

Executive Committee Minutes

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

April 10, 1964

Atlanta, Georgia

Those in Attendance included:

Courtland Cox
Marion Barry
Julian Bond
Betty Garman
Prathia Hall

Don Harris
Mary King
John Lewis
John O'Neal
William Porter

Judy Richardson
Gwen Robinson
Mendy Samstein
Barbara Simon

Meeting was called to order at 12:30 by Chairman Lewis after several delays and quorum failures throughout the weekend.

Exec. Meetings

- *Cox: move that Exec. Comm. hold its meetings last weekend of every month. The meeting place should be Atlanta unless otherwise decided upon by a majority of the Comm.
Motion seconded and accepted unanimously.
- *Bond: recommend that we either follow parliamentary procedure or else have only motions recorded in the minutes.
It was the consensus that parliamentary procedure should be followed in future meetings.
- Cox: an agenda and notice should be sent to Exec. Comm. members prior to every meeting by the secretary (Richardson).
- Hall: we should determine some type of policy in attendance at meetings: if they're open they should be open only to staff and Exec. Comm. members. Any other people should be specifically invited by the Comm. This is really a question of security.
- Barry: people should speak in meetings only if have something meaningful to contribute to the discussion. Meetings last so long because of repetition and long-windedness.
- Hall: also a problem of security in the Atlanta office. Letters are left around, offices are left open. This lack of security carries over into the Exec. meetings. People who are not even on SNCC staff are allowed to attend meetings (she then gave a specific situation). This is a potentially dangerous situation.
- *Cox: this summer most Exec. meetings will probably be held in Jackson. Security set-up most important. Move that closed sessions may be declared at request of one member of Exec. Comm.
Motion seconded and passed unanimously.
- Barry: special effort should be made to secure attendance of all Exec. members at Exec. meetings. Should consider matter of finance: what is SNCC's policy on financing the travel and eating and housing accommodations of Exec. members during meetings?
- Lewis: SNCC has generally been handling any financial problems.
- Barry: should be known to treasurer that this is official policy.
Move that those unable to manage expenses involved in attending Exec. meetings should be given financial assistance by SNCC

* All motions and mandates to the staff are starred.

Bond: any problems involved in travel or accommodations while here should be relayed to the secretary prior to date of meeting. Arrangements can then be made. Really no need for a motion.

Summer Project -- Finance

Cox: is special account being set up for Miss. through which money could be set aside? If not already in existence suggest that special account be set up for this purpose, apart from the general account.

Lewis: financial comm. should investigate this idea.

Hall: if there's no money available, there's nothing to set aside. Our debt presently growing and debts incurred from Gregory tour still due.

Cox: there should nevertheless be some attempt made to establish an account apart from general account.

Hall: is much money coming in from Gregory tour?

Garman: not too much yet. Rundown: about \$4000. from Boston, \$2000. from Schenectady, \$2000. from Philadelphia. None yet from any of the midwest schools. Most Friends groups still haven't closed out their accounts and are waiting till all expenses are met to send the net sum. We're averaging about \$2000. per concert.

At this point Cox stated that D.C. Concert made \$5000.

Porter: have any SNCC workers been making speaking tours. Could make additional money in this way.

Garman: it appears that travelling field workers can't raise as much money as they used to; a SNCC worker can no longer pull \$2000. a week out of an area but only about \$600.-800. because the glamour of a SNCC field worker has worn off in many areas. Friends of SNCC groups have been concentrating on Gregory tour. However, N.Y., Boston and Bay Area (where no concert was held) have been active in other fund-raising activities. Activities following the Gregory tour will mainly focus on the Mississippi Summer Project. Fund-raising by Friends groups should pick up in late May-early June.

Hall: this is a very difficult period for fund-raising. (Betty agrees)

Garman: was there any breakdown in this financial report of money received around specific SNCC projects like Miss. Summer Project? (negative reply) Think that only about \$10,000. has thus far been received for Miss. Project.

O'Neal: what type of union contacts have been made for the summer?

Cox: Bob would probably know more about this. UAW has been approached. Bob spoke to them about funding the summer project.

Bond: Bob will be going to Detroit to speak with Reuther about the project. He will also be in D.C. the 18th for contacts.

Barry: what has happened to fund-raising coordinator in N.Y.C.?

