

## THE LIFE CYCLE OF SNCC

U: Development of revolutionary organization in the black liberation struggle.

U: THE CONTRADICTION IN EACH FORM OF MOTION OF MATTER

100/CONSTRUCTION: Development of revolutionary programs and organization to advance and sustain revolutionary struggle.

300/PRODUCTION: Day-to-day work in revolutionary practice to change the social system is the basis for learning and testing ideas.

400/ADMINISTRATION: Development and maintenance of organization's administrative apparatus is a vital part of revolutionary struggle, helping to codify and to transmit the political lessons learned from actual work, enabling the revolutionary organization to develop to its full potential.

500/LEGAL: Repression by State forces on all levels can be negated by open/closed forms of organization and correct methods of work.

600/POLITICAL: Developing and exercising proletarian leadership and waging ideological struggle through principled criticism/self-criticism are effective measures to combat petty bourgeois class tendencies in a revolutionary organization.

700/IDEOLOGICAL: Development of correct ideology through political education, ideological struggle and ideological transformation are necessary to the making of revolutionaries.

800/ORGANIZATION: A centralized organizational structure under proletarian leadership and the unwavering maintenance of organizational discipline is the greatest revolutionary weapon of the masses.

900/THEORY: Constant summarization of our total experience and the study of revolutionary theory are essential elements in the process of discovering laws of revolution in the USA.

000/ECONOMIC: Fundraising is a political act, necessary to the survival of revolutionary organization.

## THE CONTRADICTION IN EACH FORM OF MOTION OF MATTER

U: Development of revolutionary organization in the black liberation struggle

PARTICULARITY: Emergence, development and decline of SNCC

- 1 South: Jim Crow system
- 2 South: social protest against Jim Crow system
- 3 South: exclusion of black people from voting
- 4 South: registration of black voters
- 5 South: local law enforcement & white racists
- 6 SNCC and its base in the deep South
- 7 SNCC
- 8 federal administration
- 9 federal law enforcement
- 10 FBI -- COINTELPRO
- 11 federal poverty programs -- cooptation
- 12 Congress
- 13 liberal/labor establishment
- 14 moderate civil rights organizations (SCLC, NAACP, etc.)
- 15 the Left (SCEF, SDS, New Left, etc.)
- 16 Black Panther Party
- 17 Third World revolutionaries
- 18 SNCC: religious proponents of non-violence (as ideal, an end)
- 19 SNCC: political activists (non-violence as a tactic)
- 20 SNCC: white civil rights workers
- 21 SNCC: black civil rights workers
- 22 SNCC: fear of power (Moses)--informal elitist community
- 23 SNCC: political power (Forman)--build mass organization
- 24 SNCC: "floaters"--individualism and romanticism (p.b.)
- 25 SNCC: "hardliners"--enforce organizational discipling (w.c.)
- 26 SNCC: reactionary nationalists (Atl. Proj.; later Carmichael)
- 27 SNCC: political revolutionaries (black vanguard; class anal.)
- 28 SNCC: cult of personality (Carmichael)--individualism
- 29 SNCC: organizational discipline (Central Committee)
- 30 SNCC: male chauvinism
- 31 SNCC: bourgeois feminist criticism & principled selfcriticism



