

FREEDOM

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

8½ Raymond Street, N. W.

Atlanta, Georgia 30314

INTRODUCTION:

On many campuses throughout the nation this fall, the students who were a part of Mississippi's "long hot summer" will be discussing their roles in the massive assault which was made on the traditional institutions which dominate the life of the more than 900,000 Negroes who live there.

On Negro college campuses, however, campuses which themselves were the birthplace of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the freedom rides, and the sit-ins,

students whose familiarity with the South and its problems is life-long, will be looking, anew, for ways in which they can help produce change not only in Mississippi, but in whatever state they call home.

Part of that answer is contained in the record of the Mississippi Summer Project. Another part of the answer lies in the continuation of that program, and in new programs which SNCC plans for the future.

The history speaks for itself and for those who were a part of it. The future is up to you!



A REVIEW . . .

Mississippi Summer Project FREEDOM SCHOOLS:

" . . . kids asking questions."

More than 3,000 students, from pre-school to 70, learning and broadening, their horizons and applying themselves to the struggle for freedom.

In more than 41 Freedom Schools in twenty communities across the state, people gathered

in church basements, in yards, and in community centers to learn Negro history and fill in the gaps of their past; citizenship, to increase their understanding of the importance of the vote in changing their lives, and the lives of Negroes throughout the state. More than 175 full-time teachers, from college vacations and from regular teaching posts found rewarding experiences in the growth of students in places ranging from the debris littered yard of the recently bombed McComb freedom house, to the urban community of Hattiesburg where more than 600 students attended five Freedom Schools.

VOTER REGISTRATION

The method varied, from trudging from house to house on paved and dirt streets, to driving the long and dangerous miles from plantation to plantation.

The message was the same: "Are you a registered voter?" And if the answer was "no", there was the discussion; the argument; the attempt to cut through the fear, introduce pride and the sense of being a part of a movement which was sending more and more



Negroes to the polls despite the violence with which white communities reacted to their appearances at courthouses.

And there was "freedom registration", a registration without going to the courthouse . . . and the Freedom Democratic Party, a party of their own, and the buildup from precinct and county to the state convention in Jackson, and the subsequent challenge by their own representatives to the seating of the white "regulars" at the Atlantic City convention of the Democratic Party.

That was history!

COMMUNITY CENTERS

The need ranged from adequate space for centers trying to do an effective job in dilapidated quarters which had been livened by an inside coat of whitewash, to finding people in the community who could help erect a new building at Harmony, Mississippi.

But in whatever facilities they had, community center volunteers were organizing and administering adult literacy programs; talking to women about prenatal and infant care; finding shoes and clothes for needy



families; talking about federal benefits and how to get them; maintaining and staffing library facilities; organizing young people in drama groups and book discussions, and providing a place in the community for political meetings and rallies.

Working with books and paints, and sewing machines, and contemporary magazines, and old films about subjects new to both rural and urban Mississippians, project volunteers and staff worked toward the mental and physical enrichment, and the political education and involvement of Negroes across the state.

SPECIAL TASK

Actors and folksingers; communications personnel using their high school and college newspaper experience; photographers and economics majors; printers and electronics technicians . . . secretaries and experts and amateurs at all of the accessory tasks which are important to the administration and building of programs—to recording them and getting that record out of Mississippi and

to the general public—to repairing old equipment and installing new—to bookkeeping and letter-writing, and to building spirits, and acting out social and moral messages on stage. Volunteers with an army of skills, and a dedication to freedom, used whatever talents they had to help make the Mississippi Summer Project a reality.

And they found themselves joined by recent college graduates; by older adults with more specific skills in a diversity of fields ranging from law and medicine, to chemistry and physical education.

THE NEED

As a college student, trained in the application of formally learned material to the problems of everyday life, your skills are vital to the operation of those programs which help bring political awareness and participation to Negroes in the South.

Your practice teaching experience is a tool which is invaluable in a freedom school; your campus newspaper experience is vital to our communications program; your work with visual aids and your training in the proper use of a library are invaluable in com-

munity center work; your understanding of government and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship make you a prime candidate for voter registration work.

What is more, your familiarity with the community in which you live, and your contact there with young people and adults who are concerned about FREEDOM NOW, make you a direct link in that chain which begins in the front porch of a Negro family in rural Southwest Georgia, embraces a church in Mississippi, stretches to the courthouse in Tuskegee, Alabama, and ends in a seat in the State Legislature of Georgia.

NOW!

Already, the planning has begun for next summer. Fall, winter and spring projects are underway, not only in Mississippi, but in Alabama, Southwest Georgia, Arkansas, and in all of those other places where the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee operates voter registration, community center, library, literacy, research, and other programs.

Already, more than four hundred volunteers and staff, many of them students giving a year of their lives to the freedom struggle in the South, are at work in more than 40 communities.

Some are replacements for staff and volunteers who have returned to the classroom to complete interrupted studies. They are part of that revolving cadre of young men and women who constantly weave their way in and out of the active ranks of SNCC, and the Freedom Movement.

There is a gap, however, to be filled by you.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Workshops for college students interested in becoming an active part of SNCC and its programs have been scheduled. Staff people, whose experiences range from field work in the South to fund-raising in the North, will be available to discuss future programs, and plans for continued involvement in the Mississippi Freedom Project, as well.

If you are interested in attending a workshop, please fill out, and return the blank below, making certain that you have answered all of the questions so that we may send you the proper literature, and later make personal contact with you.

Name _____ Age _____

Home address _____

(city)

(state)

School address _____

(college or university)

(box number)

(city)

(state)

If you are interested in working with SNCC, and have definite plans for becoming a volunteer in the near future, please fill out the additional blank which most closely fits your plans.

I will be available as a volunteer:

Summer, 1965 () — January, 1965-September, 1965 ()

January, 1965 - January, 1966 ()

MAIL TO:

SNCC

SOUTHERN
STUDENT
WORKSHOP

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