Richardson: Carita Bernsohn now in an office at 360 Lexington Avenue in position of fund-raisers' coordinator. Both the office and equipment are donated. She will coordinate the fund-raising activities of professional fund-raisers and contacts in the N.Y. area. Now in process of setting up four fund-raising parties for the months of June and July at which two personalities and someone from SNCC (probably Forman) will appear. Diahaan Carroll will be giving one of the parties.

Bond: reiterate request for establishment of coordinator of all SNCC fund-raising activities. Conflict and duplication of effort

- often occur because of lack of coordination.
- Cox: perhaps Dinky or Betty could do this since both in northern coordinator department.
- Bond: isn't part of their responsibility as their jobs are presently structured. Possibly Dinky and Betty could divide this responsibility between them.
- Hall: should make clear to entire staff that it should always contact Atlanta on any fund-raising tour or appeal.
- Garman: very important that field office contact the Friend. group in the area to which the appeal is going. Also, all field staff should check with Atlanta before going off on fund-raising tours. This has not been the case in several incidents in the past.
- O'Neal: seem to be two problems here: 1) providing good communications between the field and the North for purposes of fund-raising and 2) actually setting up a fund-raising program on a coordinated basis. The second problem is more complex and should be given more than part-time attention. Might even consider a professional fund-raiser for this position.
- Garman: against this idea. Professional fund-raisers may be more effective in securing funds, but they don't think the same way we do and get money in a different way. We can use their services but they should not be in a coordinating position.
- Cox: we should have at least one professional fund-raiser in every major city where have Friends of SNCC. Atlanta should be organized in this way, too. Many untapped sources here in Atlanta. Should pay these coordinators a decent wage.
- Hall: when you say professional fund-raiser do you mean one who professionally fund-raises or a person the SNCC staff trained to fill this position? Feel latter definition is better for our purposes.
- Garman: the N.Y. fund-raiser coordinator is a person placed on staff and presently being trained by a professional fund-raiser. Feel this is best arrangement.
- Barry: the person who fills the coordinator position would also be responsible for creating fund-raising activities. This person should have a basic knowledge of fund-raising techniques.
- Hall: we must broaden our fund-raising base. More critical times lie ahead because our effectiveness is growing. Should reach out for independent sources of money since large grants have strings attached.
- Cox inquired into Garman's responsibilities in Mississippi this summer. Felt it most important that students involved in the Miss. project be given a fund-raising program to carry out when they returned to their campuses.
- Garman: problem is not that we have failed to develop a fund-raising program for the campuses. Problem created by the changeover from Casey to Dinky at the crucial time for the development of campus programs. Must now concentrate on fund-raising activities for the Fall. Concerning my job this summer, my primary responsibility will be to get to know the students who come down and setting up programs with them for the Fall. I will also be mobilizing Friends groups around any incidents which occur this summer.

Relationship with Other Civil Rights Groups

There was some discussion of undercutting of SNCC's role in Miss. by other national civil rights groups. Mentioned CORE's statements on the Miss. Project this summer and the recent release on the convention challenge. It was also mentioned that the NAACP is now claiming that it has put \$8000. into Miss. for the COFO program.

- Cox:- we must try to project SNCC's image or else we'll be continually overridden.
- Garman: how much have other civil rights groups actually pledged to the summer project in terms of personnel and financial support?
- Bond: CORE supports its present staff in COFO. NAACP has given nothing except in terms of Evers and local chapters. SCLC has supported its staff in COFO and given \$1000. with promise of more. CORE has pledged \$5000. for this summer but most will probably go to their demonstrations at the Democratic and Republican conventions.
- Samstein: NAACP has pledged \$1000. for the summer project but hasn't yet sent it. CORE has been contributing to the total COFO budget but hasn't met its commitment of \$2000. a month. It promised \$1400. to the 4th c.d. and \$500. to Jackson. CORE has already contributed more than \$500. a month to the central budget resulting in a contribution less than what was promised in the 4th c.d.
- Bond: SCLC has promised \$500. for March-April-May to pay for COFO's printing expenses.
- Samstein: CORE has promised \$500. for the convention challenge.
- Garman: can you (Mendy) estimate the cost of the Miss. Project this summer excluding the cost of equipment like books and school supplies? Realize how difficult this question is but is any estimate possible?
- Samstein: depending mostly on community support for project. Most students bringing \$150. with them. COFO is asking for \$25. of this amount at the orientation session. Money collected at this time will probably go into the harassment fund. Presently operating on a shoestring. Think we can make it relying mainly on the community. Utilities and rent will be the major problems.
- O'Neal: will cost about \$7000. a month minimum.
- Garman: not including the establishment of a SNCC office separate from the COFO office in Jackson? (John concurred).
- Cox: how are we publicizing the Miss. Project in terms of SNCC's participation in it?
- Bond: we try to conform to the agreement made with other civil rights groups. If something happens to a SNCC worker in Miss. we say he is SNCC worker working for COFO. Other groups sometimes fail to mention COFO at all in this regard.
- Cox: we should send a fact sheet about our role in the Miss. project to all national civil rights organizations. We might also write them that we will act in the same manner they do in terms of publicity if forced to.
- Garman: I don't think we should, but in addition we hardly have the same power at our disposal to act the way they do.

