

SCOPE PROGRAM IN ALBANY

Major Problems and the Solutions

Schedules of SCOPE Workers at Freedom Center

SCOPE Workers in Voter Registration

SCOPE EVALUATION OF THE ALBANY PROJECT

Staff Workers at Freedom Center to be Paid by SCOPE

MAJOR PROBLEMS OF SCOPE WORKERS OF SAINT MARY-OF- THE-
WOODS CHAPTER and SOLUTIONS

I. PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM

1. The philosophy of a freedom school was difficult for professional teachers to relate themselves to:
 - a. As explained by a group of SNCC workers from Baker county it seemed ridiculous; education itself was not esteemed
 - b. In practice, it was frustrating:
 - (1 No bells to call pupils to class
 - (2 Classes generally start 20 to 25 minutes late
 - (3 The teacher has 11 students one day, 2 the next
 - (4 Carefully prepared classes seem a waste of work
 - (5 Children racing through the building continually, passing through one's room many times is vexatious
2. After four weeks working in Freedom School, there are still frustrations; but there are also many rewards in human relations. The SNCC staff (people working under SNCC leadership at Freedom Center) are certainly worth knowing; they are good friends and very accommodating.

SOLUTION TO PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM

1. Some of the above issues are disciplinary in character, and appropriate suggestions have been adopted which we have reason to believe will constitute a solution in due time.
2. It has been explained that each teacher is free to conduct her class as she sees fit and there has been an agreement that steps must be taken to check the continual passage of children
3. The philosophy of Freedom School was ~~re~~presented in a much more favorable way:
 - a. The innate dignity of the child was stressed
 - b. By encouraging freedom of expression the child will learn to think and reason for himself (only a mark of good pedagogy, of course)
 - c. Creativity of the child is to be fostered as much as possible
 - d. All unnecessary structure is to be avoided, but vital structure is to be introduced.

Although we will continue to regret professionally that ~~one~~ class enrollment will vary much from day to day--there are other compensations in the project that make it worthwhile.

Every Freedom School is different; every Freedom School is what the faculty and students make it.

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- II. Our Second and Gravest Concern was for the Safety of Our Students

1. Dr. Ballenger was with us for two weeks--a professor of philosophy from Tose Polytechnic Institute in Terre Haute
 - a. He was concerned about the influence and even the intentions of some of the Negro SNCC workers -- men not working at Freedom Center
 - b. He felt that our young women were too self confident and gullible and were taking chances that courted disaster

He did have evidence that he could not use to substantiate his concerns.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM OF STUDENTS' SAFETY

1. We had a show-down with our students, expecting to find them hostile and rebellious; but before the end of the meeting very good relations were restored
2. We discovered that we had good reason to trust them. For the most part they had acted prudently, and where they had taken risks (which they acknowledged), they were determined not to repeat the risk.
3. We felt confident that they had not been taken in to the extent that Dr. Ballenger believed--by SNCC personnel of Baker County field
 - a. We know that Dr. Ballenger had evidence sufficient to be very concerned and to warrant the stand he took
 - b. But we learned that our students had become aware to some extent and were protecting themselves.

On the whole there has been a lack of communication between us: we have not been meeting regularly--so busy have we been that we have hardly had time for exchange.

Lastly:

Our students told us that if they were summoned by SCOPE to leave Albany, they would sever relations with SCOPE and stay with SNCC.

This resolution on their part was a severe blow to us Sisters; for we Sisters would withdraw if SCOPE so ordered -- though under present circumstances and with new solutions we prefer to stay.

Such a split would have been most regrettable.

Finally, we Sisters, now relieved of our major concern for the safety of our students, finding that SNCC leaders are bending over backwards to accommodate us (Mr. Roy Shields has been consistently reasonable and understanding), realizing that we have given every-

thing to this project (all the merchandise contributed by Terre Haute merchants); that Albany merchants have responded generously to our requests--

we feel that it would be a grievous mistake to leave Albany now.

Reverend Wells has been very good to us and very capable in his efforts to get these problems solved, to arrange meetings at all levels. There have been many long meetings and late ones. We have, therefore, confidence in his leadership.

SCHEDULES AT FREEDOM CENTER -- SCOPE WORKERS

*Works part time on voter registration

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|------|--------------------|---|---|
| # 1. | Midge Maroni: | teaches drama and art classes. Superintends in library | afternoon in voter registration |
| *2. | Susan Sperry: | teaches reading and art classes, drives car | Saturday -- voter registration |
| *3. | Jonni Maldonado: | teaches arithmetic and drama classes; superintends in library | Saturday -- voter registration |
| *4. | Meg Baum: | reading classes and playground superintendence | voter registration in afternoon |
| *5. | Barbara Koester: | playground activities in morning and one class in reading | voter registration in afternoon |
| 6. | Bob Mullins: | Drives car. The last two weeks he has been more free to work on voter registration. Prior to that he had many duties during our organization period at Freedom Center | greater part of day now in voter registration |
| #*7. | Sister Alma Louise | classes in arithmetic and art; janitorial work in early morning evening: classes for illiterates and one class in Spanish | voter registration in the laterafternoon |
| #*8. | Sister Mary Jean | classes in reading and government janitorial work in early morning evening: classes for illiterates | voter registration in the late afternoon |

#Sisters Alma Louise and Mary Jean just began voter registration work last week.

