

CONSTITUTION

and

BY-LAWS

-- of the --



SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Atlanta, Georgia

PREAMBLE

Our nation came into existence as a protest against tyranny and oppression. It was created upon the fundamental assumption that all men are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights. The Government exists to protect the life and liberty of all without regard to race, color or religion.

The Federal Government has announced this principle and pledged repeatedly in its basic documents equal protection under the law. The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, particularly the Bill of Rights and the 14th and 15th Amendments, the Federal Civil Rights Laws, and many recent decisions of the United States Supreme Court proclaim unequivocally that all American Citizens shall be accorded full citizenship rights and opportunities without discrimination.

Aims and Purposes

I. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference has the basic aim of achieving full citizenship rights, equality, and the integration of the Negro in all aspects of American life.

II. Social and economic forces are bringing about great changes in the South. Urbanization, industrialization, scientific agriculture and mass education are making it possible to remove the barriers to a prosperous, free and creative life for all Southerners. However, these barriers will not disappear automatically.

Accordingly, the responsibility of the Southern Negro in the struggle for a better society is two-fold:

A. The Negro must join with other Southerners in solving Southern problems; and

B. Since the South is a part of the nation, the Negro (and other Southerners) must cherish and defend our fundamental, democratic heritage. Thus, simultaneously,

he will be fulfilling his obligations to his country and to himself as a first-class citizen.

To secure these ends, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference is established, dedicating itself to justice, refusing to cooperate with evil, appealing to the conscience of man, and working for social change but always in a spirit of good will and non-violence.

III. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference is organized as a service agency to facilitate coordinated action of local protest groups and to assist in their sharing of resources and experiences. The magnitude of the problem calls for the maximum commitment of resources of all institutions in Negro life, North and South. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference seeks to cooperate with all existing agencies attempting to bring full democracy to our great nation.

BY-LAWS
of the
SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE, INC.

ARTICLE I.

Name, Area, and Purposes

SECTION 1. Name. The name of this organization shall be the "Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc."

SECTION 2. Area. The geographic area covered will comprise the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

This geographic area may be increased or reduced at any meeting of the members as hereinafter explained.

SECTION 3. Purposes. The objects and purposes of said Corporation are to exist and function as an eleemosynary organization, and more particularly to organize and maintain Christian guidance to aid in im-

proving the Civic, Religious, Economic, and Cultural Conditions in the South and in the Nation. Said Corporation intends to strive towards greater understanding in all efforts toward interracial development and good will; to assist in developing Christian Leadership in the South and in the Nation; to work with National, State and Local Agencies in development of Christian fellowship; to work with such groups in the attainment of interracial unity, harmony, understanding and opportunity; to secure, through research and action programs the practices of opportunity for all the people, irrespective of race; to educate, and offer information concerning opportunities; to conduct public forums on the obligations of Citizenship; to promote registration and other Civic participation which fulfills the individual's obligations and promotes the general welfare. This organization hopes to achieve its purposes through non-violent direct action, lectures, dissemination of literature and other means of public instruction.

Members

SECTION 1. The members of the Corporation shall be as follows:

a. Membership in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc. shall consist of a predetermined number.

b. The membership of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc. shall consist of affiliate organizations.

c. Only representatives of affiliate organizations, hereinafter defined, shall be voting delegates.

d. Affiliate organizations shall have the right to be represented by a maximum of five (5) voting delegates provided their annual fee of twenty-five (\$25) dollars for each voting delegate has been paid.

e. Accredited visitors are those persons who are representatives of local groups or non-affiliated organizations, those over five (5) voting delegates of affiliate organizations and other indivi-

duals not necessarily representative of any group but interested in the program of this organization, who have been approved by the Executive Board of this organization or any committee designated by the the Executive Board to approve or disapprove such visitors. Accredited visitors, previously defined, must also satisfy the registration requirements as determined by the Executive Board of this organization. Such accredited visitors, having satisfied all requirements shall have the right to participate in discussions but not to vote.

SECTION 2. Notice of Meetings and Membership Rights.

a. Notice of the place, day and hour of every regular meeting shall be given to each member of the Executive Board and to each affiliate organization not less than twenty (20) days before the meeting.

b. No rights of any member in the corporation shall be assignable or transferable, and all rights shall terminate upon the death, resignation, or termination of membership for any cause.

SECTION 3. Voting. Each delegate shall have one vote and, except in cases in which it is by the charter or by these by-laws otherwise provided, a majority of the votes cast shall elect or pass any measure before this organization. If at any time the Executive Board finds it necessary voting by mail may be conducted on questions in a manner provided by said Board.

SECTION 4. Annual Meetings. The Corporation shall hold two meetings annually. One meeting shall be held the week following the second Sunday in May. The election of Officers and members of the Executive Board shall be held annually the last day of the May meeting. The second meeting will be held the week following the last Sunday in September. These will be general meetings; as such, they will be open for transaction of any business brought before the body by the President or the Executive Board or in any other manner within the power of the Corporation, without special notice of such business unless otherwise provided in these by-laws.

SECTION 5. Quorum. The majority of members present at the two regular meetings will constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE III.

