

# MINUTES

5th DISTRICT MEETING, NOVEMBER 25th, 1964

Thay King

(Presented As A Working Paper for COFO Mississippi Staff Conference)

Jesse Morris This is a very important meeting, and I hope you will all look on it as such. The attitude expressed by many people here toward this meeting is bothering me very much.

Acting

The Project Director of Hattiesburg  
Acting  
(Doug Smith, also 5th District Director) felt I should have called him before calling this district meeting. I thought Hattiesburg was the place for 5th district meetings so I called it for Hattiesburg without consulting him. I'm here today for business and I hope you will take it this way.

Doug Smith We're only hearing your side Jesse. You left a message that we were to have a meeting Wednesday from 9-4. You didn't talk with me first, otherwise you would have known 5th district meetings are held in Biloxi.

Jesse People don't talk enough at meetings, but more will talk here. We can use this meeting as a working paper for the December 4th, 5th, and 6th conference. Other people have been complaining to me about things in their projects...I thought we needed this meeting.

Charles Glenn Don't say "people." Call names. Some of what you're talking about comes out of Jackson and Harrison counties.

Jesse Another reason we are here is to deal with problems. If people don't say anything now at this meeting it will mean that problems don't exist.

Charles Glenn They shouldn't bring problems to you Jesse, they should bring them to Doug.

Jesse Complaints did come to me. I didn't know Doug was district director. If Doug is going to be District director then someone else should be running Hattiesburg. Projects in 5th have many problems. Laurel can't find housing, Sandy writes me and says he wants certain people out of the state. I won't take that kind of action unless its the feeling of the whole 5th. The district has to develop lines of authority. We must know the powers and duties of those in the leadership as well as the roles. Most complaints to the National Council of Churches (NCC) this summer came from people who had been to the coast projects, about sex and drinking on the coast. Back in July the NCC tried to get someone down. Bob Moses and Bill Hanson went to the coast but the complaints are still coming. Doug says he will pick-up Sandy (Sanford R. Leigh, Project Director of Hattiesburg and 5th District Director, now out of state) on the 15th of December to bring him back into the state but Sandy told me he won't be back until after the end of December. Purpose of this meeting is the district directorship.

Doug The problem on the coast is that the people there do not respect their project directors. Every problem from the coast that has been brought to me I have tried to handle. But the problems are brought to you, Jesse, and you keep them to yourself. You've got to let the people know that they have to go through the right channels, from their project director to the district director.

Jesse When Guyot (Lawrence Guyot, now Chairman of the FDP) left no one really assumed the role of district director. Dickie Flowers and Barry Clemson came to Jackson for \$400 for a house in Biloxi and come back a week later for another \$400 for the same house, after that I called Sandy and asked him to be district director.

Doug That's not how Sandy got the job. I was here when

Jesse We're arguing.

Barry Clemson I spoke to both Jesse and Sandy about problems on the coast because I haven't seen anyone who was a district director and I wanted advice and help from anyone who could give it. There is too little organization.

Barbara Schwartzbaum Barry, you were at the 5th district meeting in Hattiesburg several months ago when Sandy made it clear that he was district director and that Charles was trouble shooter on the coast. He said then that if you had any problems you were to go first to your project director, then to Charles and then to Sandy. The lines of authority were very clearly drawn at that meeting and I have the minutes of it in the office.

Dick Kelly How do we pick a project director? How is a district director picked?

Jesse We'll in the past we were a small organization. The summer project generated lots of programs. Guyot appointed the project directors in the 5th, Mandy Samstein appointed them in the 2nd. In the 4th they were elected by the project people and appointed. In the 1st I appointed them, in the third they were appointed. There really is no structure. Guyot was project director in Hattiesburg, people spread out to the coast and he became district director.

Dickie Flowers When I was workin in the 2nd there was a meeting in Greenwood, Sept. 13, 1963, when Guyot and Sam Block were made district directors.

Jesse Moses doesn't want anymore titles. Dave Dennis is going to New Orleans to run the CORE office there and I'm going out of the state. So who do you want to run your organization.