## THE CONTRADICTION IN EACH OF ITS PROCESSES OF DEVELOPMENT

### BASIC CONTRADICTIONS

#### A. FORMATION

- [ 1] [ 2] South: Jim Crow system v. social protest against Jim Crow system  
Originates as spontaneous social protest. Student-based. Middle-class assimilationist character.
- [ 3] [ 4] South: preclusion of black people from voting v. registration of black voters  
Voter registration had been developing as a form of struggle before SNCC's involvement. In practice, SNCC organizers learned the importance of voter registration in the struggle for political power.
- [ 5] [ 7] South: local law enforcement and white racists v. SNCC  
SNCC becomes increasingly militant in struggle against the repression of local racist forces. "Jail no bail" tactic is developed.
- [8/9] [ 7] Federal administration and federal law enforcement v. SNCC  
SNCC is critical of federal government for its failure to protect civil rights and those in the civil rights struggle; for failing to achieve civil rights at home while proclaiming democratic values abroad.
- [14] [ 7] Moderate civil rights organizations (SCLC) v. SNCC  
Ella Baker from SCLC initiates formation of SNCC, based on profound understanding of need to develop leadership in students as the lifeblood of the civil rights movement.
- [18] [19] SNCC: religious proponents of non-violence (as an end) v. political activists (non-violence as a tactic)  
Religious proponents: moral/spiritual approach originating in Nashville group and viewing non-violence as a spiritual quality or ideal. This group emphasized direct action and initially was opposed to working on voter registration. Idealism.  
Political activists: based on organizing experience, understood struggle as question of political power. Viewed non-violence as a method to achieve an end. Emphasized voter registration as a means to achieve political power.
- P.C.: [ 5] [ 7] (600) White racists and local law enforcement struggle to preserve the system of racial oppression by means of vicious repression v. SNCC intensifies militant struggle against racist oppression and brutal repression--becoming stronger and more militant in direct proportion to the intensification of repression

Features: SNCC became the "shock troops" of civil rights movement.  
SNCC became a permanent organization, albeit anti-hierarchical (e.g. consensus decision-making).  
SNCC became organization of full-time organizers.

Lessons:

1. Internal organization is necessary to bring social protest to a higher level. Lack of concern with internal organization (e.g. the importance of meetings) retards the struggle.
2. Political organizers and the mass base develop through practice in militant political struggle.

B. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH REVOLUTIONARY PRACTICE

- [ 5] [ 6] South: local law enforcement and white racists v. SNCC and its base in the deep South  
Work in the deep South led to constant harassment and fierce intimidation (in McComb, Albany, Miss. and southwest Georgia). In response, SNCC had to pull back from relying entirely on indigenous black leadership and had to engage in militant protests again to attract national attention, with the aim of provoking federal intervention. The Mississippi Summer Project was thus conceived--to use a massive force of white volunteers who were linked to channels of national communication.
- [8/9][ 7] Federal administration and federal law enforcement v. SNCC  
SNCC became increasingly critical of Kennedy administration's failure to intervene to protect civil rights workers. SNCC's criticisms were stated nationally (although softened under pressure from the moderate civil rights groups) at the March on Washington.
- [ 13] [ 7] Liberal/labor establishment v. SNCC  
The liberal/ labor establishment was key source of funds for SNCC at this stage. SNCC's militant stand at the March on Washington led the liberal/labor establishment to suspect communist influence. SNCC's maintenance of a free association policy combined with its association with leftist groups such as the National Lawyers Guild fed these suspicions. The effect of the suspicion was to threaten SNCC's funding.
- [14] [ 7] Moderate civil rights organizations (SCLC, NAACP, etc.) v. SNCC  
Through practice, SNCC proved itself unique among civil rights organizations: unwilling to compromise; self-proclaimed as "revolutionary"; broadening its aims to encompass social revolution; developing ties with other leftist groups (SCEF, SDS, etc.)  
Antagonism developed between SNCC and SCLC. In



Albany Movement, SNCC dubs King "de lawd" and views him as a cult personality and opportunist who exploits their grass-roots organizing efforts. SNCC is moderated by criticism of the Kennedy administration<sup>1</sup> pressure from SCLC at the March on Washington.

[19] [19]

SNCC: religious proponents of non-violence and direct action v. political activists (non-violence as tactic) emphasizing voter registration

In struggle over direct action v. voter registration, compromise was reached through leadership provided by Ella Baker. It was agreed to work on both FOS.

Practice in McComb and the Albany Movement formed basis for the direct action/non-violence proponents to conceptualize that non-violent tactics were ineffective in the face of a determined white establishment and that voter registration was as much a test of militancy as direct action protests.

Through practice, moved beyond Gandhian orientation to develop distinctive organizing techniques which emphasized militancy and development of local leadership. SNCC workers developed an identity as radical cadre and a unity based on broad consensus.

During this period, Forman developed an administrative structure for SNCC, including a fund-raising network, and communications and research departments. This was necessary to support the rapid expansion of SNCC's operations.

[20] [21]

SNCC: white civil rights workers v. black civil rights workers

This contradiction intensified during the Mississippi Summer Project, in which masses of white college student volunteers were recruited from the North. It is significant to note that the white volunteers were predominantly middle class.