Back to Finance

*O'Neal: move that the financial comm. bring a report to the next exec. meeting which contains: 1) an analysis of SNCC's sources, expenditures and general budgets over the past three years, 2) a report on the projected budget for next year, 3) a breakdown of means by which we might fund particular SNCC projects, 4) means by which we might get more tax-exempt funds, 5) a programmatic solution to some of our financial problems based on its findings.

Summer Project

Barry: will SNCC be able to provide scholarship money for southern Negro students who work for us this summer? Have been telling them we would.

There was a general feeling that scholarship money would be available.

Cox: Stafford said that SNCC already has \$6000. for this purpose and may get another \$10,000.

Robinson: do southern Negroes have to bring the \$150. for the Miss. Project?

Hall: no. A few in the same area or from the same school might try to raise the \$150. as a group if possible.

Barry: the girls coming down would like to have more definite information about their housing accommodations to appease their parents.

Cox: acceptance and rejection letters should be sent out very soon so that kids will have enough to prepare or to make other arrangements.

Barry: letter should be drawn up stating specifics about the project for the girls coming down. Should say what they'll be doing and where they'll be living.

Samstein: have not yet received list of southern Negro students interested in coming down. When we receive this, can give them more specifics.

Barry: some girls need this kind of information before they can approach their parents about the idea of coming to Miss.

Hall: should include with the general information and application on the summer project, additional information about housing accommodations to assure parents.

*Barry: maybe Stafford could handle this.

Bond: are we getting releases from parents absolving us from any responsibility for injuries incurred during the summer?

Samstein: intend to take this matter up with the students when they reach the orientation site. National Council of Churches is supposed to be paying the transportation costs from the orientation site to Jackson.

Garman: should first check on the legal aspects of this type of release.

*O'Neal: it is agreed then that Julian will send a letter to the other national civil rights groups which gives a statement of SNCC's policy in regard to publicity on the Summer Project. Included in this letter will be a fact sheet on SNCC's role in Miss.

Hall: if the need arises we can publish this information.

D.C. Demonstration & Convention Challenge

Bond: am in the process of contacting people for the jury. Has been no positive response yet from those contacted. Thelwell has secured the use of a church in D.C. but I feel an auditorium would be better since we could use it for the hearing and for the press conference.

Samstein: I think Casey has already written President requesting an audience the 9th of June.

Bond: the delegation will now be emanating from COFO. Farmer and King both agreed that the people from the delegation who actually do the talking will be COFO people. They may not stick to this agreement, however. Should take note that the Council of United Civil Rights Leadership will meet in Atlanta May 13th, and the main topics on the agenda will be the Miss. Summer Project and the D.C. demonstration. Had meeting in New York with Rustin, Randolph, Farmer, Miss Baker, Tillow and Frank Smith about the D.C. demonstration and the challenge. CORE says it will give \$10,000. for the challenge. SCLC has pledged its support. The challenge should follow legitimate channels and should not be connected with the demonstrations. CORE will have demonstrations at the Republican and Democratic conventions. Gray, Galamison, Branche and others may also have demonstrations. There are two types of demands to be presented at the convention: 1) specialized demands around certain issues (e.g. housing for Gray, education for Galamison and Branche) 2) the demands which COFO is bringing to the convention which relates to the specialized demands and effects them all. There is bad housing and bad educational facilities in the North because of the control of southern legislators in Congress. Therefore our challenge effects them all. Southern senators block progressive legislation which effects the whole country. A four-man committee has been set up for the challenge: The Negro American Labor Council, SNCC, CORE and possibly SCLC. Rustin is the temporary director. SNCC suggested that Miss Baker be made director and Rustin her deputy. Rustin assured those at the meeting that 25,000 people could be gathered at the convention and that some civil disobedience would take place. It's also possible that any civil disobedience might hamper the legitimate challenge at the convention.

