

SNCC Friends Told Ballot New Weapon

"The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee is employing a 'new' weapon in its fight for human rights: The ballot," said Cordell Reagon, SNCC field secretary, at a meeting of the Friends of SNCC last night in the Troy YWCA.

Granville Hicks of Crafton president of the Friends, introduced Reagon, who has been in the Troy Area the last week on an extensive lecture tour to raise funds for the SNCC Negro voter registration drive in the south.

Reagon traced the history of SNCC from the early part of 1960 when many students in the South began the restaurant sit-in movement.

Protest Not Enough

Leaders of the movement met that year in Raleigh, N. C., to form a coordinating organization for various campus groups.

It was then, Reagon said, workers realized that mere protest could do no more than arouse futile hope in the Negro community. More powerful weapons were at hand: Education and the vote.

The 21-year-old field secretary, who has taken the last several years off from his education to work with SNCC, spoke of the many difficulties the movement has faced in the South. He recounted events of the "Freedom Day" in Jackson, Ala., when 450 Negroes showed up at the polls to register. In a full day, he said, only 23 were processed.

Reagon noted that political pressure is one of the few logical answers to the problem of integration in the United States. He said the Negro community must deal with politicians, from the President on down, as politicians rather than as friends.

"Set an Example"

Following the program one of the group of nearly 40 predominantly young people present asked if there were anything northerners could do in the fight for integration in the South.

"Yes," Reagon said, "set an example for the South to follow."

Hicks noted that the Friends of SNCC was formed last May, following a visit of the Freedom Singers, of which Reagon was a member, to the Troy Area. Since then the organization has raised enough money to purchase two automobiles for the use of SNCC workers in traveling about the South.