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.

The 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 and 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 detrement 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 suggested 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
- 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 schedules 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 voluntary basis.

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

SUGGESTED RESOURCE PEOPLE:

**HISTORY**
- 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

**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 the primers guidelines: a precis no longer than five pages for each session, to include factual material, provocative questions, reading lists, illustrations, etc.