

FROM: Ella J. Baker

TO: The Southern Patriot

SOUTHERN STUDENT CONFERENCE HELD

Promise of a new thrust in the civil rights movement was evidenced at a week-end Southern Student Conference held in Atlanta Georgia from April 29th ~~1961~~ through May 1st. More than 200 students from twenty(20) predominantly Negro colleges were convened by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee as part of its renewed and expanded program of working with college students. The majority of young folk attending the conference came from Alabama ~~colleges~~, with delegates from Alabama State, Talladega, Tuskegee and Stillman colleges. Other schools and states represented were Albany State, Morehouse and Spellman colleges in Georgia; Florida Memorial College at St. Augustine; Bennett, A & T and Livingston colleges in North Carolina; Alcorn, Mississippi A & M, Holly Springs and Tugaloo colleges in Mississippi; Lincoln University in Pennsylvania; Fisk University, and A. & I. University in Tennessee; and Virginia Union University.

Central to both formal and informal discussions were problems of academic freedom, or rather the lack of it, quality education and the desire of students to become active participants in the fight for freedom. Repeatedly it was stated that many students wanted to become involved but were not sure of what to do or how to begin. This uncertainty was partially answered by the reports of how students at Alcorn College in Mississippi were revolting <sup>what was termed</sup> against the "plantation-type atmosphere" and "repressive regulations" on their campus. The large Alcorn delegation, some of whom had already been expelled from school for their organizing efforts, gave added fervor and determination to the conference, and helped to generate a spirit reminiscent of the 1960-'61 student meetings.

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A primary aim of the revitalized SNCC campus program is to stimulate new recruits into ~~the~~ <sup>human</sup> rights activity. From this conference some thirty students indicated a desire to work with SNCC this summer.

The conference voted to form units of student activists on all <sup>in</sup> campuses represented, and to work to establish ~~such~~ such units on all of the Southern college campuses. It was proposed that a format be worked out for relating these campus units to SNCC and that a program be developed to assist students in dealing effectively with their campus problems and in developing working relations with the communities in which their schools are located. A much larger Southwide meeting was projected for the Fall of 1966.

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