried to drive to the airport in Jackson, if you can picture this, and on the way to the airport, outside the airport, was refused permission to drive into the airport in Jackson, if you can picture this, and on the way to the airport, outside the airport, was refused permission to drive into the ~~airport~~ by the police. _____ of course, his car. And he was trying to meet a person visiting him, flying out from Boston, and had no way to get into the airport. And he said, "You can't do this to me, I'm just meeting somebody at the airport." ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ And the police ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ said, "we can't do it to you? Argue and ~~WXXX~~ we'll arrest you for resisting us. And so the Reverend King drove away from the airport and had to phone the airport and try to tell his friend that he couldn't meet him at the airport in an American city.

I had an ~~airplane~~ episode at the airport one evening which ~~was~~ couldn't have happened in Johannesburg. I took Charles Evers out to the airport, at about one in the morning. Brand-new spanking jet airport, built with federal ~~XXXXXX~~ funds - in Mississippi when they build anything with federal funds, the signs always say "Another Mississippi Project." And under it it says "Maintained 100% with Mississippi Funds." And if you're not dividing these things too carefully, it doesn't occur to you that "maintained 100% by Mississippi funds" has little to do with the construction of the project. ~~WXXX~~ I got to the airport that night with Charles Evers and the whole airport had in it three ~~XXXXXX~~ other people except the Delta ticket salesgirl, who was issuing the ticket. Three people in an airport in an American city at ~~IXX~~

1:00 in the morning. And Charles picked up his ticket and started to walk away, and as I started to go and get my luggage to bring it over to him, I was accosted, physically, if you can believe this, in an American airport, by a woman who obviously was of some means because she was putting somebody onto an airplane somewhere, and her escort, a male, supporting her in the attack, as she lurched at me across this airport, screaming, "You goddam nigger-lover, we're gonna get you..." and on and on in the traditional style that you probably have become used to if you have listened to Southern governors (laughter), or at ~~the~~ least some southern governors recently on the television. But for this to occur - I say this because its important to understand that while there are marvelous white people in Mississippi and marvelous human beings standing up against this, the atmosphere is so paralytically hysterical, the newspapers are so unbelievably unreal in what they report, that the atmosphere is, as I started out by saying, that "we can win if we hold out." There's no sense in Mississippi that integration is coming and let's gradually accommodate to it.

There's a sense that there's a sinister Communist plot, headed by the Kennedys, who are the most nefarious influences in history, and I say that the best thing the Kennedys can do if they want to get Kennedy re-elected is to send every American to Mississippi for a period of time and if they don't come out raving about the Kennedys then they've fallen tened to what I heard in Mississippi about the Kennedys. But this is not there where the President of the United States is considered to be a reputable agent of the Communist conspiracy, trying to destroy the country only of the Communist conspiracy but simultaneously of the Pope (laughter). Its great if you get all of your evils in one bag and get them all in one

place. The weekly newspaper in Oxford, Mississippi, had a column in which ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ University of Mississippi had a column in which someone seriously one week while I was there whether the President would next send troops into Mississippi to close down ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Protestant churches, after he'd closed down white schools.

Mentioning that reminds me of something that, as students, you'll want to hear. This is something called The Rebel Underground, published at the University of Mississippi during the Meredith period. I read it verbatim. "We urge the organization of Rebel Underground teams and units on every floor ~~x~~ of every dormitory and in every sorority and fraternity house on the campus." (This is the kind of activism that Stanford might learn from.) (Laughter) "Our primary objective is to encourage James Meredith to transfer to some college where he would be welcome. There are many Yankee colleges that would eulogize him and make him par-baby of the campus. His forced entry here has caused two deaths, bloodshed, chaos and bitterness which will work for years. The Communist Party, U.S.A. was wiring President ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ to send troops to Old Miss on September 30, while the Communists in Cuba were installing missiles aimed at the United States. Russell Barrett, left-wing professor, dined with James Meredith the other morning. It is in ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ keeping with his philosophy to mingle socially with the Negro, who has done so much for the Communist cause, through the National Association for the Advancement of the Communist ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Party. (laughter) We are looking forward to the day when the ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Ku Klux Keepers (KKK) will leave out campus. Congratulations to Russell Barrett, Robert Farley, Harley Garrett, and James Silver, who have been rendered honorary niggers." - these are four that professors who had been seen eating with Meredith. Incidentally, eating with Meredith is, ^{while} at the University of Mississippi, no mean thing to do.

