

~~STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE~~
360 NELSON ST., SW
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
STAFF MEETING, NOVEMBER 24, 1965

Note: These minutes were taken by several different people, so the form and style differ and varies. So in many cases the discussion is grouped around topics rather in the order it took place.

Wednesday afternoon, Nov. 24, 2 p.m.

Finance Committee Report was submitted and discussed by Shessie Johnson. William Porter made two suggestions: 1) that a conference budget be established for staff meetings, educational conferences, etc.; and 2) that a travel and transportation budget be established. Shessie suggested that we limit the things air travel can be used for rather than limited air travel. Jack Minnis suggested that Porter draw up a conference schedule and budget for 1966 and submit that to the Finance Committee for their approval, and Porter agreed to do this. Marion Barry asked that monthly financial statements be sent out to staff, to include total income and general expenditures. This suggestion was accepted by consensus. Charlie Cobb suggested that this report include what money is needed and where and how it can be gotten, and what the staff can do to help. Marion B. raised the question of the trend of more money going into offices and less into the field. The entire Financial Committee report was accepted by the group by consensus.

Personnel Committee Report was discussed by Muriel Tillinghast. One issue is vacations. Many of the field staff don't have money to take vacations. Our policy is that staff get their Project Director's permission, then contact Atlanta for their OK. They are very concerned with the movement of staff people in the South; i.e. Miss. is down to 23 staff, off 2/3. (Staff is now 130). They have been slow adding staff because of money problems. 6 people have recently been added in Alabama, 19 in Arkansas, and none in SW Ga. Courtland Cox asked that the group approve the addition of 5 Alabama staff immediately; this was approved by a veto. Muriel added that members of the Personnel Committee had been sitting in on meetings of the Medical Committee which wants to set up a large operation in Atlanta to service c.r. workers, so that they don't have to go all the way to New York for medical treatment. Porter asked that the Personnel Committee submit monthly reports to the staff, and Muriel agreed that this would be done.

Building Report was given by Jack Minnis, who discussed how the decision was made to rent, and now buy, the building. A prospectus of the Educational Institute was distributed and discussed.

Wednesday, Nov. 24, evening--7 p.m. Northern Office Reports

Philadelphia report was given by Murmy McKay. They are working primarily on fund raising through parties, churches and campuses (November is SNCC month at Bryn Mawr).. One of their problems is getting out information; they have a monthly newsletter with 2000 mailing list, but this is not good in a crisis situation for support action. Very few volunteers. Only two work in that office--Murmy, and Fred Meely.

Washington D.C. - Marion Barry. A mimeographed report on fund raising was past out. Up until June, we were either unknown or unliked in D.C. for two reasons; political, and because of the past actions of some SNCC people in D.C. Since then, we have had the student lobby, and have had a chance to rebuild our image some. The big est problem fund raising wise is that we haven't been able to break into any big money circles. Lester McKinney has been showing SNCC films around the city to community and church groups. We also engage in national issues, such as Coleman Hearings, John Lewis' testimony before the Democratic National Committee's special Equal Rights Committee, and trips of people (Barbour County, Forrest City, Baker County) to Washington. We attend numerous meetings to represent SNCC--Leadership Conference, etc. No organized college groups in the city. We are thinking of a highschool-college conference. It is becoming increasingly difficult to sell the idea of "giving money to the south".

New York Office submitted a written report. They have eight staff people who work on: 1) fund raising; 2) community relations (FOS, churches, etc.); 3) southern operations; and 4) organizing Harlem (Bill Hall). They feel more exchange of information is needed between offices and projects.

Betty Garmam discussed the problem of northern offices getting information too late for press action. An effective communications department is needed in Atlanta to get information out daily.

Lester McKinnie suggested that the Research Department study the effect the War on Poverty is having on the Movement.

Jim Forman discussed \$1.00 month organizing technique, and the idea of our getting more of our funds from the south. Stu House told how \$1.00 month worked in Green County, Ala.

Jesse Harris said that northern offices cannot raise money without programs and communication from the south. Scott B. said we must have a program good enough so that the man who wants to give to us will, and the man who can't afford to give will want to do something.

---(at this point Murmy McKay from Philadelphia started taking minutes.

Thursday morning, Nov. 25, 12 noon.

Project Reports

Campus Travelers-- Mike Simmons and Willae Ricks spoke about Virginia; they submitted a written report. A project has been opened in Virginia, working out of Victoria and Blackstone. The Va. project was adopted by SNCC in Sept. 1965. They work on Freedom Force; only one of the seven staff people there has been on SNCC staff--Coolie Washington.

Alabama-- Courtland Cox explained the "Alabama Plan". We are in the following Black Belt counties; Wilcox, Lowndes, Barbour, Bullock, Hale, Green, Dallas, Macon, Pickens. All of these counties have over 50% Negro population. Each county is going to form its own organization, which is permissible by Alabama law. We are trying to build very strong county organizations. In Lowndes there are 2000 Negroes registered out of a possible 5000. 117.9% of the white populations is registered. Lowndes is important psychologically. There is a strong movement there, and much of our experiences staff is there. We are trying to use Lowndes County as an experiment base. We have membership cards in the Lowndes County Freedom Organization; you must register and pay poll tax to be a member. One problem is that a lot of the people that we work with don't know they can run for office. We will have educational workshops in Atlanta Dec. 3-6. A 4-page brochure on the Lowndes County Freedom Organization is soon to be printed, and similar leaflets for each county. The reasons we are forming these groups are:

1. to gain control of the courthouse.
2. combat terror.
3. question of power.
4. 66 & 68 elections, both local and state-wide.

Alabama Democratic Conference Inc. Flowers, Billingsley, Gomillion, etc. They want to control Negro votes on the state level.

We will nominate candidates for the May 3rd primary. Probate officers certify the results of the primaries and put nominees on the ballot.

