

Telephone Report from Stoney Cooks, Natchez, Mississippi,
September 27, 1965, 11:30 P.M.

SCLC evidently received a telephone call in psuedo-desperation from Charles Evers concerning Natchez, Mississippi, explaining that difficulties with his parent organization, NAACP, had occurred and that Natchez needed a movement philosophy, and also a similar phone call was received by the NCC from Evers, also asking for people to participate and financial support in that situation. Neither organization knew that the other was being called in. The situation created was that NCC and SCLC both responded with troops, program for community organization, etc. SCLC people arrived, were orientated by Evers. Natchez is an adult movement, the people are completely generous and outgoing, there are a few schoolteachers, mostly ministers and lower class people, plenty of students involved. SCLC people were told that Natchez movement had very little funds, and that SCLC would have to pay its own way, set up its own office, pay for its equipment, etc.

A. R. Samson presented program to NCC, NAACP & SNCC, asking for support, providing Saul Alinsky-type program for some kind of permanent structure for the community, and proceeded on with meeting between SCLC and NAACP executive board. This is where conflict arose with NCC. The NAACP closed the doors of the meeting to everyone but SCLC and its Executive Board. Robert Beach was disturbed by this ~~move~~, which Stoney feels was a bad move by the NAACP, in that the NCC should also have been invited to the meeting. Beach called Rev. Boar, who called Art Thomas in New York. Thomas called Dr. King and asked that Samson be removed. The NAACP approved Samson's program and gave him permission to put his program into motion. Samson proceeded to divide all the people into individual groups which is the backbone of his community organization program -- that people be represented through small clubs which would have representatives on a steering committee which would speak for the total community. This was approved by the NAACP Board.

They had a march on Saturday which brought out about 1000 people, and which was successful. Samson announced that Monday the Natchez movement would test the curfew at 12:05 in a march to the county courthouse, protesting that the curfew was unjust in that it was totally for Negroes and did not apply to whites.

Samson left for Houston, ~~Ex~~ Texas Saturday evening and returned Monday at 2 o'clock. In the meantime, one Stoney Cooks met with members of the Board and discussed the possibilities of having a march or some type of demonstration to test the curfew. The executive board decided to call a meeting at 4 o'clock to decide whether or not there should be a march, or whether to await action by the Town Board. After much discussion, the consensus of the meeting was