For any of you who have felt that food might be better here, I think ought to be grateful that at least you could eat it without having things thrown at you while you were eating it. I ate with him three times, a very small number of times compared to a man who had to eat there twice a day for many months. I think I ought to just pay tribute here to Tom Boyson, though, because Tom was in Oxford a good part of the summer and ended up helping Meredith with his studies, particularly trigonometry, about which Tom's ~~own~~ knowledge was so extensive that he knew what the word meant at the beginning of the summer. But he briefed himself sufficiently to try to help out, and was ~~even~~ credited by Newsweek Magazine, at least, in having helped to get Meredith past the ~~exam~~ course. And I think ^{that} the degree of debt we owe Meredith for having stayed at Mississippi for the time that he stayed there is one that none of us should ever forget, whatever ~~the~~ differences of opinion one has with him on other subjects. This is one of the, I think, great Americans of our time for having done for one year for what most people ~~XXXXXX~~ would have had - I had trouble doing for one year. Well, the Rebel Underground was succeeded by other issues. ~~XX~~ "Meredith Psalm" was distributed: "Kennedy is my shepherd, I shall not want. He leadeth me to lie down at Old Miss. He leadeth me beside the water streams. He restoreth my books. Yea, though I walk through Oxford, I will not lack. His soldiers are with me. Their banners are protection. He shall comfort me in the presence of these water streams. ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ cafeteria. My cup runneth over. ~~XXXXXX~~ shall follow me for the next year and a half and I can be in the hall of fame forever."

Now, the thing is about these things is that when you understand the atmosphere in which this is the milieu of opinion forming, in which everyone thinks that if you just hold out long enough all these ~~XXXXXX~~

things are going to stop happening. And the President of the United States, next time around, won't be a Communist, and we'll have the troops withdrawn and this will all go away, then you, I think, begin to understand why what's being done in Mississippi today is unique. We had troubles in ~~MEMPHIS~~ Raleigh, we've had troubles all over the South, we've had troubles all over the North. But it's in a different context, in a context where there's still the rule of law. Even in Gadsden, Alabama which is a nightmare, and Selma Alabama, where hundreds are arrested and where cattle-prodders are used on the bare feet of people who have been running over glass, and where other attractive instruments of police action recur, there is still the sense of victory coming, there is still the sense of progress and change. And it is in this sense that Mississippi appeals ~~particularly~~ particularly to our consciences today. And I want to conclude the, at least - some of you may want to ask questions and I hope that we can answer them, but I'd like to ~~conclude~~ conclude the formal, if not prepared part of the program by just saying this, that when you list all the possible ways of trying to break through this nightmare in Mississippi, when you consider the fact that you cannot picket, that ~~x~~ even the boycotts produce tremendous retribution and are conducted with tremendous difficulty, that you can't vote, that you can't mass-demonstrate, that ~~there~~ there isn't any way that you have of expressing protest, it leads to the necessity of figuring out something else that can be done. And we've come up, however, tentatively and probably, with two ideas. One is this mock vote. The idea of the mock vote is that since Negroes cannot vote in Mississippi in the elections, the elections are not valid, because ~~x~~ in those elections the 41% of the population, or 42%, are disenfranchised. And so in the mock election, held at the same time as the ⁶⁶alleged elections, there will be an opportunity to demonstrate the intensity of desire of ~~x~~

the population of the people of Mississippi who are disenfranchised, to have the right that all Americans are supposed to have. Now, this has several virtues, the ones of demonstrating that Eastland isn't Mississippi and so forth are important. But also it has the value of giving the Negro protest movement some form of unity and some way to stick together on something and something they can do which there is almost nothing that can be ~~done~~ done to stop. Presumably some white sheriff, in keeping with patterns in Mississippi, will break into a Negro church during the voting and arrest people. And someone else will probably shoot somebody, or whatever strikes his whim at the ~~moment~~ moment. And these are the risks that any movement in Mississippi faces. But these are minimal risks compared to the risks involved in walking down Main Street, to have the police rifles pointed at you, or spending six months in the Coahoma County jail with no way ~~work~~ out because you tried to picket. So the vote protest is an effort to unify and to speak up in the only way that seems possible at this moment in Mississippi.

