

FOREWORD

One of the basic weapons in the fight against prejudice and loss of human rights is education. The fine edge on that weapon is understanding. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference Citizenship program is designed to acquaint citizens with the way in which our government is run and to help them meet voting requirements. It is devoted to helping adults help themselves by learning how to solve their community problems. Reading and writing skills are invaluable in such a program. The Citizenship School is so organized that those who lack these skills may acquire them. It is in these ways that we strive to improve the lot of all citizens and extend the boundaries of democracy and full freedom for all.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Dr. King and S.C.L.C. Vice-President, Dr. C. O. Simpkins confer with Attorney General Kennedy on voting problems in the Deep South.

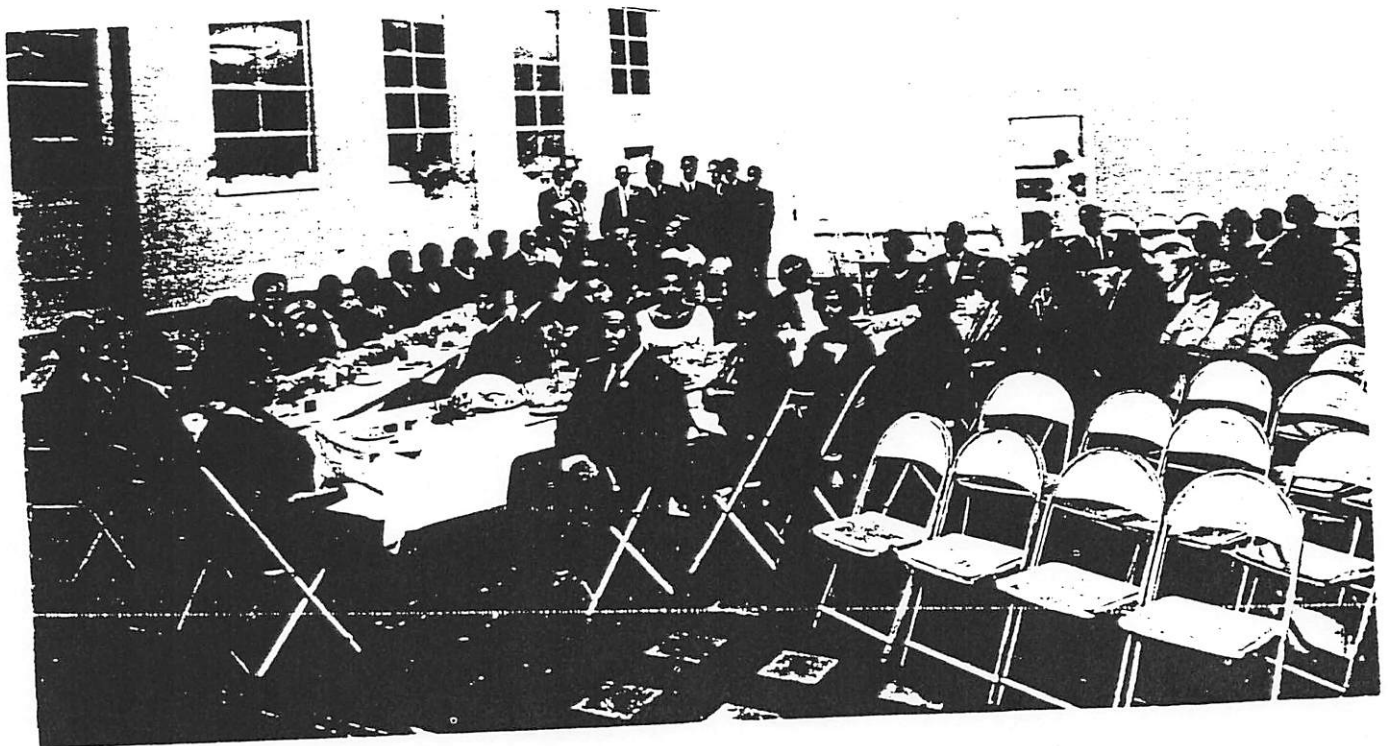


The Purpose of the Citizenship School

The Citizenship Schools are for adults. Their immediate program is literacy. They enable students to pass literacy tests for voting. There is also involved in the mechanics of learning to read and write an all-round education in community development which includes housing, recreation, health, and improved home life. Specific subjects are emphasized such as safe driving, social security, cooperatives, the income tax, an understanding of tax-supported resources such as water testing for wells and aid for handicapped children, and the structure and function of our local and national government.

