

July 15, 1966  
1316 E. Madison Park  
Chicago, Ill. 60615

Dear Friend of SNCC,

At the recent staff meeting near Nashville where Stokely Carmichael was elected Chairman, basic decisions were taken which make it quite clear that SNCC, while as youth oriented as ever, has developed the most adult and advanced political understanding of any national organization for equal rights in our country. For example, the SNCC position on Viet Nam (enclosed) is unarguable. Again, the focus on "Black Power," rather than protest, shifts the whole emphasis away from a defensive attitude to a forward-looking program. Probably the best measure of its validity is the volume of shrill and distorted diatribe that has been issuing in the press and other reactionary communications media ever since it was enunciated. Already it has proved its authenticity in the Meredith March, where it became the slogan. Of course the weak sisters, the liberals tied one way or the other to the Democratic Party, and the gullible have succumbed to the worried criticisms of the power structure whose tender nerves have been touched by the new concept.

But we are sure that the real friends of SNCC have seen through these attacks just as have Harry Belafonte and I.F.Stone (enclosures.)

There were two other basic positions adopted in Nashville that deserve your notice. One is that to a far greater degree than ever before SNCC projects must become self sustaining. Did you know, for instance, that all of the political activity (Black Panther) in Alabama is virtually self financed? The other is that approval was voted for continuing the Chicago SNCC operation and the beginning of other northern city groups.

We feel strongly that Monroe Sharp should not have to work almost full time painting and decorating in order to keep SNCC in Chicago going and himself fed, clothed and sheltered. We feel strongly that the beginnings of developing a political approach to the gaining of power in the ghetto by those who live there, free from any entanglement with the Daley-Dawson machine is the most basic necessity of all for Chicago. And we mean it when we say we will 'abhor' any connection with this machine, however remote.

We enclose a monthly pledge form and urge you to sign it today. If you wish, you may earmark your pledge either for the local work or the work in the South, although we would prefer it if you would be willing to leave the division up to us. The question of greatest need is regularly worked out by consultation with Atlanta.

We feel personally guilty for not having contributed as much as we should have in the past months. Do you?

For Peace, Freedom and POWER,

*Sylvia + Charles Fischer*

Sylvia and Charles Fischer