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BLACK SOUTHERN STUDENT SIT-IN  
MOVEMENT: AN INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE

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NOTE: PERMISSION TO QUOTE INTERVIEW MATERIALS MUST BE OBTAINED FROM THE AUTHOR.

## Black Southern Student Sit-In Movement:

### An Indigenous Perspective

This paper argues that the southern sit-in movement of 1960, though it appears to have developed in the spontaneous manner described by classic collective behavior theory, actually grew out of pre-existing institutions and organizational forms. Moreover, the spread of the sit-ins followed the networks of these pre-existing institutional relationships rather than a process of social contagion. Our data disconfirms the widely accepted claim that outside resources played a crucial role in the sit-ins. It is argued here that factors internal to the Black community, i.e., churches, colleges, protest organizations and leaders were responsible for nurturing and developing the sit-in movement. An "indigenous perspective" which focuses on the processes by which movements emerge from transformed indigenous resources is utilized in this study. Our analysis is based on primary data collected from archives and interviews with over fifty (50) Civil Rights leaders.

## Black Southern Sit-in Movement:

### An Indigenous Perspective

There's never been a nigger born with sense enough to administrate such a thing. (A retired policeman's reflections on the sit-ins: Matthews and Prothro 1966: p. 437: emphasis supplied).

Scholars of the Civil Rights movement (Zinn, 1964; Oppenheimer, 1964; Matthews and Prothro, 1966; Meier and Rudwick, 1973; Oberschall, 1973; McAdam, 1979) and Civil Rights activists are agreed that the black Southern student sit-in movement of 1960 was a crucial event. Indeed, the sit-ins pumped new life into the Civil Rights movement and enabled it to win unprecedented victories. Moreover, the sit-ins exercised a profound tactical and strategic influence over the entire course of social and political upheavals of the 1960's.

Apart from having a jarring impact on race relations, the sit-ins signaled the possibility of militant action at both Northern and Southern white campuses (Haber, 1966; Obeare, 1970; Sale, 1973). Moreover, a critical mass of the early leaders of the white student movement, acquired much of their training, organizing skills, and tactics from black activists involved with the student sit-in movement (Sale, 1973; Westby, 1976). Thus, the beginning of the white student movement as well as the quickened pace of Civil Rights activity can be traced to the black student sit-in movement.

The sit-in movement is thought to have begun February 1, 1960. Following the "initial" sit-ins, they spread at an extremely rapid rate. In an extensive study, the Southern Regional Council (1960) reported that between February 1 and March 31 of 1960, major sit-in demonstrations had been conducted in at least sixty-nine (69)

Southern cities. Table I depicts the number of cities, by states, where sit-ins and related protest activity occurred within the first two months.<sup>1</sup>

(Table I here)

The purpose of this paper is to present an original interpretation of the sit-ins by presenting new data and theoretical arguments. In the course of the analysis a number of commonly held assumptions regarding social movements in general, and the sit-in movement in particular, will be challenged.

The central issues addressed are the origins of the sit-ins and their rapid spread across the South at a phenomenal rate during the first two months. Other issues such as strategy and rationality will be addressed as the analysis develops. Although the analysis will focus on the first two months of the sit-ins, it will not be limited exclusively to this period.

#### Data

At this stage of the art, social movement scholars have been unable to establish a battery of sound theoretical and empirical generalizations regarding social movements. Yet, most scholars continue to pursue strategies that are consonant with "armchair" or "ivory tower" sociology. It may well be that some of the theoretical impasses of social movement research could be overcome by the use of primary data.

This study of the sit-ins is a small part of a much larger study on the origins of the Civil Rights movement.<sup>2</sup> A substantial part of the data for the entire study were collected from primary sources--archives and interviews with Civil Rights participants.