Doug I don't know how you can say you didn't know I was acting district director in Sandy's absence when I have with me a carbon of a letter Sandy wrote you before he left saying that I was taking over for him temporarily.

Jesse I guess I didn't have time to read that letter, because I didn't know. Question of district leadership is temporarily put aside for individual project reports.

Chuck McKeller (Gulfport) We have a good Voter Registration program. There are 6 volunteers on staff not counting John Else and his wife who are also working on VR and doing a good job. One Freedom School teacher will be leaving soon which leaves us with only one FS person who has been on the project four days. We don't have enough people in Gulfport. We don't have a Community Center mainly because we don't have a building to house one. There is one local Community Center already and we'd like to build it up and enlarge it and work within the community. There are no federal programs though there is a farm program in Gulfport. As part of our VR program we get people to memorize the section they're given and we write it down so we know what section they had and we have most of the sections pretty well interpreted by now.

Charles How many at Freedom School?

Chuck Eight to ten students, meet two nights a week.

Charles Do you have a food and clothing committee?

Chuck Yes. They're getting the clothes out of the boxes and setting up a distribution committee.

Doug Should we list problems now or later?

Jesse We'll list them now and go into them deeply later.

Mary (from Moss Point) We didn't know anything about that food and clothing shipment.

Chuck Jim Perry announced at the last district meeting in Biloxi that we were expecting a shipment.

Doug You should have telephoned when the shipment arrived.

Tillman I forgot to.

More talk about the clothing shipment.

Doug I think this is something that could be ironed out within the project.

Jesse I think you ought to let people talk.

Doug I think we should get to the real problems in Gulfport.

The staff there has been bitchin' about Chuck taking the car to Waveland when they needed it at Gulfport. Jesse Harrison told me to pull the car so I pulled it.

But no one bitched to Chuck McKeller. Problem is that people can't trust project director. Now, is it because he's young, inexperienced or just not trustworthy?.

Jim Perry (Gulfport) We're not getting subsistence and missed a couple of budget checks.

Doug Another problem in Gulfport is that people aren't working in the project and that they're looking to someone else as project director.

Gwen Robinson (Laurel) We finally have an office. We just moved in. There are Freedom School classes on a seminar basis three times a week. Math, English and Negro History. We also have a community center program part of which is a Great Issues class where important problems are discussed. Literacy classes are planned but haven't begun yet. The library is set up. We have a VR program with political

education classes on the precinct level. Our VR program is heading up to a Freedom Day sometime next month. The FDP in Laurel is planning the Freedom Day. Our biggest problem is staff. Who decides who goes where and what to do if people don't work out? Problems with transportation have been resolved since I got a car. Staff is another big problem as I requested people with certain kinds of talents. I don't feel Laurel has gotten what it deserves.

Jesse Why should one project have 15 people and another have 3?

Joel (Moss Point) We had a staff meeting to choose a project director and I was chosen to do it. Tillman took the car to Jackson and didn't tell us he was going. People called Hunter Morey from Moss Point about Tillman. I don't think they should have called Jackson. I think they should have called Doug. My feeling was that when Sandy left Doug was district director.

Gwen Not clear in my mind who the district director is when Sandy is on leave.

Tillman We had a meeting in Biloxi and Sandy said then that Doug would be district director in his absence.

Doug Reason Gwen didn't know was because she wasn't there at the meeting.

Tillman Problem in Moss Point is that I like you but I don't like him. Then I can't get you to do anything. People have to speak up.

Harold (Moss Point) What we decided was he wasn't handling the job well and we wanted another project director. Its a question of respect and trust.

Dick Landerman (Hattiesburg) People are not going to district director with problems. The reason people don't know who the district director is, is because they arrive late to meetings or don't read their mail.

Charles People are confused as to the role of the project director, the district director and the Jackson Office.

Jesse Jackson is not supposed to be a place where you set policy. You have made it what it is.

Jack Mogelson (Gulfport) We're the complaints referred back to the district director?

Barry Reason I went to Jackson was because I never received an explanation as to how to solve these problems.