The Citizenship Schools provide a service to the people which is not available through any other private or public program at the present time.

They are open to all people of a community who face problems related to first-class citizenship and want to do something about them.



THE CITIZENSHIP SCHOOL

Underlying the whole concept of political, economic and social progress is the importance of education.

A little over two years ago, SCLC took over the Highlander experiment in Basic Adult Education, the Citizenship School, and began to spread the idea across the South. By the end of February, 1964, more than 1,000 persons had received one week of intensified training in adult literacy, methods, and basic understanding of politics. They have returned to 11 southern states to share their newly-acquired knowledge with their neighbors.

The strategic importance of the program was evident to the Marshall Field Foundation which chose the American Missionary Association of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to administer the project in conjunction with SCLC. The Rev. Andrew J. Young, a minister of the United Church of Christ, was chosen to direct the program at Dorchester Community Center in McIntosh, Georgia.

The economic situation is a major key to the reason why voter-registration, with all of its restrictions, is crucial, and why the program is needed.

For instance, from 1619-1865 the Negro had no right to his own person. Legally, he was owned. Physical kinship was not talked about but was implied. He planted the richest land, but the planter took away from him the profit motive and suggested that he be satisfied with the sheer poetry of earth itself. He mixed with this earth his blood, sweat and tears, his dreams, fancies, joy and despair. He loved it and hated it more than we, the "new Negro," will ever know.

The long furrows, shade trees—under which the babies slept in boxes exposed to flies, gnats, mosquitoes, and even snakes—myrtie thickets, hot, high pine barrens, cool water from the spring, or cold water sweetened with molasses from the jug in the high cotton were his and were the sweetest things left to him. He had to live close to the earth, close to life, which was really close to death.

From 1865-1876 constructive attempts were made to raise Negroes to a better standard. After the Civil War an election brought in a new era. A new president pulled the troops out of the South. The Ku Klux Klan took over and a reign of terror ensued.

The next seven decades showed little improvement, but gave impetus to President Harry S. Truman's decision for Civil Rights in 1946. Two World Wars took Negroes, regardless of training, to foreign lands. There they bled and died, keeping America "safe for democracy". There they learned of a new way of life.

Back home from 1946-1964, they understood what the cross means, whole-souled commitment, laying one's life on the line, one's body in the jailhouse, the Great Prophets, and the ideal of social justice; but, they needed education to become an active part of their community, to prove their human worth, and to show their discontent nonviolently.

The Citizenship Education Program *lighted a lamp* and its rays guided the depressed and distraught to a new kind of school, a new approach to learning. It extracted learning from their experiences. The adults determined the educational goals, planned the techniques and applied them. The central focus is on meeting the here-and-now-educational needs of the students by "helping people help themselves".

PLANNING A VOTER REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN

A good citizen must be a registered voter. But the job does not stop there. We cannot rest until every citizen is a registered voter. You have been helped to register through this citizenship course. It is now your turn to help your neighbors. Plan a registration drive for your neighborhood or community:

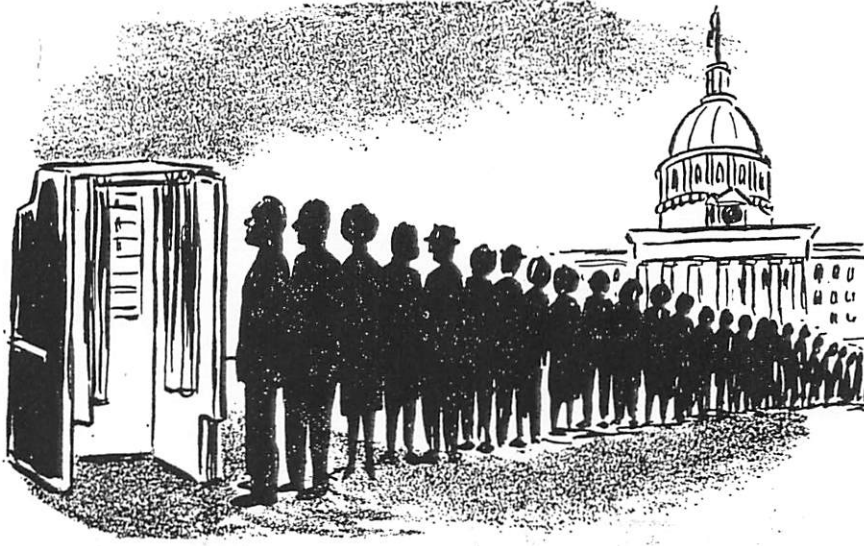
1. Select a Site (neighborhood or town)_____
2. What is the size of the Negro population?_____
3. Number of Registered Voters_____
4. Number of Negroes of Voting age_____
5. How many can we get to register?_____
6. During what period of time? (State dates)_____
7. Area of Concentration_____
8. Number of Volunteer Workers needed to cover area_____
9. Organizations to take part in the drive._____