White civil rights workers tended to take over leadership roles and reinforced racial oppression. Black civil rights workers, whose racial pride was emerging from practice in struggle, reacted strongly. In addition, SNCC was learning through practice the significance of internalized racism and that black organizers were best equipped to struggle with it.

The issue emerged: what is the role of whites in the civil rights movement? On the one hand, white volunteers were being used to provoke federal intervention in Miss.; on the other hand, whites hampered efforts to develop self-sufficiency of local black movements. By the fall of 1963, 20% of SNCC's staff was white. At this stage, both moral (Moses) and practical (Forman) justifications were raised favoring white participation in SNCC projects.

Some attempts at whites organizing whites during the Miss. Summer Project (White Folks Project) failed,

but important lessons were drawn (e.g., middle class organizers are too fearful to be effective; lay foundation before coming out in the open). In spring 1964, white SNCC workers organized SSOC.

P.C.: [18] [19] (700) Religious proponents of non-violence v. political activists

Features: SNCC was transformed from coordinator of student protests to the vanguard of a broad-based mass struggle in the South; its unity based on the common belief in sustained, militant mass struggle as the major agent of social change.

SNCC's class content changed from predominantly middle class to that of poor rural Southern blacks.

SNCC rejected non-violence as an end in itself and began openly to support armed self-defense.

SNCC established alternative institutions (e.g., freedom schools, Free Southern Theater, and MFDP).

SNCC developed distinctive and effective methods of organizing, in particular, working with local leadership and taking militant action to catalyze mass mobilization.

Miss. Summer Project established a new climate in Miss., allowing blacks to concentrate on long range goals rather than being preoccupied with immediate personal security.

Large number of middle class volunteers from North were put on SNCC staff in October 1964.

SNCC disillusionment with liberal/labor establishment--as result of MFDP failure.

Lessons:

1. There is no substitution for social practice. Social is the true test of ideas.  
Political differences in organizational strategy (e.g., direct action v. voter registration) can be resolved through concrete practice in concrete struggle, rather than through intellectual debate.
2. Effective organizing methods: pick up on rising forces and develop their leadership--through social practice and theory.
3. Non-violence is not an effective method of struggle, in the face of the repressive State and social forces supporting racism.
4. The fundamental function of the State is to preserve the existing social system.
5. At certain stages in the struggle, political alliances are



necessary to help achieve political aims; at other stages in the struggle, political alliances are not necessary to the achievement of political aims, and it is more important to maintain political principles that may preclude such alliances.

6. Development and maintenance of organization's administrative apparatus is a vital part of revolutionary struggle, helping to codify and to transmit the political lessons learned from actual work, enabling the revolutionary organization to develop to its full potential.
7. Internalized racism inhibits the ability of black people to struggle for black liberation. [This is the perceptual stage in the cycle of knowledge of bourgeois ideology.]
8. The question of what is the role of whites in the civil rights movement, is a significant issue. But lack of political study results in the issue being dealt with on a low level of personal opinions and leaves the festering unresolved question to become a condition for opportunists to weaken the organization.

"Any organization, group or individual that lacks a systematic education in revolutionary thought, that fails to read, can't help but become immersed in sterile arguments about the cause of racial oppression and about white people." [Forman]

### C. INTERNAL STRUGGLE WITHIN SNCC

[17] [ 7] , Third world revolutionaries v. SNCC

SNCC staff travelled to Africa, developed a pan-African perspective, exposed to more advanced revolutionary struggles and societies.

[12] [ 7] Liberal/labor establishment v. SNCC

Relationship becoming increasingly strained, due to establishment's intolerance of SNCC's militancy, its continued policy of open association, and its growing prominence in the civil rights movement.

[14] [ 7] Moderate civil rights organizations v. SNCC

SNCC becoming a serious competitor of SCLC and NAACP.

During Selma/Montgomery march, SNCC and SCLC struggled over S & T; Dr. King capitulated to government pressure, turning the march around and betraying trust of SNCC and the marchers. SNCC's aim during this march was to use this protest activity as a training ground for those who would sustain the struggle; specifically, to expose protesters to political action and to the ministers' moderate influence. In fact, SNCC used the march to make contacts in Lowndes County for

future organizing of LCFO. But the other side of SNCC's participation (SNCC leaders impulsively went to Selma) reflected the absence of organizational discipline and breakdown of the decision-making process in time of crises.

