

January 15, 1965

M E M O R A N D U M To Friends of SNCC

About finances and SNCC and the winter and fund raising

I guess this is kind of a New Year's message to all of you. I want to make a few comments, observations, etc about fund raising and give you some information about our present financial situation. First, I've enclosed here a projected but unofficial budget for 1965. But the problem with budgets in SNCC is that we never can follow them cause we expand and grow as fast as our sources of funds increase. Anyway, with this projected budget, at least we're working on looking at our needs and then trying to see how these needs can be met. That another purpose of this memo. See, we are faced with the need to raise a million dollars. And that means we'll have to step up fund raising in several ways. That's how the Friends of SNC and the Northern offices come in.

Just to give you an idea of how we grow, let me take the staff situation. During the summer our staff numbered about 180. This was an increase from the spring of about double. Now it numbers 225. Since the staff meeting at Waveland in early November (when we made a list of staff members by project and added those people who had worked this summer and were planning to stay on for a year and actually discovered that we had a staff of 205), we've added 20 more people. And we still need more staff...for Alabama, Arkansas and SW Georgia particularly.

And you will note that the salary budget is one half of the amount we spend -- in any given year and in any given month. Right now we spend some \$14,000 every two weeks to meet the payroll. That's \$28,000 a month. Plus we have rent to pay, the bill for the WATS lines (we're cutting the National line to an East Coast line as of February 1st -- a decrease in the bill each month from \$2200 to \$1500 -- but we find it necessary to add a Southern WATS line (one zone) so we can stay in touch with the field and the North more closely -- so we'll be paying out the same amount plus will have to foot the bill for West Coast calls). And then there are office supplies to buy, car repairs to pay for (and cars to buy -- we spent a good \$50,000 alone on cars in August and the fall alone). And field expenses -- that includes rent, lights, phone, heat, car gas, etc. for each of some 50 projects --. We spend some \$60,000 a month. And that doesn't really include the big one-time expenses like car insurance (now \$24,000 a year), scholarship funds, expenditures to build community center buildings, etc.

What I am driving at is that we simply don't have the prospects of having enough money on hand to operate in the next 20 weeks or so. That means cutting salaries, cutting down field money (some of it desperately needed for gas, light, heat), cutting corners here and there. It also means living with a situation where things are more pinched than usual -- and the hang ups that go with extra scarce resources. Last year people who were closely involved in our support -- like the Friends of SNCC -- hardly knew that we were broke and in an financial bind until we faced it squarely -- and weren't getting paid -- in February and March. Now we are on top of the financial picture -- which is grim (and has been for some weeks) -- and maybe with a little extra push in these next few months we can avoid a situation at least where we are deeply in debt as last year. (The lowest we went last March was \$4,000 in debt).

OK. Some thoughts on Friends of SNCC and fund raising.

I. Never have we requested reports from Friends of SNCC. This fall we did. Most of you never bothered to send anything in...financial or program reports. Well, we're all busy. But if I had written reports -- notes on what you are doing, planning, etc. -- I could help out alot more -- in

coordination, by making suggestions, by servicing needs, etc.

II. Never have we really requested financial reports from Friends of SNCC. Now we are doing that. People have reacted (some people) to that like we're "checking up". We're not. We just need to know what we can count on. What we have to do to keep up the fund raising momentum. How hard we have to push on all fronts -- publicity, planning, programming, etc. If we knew, for example, that "x" group had a big art show coming up and hoped to raise \$5,000 and that "y" group had a concert which would net \$7,000 and "z" group had a party worth \$10,000, we'd be in better shape. As it is now (unless I drag the information out of people consistently on the phone) we seldom can anticipate income and go from week to week wondering where is the next salary money going to come from, how will we pay the car insurance bill (which, by the way is due January 25th -- \$15,000 of the \$24,000 total). If we had collected the financial reports from the sixty-odd friends of SNCC groups that are functioning, that would help us to know, to anticipate. But only about 10 groups or so have felt it important to send reports (Incidentally, we have concocted a new financial report form which makes reporting and keeping records fairly simple -- and which allows for a good analysis of funds raised and spent. They'll be mailed out shortly.)