The chairman restated the time limit which had been put on discussion. Cox asked for an extension of that limit considering the importance of the discussion. Bond also felt that our position on these matters should be thoroughly discussed and decided upon.

The chairman agreed to extend debate.

*Cox: another memo on the D.C. plans should be sent out by Julian.

Bond: the demonstration itself is still up in the air. On the morning of the 9th, the Miss. people along with the northern students and some of their parents will visit their congressmen. After their visits they will hold a press conference. In the afternoon the people from Miss. will participate in a hearing attended by press and possibly African diplomats, etc. It will be conducted like a hearing of the Civil Rights Commission. The jury will issue a statement explaining what it feels the President must do and is legally able to do. On the

morning of the 10th, Aaron Henry, Moses, Dennis, the Miss. Freedom candidates and maybe the head of the exed. comm. of the Freedom Democratic Party (in all, about 10 or 12 people) will meet with the President. Following this meeting, they will hold a press conference. About the demonstration: 1) it is likely that we will not get to meet the President without King and King feels a demonstration is unwise. 2) still unresolved the type of demonstration that would be held (civil disobedience, march, leafleting?).

- Cox: it is tactically more important in terms of publicity to see the President than it is to hold a demonstration. If first excludes second then should abandon first. Concerning conventions: feel it's wishful thinking to feel that Bayard can get 25,000 people to Atlantic City. SNCC should support a demonstration at the convention because it adds pressure to our demands to recognize our delegation. Might get other civil rights groups to join us who will be demonstrating for other purposes. Don't feel Miss Baker should get involved with this end of the convention action since she's working on the legitimate end and because it would place too much of a burden on her. Actually for our purposes Rustin is probably the best man for the position of director.
- Bond: Farmer and Randolph felt that the Atlantic City demonstration should be limited in participation to national groups and that the D.C. delegation should be limited to those working in Miss., which is what SNCC wanted anyway.
- Cox: for the convention challenge we need the support of unions, churches and other groups with a base in the community. We can remain silent on issue of participation of non-national civil rights groups since they're going to come anyway. Feel that: 1) Bayard should be director and 2) SNCC should not publicize too much the civil disobedience angle of the convention plans since the focus should remain on the challenge itself rather than demonstration surrounding it. Wilkins will make a presentation on civil rights at the Democratic convention. Should try to gain support of NCC as they could be a source of power for us. When we gain their aid mid-west senators will begin to fall into line more easily. Bob should work on the unions and people should be assigned to work on particular interest groups.
- Hall: will be going to NCC meeting in D.C. this Tuesday and will work on this.
- Bond: if we limit the delegation to Miss. people and representatives of national civil rights groups, President can't afford to refuse an audience. Philadelphia, New Haven and Boston parents will be contacted. If President is conveniently out of town on 9th, we'll work out another time.
- Barry: has any effort been made to contact various committees of the national convention?
- Bond: Democratic National Committee is the temporary certification comm. of the convention. We might go to the meeting of that comm. in June and also to the platform comm. meeting.
- Cox: Jackson of the NAACP in D.C. has just been elected to the National Democratic Committee. He should be contacted.
- *Lewis: since Marion has handled this before in 1960, he should coordinate any activity before the platform committees of both parties

King: since Berea is unavailable for the orientation program, have been working on others. The teamsters resort camp in Missouri is unavailable in June. Three sites in Ohio have been opened up, but only Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio, is suitable. Tentative plans call for two back to back sessions since the college cannot accommodate more than 500. There would be a two-day staff session followed by the first $5\frac{1}{2}$ day session for new workers. After a $1\frac{1}{2}$ day break the second $5\frac{1}{2}$ session would begin with a carry-over of some staff, since some would have left with the newly oriented workers. The whole thing would run about 15-16 days. The dates are contingent upon our schedule in Washington. This plan has not yet been presented to the Miss. Steering Comm.

As established by a previous motion, the next Executive Committee meeting will fall on May 30th and 31st.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Richardson
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Secretary