[15] [ 7] The Left (the New Left) v. SNCC

New Left: Young activists seeking new ideological alternatives to conventional liberalism.

SNCC: A source of insight and inspiration for the New Left.

Unity: anti-imperialist perspective and radicalism; opposition to the war in Vietnam (Vietnam veteran Sammy Younge's murder precipitated SNCC's coming forward with publicly-articulated opposition to the war); increasing emphasis on economic issues.

Struggle: white Leftists' romanticism v. SNCC's racial separatism.

[22] [23] SNCC: fear of power (Moses)--informal elitist community v. build mass organization--political power (Forman)

"Moses faction": predominantly middle class; based on humanistic values; aimed to keep SNCC an informal community of organizers; foster development of local leadership and then step aside; abdication of leadership; white student activists followed Moses.

Forman faction: develop a permanent, centralized political organization to expand the power of the movement and ultimately to develop a mass organization; organization needed to sustain programs (alternative institutions). Although black field staff criticized the central office staff (Forman being among them) as out of touch with the field staff, the black field staff essentially was demanding a more effective organization.

[20] [21] SNCC: interracialism v. racial separatism

Interracialism: emphasis on setting example by practicing racial integration in SNCC; building a "beloved community"--a Utopian sect separate from social evils; moralism. Idealism.

Racial separatism: new stage in development of racial pride--valuing the "specialized ethnic relationship that cannot be entered into with whites."

Fundamental question: what is the most effective means to achieve social change? In this stage, moving away from moralism to struggle for political power.

[30] [31] SNCC: male chauvinism v. bourgeois feminist criticism & principled self-criticism

Led by white women in SNCC, feminist caucus confronted sex discrimination within SNCC. Generally, men in SNCC did not take the criticism seriously. However, some like Forman acknowledged the problem.

Although many black women in SNCC initially did not view male chauvinism as a serious problem in SNCC,



[24] [25]

they were angered by some of the men's (such as Carmichael's) derisive response to the feminists' criticism. SNCC: P.B. individualism and romanticism ("floaters") v. enforcement of organizational discipline ("hardliners")

Floaters: middle class elements. Egotistic individualism enjoying a "freedom high" which placed individual freedom over organizational discipline. These elements also susceptible to "local people-itis" (romanticism of the poor), which is bourgeois sentimentalism. Undisciplined and unaccountable; used drugs; floated randomly from project to project and did not follow through on assigned projects. Sought to preserve consensus decision-making in SNCC. Stalled organizational decision-making by engaging in aimless and abstract debate.

Hardliners: Southern-born black organizers whose political education was within SNCC. Demanding organizational discipline of field staff and more effective organizational administration. Because the hardliners were less experienced than the more moderate central staff, they did not prevail at first. The tyranny of the minority continued. The hardliners were tired of the floaters "jamming up" the organization.

As things continued to deteriorate into 1965, Forman pulled back, summarized, and planned for the rising class struggle in SNCC. He organized the "field machine" (working class forces, hardliners, in SNCC) to seize control in a staff meeting in February 1965. At the meeting, a person-by-person evaluation was conducted. Whites and college-educated black workers were most severely criticized. It was demanded that programs be established, that organizational structure be established, and that decisions be put to a vote. The result: the end of consensus decision-making and the end of the tyranny of the minority in SNCC; creation of a more efficient administrative apparatus (Executive Committee). Combatting liberalism pushed forward SNCC's development.

[26] [27]

SNCC: reactionary nationalists (Atlanta project) v. political revolutionaries (class analysis with blacks as vanguard of revolution)

Atlanta Project staff: generally college-educated, half of them from North, some had been involved in urban black nationalist organizations. Principal positive contribution was in explicating the relationship between black separatist principles and the Southern black struggle; applying ideas from Malcolm X and Fanon in their analysis. The reactionary aspect of their social practice was in their dogmatism, their disruptive tactics and disregard of organizational discipline and of SNCC's past lessons, and their empty

rhetoric in the absence of political accomplishments (talk nationalism; got no organization in the community). "Mr. Say ain't the man. Mr. Do is the man."