We want to suggest, then, that each group take a long look at the new year -- what have you all projected for the coming months? What have you planned for January? for February? March? Can you get things going for those months? What do you need from us? Literature? What kind? What is adequate/inadequate about our present fund raising literature? Everyone screams that we don't have the right kind of material -- but no one except for Chicago and New York people have taken time to think about what they might want. What can we do to improve our present literature? What specific things can we write to help you? Reports? On what? Each of you ought to view your relationship with Atlanta as a give and take. And, you all have things to offer to other Friends of SNCC groups, too -- thus the long standing suggestion that you add the others to your mailing list. As far as I know, though, only two groups do that -- Bay Area and Yellow Springs Friends of the Mississippi Project. Also, it would help if I were -- and Jon Else and Barbara Jones were -- on your mailing list. The only groups that send us their newsletters, etc. are Bay Area, LA, Washington, Central Illinois, Philadelphia and Yellow Springs. That's not a very good commentary on good communications...

I don't want to belabor the point, but sending in your leaflets, newsletters, etc. gives me ideas, too. Often ideas which we'll want to pass along to other groups. But aside from that I need help, too. I'm not here in Atlanta to direct things. To set down the final word on fund raising. I'm here to make suggestions and to service the Friends of SNCC. It's a two way street. But, I'm here, too, to plan a fund raising program and am charged with the major responsibility for seeing that the organization has enough funds on which to function -- to make sure that the staff in the field, the organizers, get paid, get new tires when the old ones are ready to blow (not after they blow), get money for gas to travel the rural roads, to keep the phone bills paid so we are not left without ways to communicate with each other and so forth.

Perhaps every group in every city ought to set for itself a monthly goal. Look over your past successes in terms of raising money -- plus money sent South. See if you can't increase that. Decide how. What parts of the community haven't you tapped? What kinds of programs can you plan to raise more? Perhaps every city ought to have one major fund event each month -- with planning some three months ahead. Like an art show one month, a big party the next, a concert the next, a bazaar the next, and so on. Then each month would also include smaller things



like consistent film showings, speaking engagements, smaller parties and so on. Special programs like voluntary poll tax (at election time be they national, state or local elections -- the idea being to remind people they can vote and others can't with a plea for funds to help voter registration work continue) or SNCC birthday parties (the Fifth anniversary of the sit-ins is just around the corner; SNCC's birthday -- or founding -- anniversary is at the end of March for the Raleigh Conference took place then in 1960) and the like can be planned around the various times when they fall. Other groups have used Halloween as a time to have high school students go door to door for SNCC; in New York city on Christmas Eve high school students went carolling and collected funds along the way.

All the key people in each Friends of SNCC ought to consider themselves "organizers". Particularly the people on our staff. But also active members and workers in Friends of SNCC organizations. Hundreds of people in each community ought to be involved in SNCC and what we do through the efforts of our "support" organizers. One way to look at fund raising is to see it in terms of people actually involved in the planning of fund raising events. In some places one person handles all of the details. In other places hundreds of people are at work on various different projects all the time. Or, already organized groups -- church groups, political clubs, etc. are asked to undertake a certain project and carry it out from there themselves. Another way to look at fund raising is the source from which funds come. From people who can give \$1, \$5, 25 or \$100 and more. There are ways to reach all communities and we ought not to forget that. Wealth is no more important than numbers -- for the basis of our Northern support has, by necessity, got to be numbers since we have little or no support from "the influential, the wealthy" when it comes to politics. So, although it may be easier to go after the "big" money we ought not to forget "little" money -- and also that many very exciting projects can be planned around gathering "little" money. It may take more people, more time, more energy -- but with hundreds of people wanting to help in some way beyond giving money (and with no direct action in the North on our part), it shouldn't be hard to involve them in mass fund raising. This is where the organizers come in. They organize groups -- or get other groups working for SNCC (groups already organized) -- a group in each community that really taps the resources, big and small in that geographical area. A group on each campus -- to organize students in support of SNCC. (During the second semester of 1964 we received about \$50,000 from campuses. This fall we've barely received \$10,000 from college and high school sources. There is no reason why we shouldn't be getting \$10,000 a month from colleges -- \$100,000 a year. If, for example, each of 50 schools (there are 1800 colleges, including jr. colleges, in the country) had a campus wide drive which netted \$2,000 a year we'd make the goal.

