

We are faced with both the greatest danger and the greatest opportunities of our short life. After finally making Mississippi a pressing national issue, COFO is torn with internal disorganization of almost fatal proportions if not quickly remedied.

Some of our fabulous opportunities are:

**POLITICALLY:** Huntley/Brinkley pointed out soon after Goldwater's defeat that the black-belt is now the political battleground - because, outside of Arizona, the Republican Party candidate's sole support came from precisely those deep South areas which deny Negroes the right to vote. SNCC-CORE voter registration activity and FDP development might force the Republican Party of Goldwater out of existence, paving the way for the possible growth of a truly liberal (liberal/labor/Negro) party leaving the Democratic party to be the moderate/conservative party it is.

**NORTHERN SUPPORT:** the swarm of volunteers has created a great base of support for the Mississippi Project upon which we can draw for volunteers, money, supplies, and political action.

**CIVIL LIBERTIES:** This summer we had people working together in an atmosphere of judging by actions, not by associations or reputation. The entire liberal community was educated by this.

**EDUCATION:** The Freedom Schools has made a substantial contribution to the nation's start at grappling with Negroes and education generally.

**FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LAW ENFORCEMENT:** The FBI step-up represented the greatest commitment by the U.S. to enforce its laws that we have yet seen.

**LEGAL WORK:** Mississippi had never seen such vigorous attacks as our COFO v. Rainey suits and others which we have started.

**BUT SOME OF OUR MOST DANGEROUS CONDITIONS ARE:**

**STRUCTURE AND DECISION MAKING:** Absolutely no working state-wide structure for decision making exists. COFO has no elected administration, nor for the most part not even any self-appointed administration. The state headquarters in Jackson is almost completely dysfunctional. There is no working Director, Executive Committee, Personnel Committee, Financial Secretary, Communications Director, etc.

**RACISM, VIOLENCE, STEALING, HOODLUMISM, AND IRRESPONSIBILITY:** Staff and volunteer discipline has broken down so far that the state headquarters has had several race riots, white workers are often subject to severe racial abuse and even violence from Negro workers, staff and volunteers have assaulted fellow workers, cash checks, clothes, and supplies have been stolen totalling several thousands of dollars, Negro workers are frequently played-up-to and looked-down-on by white workers, juvenile delinquency sometimes appears to have taken over certain offices, Bob Moses has retained the position of Project Director while taking no part in key day to day decisions in areas such as personnel, distribution of resources, etc, and the staff has allowed all of this to develop, contributing to the problem by the relatively high number of drunks and goof-offs all over the state. For example, many workers drive cars as fast as they can, figuring that COFO will pay their fines and get them a lawyer no matter what they do. Former SNCC staff going to Tougaloo steal and act rowdy in the Jackson office, etc.

And I would add **SOCIAL WORK** instead of **MILITANT CIVIL RIGHTS WORK** or **DIFFUSION INSTEAD OF DEVELOPMENT**. COFO does not exist to duplicate welfare work our governments are responsible for, nor to be a do-gooders club to soften the blows of this feudal society - but rather to agitate, stimulate and induce basic social change to eliminate the causes from which the present abuses spring. Secondly, our purpose is not to build up the largest list of counties we are "working" but rather to organize well the few places we have resources for.

To deal with some of these problems I submit the following suggestions and outline of a COFO structure.

Legal Area COFO should drop the idea (which was never ratified or agreed to by the staff anyway) of a staff counsel and go back to a Legal Coordinator who would be one of the SNCC or CORE staff people. This is necessary first because we (nor the Legal Committee) can not afford supporting a separate legal office which has cost us \$9,500 in the last three months operation. Also, Henry Aronson is not suitable to administrate our legal affairs.

State-Wide Strategy We need some group to regularly review our state operation, including the latest U.S. voting suit decision, population figures, etc. to plan our state-wide strategy. Staff shifts, program and resource emphasis should be planned instead of anarchistic as it is now. I suggest that within the broad outline set by the state staff meetings, that there be an Executive Committee to perform this function.

Structure The state CORE and SNCC staff and those this staff invites, make up the supreme governing body of COFO. The state staff meets three or four times a year, decides the program areas and policies, elects the President, Executive Committee, Program Director, Coordinators, Executive Director. The Executive Committee governs COFO between state staff meetings. The Executive Committee appoints the following standing committees:

Personnel: to hire and fire within the state, as sign and handle problems.

Finance: to handle obtaining and disbursing money, handle priorities, etc.

Legal: the existing COFO Legal Advisory Committee would continue as now but would be a standing committee of the COFO Executive Committee and its present membership would be reviewed and possibly changed.

The personnel and finance committees would have to be composed of people who would work in Jackson so that they will be available for decision making and serving the projects.

The COFO President will be the chief executive officer and national spokesman for COFO.

The COFO Program Director will oversee the field operations of COFO, helping implement the major programs of any particular time.

The COFO Executive Director will administrate the Jackson office. He is responsible for maintaining the WATS line, making sure that there is staff to run supplies, etc., and aids the working of the various program coordinators and is responsible for having reports for the monthly Executive Committee meetings.

Coordinators. These are to be elected by the state staff and are to work out of the Jackson office to be available to handle project questions and problems through the WATS line. These include Freedom Schools, Communications, Legal, Community Centers, Supplies, etc.

As completely personal suggestions, I nominate Bob Moses for COFO President, Jesso Morris for Program Director.