Political revolutionaries in SNCC: rejected Atlanta Project staff's position that SNCC should be an all-black organization. Although SNCC members already had reached the practical conclusion that blacks should lead the black liberation struggle and whites should organize poor whites, they rejected the nationalists' absolutism. The nationalists overestimated their strength in SNCC. Although some of their arguments were persuasive, they were labelled opportunists by SNCC because of their disregard of the collective organization and the rift between their theory and results in practice.

Subsequently, SNCC began discussions of the relation between the questions of race and class and imperialism. The problem was that discussion was held in a theoretical vacuum, since SNCC had never engaged in systematic political study. So, discussion remained on a low level of personal opinions.

[24] [25] Rhetoric v. building political programs (e.g. LCFO)

Rhetorical appeals for unification of blacks on the basis of separatist ideals. This aspect was contrary to SNCC's historical lessons, which held that ideas emerge from practice and development of racial pride is achieved through participation in militant struggle.

Programs: Increasing support in SNCC for the kind of organizing approach developed in Lowndes County (led by Carmichael). In May 1966, Carmichael replaced Lewis as Chairman of SNCC. New goals also were established: (1) nationalism as organizing tool; (2) build community wide political movements; (3) white organizers must organize the white community around black needs; (4) develop ties with Third World. Steps: set up internal education program and international bureau; replaced unwieldy Executive Committee with 10-member Central Committee; withdrew from White House Conference on Civil Rights (Lewis had been on its planning committee)

P.C.: [24] [25] (700) P.B. individualism (Northern middle class interracial base) v. working class elements representing Southern rural black base demands accountability to producing results in programmatic work

Features: Early in this stage, petty bourgeois elements gained dominance in SNCC; by the end of this stage, working class elements in SNCC (predominantly, rural Southern blacks) became dominant through ideological struggle and assertion of working class leadership.

Reform v. revolution; non-violence v. violence. The new



question facing SNCC: Could SNCC develop from a cadre of organizers to a revolutionary organization?  
New leadership (Carmichael)  
New goals -- politically revolutionary  
Clear choice for SNCC staff: rhetoric v. build programs  
Return to practice after culmination of introspective stage  
Increasing black militancy in urban areas throughout U.S.

Lessons:

1. Any struggle for dignity is revolutionary. It is possible to do revolutionary work without being a revolutionary.
2. At this stage SNCC, which had become the vanguard of the black liberation struggle, had to become a revolutionary organization in every sense. To become a revolutionary organization, SNCC would have to solve two problems: low level of political consciousness and lack of maturity. The methods of struggle: political education and criticism/self-criticism.
3. SNCC had achieved power through the Mississippi Summer Project and needed to expand that power, to continue the rhythm of its development. Its failure to adopt the Black Belt Summer Project plan for 1965 (due to petty bourgeois-inspired paralysis) meant SNCC's loss of a historic opportunity. The time was ripe to move; SNCC finally had the means to expand, but was paralyzed by its petty bourgeois predominance. SNCC needed structure and an end to disorder.
4. The petty bourgeois elements were a catalyst of change in SNCC's earlier stages, but were unable to transform themselves into a mass organization with poor people.
5. The petty bourgeois elements essentially viewed SNCC as reformist rather than revolutionary. Petty bourgeois habits: fear of one's own power; egotistic individualism; lack of discipline; generalized rebellion against authority; self-indulgence.
6. Petty bourgeois elitism sought to make SNCC a close group; viewed SNCC as a better society and not an organization fighting for the creation of a better society. (Again, reform v. revolution.)
7. Fear of power. Must make a distinction between a revolutionary organization seeking power from power corruptly wielded by capitalists.
8. Failure to develop unity on a correct analysis (national question and class question) resulted in failure to resolve the problem of the role of whites in SNCC.

Lacking a clear understanding of the economic basis of racism and class exploitation, blacks react to whites as the enemy. Racism of "revolutionary" whites fuels the distrust that black people have in whites.

Ideological debate on this question remained on a low level ("Marx is white and thus has nothing to tell blacks") because it was waged in a theoretical vacuum.

9. People must learn from their own experience, and the study of revolutionary theory can quicken the pace and sharpen conceptualization.