Marion Barry asked two questions; 1) projected timetable for the 20 Black Belt Counties in Ala; and 2) why not go for the state level? Courtland explained that with the new redistricting there is no Cong. district with a clear Negro majority. We are not seeking any recognition from the Democratic Party; we are seeking the offices.

Courtland outlined several needs of the Project: we need to develop young Negroes from Alabama; we need people to conduct classes; we need more staff; we would like a political group up north to adopt us a county group; we need to interest some lawyers to help us; we need a lot of

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press and pressure from the north.

They are in the process of developing a mailing list and a regular newsletter. Stue House added that they are trying to get the community to buy land and build homes for people evicted due to participation in ASC elections,

Marion Barry asked what is being done to counteract the ADCI. Cox said they would ignore them and do their own work. Jack Minnis discussed courthouse power and elections in southern states, and the importance of controlling local courthouses in order to win local elections.

Thursday evening, Nov. 25:

Lowndes County, Alabama-- 80.4% Negro; 117.6% whites registered.

The Lowndes County Freedom Organization will be a model for the development of other county political organizations in Alabama--Lowndes county was picked because of its reputation as the toughest county in Alabama. If a new political power--drawing on presently disenfranchised Negroes can be developed there, then other counties should be relatively easy.

Objectives of the Freedom Organizations:

- 1) control courthouse
- 2) control terror
- 3) power
- 4) '66--locally based; '68 state-wide

Comment on the role of the organizer: "take a little step and make a very strong thing, or else what's going to happen when you're gone?"

Mention was made of the Alabama Democratic Conference, Inc. as a tool of Attorney-General Flowers and other white "moderates" trying to control the Negro vote--"nothing but generals".

One objective of the Freedom Organization is participation in the primary on May 3, 1966. Where as the MFDP was set up as a parallel organization, the Freedom Organization can use the machinery of the state of Alabama as set up by their laws: Six people can be nominated by mass meetings. Sixty days before election the Probate Judge of the county certifies the candidates and places them on the ballot if the president and recording secretary of the mass meeting sign that the nominees are official and if all those who were present at the meeting were qualified electors. The MFDP was begun thinking in national terms, while the Freedom Organization wasn't, although possibly in 1972.

In developing the Freedom Organization, three problems were mentioned: 1) the problems of literacy, 2) of political understanding, 3) and of believing that candidates from the Freedom Organization actually can run for office. To combat these problems, work-shops for local people on their role in politics will be held.

Need for the Freedom Organization:

- 1) Development of young Negroes from Alabama
- 2) People who understand the images of rural people
- 3) More staff
- 4) Northern group to adopt a county--preferably a political group that understands the situation to take responsibility for giving material support--both money and supplies.
- 5) Development of educational materials in forms understandable to rural folk.
- 6) Northern offices around May to begin publicity campaigns. Alabama won't hesitate to use violence.
- 7) Lawyers

Trends effecting rural organizing: out-migration of Negroes California is increasingly getting the cotton allotment--Alabama plantations will soon be turned into cattle land; industries are importing whites to work rather than trained the population already present in the state; many people have been kicked off the land after the ASCS election.

Comments and questions made in general discussion after presentation of program for Alabama Freedom Organization:

Even if the people control the offices in the courthouse what they do is not determined by them but by people outside the courthouse, and outside the county.

Along with a program of electing black people, there must be a program of political education.

The program has to deal with the feelings of local people of no dignity, no power. Local people have seemed overwhelmed in front of people with power (John Doar was the example) just because they feel they have none themselves in comparison. Beginning by working on electing a sheriff and succeeding will be a start to letting people know they can do something. Adopt a 4 or 5 year program to direct the day to day programs. What plans are there for a parallel economic program to get both economic and political power together?

What is meant by intensive education program so that new officials are not just a change in skin color? In terms of the tax assessor, the commercial land of the county is assessed at a much lower percentage than the small farms. A black tax assessor, if he really wanted to help the black community, would change the direction of the tax assessment--

taxing the industries (what happens when the industries move away as a result?) Industries won't take the plants down if the whites move away. Then the community would have to decide what to do with the empty buildings, lands, etc. The people who are presently suppressed have all the right and ability to run an industry just as well as anyone who is doing it now. Intensive education then, involves teaching people exactly what a tax assessor does and can do.

The analization of the problem SNCC is trying to deal with is still necessary. What is SNCC doing? Are we a revolutionary organization, or just another organization like the NAACP, CLC, etc?

Relevant topic for discussion is people and their desire to be free. So turn the discussion inward. Local people don't think that SNCC is there for all times. The thing is not black-white, but have against the havenots. SNCC people think that the local people can't do anything unless we are there to lead them. Most of us admit that we are not revolutionary prone.

Democratic process and peaceful change is what's been talked about. What do we when people vote peacefully and don't win? If all the Negro population votes and then loses, then what?

Even if we know that Negroes won't win elections, like the Challenge, maybe they should go through the process anyway, so they learn how the system doesn't work for Negroes and has to be broken.

But SNCC sent the MFDP back to Mississippi from Atlantic City with posters saying vote for LBJ and Hubert: taught them a lesson, then didn't let them learn it.

We've been operating on the assumption that the Federal Gov't would referee the struggle. We must recognize that they won't unless we force them. Laws do no good with a racist society--racism embedded in every segment.

Organizing poor people who aren't just black--Challenge lost because it was hooked up to liberals in the North rather than grass roots people in the North. Necessary to organize poor people all over the country--that will point up many things about the country.

The only way for the proposal in Lowndes County to be carried out is for it to have the support of everyone in SNCC.

The only thing we can do is have a country-wide harvest strike--to stop war production, etc.-- and make Washington come to the South instead of us marching to D.C. We never allow ourselves enough time to be successful. Courtland's program is the only one that has been planned for more

than 3 months.

Need to look 10 or 15 years ahead--what happens when Negroes leave, or displaced from, the rural areas of the South and go to its urban areas? Our programs must take this into account--the courthouse of the rural South are going to lose their significance.

