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### Bringing the Struggle Home

Students' Work in the South will  
Continue in the North

This past summer, like the previous summer, hundreds of college students came South for their first time to work with various civil rights groups. Most of them have now gone back north. But back north to do what? For their southern experiences have wrought great changes on most of them.

"You can't get as involved down here as we are and not do more when you get back. You can't be the same person any more," explained Cathy Deppe, a University of Illinois student who worked with SCOPE in Eutaw, Alabama.

"There'll be a world of difference between what I did in the past and what I'll be doing in the future," commented Doug Norberg, a senior at Whittier College majoring in sociology and political science. Norberg, whose home is Oakland, California, was working in Greenwood, Mississippi, as a volunteer with the Freedom Democratic Party (FDP).

Besides affecting what he planned on doing back home, Doug Norberg's experiences gave him some second thoughts about the interests and values of the white middle-class.

"I wonder whether the movement can be made relevant to the white middle-class," he questioned. "Their values are so superficial. And they live up to them without any questioning. People have been taught not to feel; I want them to be able to feel.

"They should know more about themselves. My experience has made me much more aware of myself. It's aided my perception. I've been able to pick out things faster."

But this is the world to which Doug and others have returned-- to uninvolved people and, as Bill Simons realized, a dead intellectual community.

"I'm going to have the problem that many people have coming back from an active and real environment in which you always get some satisfaction to an arid environment of books and libraries, the abstraction of college life," Bill Simons said. Bill, a junior in history at the University of Wisconsin who comes from Larchmont, New York, was working in Batesville, Mississippi, with the FDP.

"Just what kind of activity is important in life?" he asked. "In Mississippi you at least work toward important change. Then you get back and everything seems so frivolous. How can I relate to people who haven't been involved and are interested in such trivial things?"

Margaret Kibbee reflected his feelings. A sophomore from Mill Valley, California, at the College of Marin, she admitted, "Living a meaningful life in Mississippi makes it much harder to go back and live among regular people. I know I won't be able to sit still for a regular life like I would have before."

How will these students get involved back in their home and campus communities? One way is through politics.

As Tim Janke of Lebanon, Oregon, explained, "My activities which were academic will be more political now." Tim, a junior in American studies at Reed College, was working on voter registration in Gould, Arkansas, with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

"Our work here really is to get people politicized," said Mike Maller in Indianola, Mississippi. Mike, who had just received his degree in math from Columbia University, continued, "If you succeed in your work, you can't help but be politicized yourself."

Sometimes this may be a shock.

"My real experience has been between the theory and practice of political science," commented Colin Minert, a University of Wisconsin student from Milwaukee, majoring in political science. "I've seen the abuse of political power in Arkansas."

How much one can be pushed along by these and other experiences was explained by Bill Simons.

"I came out of a Republican, suburban, middle-class background. I went to the University of Wisconsin as a Republican, then worked with the Young Democrats and was elected vice chairman. Now I got a situation where I'm going back to school as head of an organization I no longer fully endorse. I'm in charge of speakers and I want to get Guyot, Malcolm Boyd and others there to speak."

Lawrence is chairman of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. Rev. Boyd is the Episcopal priest who has been upsetting older church leaders on the social level through his pastoring in bars and coffee houses, on the political level through his civil rights activities and on the theological level through his remark that Christ had a penis.

"I want to be getting different speakers and set up work shops," Bill continued, "going into greater depth than the normal political picture allows. I find it most frustrating that the Democratic Party has set definite limits for itself. I want to be involved in things on a wider scale and sort of radicalize things."

An experience in the north at the beginning of the summer affected Bill's views as much as did his experience in Mississippi. He had worked lobbying for the FDP before coming to Batesville.

"I was in Washington for 12 days to two weeks which was a reinforcement of my whole feelings about the people who run the government," he commented.

Terry Garr, like Bill Simons, is a leader in a campus Democratic group, at East Los Angeles College. Garr, whose home is Fort Wayne, Indiana, was working with SNCC in Gould, Arkansas.

