

## REPORT OF SPECIAL PROJECTS: September 1962-September 1963

Director, J. M. Lawson, Jr.

The title: Special Projects means primarily workshops on Christian non-violence and consultations with local groups involved in direct action. Since 1961, this area of work has been done on a part-time basis by J. M. Lawson, Jr., working directly under Wyatt T. Walker. We work with any community group which is interested in the non-violent approach. However, we are particularly concerned to set up such workshops with the various affiliates of SCLC. Every affiliate should have periodical efforts to better understand non-violence and non-violent direct action.

### I. WORKSHOPS

We have planned and led eleven workshops over the last 12 months. Some of these have been small (with 8-10 persons at Lynchberg, some sessions in Birmingham, Memphis and Bucknell). Others have been quite large with as many as 200 persons (at Birmingham, Somerville, Ruleville, Miss.). Workshops went on from 1 to 5 days in Clarksdale, Ruleville, Shaw, Miss.; Birmingham (at Miles College in October, during the movement in April and May); Bucknell University, Pa.; Lynchberg, Danville, Va.; Somerville, Memphis, Tenn. and for the National Council of Churches in conjunction with the Clarksdale, Miss. effort. As with the year 1963, Special Projects was dominated by Birmingham which meant that workshops planned were cancelled in March and April in order to go to Birmingham with the first wave of SCLC staff. This meant that commitments made in Jackson, Miss. and Augusta, Ga. were never fulfilled. We are now trying to re-schedule these. Furthermore, in cooperation with C. T. Vivian, the SCLC Director of affiliates, it is expected that a larger number of workshops will be developed.

A number of trips were of a consultative character, representing SCLC in a situation either to help plan direct action or to discuss problems where direct action was already taking place. For example, I was asked to go to Jackson, Miss. during the height of their action last spring (June) to examine the situation with a number of local leaders. This was during the days when the police were acting like the Gestapo in Nazi Germany, prior to the death of Medgar Evers. I made at least two trips to Clarksdale, Miss. to help in the planning prior to the demonstrations which began June 16th.

I spent a good part of August planning and leading the demonstrations in Memphis on school de-segregation. This was an opportunity for me as a Staff person to work with the local NAACP chapter and should contribute to the spirit of cooperation among us. In Birmingham, I was among the staff, particularly in April, helping with much of the leg work that had to go into that tremendous non-violent campaign.

### SPECIAL PROJECTS

Over the last year, we have worked with four special projects which contribute to the growing non-violent movement.

1. The Dorchester Workshop for the staff of the various non-violent groups in the South.

## REPORT OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

Page 2

2. A film which tries to depict the cruelty of segregation in the Delta of Miss.
3. A seminar to examine what the non-violent movement has to say to the Church in conjunction with the Church Peace Mission.
4. The formation of the Miss.-Tenn. Association which meets monthly to discuss non-violence, cooperative efforts, and direct action.

### FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

We shall continue to develop workshops wherever we can. Special priority will be given to Birmingham, Jackson, Miss. and Augusta, Ga. We expect to help plan and lead "Freedom School" for high school students in Memphis which will consist of a series of workshop sessions on non-violence. The Church Peace seminar will be held in December. We also hope to develop another joint staff workshop in January.