

DISCUSSION OUTLINE - April 7, 1965

Beneath the tensions and frustrations of staff, a new sense of direction is struggling to emerge. Overnight, the context of the struggle in the South has changed: the problems we face are suddenly more complex, more subtle. Unless we understand the dynamics of these changes, we cannot hope to interpret them to the people with whom we work. The issue which has sustained the Movement over the past four years has been, simply, the issue of our right to organize. Presumably that right has been won. But now, suddenly, the question of whether we can build that independent politics of principle has become very real.

Last night, people were finally ready to talk. A number of issues were raised, issues which suggest 1) an attempt to define some of the forces which have contributed to the changed context of the struggle, 2) a need to understand the pressures which the Movement will be facing, both from within and from without the Negro community, and 3) the new programs which must emerge if we are to understand, interpret, and capitalize upon these changes.

In discussing the issues, one ought to keep in mind that a variety of techniques must be developed for interpreting to the Negro community the new Movement context.

- I. Forces which Contribute to the changed context of the Struggle.
 - A. The issue of the vote.
 1. The Congressional Challenge.
 2. The Voting Rights Bill
 - B. Federal money.
 1. The Poverty Program, Operation Head Start and the Delta Ministry.
 - C. Civil Rights Act of 1964.
 1. Nondiscrimination in federal programs.
 2. Negroes on FHA, ASCS boards etc.
- II. Pressures which the Movement can expect to face.
 - A. From within the Negro Community.
 1. Class versus Color solidarity.
 2. Conservative leadership in the Negro Community, in COFO and FDP, and other organizations.
 - B. From without the Negro Community.
 1. Bi-racial committee - integrated teams, Community Relations Service etc.
 2. White moderate elements in Democratic party and their Negro allies.
 3. Young Democratic clubs - how far should we go? Kansas City? beyond?
 4. The New sweet talk - Investigation of the Klan by HUAC, (and COFO?)
- III. New Programs.
 - A. Political Education.
 1. Researching the political structure of the county, city, etc.
 2. Role of local people in search and distribution of material.
 - B. Political and Legal Action.
 1. Establishing parallel governments.
 2. Use of aggressive suits.
 - C. Economic Programs.
 1. Employment and income.
 2. Mississippi Development Corporation.
 3. Housing - possible use of rent strikes and urban renewal.

4. Can COFO meaningfully utilize food and clothing distribution programs?

D. Tactics- Is there still a place for Direct Action?

IV. Staff

A. Can the present staff structure deal effectively with the new Movement context?

- 1. What is leadership? what is role of leadership?
- 2. Staff responsibility.
- 3. Staff education - new techniques.

B. The Summer ahead.

- 1. How does the FDP Summer Project relate to COFO?
- 2. Other summer plans.

very varied issues which suggest an attempt to define some of the forces which have contributed to the changed context of the struggle. It is a need to understand the framework within which the struggle is being fought from within and from without. The new context is the new programs which must emerge if we are to understand, understand, and capitalize upon these changes.

In discussing the issues, an effort to help in understanding a variety of techniques - such as demands for leadership for leadership to the Negro community the new Movement context.

I. Issues which contribute to the changed context of the struggle.

- A. The issue of the vote.
- B. The Congressional Campaign.
- C. The Voting Rights Bill.
- D. Federal money.

II. Resources within the Movement and open to face:

- A. Resources within the Negro Community.
 - 1. Churches versus other activities.
 - 2. Cooperative leadership in the Negro Community, COFO and SCLC, and other organizations.
- B. Resources without the Negro Community.
 - 1. Bi-racial committee - leadership issues, community relations, etc.
 - 2. White moderate elements in Democratic Party and their Negro allies.
 - 3. Young Democratic element - how far should we go? James Carr, etc.
 - 4. The New South - investigation of the Klan by SCLC (and COFO).

III. New programs.

- A. Political Education.
 - 1. Understanding the political structure of the country, etc.
 - 2. Role of local people in local and national politics.
- B. Political and legal action.
 - 1. Establishing political organizations.
 - 2. Use of legislative action.
- C. Economic Program.
 - 1. Organizing and labor.
 - 2. Nationalized investment cooperation.
 - 3. Housing - possible use of rent strikes and urban renewal.