(churches, voter's leagues, youth groups, clubs)

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR A BLOCK PARTY

Have a meeting at your home to help your neighbors to understand the importance of voting, how to register, and where to register.

1. Invite every adult on your street, from corner to corner (In rural communities, select all houses within walking distance) to come to your home for an evening of information and fellowship.
2. Have Voter Registration information and material on hand.
3. Have someone there who can talk on why, how and where to register.
4. Following speaker, have a discussion on some of your community problems and how voting can help solve them.
5. Tell why your block should have 100% voters.
6. Plan a meeting for the next week to give help to each other. (If possible, arrange to start a Citizenship School.)
7. Plan trips to take people down to register when they are ready.
8. Have someone contact the persons who did not show up at the meeting.



Let's Teach New Voters

The News commented Friday on the President's signature of the new federal voting bill that it is now law, it will presumably be enforced, and it will not be possible to ignore it.

This paper also observed that the challenge now is to make the best of this situation involving federal opening of the door to registration of who knows how many. The number may be less than some have thought. But no one can tell how many persons now will appear for registration.

It is certain, from national civil rights leaders' statements, that they will keep pressure on federal government to register many more Negroes.

President Johnson made clear his insistence on more registration of Negro voters.

Each Southern state therefore has a specific question to ask itself:

What shall we do to insure that the expanded electorate will be as capable as possible of voting intelligently?

Alabama could perform a splendid service for itself, for all its people, and in so doing could demonstrate a maximum state and local government responsibility as a consequence of this federally-enacted voting bill.

It is certainly no secret that many Negro registrants are not properly qualified through literacy or ability to understand governmental structure. They do not, therefore, adequately know what is their responsibility as voters.

The cause for this is multiple. As regards some middle-aged or older Negro prospective voters, past school system failures may contribute to inadequate educational level, to failure to have learned sufficiently about government.

A lot of the failure undoubtedly is easily traceable to home environment, which in many cases is not at all conducive even to younger children learning those lessons offered them in school.

Some inadequacy is obviously traceable to individual failure to want to learn, a kind of hopelessness or laziness among some Negroes.

Whatever the causes, the State of Alabama is faced with the job of protecting its government through producing an electorate which is as well-informed as possible.

We very well may need, here in this state, what amounts to a "crash program" of instructing immediately prospective voters, registered or planning to register, and assuring that future registrants from the Negro population are adequately informed as to government.

Throughout Alabama we have seen how numerous communities have responded to the "Operation Head Start" program made possible for pre-schoolers through the "anti-poverty program" set up by the federal government. Perhaps through the Office of Economic Opportunity, or through state-financed and supervised educational offices, a program might be started to make instruction as to government available to prospective adult Negro registrants or any already registered who want to use the special instruction program.

It ought not be enough to leave such a program to Negroes of the civil rights movements. This should seem a legitimate state concern.