Dickie Flowers (Biloxi) In the last few months we have been working on the Community Center. The Library is due to open and Freedom Schools will start Monday. There is no VR program yet as we are waiting on the 4th, 5th and 6th meeting. We are also setting up a food and clothing committee. Problem on project is between me and Barry. He and I seem to tie-up all the time. His basic gripe to Jackson was that I misappropriated funds. Of that \$100 check he was talking about, \$35 was stolen from me at the Freedom House, some of the money went for the car we used during the Freedom Vote and I have receipts for the rest. The basic problem is that I have to stand up and read the preamble to the constitution to Barry before he lets me do

Ruth Sherrif (Biloxi) In the project, the project director does not take responsibility on himself. No one went to grab responsibility but when Barry was away the finances were in bad shape. Project Directors take the cars and use them for dates. What is the project to do when we see it failing in front of our faces?

Barry I think it comes back to having respect for the project director. Its true that we have tied-up over money. I did feel that the more money I got from the group in Pa. the less project money was being spent on the project. The new cars were out every night, though not always by Dickie. We've torn up two cars on the project since the summer. Rules are set down. Usually the first person to break them is the project director. Dickie is the main offender in messing up the Freedom House. One person is messing up the project. When Dickie was out we got work done. Women also are a problem because Dickie goes with several girls who are trying to work with us. And we (not the project director) make the decisions.

Ruth Decisions are usually made at a staff meeting but the project director misses these sometimes because he's away at conferences.

Doug (Hattiesburg) Fourteen on COFO staff plus Bob Beech whose a big help and dependable. We have 12 volunteers. Everybody is busy. Library, Freedom School two community centers, VR, and a new program of research into the Hattiesburg power structure.

Charles How many freedom schools? Doug. Two.

Charles You say that you've leased two community buildings for 6 months and that the leases have been paid by Jackson.

Doug Report done on finances from Nov. 1-20. During this time \$125 was received from Jackson. But we spent over \$700. Depending on Bob Beech and Friends in the north we almost covered that. There is no way in hell we can operate in Hattiesburg on \$125.

Bob Beech Say it now children.

Wendy Anderson (Hattiesburg) There is a lack of cooperation and responsibility on each individual part on the project.

Barbara Problem is not peculiar to Hattiesburg but exists around the state. There is too high a concentration of volunteers in the project in relation to numbers of experienced SNCC people. We have a lot of people but don't know much about their work. We need a training program, an extensive one, for new and old volunteers which would help them do their jobs and also might give them more perspective on the movement. Maybe if they knew more about things they wouldn't be so quick to judge project directors and there might be a lot less policy friction in projects.

Dick Kelly Infinitely a need for staff education; especially into the power structure of the organization.

Rev. Beech Another Hattiesburg problem is the difference between SNCC and community mores.

Barry We're in debt too, but that is secondary.

Jesse There's no money in Jackson. Two checks have bounced for a total of 1,800 the other day. Everyone will just have to tighten their belts.

Question from the floor on the role of the district director.

Jesse In the 4th the district director assigns people to projects and tells Jackson how many people he needs for the area. If you call Jackson and can't get something the District Director calls. He handles sex and drinking problems. In the 2nd, Stokely allocates cars between projects; all budgets are made out with the help of Stokely. He travels around to all the projects and checks that they are functioning as well as they can. If no VR or FS program is going on, he will ask why.

He also opens up new counties and then gets people to staff them. He watches all the money and makes the projects send reports to Jackson and himself once a week.

In the 3rd there are only two projects: Vicksburg and McComb.

Charles Does the district director have the right to remove people and project directors without consulting Jackson?

Jesse No.

Doug Was it left up to the district director or Jackson to decide who comes and who goes.

Jesse During the summer it was left up to the projects.

Jack Mogelson Does Jackson set down any regulations which limit the district director.

Jesse Only general policy limitations such as not participating in...

It should never come to a vote within a staff meeting of a congressional district meeting which has so many inexperienced people on as to putting in or taking out a district director. Maybe the other district leaders with Bob and Jesse should decide on who should be the leader for the district. I feel the staff should have some say about wrong doing but also if you replace Tillman then he will come to me and complain about you and so on and then you will have a meeting every day. John Else (Gulfport) It would be better if a district director were not attached to one project. He would have more time for the district's problems then.

