

REPORT ON SOUTHWIDE FALL CONFERENCE  
THE SOUTHERN STUDENT ORGANIZING COMMITTEE  
Old Gammon Seminary campus, November 13-15, 1964

The first southwide fall conference of the Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC) was held in Atlanta, Georgia, November 13-15 at the old Gammon Seminary campus. Approximately 144 students representing 43 schools and eleven southern states were present.

The conference began on Friday night, with Ron Parker, treasurer of SSOC, talking about the organization of SSOC and how it could relate to local campus groups. General discussion followed concerning the role of local campus groups in their college community. Ideas were exchanged as to successful programming for local areas. After the first evening session a film on the life story of Lillian Smith was shown and a record of readings from her new book was played.

Regular sessions began on Saturday morning, the first one dealing with Students in Politics. Larry Goodwyn, former head of the Texas Democratic Coalition talked about the need for coalition politics, citing examples of how the coalition has successfully worked in Texas. Ed King, national committeeman for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party gave the history of the FDP, the convention challenge, and expansion of the party into other deep south areas. Immediately following the morning session a workshop was scheduled to give students a chance to discuss local campus programming.

Don West, Department of Education, University of Maryland, began the afternoon session on Southern History and Economy. Immediately following Mr. West, Robert Van Waes, Staff Associate of the American Association of University Professors spoke on the academic freedom of students. Rev. C. T. Vivian, Director of Affiliates of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference then spoke on civil liberties and violations of constitutional rights. The afternoon session was also followed by a workshop.

Ed Hamlett, a member of the SSOC Executive Committee and director of the white student project of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), began the evening session by discussing the relationship between SSOC and the SNCC. General discussion followed concerning the "whiteness" of SSOC and the possibility of attempting to work on both white and Negro campuses. It was pointed out by some of the people present who are on the SNCC staff that SNCC is beginning to reconsider its base of operation and is moving in the direction of community organizing. Therefore the door is now open for SSOC to expand its emphasis to include all Southern campuses. (Originally SSOC was conceived as being an effort to reach white southern students. The need for working on Negro college campuses had not been felt so keenly since SNCC was considered working with such groups.) The group decided that SSOC should become an inter-racial, inter-collegiate organization. The meeting was then adjourned with the understanding that persons interested in continuing the discussion could meet in another room and those interested in seeing some of the films available could do so.