

Radical Rights Group Plots 'Big Things' at Syracuse

BY T. J. MCCARTHY Jr.

Syracuse University's newly and loosely organized affiliate of what has been called the "wildcat" of the civil rights groups, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, has big plans for both the university and the Syracuse area.

This was indicated by co-chairmen Chet Machlin and Steve Katz in a special interview with the Star-Gazette and Advertiser.

Perhaps the most dramatic of these plans is the projected establishment of a Freedom Democratic Party in Syracuse along the lines of the Negro FDP in Mississippi. The SNCC—organized FDP is the most powerful Negro political organization in the South.

Election time is too close at hand to organize Syracuse Negro voters for this year. But the Syracuse Freedom Democratic Club, a subdivision of the Friends of SNCC which has practically the same members, plans a convention of unrepresented peoples in Syracuse next spring.

"The possibilities of a Harlem or a Los Angeles or a Rochester exist wherever there are black ghettos," said graduate student Michael D. Whitty, organizer and adviser of the Friends of SNCC. "I am hoping that SNCC's presence will come at this time."

In this fall's election, the Friends of SNCC will challenge the Democratic power structure, particularly in the 10th and 16th wards.

The Friends of SNCC demonstrated this when they picked Sen. Robert F. Kennedy and other delegates at a recent meeting of the Onondaga County Democratic Club at the Hotel Syracuse. The Friends also picked the home of Syracuse's Democratic mayoral candidate, William Andrews.

The group is convinced that Andrews does not have the best interests of the Negro at heart and feels the Negro problem would worsen should he be elected Mayor of Syracuse.

Members of The Friends also stood in front of Sen. Kennedy's car after the football game between Syracuse and Miami in an attempt to prevent Kennedy from leaving the campus before the Friends had a chance to confer with him.

The Friends of SNCC is part of a system of northern campus extensions of the Southern-based SNCC. The primary purpose of The Friends is educational fund raising for the parent organization. Syracuse University's Friends, however, may take more direct action with permission of Whitty, who has organized an actual chapter of SNCC in Syracuse separate from the Friends of SNCC on campus.

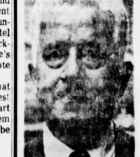
Whitty, holder of a master's degree in history from the University of Michigan, is studying for his doctorate at Syracuse University. He worked in Birmingham, Ala., last summer as a member of the Young Democratic Club and was part of that organization in Washington last April.

Whitty applied with the home office in Atlanta, Ga., to establish the Syracuse SNCC and the Friends of SNCC on campus.

Syracuse SNCC plans to work for the support of freedom schools in Mississippi. The group will work for the educational research project of the National Council for the Study and Research of Negro History, preparing materials for the teaching of Negro history, art and literature.

The Friends of SNCC have signed more than 20 members at Syracuse with 50 additional students listed as interested.

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The Friends will apply to have the organization sanctioned by the university.

Katz and Machlin invited several speakers to the campus for the International Days of Protest. Among them were Sen. Robert Kennedy, Claude Lightfoot and Mario Savio, leader of last year's riots at the University of California at Berkeley, and probably will be investigated soon by the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

Petitions have been circulating on the campus to prevent Lightfoot from appearing because he is a Communist. Should he come, he would be the first Communist to speak formally at Syracuse University.

"The idea," said Machlin, "is to get a complete spectrum of ideas on the issue of civil rights."

The Friends will distribute a weekly newsletter called "The Student Voice" to inform students of their aims and activities.

A recent newsletter contained an article describing a rally at Bircher as long as he works for SNCC's ends," Katz said.

SNCC is often charged with being Communist-dominated and probably will be investigated soon by the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

Machlin and Katz dismiss the charges as ridiculous.

"SNCC is too spontaneous and loosely organized to be dominated by any one force," said Machlin. "To dominate the movement a Communist would first have to dominate each branch office, and there just aren't that many Communists."

Katz said SNCC refuses to deny that it is influenced by communism because there are not doubt several members who have Communist leanings.

"SNCC really doesn't care if a member is a Communist or a Socialist or even a John Birch.

the appearance of an ineffective rights in the South. But these characteristics are typical of the entire SNCC movement, and it is a raggedy, old hand of SNCC workers who have become one of the "shock troops" of the civil rights movement.

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STAR-GAZETTE Elmira, N. Y.
Friday, Oct. 29, 1965 12
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