10. Liberalism is the refusal to engage in principled ideological struggle inside and outside of a revolutionary organization. True revolutionaries will struggle to eliminate all forms of liberalism (e.g., backbiting and lack of principled criticism/self-criticism; letting people drift in and out of meetings; trying to give equal weight to everyone's opinion; consensus decision-making in a stage where it allows tyranny of a minority) from their social practice. Liberalism is a very destructive tendency, resulting in tyranny of the minority and negation of leadership as a valuable factor in organization.

11. Failure to exert leadership.

It is important for leadership to analyze, share its experience with others in an organized way, and develop long-range plans. The primary functions of leadership are (a) to review the big picture and come up with suggestions for the organization's direction; and (b) develop strong revolutionaries by sharing experience and information and by the constant process of political education.

SNCC early developed an aversion to the "great leader" syndrome of other organizations. What was born as an affirmation became a simplistic negation of all leadership.

Leadership must fight for what it wants. Leadership is always in the minority if it is planning correctly; leadership's job is to convince others of the correctness of its position.

12. The class nature of an organization is the fundamental contradiction within all revolutionary movements. To be revolutionary, an organization must place the power in the hands of the poor and working class.

13. The organizer's role is to instill political education toward forming basic forms of organization and programs to achieve political power. (Education/organization/power)

14. Fund- raising is a political act. A revolutionary organization cannot be maintained without establishing a means of supporting it.



15. Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were the culmination of the disappearance generally of segregation and voting discrimination, these only gave way to new methods of depriving black people of political power (e.g., economic intimidation of voters, bribery, and vote fraud).

D. SNCC'S TRANSFORMATION TO ARMED STRUGGLE [Note: the substance of this section needs to be re-analyzed and modified accordingly, in light of our brief discussion.]

[26] [27] "Cosmopolitan" Black Power advocates v. "Local" Black Power advocates

Cosmopolitans: young, well-educated from North; emphasis on redefining "black".

Locals: life-long residents of Mississippi. To them, Black Power slogan was an appealing alternative method of struggle for longstanding political and economic objectives.

This contradiction emerged during the Mississippi march protesting the shooting of James Meredith. The locals were the DA and the cosmopolitans the rising aspect.

[14] [ 7] Moderate civil rights organizations (SCLC and NAACP) v. SNCC

During Mississippi march, SNCC introduced "Black Power" as a slogan with mass appeal; King objected to it as "an unfortunate choice of words." Competition between SNCC and SCLC heightened.

[26] [27] SNCC: reactionary nationalists (rhetoric) v. political revolutionaries (class analysis and programs)

Reactionary nationalists: purely racial analysis. Reject Marxism as by whites for whites.

Atlanta Project staff: Used issue of white participation in SNCC as weapon in struggle over strategy and control. They continuously challenged the "racial loyalty" of SNCC's leaders. When the struggle deteriorated to their expropriation of SNCC property and issuing threats, the Atlanta Project staff was expelled. Forman: "There's a limit to how much a serious organization can allow people to disrupt the normal functioning of their business."

Carmichael joined ranks of reactionary nationalists during this period. Carmichael's militant nationalist rhetoric, which was interpreted as SNCC's position, made SNCC vulnerable to external attack.

Political revolutionaries: struggling to establish and sustain programs. Their goal: to encourage black people to form a national black political party dealing with both racial oppression and class exploita-

tion. Open to building class alliances between poor blacks and other oppressed groups. Struggling to develop workable programs to consolidate its gains in the Southern civil rights struggle.

By advancing the slogan "Black Power," SNCC stimulated debate over nationalism v. class analysis. But by its failure to resolve the conflict between these competing strategies, SNCC failed to assert leadership on this issue.

[20] [21] SNCC: white civil rights workers v. black civil rights workers

Reactionary nationalists forced the expulsion of whites from SNCC in Dec. 1966, wearing down opposition from SNCC leadership by attrition.

[28] [29] SNCC: individualism -- cult of personality (Carmichael) v. organizational discipline (Central Committee)

Carmichael: developed an exclusively racial analysis. Violated organizational discipline: unauthorized trips, unauthorized statements misrepresenting SNCC's position.

SNCC: Replaced Carmichael with H. Rap Brown as SNCC chairman in May 1967, because of his apparent ability to exercise restraint in public statements and to help develop effective urban programs.