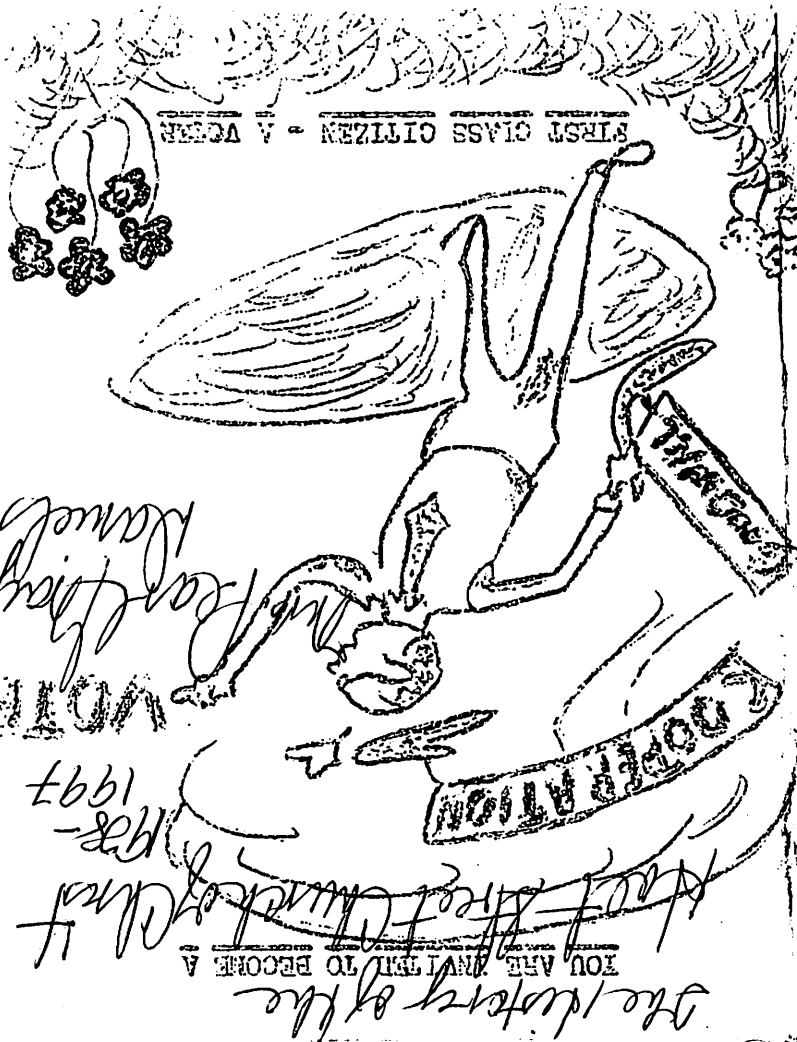
There are numerous established Alabama Negro educators at several school levels whose services could be invited and used by state officials, both in planning and implementation.

What is needed is a basic short course in federal, state and local government. What are a President's duties, senators', representatives'? What is a governor's duty? What does a state legislature do? What is a mayor, what's his job? What do councilmen or commissioners do?

Such a program could be basically simple. It could use visual aids such as films or TV. It could be embraced in an illustrated state-prepared text. Surely college or university personnel could turn out such a "handbook of government" confined to basics in short order.

There are dramatic possibilities in this. More importantly, every official and citizen of Alabama should recognize the need. These new registrants under federal and/or state law are going to be voting, and perhaps in the many thousands, quite soon.

Dare we risk weakening the informational level of the electorate? It is past time to lament. Now Alabama needs statesmanlike preparation.



PLEASE Come to a

VOTER'S

INSTRUCTION CLINIC

PLACE: *Home's Auditorium*

TIME: July 11, 7:00 Clock P.M.

FREE REFRESHMENTS

PLEASE BE ON TIME

GIFT FROM MRS. PEARL GRAY DANIELS
2/25/99

SYSTEM

TO
BE

ADD 174

一、二、三、四、五、六、七、八、九、十、十一、十二、十三、十四、十五、十六、十七、十八、十九、二十、二十一、二十二、二十三、二十四、二十五、二十六、二十七、二十八、二十九、三十、三十一、三十二、三十三、三十四、三十五、三十六、三十七、三十八、三十九、四十、四十一、四十二、四十三、四十四、四十五、四十六、四十七、四十八、四十九、五十、五十一、五十二、五十三、五十四、五十五、五十六、五十七、五十八、五十九、六十、六十一、六十二、六十三、六十四、六十五、六十六、六十七、六十八、六十九、七十、七十一、七十二、七十三、七十四、七十五、七十六、七十七、七十八、七十九、八十、八十一、八十二、八十三、八十四、八十五、八十六、八十七、八十八、八十九、九十、九十一、九十二、九十三、九十四、九十五、九十六、九十七、九十八、九十九、一百。

THE MORE WE WALK TOGETHER, TOGETHER,
TOGETHER
THE MORE WE WALK TOGETHER, THE HAPPIER
WE'LL BE.
FOR YOUR FRIENDS ARE MY FRIENDS,
AND MY FRIENDS ARE YOUR FRIENDS,
THE MORE WE WALK TOGETHER, THE HAPPIER
WE'LL BE.

TOGETHER - TOGETHER

A NON-VOTER'S YELL


$$V = 0 = T = E$$

THAT'S THE WAY TO SPELL IT
AND
HERE'S THE WAY TO YELL IT

VOTE! VOTE!

WE ARE GOING TO

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!