The archival research was conducted at various sites between May and September of 1978.<sup>3</sup> At the archival sites, thousands of original documents (i.e. memoranda, letters, field reports, organizational histories and directives,

interorganizational correspondences, etc.) that were generated by the participants during the movement, were examined. This data contained a wealth of rich information pertaining to key variables--organization, mobilization, finance, rationality, spontaneity, etc.--relevant to the study of movements.

Interviews with participants of the movement constituted the second source of primary data. To date, in-depth interviews with over fifty (50) Civil Rights leaders have been conducted. First, the interviews made it possible to follow-up on many intriguing issues raised by the archival data. Second, since these interviews were semi-open-ended, they revealed unexpected insights into the movement. Whenever statements were heard that seemed novel or promising, the interviewee was given freedom to speak his piece. Many valuable accounts of the movement were collected in this manner.

#### Method

The strategy for the archival research was straight-forward. The researcher examined every document possible within the time allocated for a particular site.<sup>4</sup> It was theoretical concerns, however, that guided the archival search. That is, the main objective was to explore the role that variables associated with the theories of collective behavior, Weber, and resource mobilization, played in the sit-ins. The archival materials were interpreted against these approaches.

Several strategies were employed in the interview process. First, it was decided that the researcher should learn as much as possible about the movement before conducting interviews. Thus, extensive library and archival research was performed. This prior knowledge enables the interviewer to ask specific questions and to assist the interviewees in rooting their memories squarely in the social, temporal, and geographical context of their actions of twenty years ago. Prior knowledge enabled the interviewer to gain the intellectual respect of the interviewee, thus increasing the possibility that they would approach the interview with integrity and seriousness.

Second, the interviews were semi-structured, usually lasting two to three hours. An extended list of questions structured around the variables used in the archival research were formulated beforehand. The interviewees were instructed to feel free to deviate from the questions and to discuss what they thought to be important. Their "diversions" produced new information.

Finally, the interview sample was assembled in two ways. While examining the archival material, the names of leaders (most of whom the researcher had never heard about) associated with various activities, turned up constantly. These were the initial individuals who were contacted for interviews. Once the interview process was underway the interviewees, often in response to queries, would invariably remark, "you know, you really should speak to 'so and so' regarding that matter." Subsequent interviews were arranged with many of these individuals. Thus, the snowball effect played a key role in the sampling process. Clearly, the sample is not random. However, those activists interviewed came from numerous organizations and represented different, if not conflicting, viewpoints. Still, to our surprise, they were in agreement on many basic issues.

Is the data valid and reliable? Given that the sit-in movement occurred twenty years ago, it is quite reasonable to wonder if the interview accounts are valid since the passage of time might have dimmed or even distorted the memory of the participants. Related to the problems associated with reconstructed accounts is the suspicion that participants might have vested interests in presenting the "facts" in such a way as to enhance their own status. It is contended here that neither of these potential trouble spots produced any fundamental defects in the data.

The problems of accuracy of memory and vested interest have been minimized because the analysis is not based on any one source. Rather, it is built on evidence from an array of published material, archival sources, and accounts of multiple individuals who participated in and eye-witnessed the same events. Furthermore,

cross references were made throughout the data collection process. Follow-up phone calls were made to interviewees to clear up ambiguity and to obtain a comprehensive view of the sit-in movement. Finally, confidence in the data stems from the fact that information gathered from diverse sources seems to point, unequivocally, to the existence of a structural pattern and logic which undergirded the movement from city to city.

#### Early Sit-ins: Forerunners

The first misleading idea regarding the sit-in movement is that it started in Greensboro, North Carolina February 1, 1960. To the contrary, the present research has documentation that in at least fifteen cities--St. Louis, Missouri; Wichita and Kansas City, Kansas; Oklahoma City, Enid, Tulsa and Stillwater, Oklahoma; Lexington and Louisville, Kentucky; Miami, Florida; Charleston, West Virginia; Sumter, South Carolina; East St. Louis, Illinois; Nashville, Tennessee; and Durham, North Carolina--civil rights activists had conducted sit-ins between 1957 and 1960.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the sit-ins did not start in Greensboro. The Greensboro sit-ins are important because they represent a unique link in a long chain of previous sit-ins. This paper will concentrate on the ways in which the Greensboro link was unique. First, however, attention must be focused on the similarity of activities in the entire chain.

