

INTERNAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

SNCC

August 29, 1966

40 Lynhurst Dr., S.W.

P.M.

Persons Present

Cleveland Sellers

Jack Minnis

Ruby D. Robinson

Charles Hamilton

John O. Killens*

Jennifer Lawson

Julius Lester

Johnny Wilson

John P. Tillman

It was generally agreed among those present that there is a need for internal education of SNCC staff. The question was raised as to whether the staff would be receptive to such a program.

Jack Minnis related the experiences of the workshops he conducted in Atlanta to prepare the Alabama staff and "local people" for the Freedom Organizations. It seems that for the most part, the staff did not participate actively in these workshops whereas the "local people" seemed to be more receptive. It was pointed out that: 1) There are a lot of people on staff who will not sit down and listen to a lecture. 2) That most staff people would respond differently to a workshop of their peers. ~~That staff would respond differently under different circumstances,~~ the majority of the Alabama staff who did not participate in those workshops realized when they returned to the state that they had not gotten the necessary information with which to deal with the problems they were faced and would react differently if given an opportunity.

There was also a question of some people being mobilizers, close to the community and a necessary part of any successful organizing project who would not grasp a lot of the information necessary to build various movements (i.e., the Freedom Organizations). The need for both groups of people in SNCC was recognized and accepted. More importantly, it was stated that there needs to be some attention given to providing learning experiences through which people who do not read and who will not listen to lectures can be given the necessary mobility.

It was felt that the key thing to getting an educational program underway is the development of internal staff discipline where the "group" demands certain things from its members. This is done on other levels within the organization and can be expanded to include staff education.

There were certain areas with which people felt that SNCC organizers should be familiar before entering the field Basically they were:

- 1) A general idea of SNCC's program
 - 2) What to organize, when, where, how and why?
 - 3) Research techniques
 - 4) Corporate Structure and how it operates
 - 5) Comprehensive history of social movements in this country, esp. as they relate to Black people and knowledge of the Reconstruction period
 - 6) History of Black people in this country.
 - 7) Knowledge of law and the administration of justice how it works to benefit the system
 - 8) International implications of what we do--current events
- After spelling out the above list and what it means, the following conclusions were drawn:

that we are developing a political elite or cadre.

that this in itself is not bad if it is not done to the detriment of the people whom we have heretofore called "mobilizers"

that workshops should not isolate the two but should include both personalities to provide for an informal learning process that goes on after the lectures through conversation "bull sessions, ex: people who do not read Camus or Fanon learn about them thru conversation with those who have read, ~~the important thing being the concepts that come out of the books rather than the books themselves.~~

Structure

It was decided that in order for the workshops to be effective they have to be isolated physically from the work that people are doing, away from cities etc.

It was suggested that we hire a place for ninety days and have six--two week sessions to include all staff people at approximately twenty persons per session. Such a group would be small enough to provide adequate participation on the part of all persons attending and at the same time large enough to provide a cross-section of the Staff for each session.

It was suggested that workshops include such things as recordings, film strips, movies, songs, and the traditional "story teller" to stimulate interest and to point out the usefulness of such aids in the learning process.

It was felt that a comprehensive outline of information contained in certain books relevant to the workshop be made available for staff. It was also felt that books themselves should be available to staff.

Staff primers: In addition to the outlines, each session would be prefaced with a written documentation of facts to be presented and how they relate to SNCC's goals; they should be written by consultants whom we feel best exemplify our own political opinion and compiled by SNCC staff in a primer

A typical two week ~~xxxx~~ session was then outlined:

Monday

a.m. films related to SNCC history as an opener
SNCC history
afternoon - comparative analysis of social movements
of 30's thru 60's (especially as they
relate to black people.
p.m. - music (relevant to earlier discussions)

Tuesday

a.m. - Black protest movement from the "Niagara" to
the thirties.
afternoon - Black Reconstruction
p.m. film relating to discussions

Wednesday

a.m. -- two hour session on Black Culture
suggested activities
films, music, black arts, folklore, etc.

Thursday

a.m. -- system of slavery here and in other countries
afternoon - slave revolts
p.m. folklore

Friday

all discussions on Africa, a.m. and afternoon
A p.m. African arts groups

Saturday -- all day Black Festival, arts, dance, etc.

Sunday all day -- skills workshops (held by staff and resource
people)

Monday

a.m. and afternoon -- the Corporate system

Tuesday

= a.m. and afternoon -- Laws and the system

Wednesday

a.m. -- session on Imperialism and international
economics

Thursday

a.m. and afternoon -- Research techniques and skills
workshops

Friday

a.m. and afternoon -- Analysis of SNCC and future role

Evening sessions should always be relaxed, informal situations, movies, art groups etc.

Sessions on Wednesday are scheduled for two hour periods. Attendance after that period and attendance of the evening sessions are on a voluntary basis

Sessions on Saturday and Sundays are also on a voluntay basis.

Discussion then centered around the types of resource peoplefor the session.. It was said that in some cases they should be willing to be discussion leaders rather than formal lecturers.

SUGGESTD RESOURCE PEOPLE:

HISORY

(names in parenthesis means they s
should get carbon of letter and
will follow up)

Sterling Stuckey
John Churchville (Hamilton
Lerone Bennet
Augusta Strong
St. Claire Drake(Hamilton
James Boggs
John H. Clarke (Killens
Jim Campbell
Nathan Hare (Hamilton
Sam Cooke (?
Harry Belafonte
John Lewis

CONTEMPORARY DIRECTION

Ron Karenga
Bob Parris

BLACK ARTS

Willis James
Cardoza Arts Group
Afro-American Folkloric
Leroi Jones
Georgia Sea Islanders
Staple Singers
Bessie Smith
James Baldwin
Yoruba Temple
Sterling Brown
Ossie Davis (Killens
William M. Kelly (Killens

ECONOMICS & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

O.E. Nwawi (Killens
C. Onuachi (Killens
Nicky Oneywy (Hamilton
Jack Minnis
Oliver Cox

OTHERS

Paul Puryear(Hamilton
Ella Baker
Hamilton-Killens

Additional names should be given to Cleve Sellers.

Suggested things to be done:

Ivanhoe Donaldson and Bill Hall be contacted for
additional names (resource people)

(Cleve)

budget to be drawn up

tentative date set for mid-November(beginning of program

(Cleve and Ruby

Library to be set up in Atlanta office

Publishers to be contacted for books

(Jennifer

Books to be sent from New York and schools

(Killens

materials to be checked for availability, films, primers
projectors, tape recorders, etc.

open letter to people concerning program

(Cleve

Written assessment of this meeting, including additional
names and after thoughts about the meeting

(Killens & Hamilton

follow-up of open letters to resource people

(Killens and Hamilton

Note: Work is to also begin on ~~xxx~~ the primers
guidelines: a precis no longer than five pages for each
session, to include factual material, provocative
questions, reading lists, illustrations, etc.