

OCTOBER 21, 1966

TO: SNCC CENTRAL COMMITTEE
meeting in Knoxville, Tenn.
October 21-24, 1966

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORT

FROM: EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Ruby Doris S. Robinson

On Us . . .

ON THE COMPOSITION OF SNCC:

I had originally written out each name and labeled it with a definition of what the individual was doing; however, I find that a bit in bad taste and decided instead to let you follow me as I wander through the official roll call of SNCC -- the Atlanta Payroll. The only label I will make is that of location. I think that you know the staff well enough to take it from there.

Atlanta

Cathy Archibald

John Bell (part-time with Atlanta Project)

Faye Bellamy

Joyce Brown

Wilson Brown

Stokely Carmichael

Charlie Cobb

Karen Edmonds

Larry Fox

James Forman

Mildred Forman

Freddie Greene

Flora Goodloe

Rufus Hinton

Claudia Hudson

S.G. Johnson

Jennifer Lawson

Julius Lester

Evelyn Marshall

William Mahoney

Jack Minnis

Ethel Minor

Regina Pleasant

Julia Polk

William Porter

Ruby D.S. Robinson

Cleveland Sellers

Roberta Simmons

Simuel Schutz

John Tillman

George Ware

Stanley Wise

Bob Smith

Atlanta Project

Robert Moore

Donald Stone

Gwen Robinson

Michael Simmons

William Ware

Dwight Williams

S.W. Georgia

Isaac Simpkins

Romona L. Baptiste

John Baptiste

Ulysses Fulwood

New York Office

Ivarhoe Donaldson

Carolyn Carter

Charlotte Carter

Robert Fullilove

William Hall

Roberta Jones

Jimmy McDonald

Kathleen Neal

Elizabeth Sutherland

Shirley Wright

West Point, Miss.

John Buffington

Isaac Coleman

Cleveland, Miss.

Lee Bankhead

Tougaloo, Miss.

Robert Fletcher

Mary Varela

Donald White

Jesse Morris

Ruleville, Miss.

Charles McLaurin

Mrs. Fannie L. Hamer

Greenwood, Miss.

James W. Jones

Sharon, Miss.

Andrew Greene

Jackson, Miss.

Lawrence Guyot

Jesse Harris

R. Hunter Morey

Winona, Miss.

Mary Lane

Osyka, Miss.

E.W. Steptoe

Moss Point, Miss.

Isiah Sellers

West Helena, Ark.

Myrtle Glascoe

Little Rock (office-apt.)

Howard Himmelbaum

Gould, Ark.

Robert Cableton

Chicago, Ill.

Monroe Sharp

Washington, D.C.

Marion S. Barry

Lester G. McKinnie

New Orleans, La. ???

Matty Suarez

Green Co., Ala.

Humber Brown

George Green

Eric Jones

Lowndes Co., Ala.

Willie Ricks

Robert Mants

Courtland Cox

Ralph Featherstone

Cornelius Jones

Selma, Alabama

Phyllis Cunningham

Gloria Larry House

Stuart (Wm.) House

Douglas Harris ?

Detroit

Dorothy Dewberry

San Francisco

Gail Brown

Mike Miller

Terry Cannon

Los Angeles

Dickie Flowers

Cliff Vaughn

Boston, Mass.

Martha Kocel

Patty Mapp

Philadelphia, Penna.

Johnny Wilson

Danny Brown

Barry Dawson

Fred Meely (on vacation)

Morris Ruffin (on vacation)

ON FUNDS:

Payroll and the New York Office -- The staff of the New York Office working primarily on raising funds are: Bobbi Jones (125), James McDonald (150) and two volunteers -- Eve Osman and Julie Perryman. There is, however, a fund raising committee and a women's division working actively with fund raising projects.

As was the understanding via SNCC Finance Committee, all monies from New York (with the exception of an \$1,100 air line bill) have been deposited directly in the payroll account. Total funds sent from New York in 1966 (through October 4th) is \$130,800.00. Amount spent on the payroll from Atlanta is \$132,672.00. Since May, 1966, we have received \$48,000; an average of \$8,000.00/month. The payroll, including taxes, is \$10,000 every two weeks + \$240,000 per year. A look at the total receipts into the New York Office during the same period (May-Sept.) reveals an income of \$100,220.97. I think that it is safe to assume after examination of the records, that most of the remaining \$52,000.00 was absorbed in the expenses of mailings, parties, and other fundraising ventures. In other words, it was used to raise the income. A small amount went for printing and promotion of propaganda.

