

REPORT TO THE NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR  
AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE.

SUBJECT: WATTS

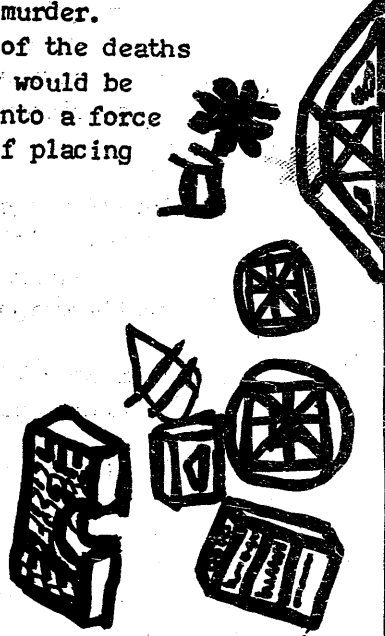
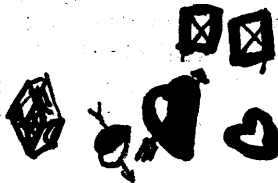
You should refer to the enclosed materials for factual data on the procedure for exclusion of incorporated territory from Los Angeles. You should also refer to our letter of June 9, 1966 for background on the rationale for the move into Watts insofar as it answers for questions of how it is consistent with the current direction of SNCC and our objective (nationally).

We have worked through the Temporary Alliance of Local organizations primarily. This is an amalgam of most of the groups who live and work in Watts or the south Central Los Angeles area. We felt that even though we could initiate the program and follow it through it would be inconsistent with our past role in organizing southern communities for us to do so. Therefore, we have been waiting for TALO to structure itself sufficiently to take on "freedom city" as a program. TALO has not yet done so and personal ambitions within the group have so far hindered any cohesive approach to either freedom city or the Community Alert Patrol which we established as a stop-gap measure to avert renewed rioting after officer Bova was exonerated by the inquest. CAP has been instrumental in maintaining relative peace in the south central Los Angeles community by observing contacts between the residents of south central LA and the LAPD. They are equipped with cameras, SNCC two-way radios and some portable taping equipment. They have forced the police to tread softly in the community and have inspired the community to consolidate itself into a solid grouping which we will be able to work with as soon as we move ahead on the freedom city proposal. As the CAP becomes better known and better manned it will become more effective in documenting police procedures in south central LA.

We are developing posters and propaganda materials to promote the Patrol. We view the Patrol as the germain police force. As an organizing tool the CAP is invaluable because of the clear service to the community and the high visibility. The patrol will lead directly, programmatically to "freedom city".

"Freedom City" is certainly a manifestation of self-help, self-determination, power for poor people and the proposition that when a government fails to represent all its people, it is the duty of the people to abolish that government and to institute new Government organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

"Freedom City" was introduced because the magalopolis of Los Angeles has proven time and again its inability to cope with the problems of the minority community. The poverty program was bungled the police department is engaged in "Operation Green Beret" a war on the south Central Los Angeles community. My excursions into the community during the Bova-Deadwyler inquest brought us into meetings with workmen and gang leaders, all of whom had but one plan of action in mind and that was a plan of sabotage, ambush, reprisals and murder. Given the experience of last year it seemed to us that most of the deaths would be on the side of the minority community and that they would be non-political. Those energies then, had to be redirected into a force that could build on the resources of the community instead of placing the entire community in jeopardy.



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Our program of establishing independent political power for the minority community has an opportunity to break open the entire country and establish the beginnings of a third party or, at least, force the majority community to recognize the legitimate grievances of the poor and the disenfranchised and approach them on the basis of the real political power that the community will wield.

Unfortunately the national office did not respond to the help I asked for in our June 9th correspondence. We feel that some indication of national support would be quite helpful at this time. We have the support of Floyd McKissick of CORE, Whitney Young, Urban League, Norman Houston Jr., NAACP, the enclosed list of California politicians are pledge to us as well as the Temporary Alliance of Local Organizations. The major work is still to be done. We will probably withdraw "freedom city" from TALO because TALO is too cumbersome to implement the program. The political aspirations of the membership tend to hinder any clear thinking through of organizing problems. We will set up next week a "freedom city committee" made up of local people and organizations to begin the enormous job of organizing the south central LA community. On August 13th, the anniversary of the LA riots we plan to hold a kick-off rally for freedom city. We will invite the major proponents of black power to share the speakers platform. The petition is the first step and from there we will have legislation introduced to cut some of the procedures for disincorporation and incorporation. Most of the work is in public relations with respect to apprising the community and winning their support for something which will essentially be all black...our public statements so far have been designed to allay the white fears of an all black city. We have pointed out that the total community is involved and have had to revert to the use (with some people) of the parity politics concept. I suggest that you all examine the other materials to see the development of the campaign. The LA Sentinel will be with us and so far the response of the white press has been favorable although this may change with the first signature on the petition. The area we plan to seize is roughly 9 square miles (the curfew area). There is so far no major opposition to the proposal.

My own role is in part the same as Marion Barry's at the beginning of the "Free D. C. Movement" to speak for the proposal and defend it. In Little Rock, Arkansas in 1964 I organized a school boycott of 7,046 students around five demands and we won. This job is infinitely larger but our Executive Secretary admits that we just have to go into the northern ghettos if we are to continue to work in the north. Our fund base logically will be in those ghettos but as you all know we can't raise money without a meaningful program. "Freedom City" is that program and SNCC is becoming a familiar word in the black community where before this spring we were virtually unknown. I would ask for a man, or people to come out and work on the community but given the dearth of resources that we (SNCC) have it is probably impossible. If the materials I am sending you are insufficient then please ask questions. I am more than ready to respond. Many, many people out here are just waiting for the implementation of the freedom city proposal. I have been forced to slow down because of the apparent lack of confidence of the Central Committee. I await your pleasure.

13 July, 1966  
hollywood, california

respectfully submitted  
Clifford A. Vaughns - SNCC

All of the nationalist groups are supporting "freedom city" and on another level SNCC. Now that we have abandoned integration as an issue they are able to recognize the real work we do. US, Afro-American Society, Self-Determination Assoc., SLANT and the myriad of other nationalists have indicated their active support for freedom city.

For those concerned about the tax base:

South Central Los Angeles, within the boundaries we have prescribed: Washington Blvd. on the north, El Segund on the south, the Harbor Freeway on the west, and Alameda street on the east, contains most of the major industrial developments in Los Angeles. The commercial commercial complex is located within that area also. I'm not sure of what the assessments are at this time but it is evident that the taxes will go to freedom city and not Los Angeles once the incorporation is established.