What do we do if we win the election?

What do we do if we start to work on it?

We must have an educational program (workshops, etc.) so people know exactly what's happening.

Again--we can have a program outlined right up to the election. But after that it's a blank.

How do you bring power to a community-wide base? Power has always seemed to be in individuals. No community feeling among the people in terms of supporting activities they are not directly involved in.

Part of the answer to the question of what to do after the election is in the idea of leaving an organization that can carry on after the NCC workers leave. Program must be expanded to include welfare programs, cooperatives, etc. Developing county-wide, representative organization that can meet the needs of the people. May have to provide defense and protection for their own people--but must have strong organization to do that. Thus, the important questions are, when does an organizer leave? and what leadership must be developed.

Part of the work must be to prepare people for losing the election they worked for, and have programs that are long lasting.

The courthouse is very relevant because it gives people some reason to learn things they need to know for themselves, so they won't have to rely on the "freedom rider".

But once Negroes in Lowndes County start moving on the courthouse (politically at least) those who control will cut off everything.

Questions that are raised about what to do after the election will be more and more pressing, but emphasis through intensive workshops will be on what to do after losing the election. Some ideas will come from the local people, of course.

Economic program, too--developing co-op. Problem of turning cotton land into cattle land.

Workshops could include economic alternatives as well as

political.

More problems with economic programs--for instance, can't organize a co-op completely isolated from the economic structure you are fighting. Never any bigger than people who control the source of capital.

Draw upon the experiences of people who have gone through similar questions.

ASCS elections (notes were begun a while after the report began)

As far as numbers of Negroes elected, it was pretty much of a failure.

Fraud --but no general pattern of harassment.

No observers at counting, but obvious the ballots were screwed up between time of sending them in and counting them.

Gains as far as organizations were very great.

Southwest Georgia: discussion began around written report (notes begun a while after discussion began)

People on SW. Ga. staff have been outside of state since June. What are they planning to do?

People have been on the project. Discussion about who has been where.

The discussion of trying political organizations, running Negro candidates to push VM. Maid's union had tried supporting candidates, were arrested. SCLC came and said let's protest. People had already been involved. They marched and had mass meetings. SCLC had been called by local reverends to get ladies out of jail that were arrested.

Even though demonstrations are being condemned by SNCC people, they were there talking over sound trucks, asking people to demonstrate.

Don't fight other organizations, outwork them. Example from Leflore County. When federal registrars came in. SNCC outworked NAACP.

SCLC doesn't ignore SNCC. They make statements, etc., against us. Working is good if you have the resources, people to be in the community program that is relevant. Even if SNCC has support in the community, can't do anything else when Dr. King is there.

Even if SNCC & SCLC disagree, no reason to fight SCLC.
Work quietly, start while SCLC is there.

Can't fight other programs 'til SCLC, headstart and tell people not to take part in them.

Success depends on how well people are educated and organized. Program that local people can identify with. Continuation of educational program from one level to the next, leading to results that people can take and use. Movements have to start from within and will only start from the education of the man that first comes in. The community must control the first people elected, or else they will become corrupt just like the people in office now.

1 or 2 people against charismatic machine such as Dr. King's is very difficult (i.e., Americus, Selma) -- people don't want to split the community; what kind of organizational forms do you want to build; how to sustain project in these areas. Need for kind of organization where organizer goes into community, find people in the community and involves them in order to have an integral, self-sustaining community organization. With this type of form, headstart does not wreck the community.

Committee on political action--developed out of King campaign. A white-dominated group (S' Ga. Community Action Council) is trying to get control of anti-poverty money. Att'y Kings group is trying to infiltrate this group.

Friday Morning

Arkansas

Pine Bluff: organizing community to be financially independent -- community center, youth, welfare, union activities. Block organization of west side of Pine Bluff.

Gould: local organization set up that runs its own programs through community center. School board elections lost through fraud. Earlier had been a school boycott, suit filed in Federal court. Talking about setting up co-op grocery store, day care center. Strong local people who want to move into the county and work.

West Helena: School situation should have led to boycott, but people realized they weren't ready--made militant local people work harder on their own. Freedom school had 200 kids this summer--now it's not operating. But will soon begin a center where kids can read and talk about Negro history leading to general discussions and action by the kids in the schools. Need for more involvement of different people just by knocking on doors, talking.

Marlboro school district. The committee set up and really want to do something. Negro school is not credited. First step is to get information to the community what the situation is, and what can be done. Seven communities within the school district are holding meetings this week, talking. Purpose is getting people informed to make a solid base of people making their own plans, rather than just doing something once, and knowing nothing about it. The same people working on schools are explaining ASCS elections. Another big thing is welfare. Students unions--talking about schools, where the money goes, why they aren't in the white schools. The white community is really worried about what's going on. Crops are all in, people disgusted with crop situation; ready to move and stand up to the white folks. Although the Negroes nominated for ASCS were nominated by the white folks on the board, and are landowners, they have turned out to be mad about the situation (of poor crops, of being nominated by white folks) and really want to get on the board and do something.

Bolivar County: Crash program on Voter registration: 3500 people registered since May. 35 people were helping, but only about 11 know that more was needed than just going to the courthouse. Need to form workshops so people can learn the relation of politics and economics and what can be done with that information. Strike: did bring some sort of scare to white farmers; gave some idea of what a strike would be like; but not much success. Only 1200 people on strike which did not make a dent. People too poor to support themselves and each other while on strike. People have to learn what a strike really is, who they are up against, and what that strike is going to mean. The only program that is at all relevant is education in politics and economics. Staff who come in don't know anything about what they are trying to get the people to do. Must know about the white power structure in terms of the individuals and what positions they hold in the structure, rather than just thinking of the power structure as a force.

Friday afternoon

FDP should be thought of as independent organization, not depending on any civil rights organizations.

