

## THE FREEDOM FORCE

The SNCC Freedom Force consists of volunteer civil rights workers who work side-by-side with the SNCC staff in southern communities. Some members of the Freedom Force are from the north but most of them are local people who work full time on a project and have no other means of support. The Freedom Force was started last fall when many of the volunteers who came down to work in the south for the summer decided not to return to school or to go home. The Coordinating Committee found that the organization was not financially able to add more people to the payroll and began to enlist help from groups and individuals in the North who agreed to take the responsibility of sending subsistence to volunteers. Money orders, usually \$10.00 each, were sent every week directly to the volunteers and they, in turn, were responsible for writing their sponsors. This was an excellent way for people who live in the north to become directly involved with the work in the south and to find out what was going on.

However, as the summer approaches, it is becoming quite obvious that the support groups in the north cannot provide sufficient financial support for all the volunteers that will be working with the SNCC staff during the summer project. Most of the volunteers recruited for work in Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia are southern Negro college students and will not have enough money either from their families or from outside sources to carry them through the summer. Some 200 of them begin work in the middle of June.

The reason why SNCC feels it is important that southern local people and Negro students work with SNCC staff on voter registration, community centers, freedom schools and political workshops is that in order to build a permanent political base for social change, the people who live and work in an area where the movement is active must build and maintain the basic movement, must speak for themselves, and must not have to depend wholly on outsiders to come in and be their leaders.

For this reason also, many local people who are not students have become more actively involved in the movement and as a result have lost their jobs or other source of income such as welfare. These local people devote many hours of hard work to movement activities.

It is estimated that a SNCC Freedom Force of some 150 people will be working throughout the south this summer. Some means of financial support must be found for them outside the organization.