During an isolated period of July-December (the same period of the Belafonte-Schwerner mailings) the income from mailings was slightly over \$38,000.00 while the expenses approached \$12,000.00 leaving a total net income of \$26,860.00. Unfortunately, this sampling is during a period when funds are ordinarily slow and may be inapt for the illustration of my point (not criticism) -- that most of our energies are being spent on expensive fund raising ventures that yielded huge profits in 1964, depending primarily on sympathetic contributions from the liberal community. Such strategy does not serve to make us less dependent on that community for mobility . . . it increases that dependency.

ON OTHER FUND RAISING OFFICES

Boston, along with the Bay Area Friends Offices (to be distinguished from the San Francisco Regional Friends Office) continues to be the most consistent, averaging between \$1,2000 and \$2,000/month. The only other offices that exist are Detroit, San Francisco. Fortunately, this represents what IS and not what potential exists since in most major cities (Philly, Denver, L.A., Chicago, et.al.) there is a strong indication of fundraising potential for SNCC.

ON WHAT'S NEEDED

I hold to the belief that our fund raising apparatus more and more has to become a "business" . . . aside from the traditional support from local communities of workers and projects which must, of course, continue. The latter fact is probably more in affect than you realize since there has been no money for the most part to send to projects. The most that the Atlanta operations is called upon to supply is the basic necessities for state offices where they exist, printing and car maintenance. In some instances, even these costs have been absorbed by the local organization.

(The maximum needs per month of the Atlanta Office is \$12,000.00. This includes field expenses, printing, car maintenance, health insurance and an emergency project account of \$24,000/year for legal fees, etc.)

Our inability to get funds, is, in my opinion, indicative of the lack of organizational structure i.e., organizational secretaries that don't really exist leaving a void in terms of mobility. There are no persons in this organization whose job it is to travel. We need more than anything else, truly mobile people . . . who can move in the ghettos of the North, the unexplored regions of the mid-west the sunny shores of Florida (where we have gotten repeated requests and have been unable to respond in any meaningful way). Such persons could provide a continuous source of organizational support -- politically as well as financially. (move on) Very crucial to our fundraising operation in addition, is the need to have at least three persons who concern themselves with getting that much needed bread. I do not feel that such persons have to be or become professional fundraisers or be willing to spend their 'life in SNCC' raising funds. Any SNCC person who sees his work with a seriousness that makes for self-discipline for the needs of the revolution should be willing to raise funds; moreover, anyone who can organize a group of people or a day's work can also raise funds.

In this organization in 1966, our every move should be viewed as having political implications (most people in this country have already reached this conclusion about SNCC; we're late as usual). If we accept this fact and the fact that people make and support movements (ours being a movement), one extension of this fact is that people are political (as some of us say, BLACK POWER IS BLACK PEOPLE) and we need people.

The need for funds can not be distinguished from the need for political support. The two are synonymous 'cause folks don't give money to you 'less they supports what you're doing. And, 'less you ask. We haven't been talking about our work or asking for money as an o r g a n i z a t i o n a l p r o j e c t (recent efforts in the communications dept. acknowledged) -- Propoganda and Funds. One thing that has stayed with us from the Camus period is that if you're working, folks'll know about it. Whereas this may be true in Alabama or Philly, it is certainly not true in Omaha, Nebraska or Oklahoma City. Yet there are people there, Black People and there are Movements. . . . that we don't know or care about. People are political and where there are people, we need to be . . . raising questions . . . when possible, giving direction . . . solidifying support . . . moving around . . . raising funds . . . regional secretaries of a sort. I don't propose that we are superwomen/men or do-it-alls, and I realize the impossibility of being everywhere. Further, I am not suggesting that half the energies of the organization be devoted to fundraising -- just the energies of three additional persons . . . who are mobile.

One important factor regarding fundraising in the Black Community is the ever present appeal of artists . . . rock'n roll, jazz, blues b o o g a l o o. We have talked for three months now about the need to get together some influential members of the Black entertainers world to talk about the possibilities of getting commitments to SNCC. I still think that the idea is sound and possible but that we, SNCC, the organization have to call the meeting and not depend on someone to do it for us -- If we're serious. There are enough pro-SNCC disc jockeys, promoters, and entertainers in the country for us to get our own g r o o v e going in the Black Community. Mildred, Dwight, and Tillman are still interested.

ON A POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

One thing that we definitely didn't decide in Nashville is that the time to go underground had come. Possibly for many reasons but primarily because we didn't feel that the time had come. Because we had not worked for that kind of base . . . we had not developed the political consciousness in the black community necessary for underground work. Most importantly, there was really no reason: we had not been outlawed by the country (govt.), placed on the Attorney General's subversive list, nor did we feel that we were prepared, rightly or wrongly, to advocate the destruction of "western civilization," or the destruction (physically) of this country.