Other studies (Southern Regional Council, 1960; Oppenheimer, 1964; Matthews and Prothro, 1966; Meier and Rudwick, 1973) haven't totally overlooked these earlier sit-ins. However, they fail to group them, reveal their scope, connections, and extensive organizational base. More specifically, it is contended that these early sit-ins occurred because of: 1) an organizational base; 2) community support; 3) the efforts of established leaders; 4) rational planning; and 5) the availability of existing indigenous resources.

The early sit-ins were initiated by militant direct action organizations. From interviews with some of the early participants (Moore, 1978; McCain, 1978; Lawson,

1978; Smith, 1978; McKissick, 1978, 1979; Luper, 1981; Randolph, 1981; Lewis, 1981) and published works (Southern Regional Council, 1960; Meier and Rudwick, 1973) it was found that Civil Rights organizations initiated sit-ins in fourteen of the fifteen cities we have identified. Thus, we are not using selective cases to demonstrate the point. NAACP, primarily its Youth Councils, either initiated or co-initiated sit-ins in nine of the fifteen cities. CORE, usually working jointly with the NAACP, played an important initiating role in seven of the fifteen cities. The SCLC initiated one case and was involved in another. Finally, the Durham Committee on Negro Affairs, working with the NAACP, initiated sit-ins in that city. From this data, we can conclude that these early sit-ins were a result of a multi-faceted organizational effort.

The data revealed that these sit-ins received substantial backing from their respective communities. It was the black church that served as the major institutional force behind the sit-ins. Over two decades ago, E. Franklin Frazier argued that, "for the Negro masses, in their social and moral isolation in American society, the Negro church community has been a nation within a nation" (Frazier, 1963:49). He went on to argue that the church functioned as the central political arena in black society. Frazier, pointed out that it is this institution that plays the predominant role in structuring and organizing the black masses. Nearly all of the direct action organizations that initiated these early sit-ins were closely associated with the church. The church supplied these organizations with a mass communication system, a safe environment in which to hold political meetings, leaders, organized masses, finances, and music. The direct action organizations clung to the church because their survival depended on it.

This does not mean that all black churches supported the sit-ins. Yet, a significant number did. They often supported this activity in a critical but "invisible" manner. Thus, Mrs. Clara Luper, the organizer of the 1958 Oklahoma City sit-ins,

wrote that the black church did not want to get involved so church leaders told us, "we could meet in their churches. They would take up a collection for us and make announcements concerning our worthwhile activities" (Luper, 1979:3). This "covert" role was central. Activists interviewed for this study revealed that clusters of churches were usually directly involved with the sit-ins. In addition to community support via the churches, these activists also received support from those parents whose children were participating in demonstrations.

Next, these sit-ins were organized by established leaders of the black community. These leaders did not spontaneously arise out of a crisis situation. They were organizational actors in the full sense of the word. It was not unusual to find that a sit-in leader was also a church leader, taught school, and headed up the local direct action organization. In fact, these extensive organizational linkages provided them with blocs of individuals who served as demonstrators. Clara Luper has written: The fact that I was teaching American History at Dungee High School in Spencer, Oklahoma and was a member of the First Street Baptist Church furnished me with an ample number of young people who would become the nucleus of the Youth Council (Luper, 1979:1).

Mrs. Luper's case is not an isolated one. It is safe to say that the leaders of the early sit-ins were enmeshed in organizational networks and were tied squarely to the black community.

