

Prospectus for Atlanta for the
White Southern Student Project

Robert L. Tenney
889 Penn Ave.
Atlanta, Georgia
19 Feb., 1964

Atlanta is presently in the state of turmoil and change. The traditional image of Atlanta as the "model city" with "good race relations" is being broken down. The power structure has worked hard for years to create this false image. The initiative in attacking the image was taken by the students, and primarily by the SNCC. But since SNCC and the young people did take the initiative in the movement means that they received, and are receiving, a large amount of criticism. However, the adult community is now becoming involved in the movement.

Among the student groups that are working in Atlanta is the Georgia Students for Human Rights. This group was organized about 3-4 weeks ago in an attempt to give the students on the white campuses in Atlanta an outlet through which to express their concerns about the problems that confront us today. It is primarily an action group dedicated to working for the civil rights and civil liberties of all people (black and white). They are involved in the civil rights struggle now, because that is the primary focal point in Atlanta at present.

To date the activities of the GSHR have ~~been~~ been as follows:

1. Mass Meetings -
2. Picketing of Restaurants
3. Distribution of ~~XXXXXX~~ \$000 prayer leaflets urging a boycott of downtown stores during lent. This is similar to the call given to the Negro churches for the same thing.
4. Organization of local campus groups and holding meetings on the individual campuses.
5. Hit and run sit-ins followed by negotiations with the managers of the restaurants.
6. Some of the Georgia Tech Students have been involved in an investigation by the states Attorney General's office.
7. Some training in nonviolence by C.T. Vivian.
8. Contacts with a number of adults and community leaders, have been made and lay the ground work for future activities.
9. A group of Scott students are engaged in tutorials and working in the underdeveloped areas.

The GSHR has an ongoing program and organization. At present its organization is very simple with a ~~fix~~ chairman (Rick Stevens), sec. (Judy Wiley), and committee chairman (Deadre LaPin). The various campuses (Ga. Tech, Emory, Agnes Scott, Oglethorpe, U. of Ga., Spellman, Morehouse, Morris Brown,) either have their own groups or have close lines of communication with each other. There is a wide range of views and opinions in the group, thus adding a bit of spice.

Some activities planned for the future include:

1. Continuation of most of the above activities as the way opens.
2. Conduct an "operation dialogue" project similar ~~to~~ to the Danville, Va. project. This would be aimed at the ~~more or less~~ more or less well to do white people. It will involve training programs for the participants. The present situation would be reviewed and ~~typical~~ answers to "typical" questions would be thought out. If possible a fact sheet on Atlanta will

be prepared and used. Groups of 2 or 3 students would then go door to door in a few selected neighborhoods and attempt to talk with the residents there about the problem. The ~~program would~~ be primarily educational in nature, but may also into active participation in the movement.

3. A March through Georgia (or perhaps through the ~~State~~ South). This would be very symbolic and significant if a group of predominately white students initiated an action of this sort. Serious ~~the~~ talk and thought have been given this project by GSHR.

4. For the less action minded ~~a~~ students, a survey of facilities could be made throughout the city. This would bring up-to-date lists at the Human Relations Council or other civil rights groups who at present do not have time to do this among the myriad of other things that also need to be done.

5. Since the civil rights issue is uppermost in Atlanta now, projects in the ~~a~~ slum areas is important. As ~~the~~ begin to gain their rights they must also ~~gain~~ the responsibility to deal with them. This requires an education program ~~in the~~ ~~fields~~ and community programs in the field of illiteracy, hygiene, community spirit, and physical improvement of the areas. This could be done ~~as~~ on a workcamp basis at first, with the possible development of community centers. (Groups of 15 - 20 students could meet on Fri. night and have an orientation session during which the area situation, etc. would be discussed. Sat. would be spent in working with the people in their homes or neighborhoods. ~~Some possible~~ ~~opportunities~~ An evaluation of the program would be conducted Sun. morn. ~~The cooperation of the churches~~ ~~would~~ Projects of this sort ~~are~~ are needed in both the white and Negro slums. Of course the groups would be integrated. ~~with this could be~~ ~~initiated~~

6. ~~Opportunities~~ Opportunities for organizing the unemployed are as yet unknown. However, much ground work would have to be done first. The workcamps (and eventual community centers) mentioned above would be a large part of this ground work.

7. Through the above action project the self-confidence of the students must be built up. ~~For many of them this is new and at present they~~ For many of them this is new and at present they are not willing to risk suspension or expulsion from school. This indeed limits their activities. This is because as yet it is still nit truly "THEIR" movement. This way of thinking must be developed. Actions by the administrations to attempt to quell the students can be used as rallying points for mass student protest.

8. In order to make inroads into the white community, the community contacts ~~already~~ already established must be enlarged and maintained. At present they are giving logistic and moral support. ~~In times of crisis they can be an effective voice of protest.~~

9. An ~~exchange~~ exchange program with Tuskegee Institute and Ga. Tech is in the thought stage at present. ~~This could be put into effect next year.~~

Needs

At present there is a one staff worker with the GSHR. Two ~~more~~ more people could be used. ~~At least one should be southern and at least one should~~ At least one should be southern and at least one should have a car. The GSHR is branching out to campuses all over the state of Georgia and the possibilities of coordinated action is great. However, this would involve at least one worker who could travel around to the campuses to coordinate the activities. Also if a large movement is started in a community it is very helpful if not necessary to have one person stay there for quite a while to make sure the "show stays off the road". Also ther is the point that students are pressed for

time and a full time person is needed to take some of this load. There is tremendous worth in the personal relations built up between the staff and the students. This can not be effectively done with a travelling person. The group tends to do nothing until the staff member is in town, which may be seldom and for short periods.

Staff workers this summer on the campuses is important in order to make the group and its actions continuous and thus avoiding the complete reorg. or refounding of the group in the Fall. Also summer students have more time to devote to other activities. The ground work laid during the year may be utilized for extensive work and action during the summer.