Joak We need to have regular district meetings.

Doug How can other district directors decide who the director in another district should be. What do they know about that district? the whole staff of the district should decide. and put someone in; then if they decide wrong they can remove him.

Gwen A group who knows what's going on in the district, after looking over all the field reports from the district. We should first define what the job should be and then worry about how to remove him.

Tillman We're not concerned about how to get who out but about who is in.

Marian Davidson (Laurel) District directors should not also be project directors.

Jesse Stokely's not a project director

Doug If you are going to be a project director and also a district director then the project has to develop to the point where it doesn't need a baby sitter.

Charles What's Sandy's role going to be when he gets back.

Jesse We're here to make things move smoothly which should be above personality.

When the staff at Waveland made up a new structure for SNCC which did not include

John Lewis we all thought he was big enough to look to the good of the organization.

Charles I don't think Doug is selfish about advancement in the 5th district. I don't believe he would hold people in Hattiesburg that were needed on the coast. Doug has done as good a job as director as anyone who didn't also have a project to worry over.

Mary Louise Crosby (Hattiesburg) He can hold two jobs and he is doing a good job.

Dick Vanderman It should be up to the project directors of a district to decide whether or not a project director can also hold down the job of a district director.

Jesse People who were supposed to go to Laurel have been kept in Hattiesburg.

Doug Only three people were kept in Hattiesburg who were to go to Laurel.

Will this separate district directorship and project directorship be permanent or temporary? Sandy is now both and he is away and is not being consulted about this.

Dick Kelly I suggest that we decide the principle of two jobs, and wait on the implementation until Sandy returns.

Seafus (McComb) A lot of us are basing our opinions on the presence or absence of Sandy Leigh. It is possible that Sandy may be running the Jackson office when he returns.

Doug He's planning to come back.

Jesse That was before it was decided that Bob, myself and Dave Dennis will not be in the Jackson office.

Ruth Charles and Dick L. are saying that the group should have no say in the decision.

Jack Absolutely no communication going back and forth. The group setting up a hypothetical situation based on the amount of work a person could do. Other group feels the structure argument doesn't exist.

Barry If we had had a full time district director the situation on the coast would not have gone  $4\frac{1}{2}$  months without correction.

Charles And he would have made you project director.

Barry Right!

Doug Jesse, you got a letter from Sandy months ago about the situation on the coast and what he wanted done about it and Dickie.

Jesse I propose a vote on whether or not one individual should hold two jobs.

Gwen How were the district directors given their jobs?

Jesse In the 2nd Donald White was elected, Stokely was appointed, with staff consensus, the director in the 3rd was appointed by Jackson, in the 4th the position was assumed by Dick Jewett.

Gwen If the district elects the district leader why do we have to wait to decide until Sandy comes back?

Rev. Beech The fact that all of this turns around whether Sandy is here or not rather than whether or not there should be such a position shows an underlying unrest.

Doug People will sit in 5th district meetings and never raise these problems..

Jesse I've handled this badly. (The arrangements for the meeting). But the problems that exist on the coast, I don't think Doug can handle them. Harry Bowie (NCC project director in McComb, brought to meeting with Jesse, and announced as new 5th district director in Sandy's absence until Jesse found out that Doug was filling that position) is a minister and he can handle problems of sex and drinking. He won't stand for any nonsense.

Rev. Bowie As Jesse presented the 5th district leadership to me it was only a temporary job and there was never any question of me replacing Sandy permanently. The thing that bothers me is that there really is a basic black-white problem here which you don't say but which is at the bottom of a lot of what you're saying. Why don't you deal with your black-white problems. We're thinking in terms of my friend here and my friend there and my personal feeling here and there. Well shit on your personal feelings. Here you are in the middle of Mississippi and if as much bitterness could be directed at the white man out there as has been at each other and the Jackson office things would really be moving here. I'm not up here because I want to do it--be honest with yourselves--you're fighting at a real basic level. You could say I'm wrong but I don't really believe so.

Doug I strongly believe that that is the real problem but what can you give us to go on.