SNCC: expelled Carmichael in July 1968 (last straw was his involvement in BPP, despite the threats it had made against SNCC). SNCC's mistake: did not raise ideological struggle and enforce discipline more decisively; and failed to organize the energy Carmichael galvanized.

[13] [7] Liberal/labor establishment v. SNCC

SNCC took pro-Palestinian position, which alienated Jewish liberal support.

SNCC willingly had relinquished the undependable but vital buffer between itself and the forces of the State. Without their support of SNCC, Congress easily passed legislation making it a federal crime to cross state lines to incite riot (July 1967).

[11] [7] Federal poverty programs--cooptation v. SNCC

Velvet glove: recruitment of students into federal poverty programs (with limited success).

SNCC: lacking financial resources to pay staff sufficient wages.

[10A] [7] FBI -- COINTELPRO v. SNCC

FBI: During summer 1967 placed SNCC on COINTELPRO list. "The giant awakens." Informants, agents, surveillance, harassment, psychological warfare, disruption.

SNCC: While SNCC had practiced low level of security, it could not meet the level of disruption dished out by the FBI.



[16] [ 7] Black Panther Party v. SNCC

BPP: Base was young urban blacks, a base to which SNCC had been trying to reach. BPP looked to SNCC for its administrative and organizing skills. BPP: poor administration; lack of internal security; authoritarianism and male chauvinism.

SNCC: Split between Carmichael and Forman played itself out in this alliance. BPP elevated Carmichael, feeding his opportunism (while in disunity with his cultural nationalism); Forman and SNCC leadership critical of BPP and willing only to establish limited alliance rather than merger as pushed by BPP.

Result: SNCC/BPP split, nearly reaching level of physical violence. SNCC's mistake: not clearly defining the nature and scope of any alliance between organizations, thoroughly analyzing both aspects.

P.C.: [26] [27] (700)

Reactionary Black Power v. Revolutionary Black Power  
Bourgeois individualism v. SNCC's failure to promote working class leadership within the organization and its failure to consolidate the power SNCC had acquired in the South.

Features: Low morale -- experienced staff resigned or expelled.  
Ruthless repression (e.g. legal paralysis of Rap Brown) and assassination (Ralph Featherstone and Che Payne).  
After resignation, SNCC leadership summarizing experience in the form of books (in particular, Forman).  
Other aspects of the revolutionary movement in the U.S. are built on the legacy of SNCC.  
SNCC's increased militancy represented a shifting of its base of power; it also hurt SNCC's fund-raising.

Lessons:

1. "Black Power" slogan was a concept pointing the way to revolutionary ideology, representing a new form of resistance (especially in urban areas) and a new stage in the black liberation struggle. But Black Power was not defined adequately at that time (again, due to a theoretical vacuum in SNCC), and thus the door was left open to opportunists to define the slogan any way they chose.  
Black Power slogan drew press attacks, cooptation, repression and disruption (COINTELPRO), and IRS harassment.
2. "Decolonization is the veritable creation of new men . . . the 'thing' which has been colonized becomes man during the same process by which it frees itself." [Fanon]
3. The first step in nationalism is to view the cause of colonialization as purely racial. Understanding must be broadened to class analysis; failure to do so renders us

unable to guard against reactionary nationalism.

4. Laziness. Rhetoric is not a substitute for day to day work with the masses.
5. Organizational security measures and open and closed forms of organization are essential methods of protecting revolutionaries from the State sabotaging their work.
6. "Revolution unfolds in many stages and many people are unable to climb the next rung on the ladder of mounting resistance. They jump off, go backward, or are crushed beneath the pressure of those willing to escalate the tempo." [Forman]
7. SNCC failed to organize the energy that Carmichael and the Black Power slogan generated. The emerging issue: Can SNCC transform itself into the builder of a mass black political party?

NEXT: HOW SNCC'S LESSONS WERE APPLIED & FURTHER DEVELOPED IN C.O.

Two concepts:

- 1) CO represented social practice in organizing white political activists, and in particular organizing whites under black proletarian leadership.
- 2) The CO provided the opportunity to develop the process of ideological transformation of white and middle class elements.

[More to come.]