

# SMOKY MOUNTAIN ECONOMIC EDUCATION PROJECT

## PURPOSE

The purpose to establish a combination workshop where people:

1. discuss their political and material needs;
2. learn enough about how to be carpenters, plumbers, electricians, furniture makers and designers to go home and remodel houses in their own neighborhood, build attractive, inexpensive new houses and other structures such as community centers, and so forth; this work will be done by and for the poor in their own communities;
3. learn by actually constructing the buildings the need for continuation of the Smoky Mountain work site;
4. pave the way for the development of cooperative corporations owned and managed by the poor people as a means of providing their basic material needs and eventually livelihood.

*W. Va. Bluefield University  
Newpower Development  
Machinery operators*

## PHASE I

### RECRUITMENT

- A. Unemployed Southern Negro men over twenty-one years old.
  1. Size of group probably eight persons, this to be determined by practical requirements such as how many it would take to construct each building.
  2. First group probably from some county where there is already a strong Civil Rights movement so that the group will have support upon returning home.
- B. Appalachian Whites . General comment: Recruiting for learning building skills could be a new organizing technique for political action. It could provide a way to reach the Appalachian men who resisted other approaches and in addition become a means of having Southern Negroes and the Appalachian Whites work together and find common cause.

### STAFF

- A. Artisans
  1. Resident Director: Ideally a married couple of the right sort.
  2. Architect, designer, consultant--Carl Koch from MIT or the equivalent.
  3. Carpenter-teacher; Tilghman Cable, who lives on the mountain. (He owns a complete set of tools which are being brought down from New England.)
  4. Stone and brick mason; a local person, friend of Tilghman's.
  5. Cabinet maker; J.D.
  6. Electrician and plumber recruited locally.

### B. Other teachers

The resident director should be capable of leading discussions in all curriculum subjects if necessary. However, other qualified persons would be invited to come in from time to time.

*PILOT - demonstrate  
training in tools*

## CURRICULUM

The curriculum will be flexible, changing according to need and it would probably include subjects such as:

1. History of the Civil Rights Movement,
2. Demonstrations, ~~through action,~~ \_\_\_\_\_ ?
3. Voter registration drives and other techniques,
4. Freedom Democratic Party and its significances,
5. The history of cooperatives and of the labor movement,
6. Unemployment,
7. Education,
8. How to change social conditions
9. ~~Dandy~~ music, plays and so forth.

*Not what I dictated*

LENGTH OF WORKSHOP PERIODS will depend on how long it takes to build each structure on the campsite. The function and design of each building will have to be determined by a committee concerned with this economic-education project with the advice of the architect and artisans. Probably a two to three month period would suffice.

It will be important once the project is underway to maintain continuity so that the site will never be left unoccupied and unprotected.

## SITE

The site is forty acres of mountain land owned by Highlander Center adjoining the Smoky Mountain Park near Cado's Cove, Maryville, Tennessee, ten miles from Knoxville.

## BUILDING MATERIALS

Imaginative use of native materials should be fully explored. (Sam Clark, who is temporarily living with Myles Horton at Knoxville, is working on this.)

RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENT by others must be checked, such as Tuskegee's experiments with bricks. Prefab possibilities without monotony must be exhausted. Architectural designs of all kinds from everywhere should be examined for ideas and possible adaptation. (There seems to be plenty of pine forest and stone available for the campsite itself.)

## FACILITIES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

Tilghman Cable's three room house which is across the road from the Highlander Center Mountain property. Above is an uncompleted structure which after a few days work would provide sleeping space for eight persons. There is also a wooden tent floor about fifteen feet by fifteen feet and a large outdoor stone fireplace.

PHASE II

While Team One is training at the mountain workshop, someone must be locating building materials and otherwise helping to prepare the way in Team One's local community for their return and for their usefulness at home. In towns where there is no adequate community center, perhaps they would like to begin by building one to meet their communal needs and to include furniture and carpentry workshops and so forth. Re-modeling and building new houses with the training team serving as teachers for others would create neighborhood projects which would be valuable in many obvious ways.

For example, persons who had been reluctant to go to political meetings, might be willing to help build houses and this would provide a new opportunity for talking. Ultimately this could lead to such enterprises as cooperative construction companies or ~~community~~ <sup>cooperating</sup> businesses. I should hope that someone like Jesse Morris would be interested in developing this aspect of the program on a long range basis. (This might be useful for future reference. Recommended by Myles Horton.) *Coop Management course at U. of Wisconsin; professor,*

**NOTE:**

This is a skeleton which could develop in many directions. I committed to paper hastily in order to get reactions and obviously commitments from persons to whom it would be sent. There are small items such as financing which have been completely ignored in this prospectus. However, I don't see why we couldn't get money for materials and training of this type from the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 which I have in front of me.

*YES* "Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, ~~Part I~~, <sup>Section 2</sup> Findings and Declaration of Purpose .... It is, therefore, the policy of the United States to eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this Nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity. *forget it, Better try foundations*

"Page 6, Section 115 ~~Limitations on Federal Assistance~~. Federal Assistance ... for two years after June 30, 1966 shall not exceed 90 per centum of the costs of such program....thereafter shall not exceed 50 per centum of such costs.....Non-Federal contributions may be in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, including but not limited to plant, equipment and services. *LHM*

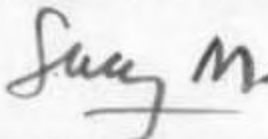
"Page 9, Title II Urban and Rural Community Action Programs Section 201 Purpose. The purpose of this part is to provide stimulation and incentive for urban and rural communities to mobilize their resources to combat poverty through community action programs.

"Page 9, Section 202 (a) The term "Community action program" means a program (1) which mobilizes and utilizes resources, public or private..... (2) which provides services, assistance ..... through developing employment opportunities, improving human performance, motivation, and productivity, or bettering the conditions under which people live, learn and work; (4) conducted, administered, or coordinated by public or private nonprofit agency or a combination thereof.

"Page 11, Section 205 Financial Assistance for Conduct and Administration of Community Action Programs....The Director shall consider....the incidence of poverty within the community and within the areas or groups to be affected....the concentration of low income families, particularly those with children; the extent of persistent unemployment and under-employment; housing conditions; adequacy of community facilities and services.

"Page 11, Section 206 Technical Assistance. The Director is authorized to provide, either directly or through grants or other arrangements, (1) technical assistance to communities in developing, conducting, and administering community action programs, and (2) training for specialized personnel needed to develop, conduct, or administer such programs or to provide services or other assistance thereunder."

Please let me hear from you at once whether you think this is a good idea and which responsibilities you would like to assume.



LM:rh

Mrs. Kenneth Montgomery