Rev. Bowie: Maybe for this meeting some of the bitterness should be thrown out. Maybe Barry and Dickie can't stay on the same project, but I don't know who should leave

Marian Davidson I don't think the black-white issue can be solved but the transportation personnel and finance problems can be solved. So we should deal with them.

Barry Rev. Bowie's was an eloquent plea that the basic question is the black-white question and I would like to talk to that point. I feel that really the problems should be stated in terms of attitudes toward responsibility. I feuded with a lot of people about that this summer --about an equal number black and white. So I don't feel that color is so important as a difference in background.

Dickie To me the black-white attitude was no big thing or you would never have been Asst. Project Director.

Doug We've got to stop being Muslims during the day and integrationists at night. One reason guys fight on projects is that some of the guys feel others are using the girls they are bitching about during the day.

Charles No cat that comes here for three months is going to give me orders when he can go home next week or next month and I got to be here for the next 55,000 years if I live that long. No one like that is going to do me that way and I don't care if he's white or black or pocka-dotted with a green stripe up his black. if he's going to go home and have a family and has forgotten all about Charles Glenn. (Laughter) Don't laugh, I mean this from the bottom of my heart.

Ruth Perhaps the problem arises when a SNCC field worker is made a project director and has to face so many new responsibilities. A new project director needs training to fulfill all those responsibilities, and there should be a larger role for the staff.

Wendy I don't think its so much a difference in black and white rather I think it has to do with having lived here a long time or being new. Just because local people are so close to the situation, outsiders are more objective and the local people should give more credit to the newcomers insights.

John Foster (Hattiesburg) Voting on project directors and district directors should be left to SNCC staff. I don't know enough about things here.

Dick Kelly Wendy's thing about local v. out of state still comes down to black and white.

Dickie I disagree with Wendy. If you had been raised in Mississippi and taken all the abuse and beatings that we have there would be no way in the world you could see it different.

Jim Perry Biloxi is a question of action v. inaction. Barry wants to do and see's Dickie not doing . . .

Doug A kid whose born and raised in Miss. is working in the Movement and he's never had a chance to get any kind of decent education and a kid from the north whose gotten a good education comes and works in the Movement and then he uses that good education against the kid from Miss. Then this guy is going to throw 55 cruves in the way of experience, talking with education against the dude who really knows the score.

Tillman You tell them not to sit in, they do, and get arrested.

Charles These girls get on the phone and call Hunter Morey and he tells them to do whatever they want and not to mind what Charles and Tillman say. That's how the car was taken from Gulfport.

Doug Hell, I pulled that car, let me explain. Only person in Gulfport who was authorized to drive that car in Gulfport was Chuck McKeller. But Jesse Harrison told me that the car had been abused in Gulfport. Well chuck has been abusing the car and he's the only one with authority to drive it so I pulled the car.

Jesse Who made it clear that only one person had authority to drive that car?

Doug Sandy.

Rev. Bowie Either Doug is going to have to appoint someone to run Hattiesburg and be a full time district director or he will have to appoint someone to run the 5th and stay in Hattiesburg.

Tillman While we're here we should appoint a project director for Pascagoula.

Body breaks for lunch.

Gwen What has happened to the question of one man doing two jobs in the 5th?

Doug Its been postponed until Sandy comes back.

Gwen When was that decided?

Suggestion that project directorship and district directorship be put to a vote from the floor.

Jack No, we can't vote now because people will interpret it as a vote pro and con Sandy rather than pro and con separation of the district and project directorship.

Question from floor as to whether such a vote would be implemented now.

Doug Proposition is that body will decide structure and wait on personnel until Sandy gets back.

Vote is taken and motion passes.

Doug Now we should discuss the role of the district director.

Jack Should help to coordinate all the programs for all of the projects. Should be all powerful.

Ruth I would leave out the all powerful part.

Jack If he is all powerful all responsibility for failure will rest with him. He should also communicate good ideas from project to project.

Doug One person from each project should be taking notes on the role of the District Director.

Barry Cars and personnel should be within his responsibility.

Jim Perry What lines of communication is set up?

