

SUMMARY OF A STATEMENT BY STOKELY CARMICHAEL, CHAIRMAN OF THE STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE, ON THE CIVIL RIGHTS BILL OF 1966:

The Civil Rights Act of 1966 is totally useless and unnecessary. President Johnson was trying to get himself off the hook by putting this bill before Congress. It was an irrelevant reply to the needs of the black community when it was introduced, and it is no better now. If passed, it will function both as a fraudulent bunch of words to convince the black people of this country that Congress has taken action to deal with their problems, and as a smoke-screen to obscure President Johnson's failure to enforce earlier civil rights legislation. The bill adds almost nothing to existing laws, and in some cases, actually makes present law worse.

Titles I and II, which are supposed to deal with the problems of jury discrimination in the state and federal courts, contain clauses which make jury discrimination even easier. The qualifications are the same which have enabled Southerners to keep black people from voting.

Titles III and VI pretend to grant the Attorney-General powers which he already has and is not using in education, equal justice, public facilities and employment. This power is meaningless as long as the Attorney-General will not act when black people are denied the right to vote and due process, when black children continue to be sent to inadequate schools.

The housing section, Title IV, is the biggest fraud of all. It "prohibits" housing discrimination, but exempts almost every form of housing from coverage. The President could sign an executive order today that would ban 80% of the segregation in housing. His failure to do so will be a green light to real estate agencies, builders and financial institutions to discriminate as much as they like.

Title V is supposed to protect civil rights workers from violence. However, the title states that people must be "lawfully" exercising their civil rights to be protected. It flies in the face of the well-known fact that in the South, local law and violence are equal partners in the conspiracy against civil rights.

The bill completely ignores many of the pressing needs of black people, North and South. The bill is a sham. Any civil rights organization or congressman who works for the passage of this bill, and any legislator who votes for it, is sharing in the hypocrisy of President Johnson and his administration. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee refuses to do so.