

News letter



*Make a file
Phys, for H.U. Right*

MEDICAL COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

21 WEST 56th STREET

NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10019

NUMBER 3

JANUARY, 1965

Personnel Sought

It is now apparent that for MCHR to develop effectively more full time personnel must be found. Salaries are available for three new positions.

- (1) **Medical Field Director:** This is our most urgent need. We are looking for an M.D., preferably with Public Health training, who would serve in the Jackson office for 6 months to a year. This person would be expected to be able to make policy decisions.
- (2) **National Executive Director:** This person, not necessarily a physician, would run the New York office and coordinate National activities. This person must have demonstrated organizational experience preferably, but not necessarily, in the health field.
- (3) **Secretary:** A second secretary is needed to ease the burden of the continuously increasing amount of paper work.

Dr. Desmond Callan and his Committee are diligently searching for excellent people to fill these positions. Every member is urged to join in the search. Please have any contacts you know write Dr. Callan at the New York office.

National Convention

The formulation of plans for the National meeting continues. The date is now set: April 23rd and 24th. The location is Washington, D. C., probably on the Howard University campus. The Program Committee is arranging plenary sessions, and workshops on program, constitution, organization, recruitment and fund raising. Though there is a great deal of activity, plans are still flexible. It is hoped that all members throughout the country who have any suggestions concerning the program will convey their ideas to Dr. Thomas Levin at the New York office.

*See you
in
D.C.!*

Action

The American Academy for Cerebral Palsy was planning to hold its 1966 meeting at Biloxi, Mississippi. MCHR wrote to the Academy advising against holding a National Meeting in Mississippi. On January 11th the Academy's President wrote to Dr. Aaron Wells advising that the meeting had been cancelled

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and would be held in New Orleans where "...[he has] been assured that no discrimination on the basis of race, creed or color will exist".

Shortly after the First National City Bank of New York purchased Mississippi bonds, despite the appeal from NAACP that they be boycotted, the National Treasurer withdrew MCHR's funds from that bank. Subsequently, MCHR has received a letter from Roy Wilkins expressing his appreciation of our action.

Winter Program

MCHR's two Public Health nurses continue to work in Mississippi; one in Holmes County, the other in Hattiesburg. Three additional long-term nurses and one short-term nurse have been employed and are about to leave for Mississippi. The nurses' activities include home visits to the sick, teaching of Public Health skills and, perhaps most important, helping local groups form Community Health Organizations.

A new National level committee is being organized for the purpose of supplying medical, dental and psychological evaluations of Civil Rights workers who are being considered for work in the South. The proposed plan of operation is as follows: There will be a National Co-ordinator, whose name will be announced in the next Newsletter. There will be forms printed for nation-wide use. Chapters interested in offering this service to their local SNCC and CORE groups will make it known that the service is available and then request from the Co-ordinator the appropriate forms. More details will be given as they develop.

Chapter News

Los Angeles: Dr. Robert Peck participated in a program entitled "Tribute to Mississippi" sponsored by Discussions Unlimited. The main speaker was James Baldwin. Over 1100 people attended. Dr. Peck also appeared on an hour long local television program called "9 on the Line". He was interviewed by three newscasters about MCHR and PSR. As a result of the program several carloads of clothing were donated to SNCC. Drs. Arthur Dunn and Stephen Seligman have also spoken to local groups. Dr. Bernard Brickman spoke to the sophomore class at U.S.C. Medical School. The Chapter is especially interested in interesting medical students in its work. On December 11th the Chapter held a meeting which attracted a "standing room only" crowd. Included were 40 medical students. Four students and a Medical Resident volunteered for Mississippi.

New Haven: Officers have been elected: President, Dr. E. Richard Weinerman; Vice-President, Dr. Philip K. Bondy; Secretary, Dr. Edwin C. Severinghaus; Treasurer, Dr. Paul H. Lavietes.

Three Committees have been formed: (1) Local Action Committee to work on the problems in New Haven, (2) A Yale Civil Rights Coordinating Committee, to coordinate with University activities and (3) a New York-Mississippi Committee to coordinate with the National program.

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The Chapter numbers its membership at about 50 physicians, plus several medical students. The Chapter is planning to raise \$1,000.00 to send to the National Committee to help with existing debts.