Doug You push your project director about what you want and if the project director doesn't give you it you can push for it with district director.

Barry District director should be able to move people out of the district after conference between people involved and Project Director.

Jim Then we stop going to Jackson about personnel. Instead we go to the district director and he goes to Jackson.

Chuck Why spend the whole damn day talking about something your going to have to be talking about again when Sandy comes back.

Doug Project director should handle finances without too much supervision from the district director. Budgets should be included in regular reports to the district director. The District Director would not get a treasurer's report of his own as Jackson now does.

Doug The frequency with which the district meets is up to the district director. In the past all the money for transportation of the district director in the 5th came from Hattiesburg funds. But if the project director of Hattiesburg will no longer be the district director then there will have to be a separate source of funds for him to get around the district with. So this means the district director has to make up a budget and each project has to pledge something to him.

Dickie If the district director is going to have to rove around, the Jackson office is going to have to give him to travel with. If you can't pay all your bills now out of your project budget where are you going to be able to spare <sup>money</sup> part of it for the district director.

Jesse The Jackson office gives district director's \$30 every two weeks to travel around with.

Doug We never saw it in Hattiesbmrgr.

Jesse Thats because I didn't know there was a district director in Hattiesburg. Its also possible that a district director would not travel too much, that he could operate primarily out of one place.. He might stay two weeks or two days in a project or operate out of Jackson with the WATS line.

John Else (gulfport) Gas bill for car was \$126. The car is not around when it is needed to take people to the court house. Is it a project car or the project director's car?

Doug Problem came up at Biloxi when gave Chuck sole authority to drive the car and no one said a damn thing.

Mrs. Else If a car is used for a great length of time in one place for personal use then should we pay bills.

Doug Either the car is not needed because there are other cars or the car is not responsible to the project.

Jim We also have two private cars in the projects: the Else's and a new one that came in with a new volunteer several days ago. John Else pays for his own gas.

Eleanor (Gulfport) My car is in bad condition but I am offering it to the project.

Charles I don't know a cat who works on a project who doesn't sometimes use a car for his own personal use. Just can't be <sup>different</sup> done baby.

Jim But only one person can use the car for per snal use and it wasn't there sometimes during the day when we needed to unload welfare shipments.

Doug Well was chuck working with the car on something else?

Jim Well maybe he was, but we didn't know where the car was.

Doug The car was signed over to Chuck when Bailey was in jail. We have to assume that a project director will be responsible to the project. If he's a drunkard he has to give up drinking if we assume he's obligated to the project. or else we'll

we'll have to close the movement down. No matter what is going on with anyone else the project director should always be straight. Chuck, you could you

take the car to Hattiesburg, and I said no so you took it to New Orleans.

Chuck Who says I took it to New Orleans.

Doug The group.

Chuck How do they know I went to New Orleans with it?

Doug Well if you didn't speak up for yourself.

Chuck I feel like I already have been convicted.

Doug If you don't speak up for yourself you will be convicted.

Gulfport car problems.

Tillman Harold says to me, give me the keys to the car, your not going to use it any more. But then he comes to me and asks for three dollars for gas. He doesn't want me to use it at nights for personal use nor in the days for personal use.

Doug How much money do you spend on yourself that COFO sends down for the project?

Barry Doug, could Hattiesburg function if Sandy messed up?

Doug No.

Barry Transportation is not the problem, the project directors are.

Chuck No, transportation is causing the whole damn problem on the coast.

Doug No, people are. causing the whole damn problem.

Mrs. Else List the duties of the project director.

Doug Each project director should tell us what he thinks his duties are.

Tillman called on.

Tillman I've resigned as Moss Point Project director.

Chuck Should be able to communicate with people on the staff. Should be able to give program for the community. He should be there at all times during working hours.

I can't make decisions now.

Dickie Project Director should communicate between the people on the project. He makes the overall decisions.

Chuck If I tell a person on a project to work on a specific street I don't think I should have to follow him down that street to check on him.

Charles A project Director should initiate and carry out programs while keeping the staff in line.

Barry A leader must set an example in practically all regards. If he does this he will have respect of people.

