

PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR MISSISSIPPI IN RELATIONSHIP TO  
SCLC's WASHINGTON POOR PEOPLE's CAMPAIGN

Prepared by: Leon Hall  
R. B. Cottenreader  
Faye Porche  
Oscar Mohead  
Major Wright

Presented by Leon Hall  
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The Mississippi Group will have two assembly points:

1. Grenada, for all cities north of Durant;
2. Jackson, for all cities south of Durant.

We have decided to break the state into two parts; the North and the South. As we see the program, we feel that it would be effective as well as dramatic to have people in Mississippi walk to their focal point in the state and then to bus them from there to our final destination. Though we realize that we'll be asking some people to walk a hell of a way, this walk in itself will be a good start towards building momentum in D. C. As we see the program, it is one in which we hope to involve masses of poor people and we will be expecting to do it the poor way, spending money for bare necessities only.

It is recommended that an office be set up in Grenada as state-wide office, and also to cover the northern area, and that a sub-office be located in Jackson which is located midway and will cover the southern portion of the state.

We have previously discussed holding a state-wide meeting, inviting leaders of various organizations, but as time moves on, we are able to see the program more vividly than ever and for this reason, we foresee holding a kick-off state-wide meeting, two area meetings (one in each area) and a finalization state-wide meeting, perhaps a week or two before we make our initial move towards Washington. We have outlined tentative routes indicating 1) rest stops; 2) key cities we will pass through as well as; 3) cities where we are hoping to get our best support (realizing that this is subject to change after our state-wide meeting).

We expect the trip from our state to D.C. to take at least three days. We are expecting to stop in these major cities:

NORTH

1. Birmingham, Ala. \*
2. Atlanta, Ga. \*

SOUTH

1. Montgomery, Ala. \*
2. Atlanta, Ga. \*

3. Greenville, S. C.
4. <sup>Greensboro</sup> Petersburg, Va. \*
5. Alexandria, Va.
6. Washington, D. C.

As outlined, our groups will come from Grenada and Jackson via separate routes and unite in Atlanta, Ga., traveling the rest of the journey together. Realizing that all of the stop points are cities where SCIC has worked before, we are hoping that SCIC will provide assistance in securing food and sleeping accommodations for whatever the number of persons involved.

\* Indicates cities where SCIC has worked before or has good contacts now.

As I see our program, it would take all of SCIC's staff and as many volunteers as we could get our hands on to work Mississippi. With this in mind and realizing that this is relatively impossible, it makes our state-wide meeting all the more important. For this reason, I think it is absolutely imperative that Dr. King personally make the initial approach to the leaders of this state. Mississippi has all the manpower necessary to make this program effective "if" they are approached in the right manner and "if" they will work to make the program work. The only possible role SCIC can play in Mississippi is that of coordinator; 1) because of the entrenchment of other organizations and 2) because we have neither the time nor manpower to do an effective job. There are some great prospects in this state and we could involve the bulk of the "Civil Rights" oriented Negroes here, but unfortunately Dr. King is the only one who can get commitments and work from these people. I realize we are taking a very optimistic attitude towards the entire program but my optimism is one of the key motivations that keeps me working in the Movement. In regards to stating that Dr. King is the only person capable of securing firm commitments from the leaders of the various organizations in Mississippi, I make this statement for numerous purposes; I think that we owe it to the people mentioned, and because many of us as well as Dr. King realize the many problems that any person will confront when dealing with such people as:

- |                           |                                  |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Aaron Henry -- NAACP   | 6. Johnnie Mae Walker -- FDP     |
| 2. Charles Evers -- NAACP | 7. Victoria Gray -- FDP          |
| 3. Lawrence Guyot -- FDP  | 8. Owen Brooks -- Delta Ministry |
| 4. Fannie Haymer -- FDP   | 9. Leon Hall -- SCIC             |
| 5. Bob Manto -- SNCC      |                                  |

There are a number of problems that will arise by the mere presence of some of these people, with their organizational and personality clashes, as well as a great number of old grudges that will be rekindled by their coming together. And, there are also a great number of age-old grudges and animosities towards SCIC.

We have drawn up our program based upon an expectation of recruiting at least 400 poor people. With this in mind, we recommend that SCIC exert whatever influence necessary to secure transportation to D. C. (we recommend buying ten buses from the Blue Bird Bus Company in Port Valley, Ga.). We are definitely certain that we can supply licensed bus drivers.

