

General Delivery  
Boykins, Alabama  
March 17, 1965

Dear Dr. Lynd:

I think probably Nancy Cooper has already spoken to you about the matter which this letter is concerned with; namely, a residential freedom school which would bring students together from both the north and south.

About a week ago I presented a very rough proposal to the Executive Committee of SNCC for such a freedom school. It was approved and now I'm proceeding to work on it. Considering your closeness to the freedom school and your whole idea about how people should learn things, I wanted very much to get your ideas on the kinds of things that could be done at such a school.

In the proposal I suggested that there might be two different schools -- one sometime in June, and the other in July. Each session would last about two weeks and would have maybe one hundred kids at each school, divided evenly between northern and southern high-school age students. The number, however, is not rigid and really depends on the response we get from the various areas. The kids who come will be coming from ghetto areas like Harlem, south side of Chicago, etc.

Now at this point I'm somewhat unclear about exactly what comes out of such a meeting of northern and southern students; I just feel it would be a good idea for both to get a chance to talk to each other about the common controls over their lives and what they feel they might together be able, at some point, to do about them. That it would be a good thing for them to be able to learn together about some of the things (and people) who run this country and the part they, as Negroes in the ghetto, play in the whole scheme of things. Getting together would also allow them to see that there is motion going on all over this country on the part of young people like themselves. The meeting might also strengthen the feeling of unity between the northern and southern kids.

Now about the type of resource people we invite to such a school. I thought perhaps Neil Day might be able to come down and talk with the kids about the kinds of things which stopped him, because of the threat he posed, from being elected in Boston; as well as any other things he felt like talking about. Perhaps Jessie Gray might be invited to come and discuss rent strikes and what they mean to both the north and south. Someone from MFDP could talk about why it is not "politically expedient" for congressmen to support the challenge and the part southern senators play in governing the lives of us all. There could also be discussions of Negro history as well as the relation of the African struggle to our own struggle here.

The most important part of the school is, of course, making sure that a climate always prevails which will allow the kids to discuss, argue (with each other as well as with the resource people) and ~~argue~~ question the thoughts which are tossed out. Small discussion groups of, say, 20 students each might help provide for this (although I realize the physical set-up is just one factor which we have to worry about in terms of the atmosphere surrounding a discussion). I also think its very important that the kids have enough free time following the day's schedule to get better acquainted with each other and each other's thinking. Because usually, as you know, much (and sometimes more) comes out of the intimate discussions in the evening as comes out during the scheduled discussion.

As I said, this is all very sketchy, and because it is, I'm very, very open to all and any ideas you have. I'll also be writing to other people (like Bill Stickland (NSM) and Tom Hayden (ERAP) etc. as well as projects - SNCC and otherwise \* through-~~ough~~ out the south) who have everyday contact with kids of high-school age (this includes "drop-outs", too).

I'm working in Wilcox County, Alabama now, but if you write to me at General Delivery, Boykins, Alabama, I should receive it. I hope to hear from you soon cause I'd like to know your feelings about this whole idea.

FREEDOM

Judy Richardson  
SNCC