"Next year," he explained, "I'll be president of the campus Democratic Club. I want to use this position as a wedge to get some organizations like CORE and SNCC on the campus. Right now students don't follow CORE or anything like that on the campus."

Terry, like many other students, will try working closely with campus civil rights groups, helping to increase support for the work in the South.

Various students explained:

"I'll be raising money for the South."

"When I get back to Brown, I'm going to organize like hell. There's a lot of wealthy people there."

"I did a little work before with San Jose State Friends of SNCC and I'll increase my work with them."

"I helped start Stanford Friends of SNCC. I hope to get it

more active. I'd like the Stanford campus to get more involved in what's going on in the South."

In this manner, the struggle in the South won't be forgotten. And also, many are planning on returning...next summer for two or three months or after graduation for a year or two.

But many of the students won't be ignoring the problems of race and poverty in their own communities.

"I want to get back to San Francisco," Vince O'Connor explained in Arkansas where he was working with SNCC. "There's a lot to do there," the University of San Francisco senior continued. "There's a lot that's wrong."

"I want to become more informed on what's going on in my area," said Nancy Davis, a sophomore at Stanford from Winnetka, Illinois. Nancy, who was working in Moorhead, Mississippi, said, "I may work in tutoring in East Palo Alto."

Tutoring is one way students plan on involving themselves.

"I'll probably do some tutorial stuff with kids," Colin Minert explained. "I like the relationship you can develop between people."

And the freedom schools had a strong effect on this interest. This southern-born and bread program will also be carried to the north.

"I'd rather work with freedom schools in Berkeley than fund raise," said Gene Turitz in Batesville, Mississippi. "I think that the freedom schools can be one of the most important things in the community. It can be a good place for the raising of important questions."

Terry Garr admitted, "The way freedom schools are run makes me think the same thing could be done in East Los Angeles in the Mexican community. I want to set up classes right in the homes. I hope to get college students involved in this."

But many want to go beyond tutoring and into deeper involvement.

"There's a Negro ghetto in East Palo Alto," explained Dave Quattrone of Stanford University, "and though I'm not familiar with all the problems there, I know there's a big school problem. I think that's where my primary interest would go." The worker in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, added, "But I want to get beyond the position of tutoring."

"I think I'll probably look into working in northern Negro ghettos but it won't be easy," said Lea Glasgow, an anthropology major at Berkeley who was working in Batesville. "I don't want to just piddle around. I've been able to work here with nothing in my way."

"I plan on moving into Boston's north end, an Italian community, and organize to overcome this race thing," explained Harvard student Carl Pope who was working in West Helena, Arkansas. "I'd be working with people experienced in community organizing."

"I'd like to get into the slums of Providence and help clean them up," commented Dick Sugarman of West Port, Conn., a sophomore at Brown University. "There's a lot to be done there. I'll definitely try to get other people involved in this. SNCC really got my feet moving and I think I can get other people moving. What I want to do is essentially what we're doing here in Forrest City (Arkansas). Get in with the people and get to know them and get them moving. And the people there know a lot they can teach me. Like here I'm learning a tremendous amount. You have people who have a lot of legitimate gripes and they can get moving. I want to get them to organize themselves. I don't want to organize them. I want to bring the SNCC process in."

Community organizing is one of the most important things students helped with in the South and clearly they will be taking this experience back with them.

"I feel already I'm more capable to do organizing than most people," Colin Minert commented at the end of his more than two months in rural Arkansas. "You organize to replace yourself."

Community organizing brought the students in close contact with people and that too had its effects.

"I'd fallen badly into the economist's habit of thinking of people as statistics," explained Kathy Kahn who worked in Greenwood, Mississippi. Kathy is a senior majoring in economics at Berkeley. "This was a type of organizing I hadn't seen before. This is the first time I've gone out and talked to people without any preconceived notions but just to find out what they want to do.

