

Report to the NEC on the SSOC National Convention, May 10, 1967

by Charlie B.

The Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC) met at Buckeye Cove, North Carolina, on May 6-7. Attendance ranged from 75-80 during the two days. Most of the people present were students.

SSOC can best be characterized as the southern counterpart of SDS, although the two groups have no formal ties as yet. SSOC is generally more moderate in its political orientation and is much smaller than SDS, with 125-175 members. There are SSOC chapters in Nashville, Atlanta, Memphis, Florida, Virginia, and North Carolina. The biggest chapter is in Atlanta, numbering about 30 people.

SSOC is predominantly a white, middle class organization. Many SSOC people feel frustrated about SNCC's orientation of building an all black organization. They don't understand the reasons behind this concept and feel a desire to find ways in which they can work with all black organizations. SSOC seems to have little knowledge of or relationship with SNCC.

SSOC had two major projects during the last year. One was a folk concert that went from campus to campus in the south passing out SSOC literature and raising money. The second was a traveling peace caravan that went from campus to campus in Florida.

Local chapters like the one in Atlanta have also carried out consistent antiwar work.

There were two major political points discussed at the conference:

- 1) How to organize students on the campus. This discussion was devoted mainly to student power issues.
- 2) How SSOC could relate to labor. A proposal was passed to give money to support organizers for the Southern Labor Action Movement, a small group of trade unionists who want to start a trade union organizing effort in the south and who are hostile and want to dump the leadership of the existing unions.

A proposal to set up a regional office in Florida was passed.

There was some discussion of SSOC merging with SDS, but this met with the disapproval of most SSOC people, primarily because they thought SSOC would lose its tax exempt status.

SSOC is funded primarily by a number of foundations, receiving about \$40,000 a year. There was some discussion on exactly where this money came from and where it went, but there were no clear

answers given. They have seven people on full time as organizers and publish a mimeographed bulletin entitled The New South Student.

The new officers of SSOC are Tom Gardner, President, and Nick Levin, Vice President.

Representatives of national YSA, PL, DuBois Club and SDS spoke at the conference, each outlining their general political perspective, and the YSA sold literature. A fair number of SSOC people were friendly to the YSA.

The address of The New South Student is Box 6403, Nashville, Tennessee, 37212. Subscriptions are \$3.00 per year.