SNCC should do in Mississippi only what FDP ask them to do.

There are areas in Mississippi in which SNCC has the resources to work and FDP doesn't.

If FDP talks about being an independent organization, they have to talk about raising money within the state. Setting up friends of FDP just makes them dependent on other

outside sources, SNCC has developed certain skills from experience that FDP should be able to call on. We should be prepared to say that there are things SNCC is prepared to do that FDP won't do.

1) If SNCC is committed to developed indigenous leadership and organizing forms for them to work through then what is the relationship between this leadership and the original organizers?

2) FDP is independent, but on the national level, needed the help of SNCC.

3) What happens to organizers who have been working on other programs than FDP?

4) How do individuals who are both SNCC and involved in special areas decide what their roles are?--Problems when a analysis and theoretical consideration are mistaken for an attack.

No Clear-cut split between SNCC & FDP.

Out of this problem of the relation between organizer and organized, maybe we should change our concept of how to organize.

The only thing SNCC has to offer is time and energy. Very important that young people be recruited, educated and developed into organizers from the local communities, spending time and energy developing new people who can use their time and energy.

Necessity of making SNCC-FDP relations very clear-cut:

1) SNCC staff should not be big leaders in FDP

2) FDP should have their own money, perhaps from SNCC, to hire their own staff.

3) Ideas have been brought to FDP executive committee by SNCC, then have been carried out without waiting for a decision.

Are we willing to face the issue that an organization started grows, and grows out of control?

Have to talk about what it means to talk about losing what you have created, and the feelings of responsibility for it.

After we have lost ("weaned") organizations we have begun, then what is our relationship to them?

Perhaps SNCC could develop into a political party across the South that local groups can join up with.

Do we really think that local people have enough sense to decide things for themselves, or do we think that they need us and can't do anything without us.

If SNCC is talking about giving money to people in Mississippi then they should give it to SNCC staff who are there and

have enough faith in those people to know they will use it for organizing. Do this and keep the Atlanta office out of finances and programs in Mississippi.

21 SNCC staff are in Mississippi; 10 of them are on the executive board of FDP.

If staff in Mississippi wants \$10,000 they have to go through individuals here in Atlanta and justifications needed for using that money have to be based more on the bureaucracy of Atlanta rather than consideration in the field.

If SNCC wants to deal with FDP, they have to deal with the 10 people from staff on the executive committee of FDP, because they run FDP.

Reanalyzing the situation means look at where we started in '61, where we are in '65 and what it means in terms of changes in the country--and we have to talk about power. How do we organize in terms of power?

Broaden our base for more than in terms of the U.S.

FDP-SNCC: Is SNCC ready to draw the line and decide what we can give to FDP and what we can expect from them.

Mississippi: Relations between SNCC and the MFDP

Reports on Mississippi were given by Lee Bankhead, Jesse Harris and Doug Smith. Jesse indicated that the MFDP was now trying to strengthen its grass-roots base in the spirit suggested by Courtland Cox in his report on Alabama. He also reported that hostility toward SNCC was running high among some MFDP people.

In the discussion, there was a strong feeling among both SNCC people and SNCC staff working for the FDP, that the FDP had always been independent of SNCC in principle and should become so in actuality. People also agreed (including Lawrence Guyot, who arrived late) that the MFDP was not the whole movement in Mississippi. The question of SNCC being "left" of the MFDP was raised; Charlie Cobb felt this meant that SNCC people did not want to see political participation reduced to choosing between "the lesser of two evils" in 1966.

The MFDP-SNCC problem was not unique, some said: it related to the basic nature of SNCC as a band of organizers. It would come up again in other states (such as Alabama) when other political parties initiated by SNCC developed. The problem was compared to that of a child becoming independent of its parents. A weaning process. At what point should SNCC withdraw? And if SNCC organized something which developed in a way that SNCC didn't like, what should SNCC do?

Guyot stated that the MFDP's goal was to build a state machine and eventually take over the Democratic Party in Miss. He outlined its present program: ASCS elections, running candidates in the 1966 state elections, organizing strong county executive committees, getting more federal registrars and having them become mobile, the reapportionment suit. The MFDP, he said, wanted its independence and intended to do its own fund-raising both in the North and in Mississippi. He indicated that if SNCC fund-raisers in the North objected to this, the MFDP would go ahead and do it anyway.

A proposal was made by Elizabeth Sutherland and adopted by the Coordinating Committee with certain changes:

1. All SNCC staff workers in Mississippi are to be given the option of transferring to FDP staff to work on FDP programs and be responsible to the FDP, unless the FDP executive committee objects to any individual. This does not preclude SNCC workers from remaining in or entering the state to work on other specific programs.

2. SNCC will continue to pay the salaries of those workers who transfer to FDP staff as well as those who do not.

3. SNCC will pay all MFDP expenses listed below when possible, and guarantees to pay \$985.00 per month for those expenses marked with a star:

<u>Jackson Office</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
*Rent	\$60.00
*Utilities	\$15.00
*Telephone incl. WATS)	670.00
*Subsistence pay to 6 workers	240.00
Office supplies	352.00
FDP newsletter	150.00
Petty cash	200.00
Rent on minco machine	28.00
<u>Statewide</u>	
Gas & oil for 10 cars	800.00
TOTAL	\$2,515 per month

The above budget was submitted by Jesse Harris, based on figures obtained from the Jackson office, as the amount of support which MFDP was now \$8,000 in debt; that it had spent \$85,000 on the Challenge.

Clove Sellers reported on the amount spent by SNCC in Mississippi in 1965: \$4817 per month. This included the staff payroll plus expenses for non-FDP programs such as the MFLU, the Poor People's Corporation, photo work, etc. He said there were 22 SNCC cars in the state.