Doug A project director has first got to be honest. You have to first set an example. Good leadership develops a good follower. Project director has to start relying on certain people to take certain responsibility.

Dickie You can't ask people to be machines, and human beings are subject to mistakes. On a number of occass

Dickie On a number of occasions, Doug, I know that you haven't set an example.

Charles Can you (Doug) hinder me from working in Hattiesburg or on the coast.

if I want to work.

Barbara Tillman and Chuck say they can't communicate with their staff and I think they should say why.

Tillman I can't be handled like they want to handle me. They tell me :we decided to do it this way! That blows the top off a man's head.

Doug I have always felt that a Negro Project Director from Miss. can't talk to his staff because he feels a lack of education. But its really education v. experience and experience is the more important.

Mary (Moss Point) Its a question of background. We always feel that we have a right to give an opinion. We have to bend, and are learning this more and more.

John Else Many of us have been hardened by education. We can destroy another person by our persistence. This summer there was a fear of taking things to a project director. I became a middle man this summer.

Barbara I can't understand why anyone should feel afraid to talk to Charles and would have to go to you.

Charles Because I can;t be handled like a puppy on a string. They'll have to get themselves another black puppy on a string.

Mary We could sit down and talk to Charles.

Ruth We can talk to Dickie but when Guyot came in the attitude was that we were just nothing, that we needed to be told what to do. We felt that we were being bulldozed and that the organization would back them up. Lots of us had the feeling that SNCC would back up people who drank or misused cars against us just because they were SNCC. That if you were SNCC you were right. Now I think that SNCC is beginning to realize that this is wrong.

Tillman Lot of people on these projects feel they can't take orders from a black person. Mary said the other day that if we can't have a white project director then we won't have one.

Harold Then why do we have a black project director?

Doug Its good for all projects to have a Negro project director. A Negro can go into a lot of places that a white can't. The Negro community cannot adjust to a white person directing a project in Miss. Charlie's kept them down for so many years they can't help but ask if he's changing so fast why isn't he changing in Miss.

Georgia For so long Negroes in Miss. have been led by white people. Ray Charles has a beautiful home but the white man put him where he is. But at least in this organization its different.

Charles But I won't take orders from white folks in the movement!

SNCC worker from Moss Point..But there are a lot of bullshitting Negroes.

Mary Louise If a white man were project director I wouldn't be in the Movement.

We have to organize something for ourselves.

Charles I have objections to any white person being a project director but guys like Bill Hansen, Dick Jewett have proven themselves to me. They didn't run home and I would work with them. I have the utmost respect for them.

Pat (Moss Point) I disagree, I feel that this is showing prejudice.

We are all here to work together.

Don Once you give one a chance to be project director--Doug then you'll be out of a job.

Ernest It shouldn't be you over me or him over some other guy. We're in this movement together.

Benny A local person will come into the office and see a white project director and leave because he's always had white folks over him.

Jack Negro people should be over a Negro organization. None of us have left our past enough so that we've thrown out our prejudices. There's lots of hostility against white people. All I ask is that the people I work with try and cleanse themselves of at least the superficial hatreds. We have to accept the fact that there is a level where we cannot get along.

Mike I didn't come here to be a leader. If I were made one I would feel that COFO had failed because I feel one of the aims of the organization is to develop Negro leadership.

Dick Kelly Basically we don't understand one another.

John The fact is you can't pin a badge on anybody, Negro or white, and make him a leader. How do you develop leaders? , What does the district director do when he wants to remove a project director when no one who is Negro is ready?

Ruth What happens when you have a Negro leader and he is incompetent. Doesn't the community notice and lose faith in Negro Leadership.

Barbara : Its not just a question of white project directors, although thats the worst. But all over the state there are white girls in the office, and white "teachers" in the freedom schools.

Doug How many times did you try to get your project director to talk to you.

You've got to press people to talk to you. Someone in Hattiesburg kept pressing me to talk and now we have a good working relationship.

Benny Have you ever gone to local people and ask them to talk to Chuck about what he does wrong?

John Often when we can't establish communications a trusted local person can.