Affiliates

Those organizations or other bodies whose aims and methods are closely akin to the aims and methods of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc. may, at the discretion of this organization, become affiliates of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc., upon such conditions as the Corporation may prescribe. The by-laws of such Organization or bodies shall be approved by the Executive Board or a designated committee of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc. in advance of affiliation. If the by-laws of an affiliate organization are altered approval of the changes must be secured from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc. for affiliation to continue. Affiliated organizations may disaffiliate. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc. may require disaffili-

ation on failure of an affiliate to comply with the terms of its by-laws as approved by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc., or in the event this organization concludes that the aims and methods of such organization be no longer closely akin to those of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc. All affiliate organizations will contribute a minimum of twenty-five (\$25) dollars annually to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc., which entitles such affiliate to the representation of one (1) voting delegate.

ARTICLE IV.

Boards and Committees

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc. shall provide for an Executive Board of not more than thirty-three (33) members; at least one person from each Southern State should be on the Board. Nine (9) Board members shall be elected by the Board itself and the other twenty-four (24) members by the Conference. The Executive Board shall serve during the pleasure of the Southern Christian

Leadership Conference, Inc. The President of the Leadership Conference shall also serve as Chairman of the Executive Board. During the intervals between the meetings of the Leadership Conference, the Executive Board shall possess and may exercise all of the powers of the Corporation, conferred by the by-laws or the charter of the Corporation, in all cases in which specific directions shall not have been given by the Leadership Conference. The Executive Board shall keep full account of its transactions. All action by the Executive Board shall be reported to the Leadership Conference at its next meeting, succeeding such action. The Executive Board shall be empowered to fill all vacancies that occur among officers of the Conference and on the Executive Board during the interim between Leadership Conference Meetings.

SECTION 2. Term of Office of Executive Board. The term of office of members of the Executive Board shall be three (3) years. The terms shall be staggered so that eleven (11) members shall be elected each year, eight (8) by the Conference and three (3) by the Board itself.

SECTION 3. Meetings of the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall meet three times annually. One of said meetings will be held one day during the week following the first Sunday in December, the other two meetings shall be held each time the Conference convenes. The Board shall also meet at the call of the Chairman or any seven (7) members of the Board.

SECTION 4. Quorum. At the Executive Board meetings nine (9) members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; if at any meeting there is less than a quorum present, a majority of those present may adjourn the meeting from time to time, but not for a period of over thirty (30) days at any one time, without notice other than by announcement at the meeting until a quorum shall attend. At any adjourned meeting at which a quorum shall be present, any business may be transacted which might have been transacted at the meeting as originally notified.

SECTION 5. Removal. At any meeting of the Executive Board called and with the

purpose stated in the call, any member of the Executive Board may, by a majority of the votes cast, be removed from Office for cause, and another be appointed in the place of the person so removed to serve for the remainder of his term.

SECTION 6. Proxies. Every member of the Executive Board may vote either in person or by proxy. All proxies shall be given to members of the Executive Board only. Proxies shall be in writing and revocable at the pleasure of the member executing same. Unless the duration of the proxy is specified, it shall be invalid after thirty (30) days from the date of its execution.

SECTION 7. Administrative Committee. The administrative committee shall be composed of a maximum of nine (9) members of the Executive Board, appointed by the Chairman of the Executive Board, including the President, Secretary, Treasurer and Counsel. The committee shall act in place of the Executive Board at the discretion of said Board.

SECTION 8. National Advisory Commit-

tee. The Leadership Conference shall establish a National Advisory Committee, composed of persons who are in sympathy with the aims and policies of the Organization, and whose purpose shall be to advise the Leadership Conference on matters pertaining to its work.

SECTION 9. Nominating Committee.

The nominating committee shall be composed of seven (7) persons: three (3) persons who are members of the Executive Board, elected by the Executive Board and four (4) persons elected by the Conference. The committee shall be appointed at the October meeting and meet the day of the meeting of the Executive Board in May and make its report to the Executive Board. The Executive Board then conducts the election. The nominating committee shall elect its own Chairman. The nominating committee shall nominate the officers of the Conference and eight (8) members of the Executive Board each year. Conference affiliates will be notified to send in recommendations to the nominating committee thirty (30) days before the committee meets.

SECTION 10. Other Committees. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference or the President may by resolution provide for such other standing or special committees deemed desirable and may discontinue the same if necessary.

ARTICLE V.

Officers

The Executive Officers of the Corporation shall be a president; one or more vice-presidents, not to exceed four; a recording secretary; an assistant secretary; a financial secretary; a treasurer; a chaplain and a historian. The Officers shall have such duties as usually inhere in their respective offices or as may be prescribed by the Executive Board.

The President and the Administrative Board shall have the authority to procure such a professional staff as would be necessary to further the purposes of the Conference, and to outline and supervise their

duties as required by the Conference subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

All Officers must be members of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VI.

Amendments

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting or by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the delegates present or by a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) vote of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII.

Rules of Procedure

The rules of procedure at meetings shall be according to "ROBERTS' RULES OF ORDER," so far as applicable and when not inconsistent with the charter and the by-laws. The rules of procedure may be suspended by majority vote of those present and voting at any meeting.