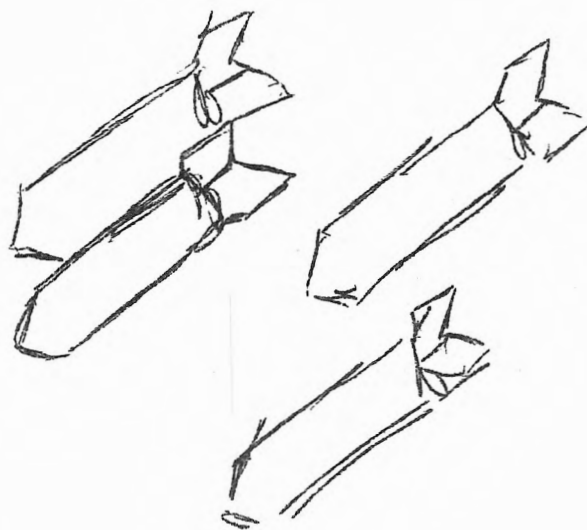


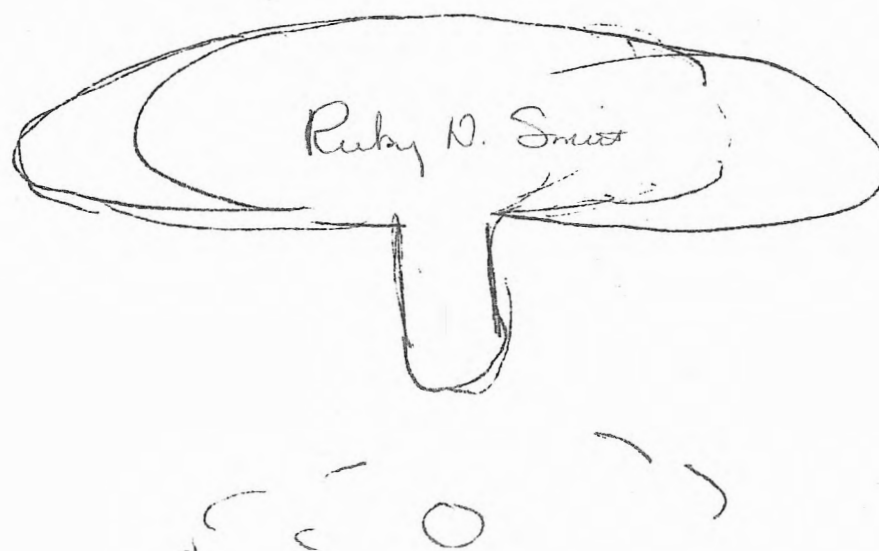
1964



The

SNCC

Explosion



For about four months now, we have talked about the need to re-evaluate the staff, to find out what people are doing and how effective they are being. We have asked, on three different occasions, for job description from each project director. We received replies from Southwest Georgia, part of the Washington Office, and Greenville, Miss. . . . about ten people out of a total of approximately 100 field staffers.

In an act of desperation, the Personnel Committee asked Worth Long to make a field tour to obtain the needed information, and to give a "quickie" evaluation on the basis of what he sees and what he is able to obtain from conversations with the staff. We are fully cognizant of the inadequacies of such a report; but, with an organization like SNCC, what can you do? huh! How do you impress upon the staff the importance of such a simple request? On the other hand, is it really important?

It may well be, as I am forced to believe, that the issue at stake is much greater than staff evaluation or a sense of responsibility on the part of staff people, etc., for I know that the frustrations of field staffers must have increased three-fold when asked to undertake such a task . . . and, inevitably frustrations lead to inefficiency. Evaluation for what? What are our goals; what are our aims in the community? What does SNCC desire to accomplish?

What do we say that we are? What do others think of us? And, moreover, what do we think of ourselves? We say that we are revolutionaries (attempting to force basic changes in society)

and, we say that we are nonviolent (I decline to comment, for I do not know, if we can in fact be both). The Press projects us as *radicals*; some even say that we use revolutionary tactics. Sometimes I think that we actually believe that the PRESS BELIEVES WHAT THEY PRINT ABOUT US. The fact of the matter is that we are the only organization on the scene (with sufficient recognition by both the Negro and white community) that dare challenge the *status quo* in the *real* sense of the term--or should I say with the potential to do so.