#### PROPOSED TIME TABLE

##### APRIL 27TH

Northern group leaving Grenada at 5:00 A.M. will pass through:

1. Tusculoosa, Ala.\*
2. Birmingham, Ala.\*
3. Bessemer, Ala. \*
4. Anniston, Ala.
5. Atlanta, Ga. \*

Southern group leaving Jackson at 5:00 A.M. will pass through:

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. York, Ala. *      | 4. Selma, Ala. *      |
| 2. Demopolis, Ala. * | 5. Montgomery, Ala. * |
| 3. Uniontown, Ala.*  | 6. Tuskegee, Ala.     |
| 7. Atlanta, Ga. *    |                       |

\* Indicates cities where SCIC has worked or has possible contacts.

PROPOSED TIME TABLE (cont'd)

APRIL 28TH

The combined Northern and Southern groups leave Atlanta at 5:00 A.M. and will pass through the following cities:

1. Greenville, S. C. \*
2. Greensboro, N. C.
3. Charlotte, N. C.
4. Durham, N. C.
5. Highpoint, N. C. \*
6. Henderson, N. C. \*
7. Petersburg, Va. \*

APRIL 29th

The Group, leaving Petersburg, Va. at 6:00 A.M. will pass through the following cities:

1. Richmond, Va.
2. Fredricksburg, Va.
3. Alexandria, Va.
4. Washington, D. C.

TIMETABLE OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE HOURS

- I. With the two groups leaving Grenada and Jackson at 5:00 A.M. on April 27th, the Northern group should be in Birmingham by 11:00 A.M.; the Southern group should be in Montgomery by 12:00 Noon.
- II. With both groups leaving Birmingham and Montgomery at 3:00 P.M., they should both arrive in Atlanta by 8:00 P.M.
- III. The two combined groups should leave Atlanta at 5:00 A.M. on April 28th, and should arrive in Greenville, S. C. at 8:00 A.M.
- IV. Leaving Greenville at 10:00 A.M., we should arrive at Petersburg, Va. by 7:00 P.M.
- V. Leaving Petersburg, Va. at 6:00 A.M. on April 29th (having spent the night there) we should arrive in Alexandria at 8:00 A.M.
- VI. Walking from Alexandria, Va., we should arrive in Washington, D. C. by 10:00 A.M.

We have attempted to draw up a timetable that would serve many purposes. We've not attempted to spell them out, but we are prepared to deal with them at anytime and are preparing to present these purposes and many other aspects of our program, in Atlanta

As we see our program, it will be self-supporting. In each of the towns we stop in, we are expecting to spend enough time so as to join in whatever activities the leaders of that town have scheduled. We would also urge that each stop point have some type of activity scheduled. With the Mississippi Group passing through so many good Movement areas, this in itself could be just the thing to rekindle some of the old Movement fires that are possibly burning low. We have specific reasons in mind for each area we've mentioned, such as: arriving in Atlanta could mean that Dr. King would be in town and he'd be able to address a mass meeting that night.



There are presently five people working in Mississippi full time with SCIC: Leon Hall, R. B. Cottenreader, Oscar Mohead, Major Wright and Paye Porche. We are relying upon all of these people to work when we take steps towards putting our program into operation. We would also recommend that at least one other person be assigned to Mississippi. A person such as Jessica Holland could possibly be the ideal person. She would be quite an asset working in a secretarial capacity and not only that; we could use her in an organizing capacity, for the mere reason that the Black community here, unlike many other areas are still at the point where they are not only unadjusted to earnest white people but for the most part they have not even met earnest whites. And she could serve as an example as to what Negroes can expect if we ever come to the point of dealing with whites on an integrated basis. We are also recommending that Oscar Mohead, Major Wright and Paye Porche be employed by SCIC on a subsistence basis for the duration of our program.

Taking all factors into consideration, we are forced to take the position that there can be no Poor People campaign unless poor people are involved to a great extent. This means that we must not only overlook personal grudges and organizational differences, but we must also deal with our individual ego problems, meaning all of us from the top to the bottom. We must at the same time be realistic and admit that this will not be an easy job; it will take the cooperation of every man. We are relying heavily upon such people as Lawrence Guyot, Fannie Haymer, Aaron Henry, Charles Evers, to name but a few. For this reason we are asking that not only Dr. King, but the entire body of SCIC join together, as we did in Selma, and make this a successful venture. We are attempting to be earnest with ourselves and we are hoping that the rest of our fellow workers will do the same. Some of us may be untruthful to ourselves and others as well. But we are hoping that each of us will start with ourselves and work from there. We are here thinking that we are preparing to make a great push towards liberating America. Though our attitude may be terribly optimistic, we think it is not only justified but it is necessary to embark upon a mission of this sort.