

*Please read before coming to the Ex Com.  
meeting.  
Cleve*

## Program Proposal

### Transition in the Church

To: Executive Comm., Jkm Forman, Cleve Sellers, and John Lewis

From: Tom Brown

Just recently in the SNCC staff meeting, many ideas were projected however; seemingly looked over. But there was one idea that had great bearing on bringing a change in the South for the Negro and in many ways it was projected by the Rev. Charles Sherrod. Realizing that most SNCC people disliked the work God and Church mentioned and that these words were Taboo in the organization, from this I have had much restraint in presenting the idea of Rev. Charles Sherrod and of which has been with me the idea also.

I mentioned the words Transition in the Church as tentative topics due to the fact that I have no specific topic for this program; however, there is a content of what this program should be like.

I.

This program is designed to bring about Church and Community and development together in such a way that SNCC programs are implemented and that there is more Negro participation among the classes in the South. The program is designed to educate and associate religious doctrines and programs to the community in its true essence. The true essence of the Church is not Sunday morning preaching, shouting, foot stomping, halleluyah ecstasy. The true meaning of the Church is the gathering platform where people worship, work for the needs of other brothers and sisters, where people educate one another to the sins of reality and then try to correct these sinful realities only in the realms of a Social Change .... "Who are thou brothers keeper." The program is also geared to help ministers who are confronted with the powers to be in and out of the Church in his endeavors to direct and educate people to the New Change or to the reality of true Civil Rights. I could go on describing the purposes but these in themselves should broaden the mode of what this program can do and should do.

### II. Organizing of Ministerial Action Groups

A. The purpose of this development is to bring the willing ministers together to discuss the role he can and shall play. This period of development has no set pattern or programmatic structure in as much as they discuss implication of the Church responsibility to the community. This phase of the program will involve a person or persons of SNCC who are familiar with the Negro Baptist and Methodist Church and to some extent who know the Bible and its ramifications and the Bible and how it relates its doctrines to Civil Rights. The need of knowing the Bible is not of importance if an organizer knows how to carry out a well structured workshop that can bring conclusions or results.

B. The ministerial groups then will align themselves to bring other stragglers into their group. This group will perpetuate enormous uneasiness into the white religious groups in whatever manner they perceive. These somewhat subversive moves should depend upon that organi-

zer and his abilities to originate new ideas that can drive the spiritual conscience of white so-called Christians. At the same time, the organizers much in his own educate the ministers to the social change and at the same time allow himself to be educated to the religious ideas of the old Church and from there he takes the religious ideas in its entirety and apply it to Civil Rights or a social change in the South.

C. Now within this development there is need of a strong propaganda machine or one might say, need of publications. This is where churches all over the country will become involved through letters and incident reports, pamphlets that deal with where the church has failed, also to deal with how Churches control Segregation. These publications should be the radical implications of the Church and the dealing with truth in its entirety to what the Church has not done and what is needed for a social change.

#### SUMMARY:

The first phase of this program is designed to tap the conscience of the so-called God-fearing ministers and Faith believing leaders. It is to try to lift ministers out of their lethargy and educate them to what the job of the church really is. It is to acquaint ministers to our programs and to seek support, assistance and to elevate their abilities to bring new ideas along with congregations to develop new programs that we may never had thought of. It is to bring awareness with motion among Negro ministers to act on immediate problems of that community (example, public accommodations, city facilities, employment, schools, etc.), in as much as it broadens their perspectives of what Freedom is and to what a true Church is and what means responsibility is to one another.

#### III. Workshops Inside the Churches Programs

A. This phase can be quite difficult if the former phase of our program does not work, however; this can be chain reaction to the former phase of our program if tactfully approached. In this phase of our program approaches will be made to the existing groups within the church with all out efforts to bring others to these groups (auxillaries... missionary board, deacon board, trustee board, matrons, usher board and etc. ) and from there, hold workshops on "problems of the community, church role in the community, what the scriptures say about helping one another, and what is equality and who are God's children and how this relates to the present day inequality." These and many other ideas can develop out of discussion or workshops. It also may be well learned that some of these boards may run the church and this in itself can call for some problems, but within an involvement of a greater number of people and groups of the church you will find that repercussions or much less if none at all.

B. From this involvement needs of developing strong student groups within the church for they can serve as a strong prerequisite to church development and parental confidence in SNCC workers. It also opens the minds of parents and leaves freedom and support from young people to move with open minds and inquisitive ideas. Also the educational process of SNCC can take place, forums can be set up through the week and an integrated schedule could take place with the application of the church and Civil duties.

C. This involvement also needs a propaganda device in the people express ideas and efforts across the country, also students began to challenge young church groups across the nation and challenge the Church into a new change across the map. Only through written articles, research data and methods of publication can this phase of the program build its momentum.

#### SUMMARY:

This phase has the similarities of the first part of the program, however; efforts on this part of the program is to bring people to realities of their involvement. It is also geared to set the platform of bringing people together under similar objectives with elements of motions. These groups will serve as support groups meaning that many expenses on SNCC field secretaries will be alleviated.

#### IV. Integration of SNCC Programs into the Church

A. This integration of program phase will allow for SNCC to institute more of its education programs (example .... Freedom Schools) here SNCC programs will be working off a strong base as far as the community is concerned. These programs will be so set up that eventually on a quicker scale people will take up own leadership roles or will handle ~~own~~ programs or SNCC programs in their community. During this period the more broader programs of SNCC will be introduced and handled in such a way that people across the State in Churches will work together. It is up to the SNCC workers to make sure things work in harmony and that there is no over exaltation of one individual or one particular minister. It is up to the SNCC worker to see that everyone's ideas are heard or it is up to him to see that the particular leader is working in behalf of the people.

B. For this whole program to take place the following materials or working apparatus is needed:

1. Personnel
2. Publication
3. Descriptive analysis of all SNCC programs
4. State Workshops ... rural churches

Basically, the resources will come from the Church itself.

It must be remembered that this program had much of its direction to the rural and small town churches. I felt, instead of the Urban Church influenceing the Rural Church the trend could be visa-versa with greater momentum.

I would very much like to be present, when this program is discussed, so that I may give in detail on what the program is to do. For there are other aspects of this program that will prove to be beneficial to SNCC.