OK. Some ideas: How about organizing collections at the commuter trains? At the morning and evening bus stops where a lot of people get on or off? Hand out a leaflet in the morning which explains SNCC. Indicate that you'll be back that evening to collect funds. Or organize a group within each large housing project or group of apartments -- have them go door to door one day with literature and return some days later to collect and further explain. A group in New York raised nearly \$10,000 this way in one project area. Organize trading stamp drives. (Marin Friends of SNCC will soon be sending out some information on their drive where they have obtained so far around 3,000 books of blue chip stamps). We can use stamps for all kinds of things -- cars, equipment, supplies, etc. And we may move to a bigger building in Atlanta. In which case we will need more desks, typewriters, file cabinets, etc. Get high school students -- even college students -- going door to door for stamps, funds. Maybe we ought to think about how the community chest raises funds and copy their techniques to some extent. An all out week where every home is visited. Where a goal is set and tension and excitement builds as the goal comes nearer. This is good

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particularly as a way of organizing on campuses. Harvard raised \$5,000 this way last spring.

Program ideas are limitless. Some groups have really done clever things to raise money. That's another reason why you all should communicate with one another. And, hopefully if we ever find time we will put together a booklet on fund raising ideas used by other groups to send out to everyone. And, we'll revise the You Can Help booklet so it's useable.

We know there are problems. Immense ones. There are several that can be outlined below: 1) full filling requests for literature and now books and records. The problem is actually finding some one in Atlanta to pack the stuff. We keep working to solve that. Secondly, the problem now with Zinn books and records is that we are broke -- and that we decided last year that we would pre pay orders for that stuff cause our "debt" was partly made up of money we owed for songbooks, records and buttons. So -- when no groups account to us for records, books, etc they have sold, we can't and won't reorder. As far as our records show only about one-twentieth of the stuff we ordered in the fall has been sold. At the end of the week I'm sending out inventory forms and will expect funds back, too...so maybe we can re order so you can go on selling things. 2) having adequate (in terms of quality) fund raising materials. This, too, may get solved at some point -- we have new people in the production department, a new way of getting such requests handled and hopefully a group of people in Atlanta who will talk about the kinds of things we need. But that is not a substitute for your requests, your own thoughts on what goes over well -- for you are the fund raisiers, you are the ones who give out the brochures and see how people respond, etc. 3) The problem of finding artists for parties and benefit concerts. This is an all time problem of coordination and contact. Hopefully, too, we'll get to some better way of providing you with performers. But establishing the contact network takes time. 4) The problem of supplying you with adequate information -- not so much news events since the bi-monthly incident summaries should do that pretty well -- but program information and stuff on the actual operation of projects. We now have a booklet on SW Georgia and one on Mississippi. Soon we hope to have stuff on Alabama and Arkansas out. You'll get the former two as soon as we find people to collate them. 5) The problem of coordinating speakers and speaking tours. We're planning several college tours for the spring and will hope, too, to send a field worker to your city (depending on its size) for 2-3 days to a week. More on that later. In the meantime give us 2-3 weeks notice if you need spakers. 6) Fund raising information and financial information. The first step is this memo and the enclosed budget. More to follow. Also, see the back of the budget for a tally of Friends of SNCC contributions to Atlanta since October. It would also help if each of you wrote up how you planned some of your more successful fund raising events. Then we could circulate that to everyone. Then we can have a constant flow of ideas back and forth.

I imagine I've rambled enough. I'm sorry this has to be mimeographed. I'd like to type it individually for each of you but obviously can't...still hope I'll get responses from all of you. Frankly we are very concerned that we make it financially through the winter months and strengthen our fund raising overall program as well. Not only is it cold in January, February without heat but it is also no great help to have work stop ever through lack of funds and for worries over where is the next tank of gas coming from.

Can I have a written report from each group soon? With appropriate financial information as well as program outlines? And comments and suggestions on what you need? We depend on all of you heavily.

Freedom,

*Betty Garman*  
Betty Garman  
Northern Coordinator