

# SNCC

## SNCC: Structure and Leadership

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee is not a membership organization, but rather an agency attempting to stimulate and foster the growth of local protest movements.

The Coordinating Committee itself consists of representatives of protest groups which meet regularly to formulate strategy. The Committee elects an executive committee, which is responsible for employing staff and overseeing the general program.

*Chairman:* JOHN LEWIS

*Executive Secretary:* JAMES FORMAN

*Staff Coordinator:* WORTH LONG

*Communications*

*Director:* JULIAN BOND

*Project Directors:*

*Mississippi:* ROBERT MOSES

*Southwest Georgia:* CHARLES SHERROD

*Central Alabama:* BERNARD LAFAYETTE

*Arkansas:* WILLIAM HANSEN

*Eastern Shore:* REGINALD ROBINSON

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# SNCC

**W**e, the . . . students who make up the staff of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the thousands that make up its base, have staked our lives on the principle that an interracial democracy can be made to work in this country, even in the fields, bayous, and deltas of our deep South.

We have not spared ourselves in attempting to make that faith good. We call on the federal government to do likewise. We would have it understood that we are not calling on the country for what she might do for us, but rather to inform her of what she must be prepared to do for herself.

... from S N C C testimony, before  
the House Judiciary Committee,  
May, 1963

## HISTORY

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was born out of the history-making sit-in movement that erupted across the South in the spring of 1960. At Easter of that year, the first southwide meeting of sit-in leaders was held in Raleigh, North Carolina. Here a temporary committee to promote communication and coordination of activities among protest groups was set up. This Committee met monthly during the summer, opened an office in Atlanta, and at a second conference held in Atlanta, October, 1960, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was formally organized. One representative from each Southern state and the District of Columbia made up the Coordinating Committee.

Participation in the Freedom Rides in 1961 and a growing sense of the depth of fear that shackled most Negroes of the South convinced SNCC leaders that *some one would have to TAKE the freedom movement to the millions of exploited, disfranchised and degraded Negroes of the Black Belt. . . .*

### **SNCC DID JUST THAT.**

**... August, 1961—SNCC launched its first voter-registration project . . . choosing Walthall, Pike and Amite Counties of Mississippi.**—This sparked nonviolent direct action by hundreds of high-school students in McComb, Miss., and led to the development of a statewide voter registration program, recently dramatized by the use of snarling police dogs to stop Negroes from registering in Greenwood, Mississippi.

**... October, 1961—SNCC workers went to Albany, Georgia, and became the catalytic fuse for the massive protests of the Albany Movement.**

**... By November, 1961, some sixteen students had volunteered to take out a year or more from school to work in the hard-core rural areas for subsistence only.**



SAVANNAH, GA.



ATLANTA, GA.

## PROGRAM

SNCC's grass-roots approach is designed to . . . *build indigenous, trained leadership* . . . on college and high school campuses, and in local communities . . .

**\* \* \* In recruiting potential student leaders from college campuses and sending them to work in rural communities, SNCC hopes to bridge the gap between centers of learning and the work-a-day communities.**

**\* \* \* SNCC workers have organized and guided local protest movements which are never identified as SNCC projects. This is part of its program of developing, building, and strengthening indigenous leadership.**

This program has captured the imagination of students all over the country, and today *more than 150 SNCC field secretaries* are symbols of courage and dedication as they undertake the often tedious and tiring, and always dangerous work, *in the most difficult areas of the South*. . .

**Mississippi—Southwest Georgia—Central Alabama—Eastern Arkansas—Southern Virginia**

These students work for subsistence salaries when funds are available, but at times they have chopped cotton and picked squash to secure food. They live in the community, often in the homes of local residents, for the weeks and months that are required to break through generations of fear and intimidation. The students' courage helps emerging leaders achieve a new self image and the strength to act. Sustained personal contact, discussion and persuasion and his determination to stay with them and their problems, give the local people confidence in the SNCC worker and the program he advocates. The people then begin to gain enough confidence in themselves to seek and assert their rights.

In the community SNCC workers organize for voter registration and direct action. SNCC voter registration efforts give disenfranchised Negroes the right to vote in areas where they have been denied this right since Reconstruction. And, fully as important, the program deepens an awareness of the meaning of first class citizenship, develops a community of action, and creates mutual trust and support among people who too often have been suspicious and divided by fear.

As of summer, 1963, SNCC had initiated and participated in . . . direct action campaigns in 49 cities in 13 states. . .

## THE FUTURE...

**The future means redoubled efforts to continue . . .**

- introducing educated and determined young workers into hard core areas;
- maintaining a college contact that leads to militant action in cities and provides new recruits for full time work.

**The future means . . .**

- expanding our pilot voter registration projects in cities to provide workers in surrounding counties.
- finding more funds to support students willing to work at subsistence wages and share the life of the Southern rural Negro while trying to convince him of his rights.
- providing more and better workshops and conferences on the meaning and techniques of nonviolent community action and political involvement.

Change will be slow, but change must take place. SNCC will need *three times our current staff* to do the job we have only begun. We will also need *three times our current budget*.

**The future means your support . . .**

- in contributions and in stimulating your local community to break down every form of racial discrimination now.
- in letting us know how we can help you and how you can help us.

DANVILLE, VA.



**WE BELIEVE AND WE ASK YOU TO BELIEVE WITH US: WE SHALL OVERCOME!**