At any rate, today . . . in 1964, we are a threat. My projection, if I may, is that we will remain a threat *only* to the extent that we are able^{to}₁ be continuously creative in our radicalism and revolutionary in our aims. At this point, history seems to be ahead of us. By this I mean that we have not really changed our goals since '60 . . . our tactics yes, but not our goals. We have failed to take "creative" advantage of the revolutionary^{trend}₁ of the world; we have been afraid or unwilling to identify with oppressed peoples of the world . . . even though they identify, and feel a sense of solidarity with us. Or, as Billy Stafford often says, we have not understood radicalism and why it must exist. More than anything else, I feel that we have failed to grasp and use the creativity which we have produced. (For a better understanding of this statement, consult the file of "*lost proposals*" where this report will, no doubt, find its destiny.)

What I have said thus far is an introduction to the fact that (in my opinion at least) civil rights in this country is a dead

issue. It is *dead* as defined by our Federal Government and the major civil rights organizations, because in such a context, it does not mean anything to the average individual; on the contrary the average individual is concerned with the basic necessities of life--and why shouldn't he be; in a country which strives on exploitation and racism. I do mean to be *misinterpreted* to say that civil rights is not basic. Yet, we have to deal in facts and the facts are that the news media has distorted the term *civil rights* to the extent that it has been successfully reduced to concern only minority groups and is spoke of in reference to "acceptance" at a lunch counter or housing dwelling, or the attainment of a job. Even now, as the Federal Government fights in Congress to pass a Civil Rights Bill, it is denying its citizens of one of their most basic rights through the House Committee On UnAmerican Activities and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. It talks about eliminating poverty, realizing at the same time, that our economic system strives on poverty and cannot exist successfully without it.

Realizing these things, how can we *allow*--unless we act, we will be doing just that--the people of this country (who look to and depend upon, our leadership) to place their faith in civil rights when we know that civil rights is not the issue. (This is a point which I have thought on for some time and feel that it has not been discussed "nearly" enough among SNCC people).

Turning to our historical development, I think that there is

a definite lesson to be learned when we comparatively analyze two of our oldest projects--Southwest Georgia and Mississippi. I use these only as examples for basic discussion and not in an effort to de-emphasize the work of either staff group. What did happen in 1961 when Sherrod and Moses went into S.W. Ga., and Miss. respectively? The two projects were organized on the basis of two entirely different concepts: organizing a state, and mobilizing a community. While one worker seems to have spent most of his time traveling, making contacts, selecting leaders, etc. , the other worker concentrated on developing and mobilizing a local community (demonstrations and voter registration). Both were successful in achieving their goals; however, the question is: which method has proven to be most effective in terms of long range goals and preparation for future action? (Think about it) It seems to be that our job today is very much the same as it was in 1961. Only a few factors differ: first of all, the resistance is greater; secondly, today we *must* be consistent in our goals and thereby, to a certain extent, in our methods; each field worker *must* at least know and understand his immediate goals and how they relate to the trend of revolution; he should also know what the long range goals are and have some idea of a timetable for accomplishment. Then, and only then, can we expect to evaluate the staff.

GENERAL PROPOSALS

First of all, we cannot continue (impossible) at our present

rate of budgetary growth. This year our budget will be six times what it was last year. (notice the uncertainty which is indicative of a lack of planning and follow-through)

The Executive Committee has an obligation, not only to the field staff but to the organization, to carefully appraise field budgets *before* approving them. Cases in point: At the last full Executive Committee meeting, proposals, as requested, for expansion were presented by two project directors. They were presented to the meeting and immediately approved. The finance committee was left with the burden of saying what would and would not be acceptable in terms of finances. They were cut by the committee to reveal a more realistic figure; however, not one of the projects involved have been able to do any work since that meeting. But, mind you, the proposals had been accepted and had to be funded in order to operate. Yet they remain without money--not because the Atlanta Office is prejudiced--but because SNCC doesn't have any money. Another example is the Miss. Summer Project. How many of you know how much money SNCC will have to spend in Mississippi this summer. . . who is concerned? If we are to survive, such loose

of attack, new and creative tactics, and how our work is affecting basic changes in the power structure i.e., the press, the Federal Government, etc., and how we must, if we must, launch a counter attack. For example, the Poverty Program and the Civil Rights Bills could be the greatest obstacles that we have faced in the history of our existence, (including the bombs, the dogs, the fire hoses, etc.).

