

What is SNCC?

SNCC is a group of organizers. In other words, SNCC is a staff and the staff's job is to organize. SNCC exists because a group of people decided to try to change something about the United States and to do it in a certain way.

What do we organize?

We organize groups of people who feel the same needs. We organize them so they can gain enough power to get their needs met by people in this country who can meet their needs. These groups should be as independent as possible, should be led by people from within the group (rather than by the organizers or by "civil rights leaders"), and should develop programs themselves with our help.

The groups we organize should join together for strength. Thus an independent student union on a campus should be able to hook up with other student unions into a southwide student union or a statewide student union. A local political unit should be able to hook up to an FDP or other voters leagues in their congressional district. In other words, these groups should not affiliate with SNCC but with other groups like themselves. SNCC is the organizing group that helps them do this.

Where do we organize?

So far, we've organized mainly in rural areas and small towns in the Black Belt. There are, of course, other possibilities:

Urban South: We haven't had much luck here because 1) there is already an established, usually conservative leadership we have to fight and 2) the problems to be fought are complex. We should be thinking about the urban areas of the South because people are moving to cities. But we can't be all things to all men. Maybe we should have a pilot project that we really support and stay with in a city so we can learn more about how to work in urban areas.

Campuses: Certainly we should work to organize campuses. They should be organized around student problems, not problems we think are important and try to impose on them. Their problems are likely to be things like dress regulations, hours, academic freedom, even food. We can organize groups to deal with these problems within the context of democratic rights, as we do communities. They can hook up with each other on a statewide or southwide basis. We will relate to them through our campus organizers in the same way we relate to a community through our community organizers. Many of these students will be potential SNCC staff.

Northern Cities: Friends of SNCC groups, we are told, want to engage in action. If we organize in the North, we should follow the same pattern as in the South... independent local groups. Friends groups, who are organized to do fund raising and support work for SNCC, shouldn't be action groups. There is also the question of whether we should organize for action in the North at all. If we can't handle Southern urban areas, what are we doing in the North?

How do we organize?

We should organize in a way that allows local people to take the lead. We should make sure that local people understand each program we suggest and its implications. We should make sure we respect the way they think and work and