### **Civil Rights Movement Veterans**

"We who believe in freedom cannot rest," — Ella Baker

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### Published in *Freedomways*. Author cannot be located.

#### Seige at Savannah by Benjamin Van Clark

(Ben Clark (21) is Chairman of the Youth Division of the Chatham County Crusade for Voters.)

#### Originally published in Freedomways, 1st Quarter, 1964

Savannah, Georgia, a city whose Negro population numbers 70,000, is on the border of the Savannah River. Today its economic life is at its lowest ebb; industry just doesn't move into this city as it does into other cities. However, until 1960, the Negroes and whites had experienced good working relations. The only difficulty we had in dealing with the problems of the city was trying to get through to the city fathers.

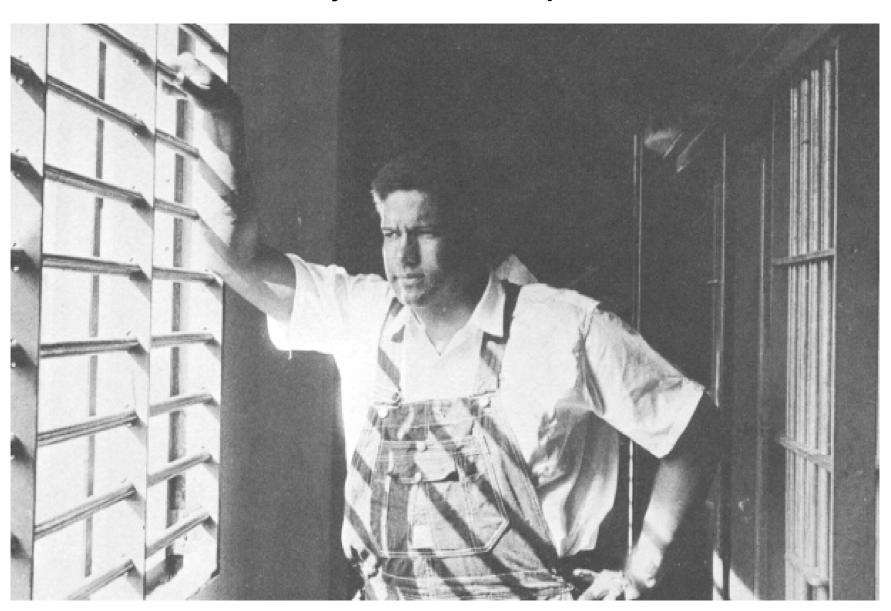
However, in 1960, the Movement started that was to change the historical viewpoints. Some eighty students marched through the streets of Savannah, on March 16, in the first in a series of demonstrations in Georgia. The Movement began to pick up momentum almost immediately because this was new to the Negro's experience in Savannah and it lasted for about six months. Then it fell apart after the successful desegregation of the lunch counters. The Negroes began to drift back into their seemingly nonchalant life.

Hosea Williams, a leading citizen, said that something should be done to bring more awareness to the political life of Savannah; so they organized the Chatham County Crusade for Voters — the organization that was to deal with voter registration and political aspects

# Mississippi Freedom Summer. Photographer unknown.



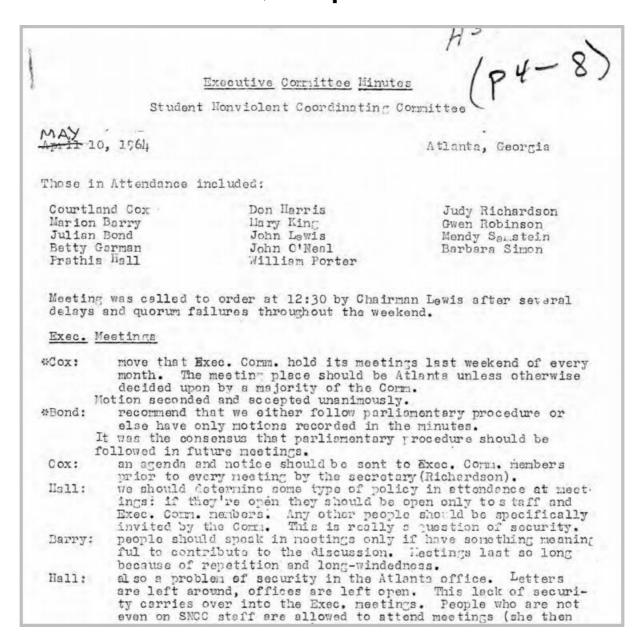
### James Forman SNCC Executive Secretary. Photo by unknown prisoner.



## Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) "Snick."

- Founded ~ 1960
- Student Sit-ins ~ 1960-1961
- Freedom Rides ~ 1961
- Voter-Registration, MS, AL, GA ~ 1962-1965
- Freedom Summer ~ 1964
- Selma & March to Montgomery ~ 1965
- Black Power ~ 1966-1968
- Dissolution ~ 1969-1970

### SNCC Executive Committee Minutes, May 1964. Internal, unpublished.



# Unsigned, unpublished memo about organizational breakdown in SNCC.

March 1, 1967

said that the matter and the said of the said to be said.

Dear Staff

It is constantly amazing how the so-called lines of authority operate in this organization.

Once, I thought people were sincere when they voted to give this organization a new structure. People were given more authority in order to help us function better.

All I want to know is what happened?

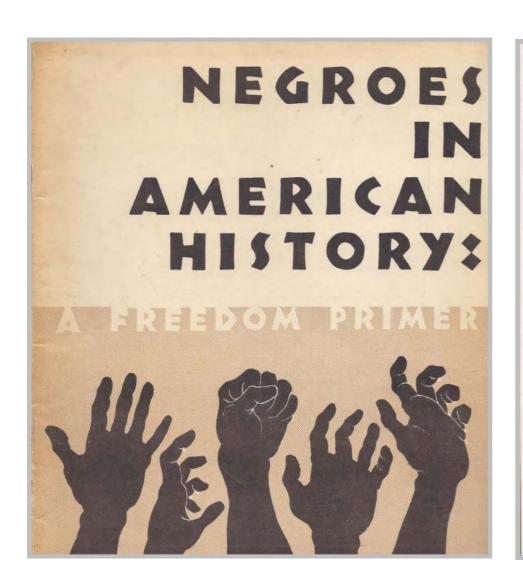
What is it/makes us decide, vote and assign people to carry out decisions and those decisions are started but never finished. We, myself especially, are getting very tired of trying to bear up under so much pressure.

Those in authority wait until a crisis situation becomes an impossible situation before they deal with it. There are people on staff who should be made to take a rest and our officers know who those persons are, but as usual, the situation must first become a desperate one before any action is taken.

Offices are closed, equipment and other supplies are lost... Why? Because there are no defined rules of how those offices should be closed and the equipment confiscated. If defined rules do exist, and we just don't know about them, then those assigned that job have definitely been lax.

People are fired, but they might as well not be. They continue to work inside the organization. What are the defined rules around that and who is supposed to be implementing the decisions about people who have been put off staff.

### SNCC copyright. Authors dead or missing.



The movement is someimes called a "Negro Revotution." What is a revolution? Was the American Revolution like the freedom novement today?

So they wrote the Declaration of Independence. It said that all men were equal and that men should not be controlled by other men. Many of the people who signed the declaration also owned slaves. Some of them felt that Negroes should be free. But many of them thought that freedom was for whites only.

IN THE DAYS before the war, Boston was one of the towns where British soldiers stayed. The soldiers' coats were red so the people called them "redcoats." The people and the soldiers hated each other and they would often have small fights.

One day there was a bad fist fight between some soldiers and town people. When everybody heard about it the next day, they were very angry. Many of them went out into the streets to wait for something to happen. One little boy got hit over the head by an angry soldier. The people picked up rocks and sticks and marched up to where the soldiers stayed.

The leader of the people that day was a tall, strong Negro named Crispus Attucks. He was a runaway slave who had become a sailor. He stood in front of the people and told them the soldiers would not dare to shoot. The people shouted at the redcoats, "Shoot and be damned!"

A soldier shot into the air to scare the people away. They didn't have tear gas and cattle prods in those days. Instead of running away, the people threw rocks at the soldiers. The angry soldiers started shooting at the people. Crispus Attucks fell to the ground, killed by a soldier's bullet. Then the people attacked the soldiers with stones and sticks. They were too mad to care about bullets

Finally the soldiers backed away and the fighting stopped. Four Americans lay dead in the