

SNCC Western Regional Conference...Saturday Workshop...November 14, 15
Report on the Workshop on Educational Programs and Speakers' Bureau
Community

Ambling discussion of educational concepts and goals in community organization finally boiled SNCC's educational job down to two levels:

1. Putting the energies of sympathetic people to work--they want to be involved but frequently don't know how--they need direction;
2. Reaching beyond the liberal community, using the broad human appeals of Southern backwardness in education, law enforcement and voting rights, SNCC can create an image that will touch more people than other civil rights organizations.

For the first area, liberals, it was the workshop's consensus that SNCC has the responsibility of directing individual skills at time to do the job SNCC needs done. In this phase of education the workshop proposed that SNCC:

- a. Set up a better system of communication, specifically starting with a letter to contributors and all persons on the mailing list defining current projects and asking for help, with a return postcard for each person to indicate what they can and will do to help
- b. and, include all Friends of SNCC and SNCC groups on the mailing list of the Bay Area Regional Office and each local office--so each one knows what the other is doing.

For SNCC contributors and the public generally, the importance of SNCC articulating its goals was underlined--most people don't even know what the letters "SNCC" stand for. Subsidiary to this, minor but not unimportant in impact, was the recommendation that there be publicity on what SNCC's money goes for. This information can be particularly impressive in direct solicitations--graphs on posters at collection tables, in letters, etc.

In its broad community action and education, the workshop saw SNCC utilizing all the communication media to get across the reasons for SNCC's concentration on the South (when there are local California problems.) Specific proposals here were that SNCC films should be shown in every community in the state; that every community organization should be circularized, offering a speaker from SNCC; that an attractive pamphlet, with photographs, be produced telling what SNCC is and what it does; that photographs be used more widely and effectively; that SNCC's educational program draw on all the arts, dance, music, and graphic, to get its story across; and that specialized programs be developed for specific groups, such as teachers, lawyers, social workers, ministers, etc. One of the suggestions for teachers was introducing a pen pal program between California and Mississippi school kids. This could be worked out with the cooperation of the CTA, AFT, the schools, and the ITA. Another program suggested, this one for churches, was the establishment of a scholarship fund program for Mississippi Negro students to attend California colleges and universities to get training in professions the freedom movement needs in the South, i.e., librarians, teachers, lawyers and the like. Los Angeles parents of Mississippi Project volunteers have recently started this program, sponsoring, housing and providing tutorial service for Mississippi students.

The question of SNCC organizing on a precinct level was raised, but lightly because it seemed that Bay Area SNCC needed better organization at the top before it could consider work on such a direct, local level. But as a beginning in articulating objectives to the community at large, one of the workshops resource persons proposed that an immediate project in door-bell ringing could focus on a letter-writing campaign asking people to write their Congressmen to enforce section 2 of Amendment 14 (U.S. Constitution), analyzed by Ann Ginger in the morning symposium on "The Federal System and the South."

Education Programs and Speakers Bureau---cont'd

Among the general observations made that SNCC in this region might find valuable in expanding its educational perspectives were:

----SNCC's work offers an opportunity for emotional involvement, not just intellectual, and under this heading any number of people can be productive on collections of blue-jean stamps, food, clothing and other materials that SNCC needs in the South;

----SNCC can create a public image completely different from other civil rights organizations--its direct work has no local target, therefore it doesn't hit too close to home for the parochial folk who are sincerely concerned about the South's lawlessness and denial of democratic rights.

Half of the members of this workshop suggested and agreed to continue as a working committee, with a meeting scheduled for next week, to dig more deeply into the questions and problems discussed above.