New York: A new chapter of MCHR has officially been started in New York City. Several well attended meetings have been held, a Steering Committee has been chosen and Dr. Philip Stuart has been elected pro tem. Chairman. Meanwhile some individual members have spoken about MCHR and Mississippi. Miss Ianthe Harris, R.N., Desmond Callan, M.D. and Lee Hoffman, M.D. addressed the Columbia University School of Nursing Chapter of the National Nursing Honor Society, Sigma Theta Tau. Mr. Martin Gittleman spoke to the Department of Pediatrics of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine on "The Effects of Discrimination on Mental Retardation and Infant Mortality in Mississippi."

Pittsburgh: A fund raising event is being planned for January 30th in conjunction with Pittsburgh Friends of COFO. Dr. Aaron Wells will be the guest of the Committee for the weekend.

Another recent fund raising activity of the Chapter was a letter which was sent to every medical doctor in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. The letter briefly explained the workings of MCHR, its future plans and financial needs. It has already begun to produce generous responses.

Washington: "The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party sent 600 people to Washington on January 4th to protest the seating of the congressmen from Mississippi. The MCHR chapter helped them find accommodations in private homes, and provided medical care for several who became ill while they were here.

We have been able to provide medical and dental care for a number of SNCC field secretaries from the south. Federal law provides hospital care at Freedmen's Hospital for indigent transient persons, and professional civil rights workers, with an income of \$10 a week, are eligible.

One of our nurses spoke about MCHR to the student nurses at the Washington Hospital Center.

Our executive board is busy with plans for the National Meeting in April. We cordially invite all of you to be our guests!"

Mary Holman
Publicity Chairman

Sponsors

MCHR has had six new sponsors added to an already impressive list.

T. P. Almy, M. D. (New York) - Director, 2nd (Cornell) Medical Division, Bellevue Hospital.

Elliot S. Hurwitt, M. D. (New York) - Chief, Surgical Division, Montefiore Hospital.

Irwin H. Kaiser, M. D. (Salt Lake City) - Chairman, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Utah.

Joseph R. Wilder, M. D. (New York) - Director of Surgery, Hospital for Joint Diseases.

Leonidas H. Berry, M. D. - President Elect of National Medical Association.

John N. Edson, M. D. - Director, Department of Internal Medicine, The Long Island College Hospital.

Publicity

The brochure for MCHR is out. It is handsome and informative and should be of considerable help in explaining MCHR to the public and in soliciting funds. Quantities can be obtained by chapters and individuals by sending order requests to New York specifying the number required. The price is \$25.00 per thousand.

The major portion of the The Nation for December 28, 1964 is devoted to "Journey to Understanding: Four Witnesses to a Mississippi Summer". One section each is written by a lawyer, a minister, an educator and a doctor. The doctor is Aaron Wells who describes his experiences during MCHR's formative stages. [Last Fall Mr. Wayne Carrington of Mamaroneck, N. Y. arranged for me to meet Mr. George G. Kirstein, publisher of The Nation. This Mississippi issue of The Nation was an out-growth of that meeting. MCHR owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Carrington - Ed.]

The December 1964 issue of the American Journal of Nursing carries a brief report of a session on MCHR sponsored by the New York City Public Health Association at the recent APHA annual meeting.

In the section entitled "Names in the News" of Medical World News (November 6, 1964) Dr. Aaron Wells is cited as the first National Chairman of MCHR. There is an accompanying picture of Dr. Wells. Drs. Jerome Tobis and Alfred Moldovan are also mentioned.

Fund Raising Activities

On February 14th an elegant Cocktail Party is to be given for the benefit of MCHR at the New York home of Mr. and Mrs. Max Abramovitz. Mr. Abramovitz, a world renowned architect, is perhaps best known as the designer of the United Nations building. Dr. Benjamin Spock and Mr. Sammy Davis, Jr., will be the guests of the Committee.

The Women's Division is currently holding a raffle. First prize is a round trip to Puerto Rica for two; second prize is an oil painting by G. Hatcher and third prize is a sable boa by F. Flournoy. The drawing is March 20th. It is planned that this activity will earn \$5,000.00 for MCHR. The Women's Division's last activity netted MCHR \$1,900.00.