"I want to become much more active in community organizing. It seems like SDS is doing more of this. Campus politics are just reaching the organizing stage."

Others want to work in community organizing full time. It has opened up a new profession to them.

Velma Parness worked in Indianola, Mississippi. A 1963 graduate in sociology from San Francisco State, she was working at the college in research when she left to come to Mississippi.

"I quit graduate school," Velma said, "because it seemed ridiculous. At San Francisco State we had a grant to study welfare dependency and evaluate the San Francisco Youth Opportunity Center.

"Here I've had more experience working with people rather than with administration and working with people is what I prefer to be doing. I prefer to get a job now in community organizing or the

anti-poverty program. After my experience here, I won't be as willing to compromise myself."

"Ever since I left Rochester," explained Dave Farley, a drop-out from the University of Rochester who worked in Indianola, "I've been wanting to do something but there wasn't much going on. One of the reasons I came here was to learn how to build from the bottom.

"I'm going to go to New York from here. I'd like to get a job in some kind of community action program."

Students also came away from the South with changed ideas and plans about their future work after college.

"I was thinking of the Peace Corps before," remarked Tim Morrison, a senior at San Jose State majoring in social science. Tim, who is from San Francisco, was working in Arkansas. "But now I'm thinking of the Peace Corps much more seriously after my experience down here."

"I'm thinking about going to law school," Colin Minert ambitiously plans, "because I think lawyers are greatly needed down here. They could use a full-time lawyer right here in West Helena."

The freedom schools have also brought new meaning to teaching for some.

Sundy Smith of East Lansing came down to Holly Springs, Miss., with some fellow students from Michigan State. At Negro Rust College there she taught communication skills to 40 youngsters who were to enter college in the fall. When that project ended, she worked with SNCC as a volunteer for the rest of the summer, teaching at a freedom school in nearby Benton County.

"My experience," she admitted, "has made me think about going into teaching which I never thought about before."



Dan Hudson is already a teacher in Hartford, Conn., where he teaches history to classes in the 10, 11 and 12 grades. After his summer experience in Belzoni, Mississippi, it is doubtful whether those classes will be the same.

"The SNCC or FDP approach will have some influence on my teaching," he was quick to explain. "I'll be getting away from an authoritarian lecture posture to some kind of attempt to create an atmosphere conducive to freer discussion. It would be sort of the group working out problems and having discussions instead of my spoon-feeding them.

"I'll certainly make a much greater attempt to incorporate Negro history into American history. But I don't want to spend a week on it. Instead I want to work it in so it becomes clear and natural that Negroes played a part in building this country."

The students who came South this past summer won't be neglecting problems in the north. Their southern experiences demand that they act there too. And for some, going South was going for experience to use in the north, or to see racial and economic problems where they are more easily recognized and analyzed.

As Bill Simons explained, "I wanted to see the situation in Mississippi and how it relates to other problems. The techniques that are used here could be used elsewhere."

And Cal Atwood, a junior at San Jose State, explained, "A lot of things I've seen here have helped me to see things that are wrong elsewhere. Mississippi is like the rest of the nation. It's just more concentrated. I can go back to California now and see better the conditions with Mexicans and migrant labor."

"One of the first things people say," Dan Hudson pointed out, "is, 'Why don't you stay here and do something.' But the situation in Mississippi is much more clear cut. It will help prepare and train me for Hartford."

Terry Garr was frank when he explained the new view his experience gave him. "Now I'll look at what was going on back home," he said, "from a new point of view, not the white man's view."

"I didn't feel a concern about the Negro community where I was living," Dave Quattrone confessed. "Now I'm more equipped, more concerned about what's going on. It's sort of a shame I had to come down here to find that out."

Southerners can no longer honestly state that the student volunteers should tend to their own backyards for they are beginning to do just that.

And those backyards, the college campuses and Negro ghettos of the north, will be in ever more ferment in the months to come. A lot more will be heard from these students from both sides of the Mason-Dixon line.

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