There was debate on SNCC's financial commitment to the MFDP having TOP PRIORITY, but it was felt that SNCC should support the MFDP in a specific way rather than by bills. During the discussion on SNCC's role in Mississippi, Courtland Cox stated that our main contributions were time and energy. In the past, SNCC's method had been to develop individual organizers within SNCC: we have reached a plateau with this method because those organizers have developed their own interests. What SNCC should now do in Mississippi is this: get young people to do the building, and put them on staff as soon as possible.

Urban Organizing

Ivanhoe Donaldson reported on his project in Columbus, Ohio. He agreed with Bill Hall's report (on working in Harlem) that the important area of struggle for Negro rights would be the North--and above all, the city. The city was the key situation because that is where the main conflicts of interest are taking place; that is where America's corporate structure is based; that is where the media and the universities are controlled. In urban society, the middle-class, college-educated, salaried people are the major interest. The value of the lower class is no longer its labor but its dependency.

The city presents big problems: where is there enough public authority to deal democratically with all that power and all those conflicting interests? Should a city have one government or many neighborhood governments? Ivanhoe believed the second way was possible, and that it would counter-act the feeling of powerlessness in the ghetto.

In Columbus, Ohio, a "community foundation" has been set up as a model of neighborhood self-government. It covers an area 30 blocks wide and 14 blocks long; 7000 people--many unemployed--live there. These people (black and white) elected a board of the community foundation. The board decides how money will be spent (it makes grants from contributions by the people to the foundation); how people will vote (it gave the vote to all residents over 16), etc. In effect, the community incorporated itself for the purpose of government by participatory democracy.

A Community Congress has met twice, with about 2000 people present each time. They elected the board. They aim to build up a treasury and already have \$1500; with this money, they will hire the unemployed. They are trying to get \$200,000 in anti-poverty funds but the governments has never given OEO through such channels. They also have a community center, in a building donated by a local church.

Many questions were asked by the staff. How would the foundation stand up against strong external forces--what would it do if the city announced it was going to put a thru way through that neighborhood or have an urban renewal project? Ivanhoe felt that power does not lie in the courthouse but in people, and that they could fight such a decision themselves.

Some felt that the community foundation was such a threat to the status quo that it would eventually find itself up against the police--what then? Ivanhoe stated that people in the area were talking about doing things which he wasn't equipped to help organize.

Another question: how could the community possibly become independent economically? Wasn't OEO money a denial of independence? No easy answer came to this; Ivanhoe agreed it was the big question everywhere.

He was asked why he had picked Columbus to work instead of Atlanta, where SNCC has a genuine foothold through Julian Bond (staff then asked what program Julian had planned for his district, but there was no information on this). He replied:

- 1) there was a building available for a center in Columbus;
- 2) the home-rule program he had been working on in D.C. didn't progress;
- 3) he felt Julian's district should be Julian's.

It was suggested that there were urban areas in the South (Albany, Selma, Montgomery) where SNCC had some experience and that SNCC staff should experiment in those places rather than going North.

At this point, Ivanhoe stated that he had just realized that his Columbus work had never been approved by the entire staff or by the Executive Committee, because those bodies hadn't met in 2 months, and he asked for approval now.

In the discussion, Jim Forman maintained that any organization has the right to experiment. The main issue was not Ivanhoe's right to go to Columbus, but to what degree was SNCC willing to experiment in urban areas? John Lewis stated that he hadn't known where Ivanhoe was, and this had proved embarrassing. A vote was taken, 17 to 6 in favor of continuation of Ivanhoe's program.

Afterward, Hunter Morey said he said he felt SNCC was not serious about its work; we assume there is some mysterious pattern in the things we do, but what is it? Marion Barry stated that he felt we should have first discussed all programs and then made the decision on Ivanhoe's program within that context. Our method was haphazard; we should make decisions in a cohesive way--

Intern Program in California

Mike Miller of the San Francisco SNCC office reported on this program, in which he had got 4 churches to finance organizers at \$25 per week to work on local issues such as school conditions and jobs. Some were also involved in the 1968 strike of garment makers. There was no decision on this request.

SNCC STRUCTURE: How to "open up" the organization

Field staff said they felt they did not and could not get what they needed from Atlanta; that they had no voice in finance and personnel decision; that there was a "conspiracy" to frustrate them; that big-shot staff members could get things quickly while little shots couldn't get anything.

Some of the staff felt that it was the responsibility of field staff to keep themselves informed; to go to meetings of committees (such as the finance committee) to which they had been elected last February; to assist themselves.

Betty Garman made three proposals which were all adopted:

1) All communications between Atlanta and staff on personnel questions would be made available for examination at this meeting. After this was voted, the files were brought over from the Atlanta office. However, only a few letters were read and only one was discussed: Fred Meely's letter about the cutting-off of his paycheck and the pulling of his car. In the discussion, it appeared that the person responsible for these actions was not primarily someone in Atlanta but the Alabama project director.

2) The staff would be given a report on:

- a) Money received every day by the Atlanta office
- b) Requests for funds received each day in Atlanta from the field (to be recorded by Fay Bellamy)
- c) Money spent by Atlanta each day
- d) Bills unpaid as of each day

Some people had doubts about whether the Atlanta staff could prepare such a detailed report for every day, without hiring someone to do just that.

3) ELECTION OF A NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, A NEW FINANCE COMMITTEE, AND A NEW PERSONNEL COMMITTEE.

After it was voted to elect a new Executive Committee, people were nominated to be the 10 members at large. Those elected were:

Lee Bankhead (Miss.)	Jesse Harris (Miss.)
Marion Barry (D.C. office)	Bob Mants (Alabama)
Betty Garman (D.C.--Federal Programs)	

Fay Bellamy (Atlanta)
Ben Grinage (Arkansas)

Gwen Robinson (N.Y. office)
Doug Smith (Miss.)
Bob Zellner (Alabama)

The following proposals concerning the Executive Committee were also adopted:

1) The Exec. Comm. will meet once a month in Atlanta, on a regular date (such as the first Saturday of each month), to be established by the committee. Notice of this would be sent out to all staff. Meetings will be taped, and minutes will be taken.

