

MEMORANDUM ON STRUCTURE

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Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee would be the staff and these people which are invited by the staff to attend. It would be the basic decision-making body and would function pretty much as Jim suggests.

Program Committee

At the Coordinating Committee meeting we would have committees meet. These committees would be the same as our workshops on program this time. The committees, in other words, would be composed largely of people working in a given program full time, with the addition of others who wanted to come. They would meet three times a year at the Coordinating Committee meeting.

The committees would be set up by each Coordinating Committee meeting. There would be a committee for each program we have or want to have. This time we had committees on Freedom Schools, Community Centers, Voter Registration, Unions, Political Organizing, Public Accommodations, Literacy. Before the meeting is over, we should have meetings of committees on our other program areas (most of which Jim calls administration): Northern Support, Southern Campuses, Communications, Research, Education. We would be sure to set meetings of the committees so that people working in the field can go to meetings of committees that don't relate directly to field programs and vice versa. These committees will select someone to suggest to the body to coordinate the program they outline and help them carry it out. Sometimes this will mean they shift to Atlanta and travel from there; sometimes they can go on with work in their area, and still kind of see the program is carried out. So Featherstone and Cobb and Amanda will coordinate the Freedom School program and John Perdew, still in South West Georgia will work on the union workshop.

This will provide for getting leadership for all our programs directly from the staff and will do away with the administration idea in Jim's paper, which makes many program areas responsible to one person rather than to all of us.

Executive Committee

Between the meeting of the Coordinating Committee there should be a group which can review the work of the people who are coordinating the work the committees have outlined. This group can be called an executive committee. It would be a workable size, maybe about 15 people. It should call in anyone they need to have at the meeting part or all of the time to get information. But the people actually on the committee would not be there because they were head of this or that. We would elect the Executive Committee from the staff at large and should elect people we trust to make sure what we wanted to happen at the last Coordinating Committee meeting is really happening. They might be people who were head of a program area (like Northern Coordinator) or a project director, but they would not be there because they were head of the area but because we might trust them to serve on the committee.

Everyone who wanted could come to meetings of the Executive Committee and some people who were needed would be specifically invited, but they would understand that they are not there to act as the committee (which was elected by all of us at the Coordinating Committee.) If there were decisions about crucial things that could not be made by the Exec. Comm., they would call a special staff meeting or would delay decision until the meeting of the Coordinating Committee.

Jim's proposal seems to try to give representation to program areas and project areas, but I think if the Coordinating Committee really functions (as it hasn't) then it will make basic decisions and the function of the Exec. Comm. will be to see they are carried out. If this is the case, we need good people we will trust to do that, rather than someone to go and represent out views on crucial issues.

Maybe one of the reasons SNCC's functioning seems so confused is that the way we really work isn't reflected in our formal structure. I think the above plan doesn't impose any unnecessary structure on the way we really work and it allows for as much staff participation as possible.

There are some problems not included above because I don't understand them entirely:

1. The Executive Secretary and Chairman: I don't understand the difference. Maybe Chairman has been spokesman and Exec. Secretary responsible for the carrying out of programs. If we have a lot of people responsible for carrying out programs and responsible to the staff as a whole maybe we don't need such a strong exec.

2. Personnel: Personnel committees don't function because personnel decisions are day to day decisions. I suggest we outline at the Coordinating Committee personnel policies and have someone in Atlanta responsible for hiring, on an interim basis and with consultation with people working in the different program areas and projects. These hirings can be approved by the personnel committee.

3. Program Secretary: I do think we need someone, maybe the same person as the personnel person, to work directly with the field and kind of help the Coordinators of program that relate to the field with problems they might have. This would be the person you'd call if you needed a car and there was a hangup with the transportation person or who would find out for you why you didn't get your check for a month and Chessie said it was sent. Maybe program secretary isn't the right word for this kind of person, but there really has to be someone to get people out of bureaucratic jams and help them with programs the program coordinators aren't already handling.

4. Who is on the Coordinating Committee: Jim suggests we solve this with a Call Committee. Again, I just don't think committees function well for us unless they are made up of people involved in the work. Maybe the Executive Committee should plan and call CC meetings by letting the staff know they are happening and by indicating they are only for staff, but if staff knows of anyone else who really should come, they can let X (the Exec. Secretary) know.

5. Finances: The Executive Committee should be responsible for outlining the budget and the financial report in such a way that everyone can understand it. Finances is probably the general responsibility of the Exec. Secretary, but the whole staff should be able to understand questions like how much are we spending on offices compared with the field? And what salaries are people getting and why?

WORKSHOP ON COMMUNITY CENTERS

Proposals:

1. That SNCC adopt the proposal submitted by Frederick Johnson for the training of local people and staff involved in Community Centers and that a Committee composed of staff interested in the Community Centers project be instructed to meet following the retreat to evaluate the proposed training program and to make any necessary additions or changes.
2. That staff people interested in Community Center programs take time after the retreat for discussion of specific program ideas and needs.

WORKSHOP ON VOTER REGISTRATION

It was the consensus of those participating in the voter registration workshop that there were flaws in SNCC voter education programs and these flaws were caused primarily because the staff was ill equipped. They were and are not familiar with all of the programs such as the Federal Programs, Community expansion and the Education programs which are so necessary in making a working voter registration program. We therefore propose that the voter registration workers attend some type of educational program which will make them aware of their responsibility.

We also propose the voter registration programs in this order:

1. Organizing
2. Educating
3. Community Expansion.

The suggestions proposed for organizing were: around block clubs; issues in local elections; youth organization (that is to say young Freedom Democrats); adult political organizations (that is to say Freedom Democratic Party); citizens committees, and the distribution of food and clothing. Food and clothing, in some areas, are to be used as an organizational tool as well as to meet the needs of the people who have need and tried to register to vote.

The suggestions proposed for voter education were literacy classes, citizenship classes, freedom schools, depth canvassing, distribution of literature, and federal programs. Depth canvassing is probably new to most of us, therefore we have defined it as being: teaching political programs and educating around the vote while canvassing.

DANGER AREAS: Freedom Vote, and Freedom Registration.

The suggestions proposed for community expansion were: job training; building businesses; bringing industry; getting local officials of a particular choice.

DANGER AREAS: Black machines; Mrs. Boynton's in Selma, Ala., the Southwest Georgia situation.

A consensus reached by the body was that the voter registration workers who only take people to the courthouse are obsolete. Some educational program for voter registration workers should be proposed and voted on, since voter registration workers are SNCC's most important product.