Rational planning was at the heart of this early wave of sit-ins. Several concrete examples will substantiate this claim. During the late fifties, Revs. James Lawson and Kelly Miller Smith, operating under the auspices of their direct action organization--Nashville Christian Leadership Council--formed what they called a nonviolent workshop. In these workshops, Lawson meticulously taught local college students the strategies and tactics of non-violent protest (D-Bevel, 1978; Lewis, 1978). In 1959, these students held "test" sit-ins in two department stores. Beginning in

1957, members of the Oklahoma City NAACP Youth Council created what they called their "project" whose aim was to eliminate segregation in public accommodations (Luper, 1979:3). The project consisted of various committees and groups who planned sit-in strategies. After a year of planning, this group walked into the local Katz Drug Store and initiated their planned sit-in. In St. Louis in 1955, William Clay organized a NAACP Youth Council. Through careful planning and twelve months of demonstrations, members of this organization were able to desegregate dining facilities at department stores (Meier and Rudwick, 1973:93). In Durham, North Carolina in 1958, we find that black activists of the Durham Committee on Negro Affairs conducted a survey of 5 and 10 cent stores located in Durham (Southern Regional Council, 1960). This survey revealed that these stores were heavily dependent on black trade. The sit-ins initiated by this group were based on this sort of rational planning. The same picture emerges in Sumter, South Carolina and across this entire group of early sit-ins.

That rational planning was a central component of these early sit-ins should be expected. Indeed, the activists who led them were adults who occupied leadership roles in their respective direct action organizations. From experience, they had learned that one does not confront racist entrenched white power structures relying on the winds of spontaneity and fortuitous events. Rather, these leaders spent blocks of time at meetings, rationally planning strategy, tactics and mobilizing community support.

Finally, these early sit-ins were sponsored by indigenous resources of the black community. The leadership came from blacks. The bulk of the demonstrators were black. The strategies and tactics were formulated by blacks. The finances came out of the pockets of oppressed blacks, while their serene spirituals echoed through the churches.<sup>6</sup>

Most of the organizers of the early sit-ins knew each other and were well

aware of their militant activities. Indeed, many of these activists represented the militant wing of NAACP. Following the Montgomery bus boycott, this group began to reorganize NAACP Youth Councils with the explicit purpose of initiating direct action projects. This group of activists (e.g. Floyd McKissick, Daisy Bates, Ronald Walters, Hosea Williams, Barbara Posey and Clara Luper) viewed themselves as a distinct group. This special identity was forced upon the militants because the national NAACP usually did not approve of their approach or took a very ambivalent stance towards it.

These militants of NAACP built networks between themselves that detoured the conservative channels and organizational positions of their superiors. At NAACP meetings and conferences, they drifted into rooms where they could speak freely of their militant desires and plans of confrontational politics. At these gatherings, information regarding strategies and tactics was exchanged. Once acquainted, they remained in touch by phone and mail. Thus, it is no accident that these early sit-ins occurred between 1957 and 1960. It should be remembered that other militant activities besides sit-ins occurred during this period. For example, this is the same period when Mrs. Daisy Bates led young people of her NAACP Youth Council into the all-white Little Rock Central High School and forced a President to send in National Guards. This is also the same period that CORE is beginning to get a foothold in the South. CORE's explicit goal was to initiate direct action projects. We have already seen that CORE activists were very closely linked with the other activists of the period. These early sit-ins and related activities weren't part of a grandiose scheme. Nevertheless, their joint occurrences, timing and approaches were connected via organizational and personal networks. They were part of a decentralized, yet connected, effort to bring about desegregation.

### Sit-in Cluster

The first cluster of sit-ins occurred in the state of Oklahoma in 1958. It was organizational and personal networks that produced this cluster. By tracing these networks, we can arrive at a basic understanding of this cluster and a clue to understanding the entire sit-in movement.