2) Anyone on the staff can attend a meeting of the Executive Committee, and the Finance Committee is mandated to provide anyone with money for transportation if requested. (There was debate on this proposal; but it was felt that staff would exercise self-discipline, catch a ride, or scrounge the money if possible before requesting it).

3) Because of past failures to get out Executive Committee minutes, Marion Barry was assigned to be responsible for seeing that minutes did get sent to the staff preferably within a week and not later than two weeks after the meeting.

4) Any decision of the Executive Committee not yet carried out can be challenged by a petition with 5 staff signatures. The decision will then be submitted to a staff-wide referendum. When a referendum takes place, the full debate on that decision will be transcribed from the tape and sent to the staff. Such a petition can be submitted up through the following Executive Committee meeting; this time limit does not apply if the minutes have not been sent out on schedule.

A proposal was made by Cliff Vaughns that anyone attending a staff meeting has a vote as well as a voice, but this was defeated 22 to 12.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Seven persons were nominated to serve, and it was decided that all should become members without an election; these people are--

Bob Mants
Bill Hall
Ben Grinage
Amanda Perdue

Stokely Carmichael
Isaac Simpkins
Cynthia Washington

(note: fill in on this from Muriel's notes)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The following persons were elected by ballot to serve:

Jack Minnis
Muriel Tillinghast

Cynthia Washington
Shirley Wright

Dottie Zellner

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF SNCC AND THE MOVEMENT

Late Sunday night, Nov. 26, there was a general discussion of goals in which various people outlined their philosophies and ideas. There was reference to the importance of Africa and the movement of colored peoples around the world; to how SNCC relates to a man like Richard Flowers; to SNCC attitudes toward the black bourgeoisie; SNCC concepts of what the "local people" want.

The word power (as a means to end exploitation) ran through almost all statements. Some people felt that nonviolence was unworkable others felt that SNCC should at least deal with Black Nationalism.

Gwen Robinson described her experience in Patterson, N.J., where Negroes had gone through all the "steps": demonstrations for public accommodations, emergence of a strong CORE chapter, then a voter registration drive that got all Negroes registered -- and then a riot. They were no better off than before; what to do? The Northern city is where the Negro will be in 10 years, not the South. SNCC must prepare for that, find alternatives. She suggested that SNCC should have a cultural arm and let people in the South know about the North -- including Black Nationalism.

Tina Harris said SNCC should do the following:

- 1) Teach blackness -- meaning the great heritage which goes back to 600,000 B.C. the date of the first Negro skull (found in Kenya), the time of black empires.
- 2) link up with black liberation movements around the world, and make the connections which existed -- e.g., the U.S. company which has cotton in the South and sells an atomic reactor to South Africa.
- 3) go to the White House with African delegates from the U.N. (as voices of influence) and tell LBJ why we don't like the present poverty program.
- 4) help people to go through all the "steps" (which include the MFDP) so that people will see they don't work.

RUSSIAN TRIP - JOHN LEWIS

An invitation has been extended by the Student Youth Organizations of the USSR for four SNCC representatives to visit the USSR for an all-expenses trip for a month this spring. Marion Barry spoke against the trip because of the problems it will open up -- "people will use this as an excuse to get at us." If we agree to the trip it should be open to staff referendum. Guyot, Ivanhoe, Janet Schrab, Shirley Wright, C. Cox, Dinky Romily, Gwen Robinson, Charlie Cobb, Dwight Williams, and Stanley Wise spoke for the trip.

Last of the minutes of Staff Meeting.

Evening Nov. 29, 1965

Stanely Wise - Motion - People who want to go on the Russian trip can volunteer their names to Atlanta and names can be drawn out of a box at the next Executive Committee meeting. Minutes of that meeting will be sent to everyone. (carried by pros) Information on the trip can be gotten out to the staff by Faye Bellamy in WATS reports, etc. especially to people not at this meeting.

Marion Barry - Motion - Minutes of this discussion (with decision on Russian trip and the above motion) be sent to the entire staff no later than one week from today and, if there are any disagreements, they be directed to the chairman and if the disagreements concerning the decision made are of substantial number, there will be provisions made for reconsideration at the next Executive Committee meeting. (3 pro, many more con).

? - Motion - SNCC policy on Vietnam be discussed (majority yes)

Gwen Robinson - Asked that Washington staff stay for discussion, especially Marion due to the fact that he might have trouble with our decision on Vietnam.

Frank Smith - Request that discussion of brick factory be put on the agenda.

Cleve Sellers - Suggestion: That tapes be transcribed from the last Executive Committee meeting to bring people's feeling on Vietnam.

Jim Forman - Suggestion: Should not go back to people's opinions of two months ago - just cause confusion and people may have changed their opinion on SNCC policy, up until now, on Vietnam (anti- U.S. action) was financial support, but individual support by individuals in demonstration, etc.

MOTION: A committee draw-up proposal and return it to the room to present it and have body vote on it--others can go on to discussing other things.

MOTION NOT SECONDED: Suggestion: As a body - we not get involved in it (Anti- U.S. Policy in Vietnam) but continue to support it as individuals.

Courtland Cox - Suggestion: SNCC take a stand against the draft.

Dinky Romily - Suggestion: SNCC not take any stand on anything on basis of nonviolence.

? - Suggestion: SNCC take stand on nonviolence, but on basis of SELF-DETERMINATION.

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Bob Fletcher - We should have much information.

MOTION: Any final decision of policy in Vietnam should be so decided that it represent the entire staff.

MOTIONED SECONDED: Then withdrawn until later.

Fred - MOTION - SNCC slogan of "One Man - One Vote" be changed to "self Determination"

MOTION NOT SECONDED.

Stanely Wise - We haven't opposed some killing (people killing throwing molotov cocktails, etc. Suggestion: We not take an all out stand against draft unless SNCC people are willing not to go with Draft. Talked of person feeling bad when have to make decision (Faced with Draft Personally and conflict if SNCC takes all out stand without assurance that everyone will stick to it.