SCOPE WORKERS IN VOTER REGISTRATION

N.B. Students marked with asterisk (*) work part time in Freedom Center. The others work all day, but give time in late afternoon or on Saturday to voter registration. Double asterisk (**) --does not work at Freedom Center at all.

- * 1. Midge Maroni mornings
- * 2. Barbara Koester afternoons
- * 3. Meg Baum afternoons
- 4 & 5. Sisters: Alma Louise and
Mary Jean late afternoons
- 6. Juanita Maldonado Saturdays
- 7. Susan Sperry Saturdays
- ** 8. Bob Mullins greater part of
day in registration
work

In the first few weeks Bob had many duties: running errands via car for Freedom School, etc. Even now he provides car service at specific times.

A SCOPE EVALUATION OF FOUR WEEKS IN ALBANY

Time span: Four weeks--we arrived in city the evening of June 19

- I. We took possession of an empty four-apartment building about a week after our arrival in the city (two families had to move out first)
 1. With equipment brought from Terre Haute, with materials sought from Albany merchants, we opened the doors of Freedom Center on June 24th.
 2. By that time a kind of public relations had been established between some merchants of the city and our project. The Catholic priests of both Saint Theresa's and Saint Clare's churches manifested good will very promptly. St. Theresa's parish provided 75 chairs for the project promptly.
 3. The SNCC worker Paul Menzel was invaluable to us before the doors of Freedom School opened and for the succeeding weeks. With Negro young men he cleared the yard for sports, and from lumber found around he built benches and tables that were sorely needed.
 4. From June 20 to the present we have set up a curriculum and put it into effect:
 - a. Reading, arithmetic, government, Negro history, art and drama courses are offered
 - b. Supervised recreation on the grounds outside goes on throughout the day
 - c. Enrollment varies but it is approximately 80 to 90
 5. The faculty of Freedom School--those working under SNCC--are wonderful people.
 6. Freedom School boasts a modest library, housed on wooden planks laid over cinder blocks; but the books have been accessioned and are circulating.
 7. In the evening from 7:30 to 8:30 adult classes in literacy are held. The number is growing very slowly--5 are enrolled at present.
 - a. The Sisters canvassed the neighborhood for one week in search of adults for this class
 - b. There is considerable likelihood that the number enrolled will increase
 - c. Sister Alma Louise has visited many of the Baptist ministers and has advertised the class in the Southwest Georgian and in The Weekly Inquirer. Father Martin of Saint Clare's (Negro parish) has advertised it twice in his Sunday bulletin.
- II. Negro leadership, particularly in the person of Mr. Slater King, has manifested real interest. As realtor for the building Slater King has put in some forty panes of glass, has had

locks put on the doors, plumbing and electricity checked.

Mrs. C.B. King has been most attentive to the Sisters and her husband is the lawyer for both Sue Sperry and Bob Mullins who have suffered from police harrassment.

III. White leadership is being attracted

1. Sister Mary Jean spoke at St. Theresa's parish to a select study group working under Father Kyrgier. As a result some \$67.00 was donated at the door that evening and various members stood and volunteered to:
 - (1) Paint the front of Freedom School
 - (2) Repair and put new locks where children's vandalism had broken or damaged
 - (3) Ice for the barral that provides the children of Freedom School with water all day was financed
 - (4) Women of Saint Theresa's parish have visited the school in the past week bringing small gifts.
 - (5) Two invitations have been extended by women of that parish to dinner in their homes
 - (6) Best of all: Father Krygier, assistant pastor, is to have a month's vacation very shortly and he has written to Bishop McDonough of Savannah for permission to spend it at Freedom School, doing anything that comes to hand. He will live in the Negro parish just around the corner.

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- IV. Perhaps it is worth mentioning that the City of Terre Haute in a sense adopted this project of ours. Seven clergymen of the city sponsored the appeal to merchants and businessmen, and the results exceeded the expectations of the majority.

Perhaps it is further worth mentioning that a photographer from LIFE magazine has spent ten days with us and expects to return once more.

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V. Regarding voter registration:

The number of Negroes registered for voting will probably disappoint SCOPE Headquarters; but originally we were told by Hosea Williams that our field would be education and that he would send another team (we were not destined for Albany then) to take care of voter registration.

If our count is thus far low, however, almost every one of us is now engaged in the activity giving some of us a very crowded schedule: morning, noon, and evening. Some of us only ventured into this field this past week (organization of the school did not permit it earlier) and perhaps we will not total high registration figures in the end; but we trust that numbers will not be the only yardstick by which we are to be measured.