In August of 1958, the NAACP Youth Council of Wichita, Kansas headed by Ronald Walters, initiated sit-ins at the lunch counters of a local drug store (Lewis, 1981). At the same time, Clara Luper and the young people in her NAACP Youth Council were being trained to conduct sit-ins in Oklahoma City. The adult leaders involved in these two groups knew each other. Besides being organizationally connected several individuals in the two groups were personal friends. Following the initial sit-ins in Wichita, a number of phone calls between the two groups were exchanged. Information regarding strategy, tactics and mutual support was discussed. This direct contact was important because the local press refused to cover the sit-ins. In less than a week, Clara Luper's group in Oklahoma City initiated their planned sit-ins.

Within a short period of time, sit-ins were conducted in Tulsa, Enid and Stillwater, Oklahoma. Working through CORE and the local NAACP Youth Council, Clara Luper's "play daughter"--Mrs. Shirley Scaggins--organized the sit-ins in Tulsa (Luper, 1981). Mrs. Scaggins had recently lived in Oklahoma City and thus knew the inner workings of Mrs. Luper's sit-in project. The two leaders worked in concert. At the same time, the NAACP Youth Council in Enid began to conduct sit-ins. A Mr. Mitchell led that group (Luper, 1981). He knew Mrs. Luper well and had visited the Oklahoma Youth Council at the outset of their sit-in. On that visit, they discussed strategy, tactics and mutual support. The sit-ins in Stillwater appear to have been conducted independently by black college students. Even if that were the case, three of the four Oklahoma sit-ins were connected and organized through

organizational and personal networks. The same process occurred as far away as East St. Louis, Illinois. Homer Randolph, who in late 1958 organized the East St. Louis sit-ins, recalled that he had previously lived in Oklahoma City and knew Mrs. Luper well, and had young relatives who participated in the Oklahoma City sit-ins.

Therefore, the first sit-in cluster occurred in the state of Oklahoma in 1958. These sit-ins spread to cities within a hundred-mile radius via established organizational and personal networks rather than through a process of social contagion or the mass media. It was not outside social movement entrepreneurs who organized this cluster. The skilled organizers came from within the dominated group.

Moreover, it has been shown that the majority of these early sit-ins were: 1) connected rather than isolated; 2) initiated through organizations and personal ties; 3) led and rationally planned by established leaders; and 4) supported by indigenous resources.

Evidence has been presented which demonstrates that the Greensboro sit-ins do not mark the movement's beginning. The Greensboro sit-ins are a link in the chain. But it was a unique link which triggered sit-ins across the South at an incredible pace. What possibly could have happened in the black community between the late 1950's and early 1960's that could produce such a movement? It is contended that something new in the black community did happen between the late 1950's and February 1, 1960 that was responsible for this rapid spread of a major sit-in movement. That something "new" proliferated the basic dynamics--rationality, indigenous organizations, indigenous leadership and indigenous support--that were central to the sit-ins occurring between 1957 and 1960.

#### Indigenous Perspective

##### System of Domination

An indigenous perspective will be used to analyze the 1960 black student sit-in movement. In the analysis of concrete movements, the first task of the perspective

is to identify the form of domination against which collective action is directed. Oppressed groups are not dominated to the same degree. Our strategy is to treat domination as a variable running on a continuum from extreme to moderate to mild. In this paper, we are concerned only with the system of domination that confronted Southern blacks in the 1950's and 1960's.

The system of domination that Southern white society imposed on blacks during this period falls towards the extreme end of the continuum. Blacks were dominated politically. They had no institutionalized political power nor formal political rights. Whites controlled the local governments and the agents of social control. This meant that blacks had no control over the mass media. Following Molotch (1979), we view the media as part of a nation's political structure. Without political power, blacks had no institutionalized leverage over the media. Overall, the political institutions were controlled by whites.

Blacks of this period were dominated economically. They were at the bottom of the economic order of the Southern cities without the resources to allocate basic economic goods to their members (Piven and Cloward, 1977). Blacks could be fired from jobs at the discretion of the employer and organized labor made it overtly plain that union memberships were not to be extended to them. Thus, blacks had little power in the economic institutions of the society.