Janet - Peace issue is used as a "cover-up" - the Draft is a personnel decision. Talked of U.S. in Vietnam as related to U.S. policy in states. (Would like to see Viet Cong win and kick US asses - perhaps a dictatorship might occur, but US would be beat. Have to take that chance.

Lester - Calls for honesty in discussion.

Courtland Cox - 1. Police in Harlem used same type of oppression as in Vietnam. 2. Watts used same type here. 3. "Hypothetical situation" Mississippi is a nation, Eastland is President, Delta wants land reform- GE has made treaties with Mississippi people (wanting land reform) get help from SNCC group etc., in the process of revolution, innocent people killed. Example: of how people end up killing people they didn't want to kill (kill mother and child in process of killing men standing hear).

Scott B - Talks of experience in Korea - racial feelings involved- people (US soldiers) getting killed by own men due to these feelings.

Gwen - The draft and the fight for freedom in Vietnam is a contradiction. 1. Black men are going and dying - so are poor whites so that the U.S. can keep "world in its pocket" 2. Country is trying to make things look so good inside (press, etc.) 3. Men are going to have to leave the movement to go and people can't get out of college to work in the movement.... they will get drafted. We have to talk to the people about how rotten the country is that we live in. The MONSTER we live in.

Howard - Asked: What about Viet Cong coming to U.S. (following from Janet statement)

Stanely - I would fight in U.S. with Viet Cong.

UPROAR - Then it was decided that Howard misunderstood Janet's statement.

Frank - Be honest. I believe in protecting oneself with guns. Stokely has been thinking of taking over Lowndes County Court House. I think he might be thinking of guns, deputizing, etc. We here, aren't thinking of being killed like we know we would be in South Africa. We have to relate US war to employment for example, U.S. employes many people to build planes. Those people are happy they have jobs because of Vietnam. We have to talk about conflicts the UAS, EPSIL, etc., are having because at last Saturday's march they were "closed out". It was a "Respectable People's March", not supporting getting out of Vietnam, but talks in the UN specifically.

Gwen - MOTION: Have Educational Conference to educate people concerning Vietnam with professors coming down South, etc.
MOTION SECONDED: But more discussion wanted.

Janet - Want: 1. Resolution concerning Vietnam
2. Resolution concerning South Africa
3. " " Draft

We in SNCC are opposed to war in Vietnam.

Winky - Support Janet, but would like to see us say something about Rhodesia (bring it into this).

Suggestion: SNCC persons go to U.S. and lobby.

Lester - Agree with Janet. Would like to see SNCC come out with statement against war in Vietnam tying it up with black man's fight.

Charlie Cobb - We should do more. We know U. S. has to be in Vietnam. We know too much about this country. We know that Johnson leaves tomorrow that doesn't clear up anything - can just go somewhere else-- Watts, Little Rock, Etc., are all related to this. If we disagree with war, we disagree with what allows war - we are already doing things against what allows war in Vietnam.

Fred - Talk, people did not go to the courthouse in Mississippi because I have them answer, but people were willing to take a risk. We sold the idea "One Man One Vote", but did not sell them on principle. Must change our slogan to "Self Determination".

Marion - We need to work out program - Programatic Suggestions.

Jim - Suggestion: We should include statement on the right to dissent. If the US people can dissent on domestic policy but the foreign policy bit...always mysterious and government has to make the decisions government with holds information. It is tactically important:

1. Support groups who support us in the past - SDS, etc.
2. Not being drafted, but important to staff people 70%-80% of staff this. It is an organizational interest, therefore has to be something relative to draft in statement we might make.

Vista and Peace Corp exempt from draft - yet people working in this country for democratic reform have to be up-rooted. Any resolution primary forces has to be hooked up with the kind of work we have been trying to do expresses opposition and gives leverage. Tie war in Vietnam in with what we are doing.

3. Splits in movement (history of)

- a. due to ideological points
- b. arrive at something we can all rally around (broad enough)
- c. People are different ages and various stages of development with different backgrounds.

4. It would be a tactical mistake to shift focus on what we are doing.

- a. continue to work for peace, but confine our work. (I volunteered and was brainwashed and would not do so today)
- b. many people (war mongers from these states) relate taking over court houses to peace mongers, etc.
- c. Peace movement doesn't have grass-root work going on we can relate things to people where we work.

Frank - People in countries where war is aren't allowed to make decisions about their lives.

- a. Call it self-determination or free and open elections. Suggestions: Conference in South talking about free and open elections relate to war. Even go to Vietnam (a delegation) and talk about peace.

John - Draft directly affects this organization.

- a. More and more going to be drafted.
- b. Boys going over there brain-washed on democracy, etc.
- c. Raise Questions.
 1. Number of men drafted monthly
 2. Relationship to number of Federal registrars in South USIS offices in South Vietnam.
 3. U.S. (what type will it bring?) in Vietnam.
 4. People can't be effective in doing their work when they must worry about the draft.

Marilyn - Consider some suggestions.

- a. Delegation to U.N.
- b. Relate problems of U.S. to whole Vietnam situation.

John - SNCC should sue Selective Service because it is segregated. All of the Selective Service board in the South are lily white.

Gwen - Suggestion: SNCC have a mass propaganda program incorporating the whole thing of the U.S. policy, etc. I don't understand Charlie and Jim's last statements..

Scott B. - Watts - U.S. can't control "little people". Rather than civil rights focus on human rights.

- a. Go to U.N. "tear it down" and ask for an investigation of the situation, crying "I am a human being, too. "Let's

not talk but DO".

Courtland - We got to talk about.

a. Lee got killed in Miss. fighting for democracy. People in Watts getting killed fighting for rights. Rhodesia, South Africa, Santa Domingo.

b. Only thing U.S. knows about Freedom is how to lie about it. (after five years of work we know this)

c. Support some things Jim Said. Opposed to war in Vietnam related to what's happening in this country.