Mary We're talking a lot of things today but tomorrow Tillman you'll still be as

Jack We've all lost contact with what we are here for. The community is watching. If you must drink, don't do it in public. Unless everybody here is willing to say, that they are here to do a job then they should grab their gear and get out.

Rev. Beech The project directors that the staffs are complaining about have been around a long time. Have they always been like <sup>this</sup>? Maybe they needed a rest a long time ago and didn't get it. And in addition to that they're confronted by a bunch of fresh, eager, rested people, who haven't lost their first wind. Now, how are these guys going to work with a group like this.

Jack What do you do when your on a project and everyone beside the project director thinks his decisions are ridiculous. What do you do?

Doug I've never been caught up in this situation and we always consult group opinion in Hattiesburg.

Mrs. Else Maybe if Chuck could observe your example it would help. You should sit in on one of our staff meetings and show us where we're all wrong. We need a mediator right now in Gulfport.

Jim When we sit down together we reach decisions by consensus. But we very seldom sit down together.

Mrs. Else Maybe we need to have staff meetings more often.

Ruth In Biloxi decisions are made and Dickie isn't there and then sometimes he rebels after. We'll Dickie is tired, he needs a rest.

Barry I'm concerned now that we are really coddling people who don't give a damn. I spent all summer saying, Dickie is tired, et.c

Chuck How many people on that project don't give a damn.

Barry Three volunteers, 1 staff person and 2 local people really care.

Ruth The movement will have to realize that some people join not out of concern for the movement but for other things. We had one young guy working with us who didn't work and spent money like water.

Harold Monday all the staff members got together and decided that Tillman didn't have the common support and made Jock project director.

Barbara Did you consult with Doug about his?

Harold No.

Barbara Why?

Harold Something had to be done then.

Doug Glenn appointed Jock Project Director. Glenn is working the coastal area as a trouble shooter, so they went through the right channels.

Dick Kelly What if Glenn wasn't there, would they have to consult you.

Doug Yes, otherwise they would have new project directors every day.

Jesse You are letting your meeting become a legislative session by one person.

Who says that Glenn is that trouble shooter. Maybe people want to elect their

own project directors. If we're talking about building colored leadership then we're not talking about bosses. The Best leadership is flexible and willing to listen to suggestions.

John Else Whole concept of a project director as a feudal lord who puts down his fist either way is wrong. Is this the concept under which we should be working?

Jim Perry By what method did Glenn appoint Jock?

Charles I can't appoint anyone indefinitely but the night that I did this no one could talk any sense to anyone. I did this temporarily in order to settle people back down.

Harold Well, do we decide or do you decide?

Doug Charles just decided that someone had to be project director so that the project would not be left without a director. Its left up to the staff whether out or not they want to keep Jock. They can kick him providing they have someone else to put in.

Ruth If there are changes to be made you should consult district director.

Dick Kelly This is a very radical thing you've just said Doug, do you really go along with the staff being able to remove and elect its own project director?

Doug Well, no, I don't agree with this but if that's what the group wants...

Ruth Decisions are getting slipshod, we'd better postpone this discussion until we're fresher.

Barry We'd better backtrack on the question of electing a project director.

Charles I think the district director should appoint the project director.

Doug What the hell are we doing now? Seems to me we had decided not to change personnel until Sandy came back.

Question from floor. Then can people go back to their projects and elect new project directors?

Doug No.

Barbara The heavy majority of this group is volunteers. How many volunteers were at waveland when the SNCC leadership was chosen. Not a one. Now how can a group which is not considered competent to chose leadership for the entire organization chose and depose the leadership of part of the organization--namely the 5th district of Miss. How much does a volunteer whose only been in the state a few months know and how can such a person actually be put in the position by weight of numbers to select project directors and determine policy.

Dick K. Lets not have any big changes until after the 4th, 5th and 6th staff meeting.

Harold There are people who are in positions of power and they are interested in retaining this power and then there are the have nots.

Jesse Could we have the minutes of this meeting typed?

NOTE

These minutes were taken in long hand during a long and stormy meeting. The reader is warned that consequently there may be inaccuracies in them. Also, it should be remembered that this is not a complete record of the days meeting.