The other project that's still being toyed with is the idea ~~that~~ of a mass assistance campaign from outside Mississippi next summer. As Mr. Pitts, Doctor Pitts, in Alabama said the other day, when the Mayor of Birmingham said that we want to settle these problems ourselves, he said, "You've had several ^{these} centuries to settle things without outside help and you've failed. And now we're going to get all the outside help we can." And this is the feeling, in Mississippi, of the people who have been denied these basic opportunities. So next summer we're hoping to be able to arrange ~~with~~ sufficient assistance from outside Mississippi so that even white people in Mississippi will pretend that they're ultimately going to win that they'll know that it's not. That they'll know that ultimately this country will not tolerate

ssippi going on as it has. I think that the confidence in Mississippi of
 people will not be reached until they begin to get facts, until they begin
 to understand that the New York Times, Time Magazine and Life Magazine
 are not Communist plots, that the Kennedys are not tools of Moscow, that
 the Pope isn't running around as the chief agent of miscegenation and the
 Catholic Church hasn't been turned over to sinister forces that are trying
 to destroy the sacred way of life of Mississippi white people, that this is
 the pattern of our world, and that they must get back into it. And no more
 do we want to destroy white people in Mississippi than in South Africa or
 anyplace else, ~~that~~ in a sense we're trying to help them. But, whatever
 happens, it seems to me that its time that there was a ~~unanimous~~ response
 to Mississippi commensurate with the degree of oppression and bitterness that
 the people there live under. And so next summer we're hoping to be able to
 get agreement among the Negro civil rights organizations to have a large number
 of people from outside Mississippi come to help and bring enough people
 into the state so that there will be a awareness among the white people
 you can't beat up everybody in the United States, and that every time you
 up one person who's committed to the ~~radical~~ ~~idea~~
 of getting people registered to vote, ~~it's~~ ~~not~~ ~~the~~ ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~beating~~
 aimed at, its to ~~get~~ ^{get} people the ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~beating~~
 beat one person up for that, ten more ~~people~~ ~~are~~ ~~going~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~
 of the United States and is on our ~~conscience~~ ~~as~~ ~~an~~ ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~beating~~
 whatever our compassion may be for the ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~beating~~ ~~up~~ ~~one~~ ~~person~~
 has come when people who are fighting ~~for~~ ~~social~~ ~~change~~ ~~have~~ ~~to~~
 the fact that ~~they~~ that they're going ~~to~~ ~~make~~ ~~the~~ ~~social~~ ~~change~~ ~~rather~~
 fighting against it rather than preventing it from occurring.

So this is what our hopes are in Mississippi. It's not an optimistic forecast of the situation; I couldn't honestly be optimistic now about Mississippi except ~~in~~ that I think you know, and I know, outside Mississippi, that we are in Mississippi going to win, that even the unreality you get when you're there of feeling that somehow there is no progress is wrong, and that from the perspective of other parts of the United States and of the world this little island of embittered people, shooting and beating and turning to brute force to terrify are in the backwater of civilization and are going to be lost. Mississippi is not a foreign country in our midst - it's the foreign part of all of us in our midst, and we help ourselves, I think, as we help Mississippi.

I thought I'd finish this statement by, since I've been talking about the South, on a note that was struck by a southerner, perhaps the ~~greatest~~ greatest southerner, one of the greatest Americans of our time, Senator Frank Graham of North Carolina, now a United Nations mediator. And it was from a Southerner that these words ~~came~~ came, as well as ~~all~~ these things that are going on in Mississippi today. He said this: "In the fulfillment of her heritage of freedom and hope of brotherhood, may America more and more be a land in which free peoples ^{of} become brothers in the sight of God and the human heart. Here ^{are} the autonomy of the human spirit, the freedom of the mind, the liberty of inquiry, speech, association, work and worship, with a personal sense of moral and social responsibility are essential to the dignity of the free individual on whom ^{are} the security of the state, the welfare of the people and the progress of civilization. In this land of liberty, for which our fathers died and for which we would live, work and give our all, may America become a country in which the highest and lowest and all the people equally together have the freedom to struggle for a more perfect freedom, a freedom of truth and beauty and goodness,

where democracy is without vulgarity, excellence is without arrogance, the answer to error is not terror, and the response to a difference in color, race, religion ~~ideas~~, ideas, or social ~~rank~~ status is not discrimination or exploitation or intimidation. Here is the humility of repentance for our own wrongs, ~~the~~ freedom of indignation against injustice and evil, and courage in action for decency and fair play." Thank you very much.