A lot has happened since that meeting. The most significant being the cry of Black Power . . . what that has meant to us . . . to black people . . . north . . . and south. It has meant different things to different people. Then there is the architect of Black Power (as posed in Ebony magazine) Stokely Carmichael. What has been his image? How has that affected SNCC as an organization, as a force in this country? There can be many answers to those questions. Probably, each of us would answer differently. "It hurt me in Alabama." "It helped me in Chicago."

How could one individual make such a tremendous impression on so many people in such a short period of time . . . so much so that to some people SNCC is only the organization that Carmichael has at his disposal to do what he wants to get done. Actually, it is very simple. He has been the only consistent spokesman for the organization and he has had the press not only available but seeking him out for whatever ammunition could be found -- FOR OUR DESTRUCTION. There can be no dissent on the fact that for the most part Carmichael has spoken for the masses of black people. At his best, he has said what they wanted to hear -- and for many what they would like to say. But, there have been times . . . too many times, when he, like most of us, has not been at his best. Cliche, after cliche has filled his orations . . . things that many like to hear but few understand . . . things that feed those who wish to destroy us . . . things that hurt even in the black communities where we organize . . . CAUSE PEOPLE DON'T UNDERSTAND CLICHES. How do they apply to the lives of Black people in a town where the SNCC worker is organizing a co-op or running political candidates or trying to explain the draft program, or preparing a campaign against police brutality? For the most part, they have no meaning and to give meaning means to devote hours to a dialogue that attempts to "water down" what was actually said to what was really meant. Personally, I don't feel that we have the time to afford such a luxury.

Example: Politically, Carmichael has made his best presentations on Television. Once on Meet the Press, once on the Today Show and some other program that I watched. In each case, there was a flood of mail and calls of a congratulatory nature or expressing support of SNCC positions as expressed by Mr. Carmichael. I think that there is a reason for this kind of response (admittedly from the middle-class or striving middle-class which encompasses the entire Black community and is the nature thereof). He has more time to think, he is immediately faced with what he feels is a hostile press (rather than having them in the audience which is usually the case) so that their presence is sensed and he is guarded, and last but not least, the questions usually deal with facts and the response has to be of a factual nature . . . why oppose the war . . . why self-defense . . . and they deal directly with things that can be programmed: what we do, how we do it, why, etc. The irony in this situation is

that the hostile press is EVERYWHERE. Putting whites out of meetings doesn't help. They simply use more blacks to do the same work. One might argue that we get more reporting jobs for blacks, but I'm not sure that I support that argument to the end since we also place more blacks into what they feel are the mainstreams of American life -- "making it".

My concern here, and I may have gotten a little astray, is that we, SNCC, beginning with the Central Committee, develop some POLITICAL SENSE, as to how we move to get the most. That we abandon the theory that the more people talk about us, the greater we are (we pose a threat), the more we're isolated, the better off we are. Moreover, I'm concerned that we make ourselves objects of controversy by forcing people in a community not just to accept us but to accept atheism, uncleanness, uncombed hair, sexual freedom, pot smoking, and all the other personal freedoms that we still hold to. The same is true in terms of the press. When we say things that we are not prepared to do, which we do not endorse as an organization, which have no programmatic implication for the movement in which we are actively involved, we make ourselves objects of controversy. Naturally people are going to retaliate when one speaks of destroying western civilization, or of substituting dynamite for molotov cocktails -- regardless of the intention or the context. Some things don't need to be said to Black folks. They live in this country and are taking shit that none of us have had to take and they are moving to do what they feel should be done. The best that SNCC can do is to give sanction, and they don't need our sanction.

Example: Summerhill, Atlanta, September. Carmichael went to the scene of the shooting of a black man, said a few words and left. When SNCC folk got back on the scene some two hours later, business was being taken care of. For him to go back (as he later found) would be anti-climatic. There was absolutely nothing he could do short of leading an armed insurrection -- which he obviously was not prepared to do. In short, at that point, his words, his person simply was not needed.

ON WHAT TO DO NOW

I would off hand suggest a period of silence for our spokesman coupled with a period of internal examination and hard work.

After some thought, I make the following concrete proposals:

- That we ask the chairman to select two additional organizational secretaries who can begin, after some discussion, to travel around the country where there are groups who want to identify with SNCC, solidifying political support for SNCC programs and initiating support where it does not exist.
- That some procedure be established for affiliation with SNCC. Presently, the only way that a group can be identified with SNCC officially is to have a SNCC project in the area, and a SNCC staff present. Obviously, we can't have projects with staff in 52 states -- at this point.
- That Jimmy McDonald begin to move out of the N.Y. office (which I understand he plans to do) and begin developing independent fundraising groups in unexplored areas.
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