Marion - (Upon leaving) Wanted assurance from staff that a statement be circulated to staff for comment before making it public.]

Charlie - (Response to Gwen) - There are students on campuses who used to be tied to us, they are in motion in a sense around war in Vietnam, either for it or against it. It is very frustrating. War is not going to end. What allows war is not going to end it.

a. I feel we have something to give to those students.

b. I feel war in Vietnam will end when people in this country say it will end.

c. SNCC couldn't organize entire country because it is physically impossible among other things.

d. But how can we get information to students as we give them information about the situation in the South.

e. How can we deal with intensification of hostility toward SNCC (Novak-Evans), etc. Students face similar things

f. Students protest from intellectual experience but don't have working concept. We have had some experiences that maybe we can give them.

Charlie - Urge us to think HOW, HOW can we do something with energy so it will work.

Janet - Concrete things.

a. We can do things, have multi frontal attack.

b. Investigate military bases set-up, file suit.

c. Draft more than haveing people refusing draft.

Have people sign petitions saying they will not fight in Vietnam but fight war in North and South

d. Support Courtland.

? SDS has a new idea, they have a "draft card" that says "Build-Not Bomb".

Jim - Consider Black People

a. Who have been in Vietnam and in service

b. People get caught in traps but experience things there and change ideas (on war, etc).

c. Not necessarily change focus on what we are doing, but continue on making relationships between Vietnam, etc., and what is going on in U.S.]

? Government that we elect is not responsible to us. The whole contradiction is brought out by the fact of war. Don't

think getting rid of Senator Eastland does away with the problem but may give on emotional satisfaction. Don't do away thith people by killing them only another will rise. Must work toward a new society. Oppression and discrimination causes 'problems' we have. The answer is not killing. Example: Eastland being born was accidental and how can he get out of the bag, if you kill someone you don't like, you have to continue to kill those you don't like, then you become like one of them.

Marilyn - Suggestion: We should be named Student Nonviolent Anti-Colonial Committee Vietnam, Cuba the people are waiting to hear from us.

Courtland - Support the person who spoke before Marilyn.

Stu House - Support Courtland's motion and include.

- a. Opposition to draft.
- b. Relation to our work.
- c. Vietnam similarities to Afro-American situation.
 1. Means used to suppress rebellion
 2. Suppression of majority by minority
 3. Degree of suppression
- d. Right to dissent.
 1. Suppressed Afro-American made to fight suppressed Vietnamese.
 2. People who feel committee to fight war go fight it.
 3. Peace Corp men being deferred.
 4. Point out relation of war-mongers to racist Congressmen
 5. Free and open elections in Vietnam.
 6. Things now doing (dealing with institutions that are allowing the war) in working to end the war.
 7. Demonstrate at U.N.
 8. Own Peace Delegation to Hanio and Saigon.

Janet - Proposal

- a. Committee of people get together tonight and write statement and pass out the statement to body.
- b. Laeyers contact, research be done, and SNCC file suit against military bases.
- c. And that we pursue the petition "not going with draft", but be willing to work in this country and movement.

Casey - The suit against the Selective Service is a good way of raising issue, but not good in itself (who cares if Selective Service is integrated its wrong).

Support: Working with students drawing those interested in civil rights to war, etc.

Happy over suggestion of committee, SNCC can work in smaller group better.

Suggestion: Working in committees at future meetings.

Dinky - Suggestion: Working with SDS on their draft cards.

Question: What about suit against Selective Service?

Dinky - Sounds like we think if Draft Board is integrated, everything will be OK.

Janet - We are not saying draft is OK if integrated, but it would open whole arena of things, political things showing how the whole thing is.

Dinky - Use it as a tool.

Jim - Question concerning the suit. Uneasiness....what will suit do? This has to be more defined, etc. Also... what about proposals and so few here to vote on this from the body.

Janet - We will circulate it to the entire staff.

? All information covered in meeting be made available to staff.

Janet - MOTION-

1. Research done: Selective Service in country and file suit if things are found with intent to expose situation. This being just one arm of the whole exposure of Vietnam.

2. Get program (?) people to sign petition against draft and say that they are willing to work in the movement within the country. Motion passed - Majority yes.

Gwen - I understand Charlie now when he says it is frustrating to work with students. I attended a SDS meeting, students look to Gwen for suggestions for action. I tell them to work with the peace government. Students are not satisfied just to raise money! We must come out against South Africa and Rhodesia. We have basis in South. Must have Research.

MOTION - SNCC have workshops in each and every area working (staff and community) to discuss work engaged in related to Vietnam, South Africa and Rhodesia. MOVED AND SECONDED - Not voted on.

Stanley - We should try to solidify militant groups connected with the movement. Have educational program first. Then develop program from there. Get them together.

Fletcher - Think we should do that. Things done or discussed at workshops should be brought for programming. Develop programs.

Bobby Cieroreka - Frank and I worked on Primer about a month ago relating SNCC to South Africa, Rhodesia, Etc.

Gwen - We must carry out proposals. I'm going to see Howard Zinn when I get back to NY, concerning this. Volunteered to work on education program. MOTION VOTED ON - PASSED

Bill Hall - Must remember the fact with all this. "We have to meet the man" I try to bear with you and respect you realizing I have a different background. Talk of college students and working reduction of voting age. As to working with students we can prevent this country from continuing in this way. (reduce voting age.)

John - NOW is working on a program to lower the voting age.

Bill - Along with Charlie's idea on working with students work on reduction of voting age.

Fred - MOTION - Have money appropriated for tapes for workshops-tapes then be used in educational program. Have person responsible for distribution of tapes. NO SECOND.

Tina - What about things voted on last night.

Porter - When is next coordinating committee meeting?

Someone - What about SUEC being investigated?

Minutes type by B?