Do we really realize what the success of these "ventures" could mean? We should be already planning a counter attack.. maybe we are.....hopefully, somebody is.

In 1965, we must be disciplined to accept ~~discipline~~ and discuss the possibilities of concentrating our forces, if that is the wisest thing to do. We must be a lot of things but above all, I feel that we must be organizers. As organizers, we cannot construct a program which calls for four people in a given community for a period of four years. We must vision ourselves as missionaries with a mission to conquer the minds of the masses, to organize them, to give them programs that will help destroy rather than build up an oppressing system. It may well be, and I feel that it is a valid assumption, that we could not have been that kind of organizers in 1961, and maybe we could never be successful in 1965 had we not enjoyed the luxury of '62, '63 and '64's. At any rate, the ground breaking ceremony is over, in '65, we do or 'die." As for staff personnel, I can only recommend, (again), that after the summer, there be a complete clearing of the board and

and that people be reassigned, (or taken of staff), in accord with our needs for the coming year. Here again, "one cannot determine needs until one first determines what he wants to do."

SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

Talking about what is wrong, expounding on the problems, rubbing it in, etc., is always the easy side of the issue. More important and much harder in terms of really making use of one's thought processes is suggesting concrete solutions. I'll try: Listed below are my recommendations.

IDEOLOGY

1. That SNCC define its ideology--what it wants to accomplish in terms of changin the present society.
2. That SNCC establish specific goals for the areas in which it will work in the next three years, (or more), and show how they relate to the ultimate goal, developing out of the definition of the ideology.
3. That SNCC define in very definite terms how it will project itself in the mass media, i.e., interpreting field projects to the public, building the organizational "image", responding to accusations by the press, etc.

FIELD OPERATIONS

1. That all such operations cease to function after the summer, with staff coming together in a meeting late in August or early in September.
2. Staff meeting for two-fold purpose: a. to provide period of rest after and inform of re-evaluation that will

take place and b. to allow staff an opportunity to give their opinions on the subjects that will be discussed later in a smaller strategy meeting. Staff meeting should be well structured to do both things well.

2. That before you leave this meeting, you should, on the basis of projected income for the summer, make a decision concerning the activities of Southwest Georgia, Alabama, and Arkansas, especially Southwest Georgia and Arkansas.

Recommendation: That a maximum of ten people work in each area.

b. That they be given an orientation session conducted by Billy Stafford, the purpose of which would be to obtain some basic knowledge in organizing, (organizational skills), as well as how to gain factual information that will be useful to us in the future.

c. That they work in teams and be assigned to an area which they can effectively organize in nine--ten weeks. My own projection is that they would not need more than a week in each community, since during the campaign, some initial contacts were made. Also that at least one team be assigned to hit the major cities in Georgia and in Arkansas.

d. The work should result in the developing of concrete programs with which the masses can identify. Since they will be moving in a few areas where we have no contacts, the initial programs should be of a low organizational structure.

- (1). Program should emphasize the topic of the Washington SNCC Conference, which means that organizers will have to be well informed.

One Man, One Vote: Jobs and Food.....

- (2). Program should include basic facts on what the Civil Rights Bill will not accomplish....if it is passed. And, if possible, information pointing up why the Poverty Program cannot be totally successful. All of these things must somehow be done without destroying whatever "hope" people might have...not in the system...but in themselves, (give them a dream).

3. That at some point, after the summer, there be a meeting of all major fund raisers for SNCC.

4. That a major strategy meeting be held immediately following the staff meeting.

PERSONNEL

1. That there be, a genuine and honest attempt next fall and spring to recruit needed personnel to carry out the projected program.

2. That all incoming personnel from this day forth be fully oriented to SNCC before he begins to work.

- a. That materials be printed for this purpose which thoroughly explain SNCC, its history and its goals.

- b. That workshops be regularly scheduled to allow dialogue among staff, as well as a continuous evaluation of what we are doing and how we are affected by rising issues in society. Hopefully, the Educational

Program will be able to provide most of these needs.

3. That persons be assigned to a specific project and given a specific responsibility, based on his skills and as an individual.

MORE, MORE, MORE, MORE, MORE.