Finally, blacks were dominated as a racial group. Members of the dominant white group thought blacks to be an inferior species. All members of the dominant group could routinely prevent blacks from enjoying the taken-for-granted privileges accorded dominant members. Blacks could be shot down, lynched, castrated or illegally jailed by whites who feared no reprisals. This direct domination produced an oppressed/oppressor relationship similar to the inmate/staff relationship which Goffman (1962) analyzed in total institutions. That is, whites had unlimited institutional power over blacks.

Therefore, blacks were dominated politically, economically and as a racial group. A system of extreme domination exists when a dominant group controls a subordinate group politically, economically, and singles them out for punishment because of ascriptive characteristics. In the fifties and sixties, collective action by Southern blacks was directed at a system of extreme domination.

#### Power Behavior/Indigenous Resources

Secondly, the indigenous perspective maintains that collective action is overt political behavior that requires contending parties to mobilize resources. Following Coser (1966:1), "politics always involve the clash of conflicting demands." Similarly, Weber (1947) argued that power stems from one's ability to realize one's own will even in the face of resistance. It would seem that a group circumscribed by a system of extreme domination would have few resources (i.e. money, leadership, viable organization, skills, etc.) required for a sustained confrontation with the dominant group. A number of social movement scholars (Marx and Useem, 1971; Oberschall, 1973; Jenkins and Perrow, 1977; Zald and McCarthy, 1979) have concluded that for dominated groups to initiate social movements, they must acquire these critical resources from outside elites. They argue that outside resources play an essential role in the early phases of movements. Hubbard (1968), Lipsky (1968), and Garrow (1978) have presented a related notion that movements of the powerless are strategically designed to attract sympathy from the outside because their success is dependent on the action of third parties.

From the indigenous perspective, the claims that outside leaders and resources play key roles in initiating movements of the powerless and in determining their outcome, must be questioned. The Civil Rights movement is a good case with which to test this claim because these writers have identified it as a prime example of a movement dependent on outside resources. Furthermore, it is widely accepted that the sit-ins occurred early in the movement and that they were critical.

From the indigenous perspective we note that: the critical resources necessary for the initiation and development of social movements may be present in the communities of the dominated. Indeed, the researcher must be prepared to examine the internal community of the dominated because the basic funding patterns, resources, communication systems and organized masses central to the emergence of social movements may be concentrated there. A task of the indigenous perspective is to specify the conditions under which these pre-existing resources are transformed into political resources. An analysis of the 1960 sit-in movement will shed light on these issues.

Indigenous Political Base/  
Spurts of Collective Action

Next, we ask why at certain periods in movements do we suddenly get a heavy volume of protest activity by the insurgent group? The rapid spread of the sit-ins is an excellent case in point. What may account for the timing of these pronounced spurts of insurgency? In my view, heavy spurts of protest activity are likely to occur following the development of a political base internal to the dominated community. Within such a base are to be found protest organizations, formulated tactics and strategies, mass mobilization potential, trained protest leaders, and on-going protest projects. It is through this sort of political structure that a heavy volume of protest activity can be organized and rapidly spread. It is through the political base that protesters can be shielded from repressive onslaughts. Through this base pre-existing resources can be rapidly transformed into political resources and conflict activities can be planned and coordinated. Because it plays these concrete roles, a developed political base is responsible for heavy volumes of protest activity rather than outside factors (such as the mass media, federal government, liberal foundations, etc.). The more developed the base, the greater the likelihood a precipitating factor will trigger heavy spurts of protest activity.

### Movement Centers

The indigenous perspective focuses on the social processes by which collective action occurs in real space and time. Why, for instance, could the sit-ins be rapidly initiated in black communities across the South? From our perspective, concrete instances of collective action are often planned, organized and initiated through what can best be conceptualized as 'local movement centers'. These centers are the micro-social structures through which communities conduct collective action. Movement centers provide communities with protest training and orientation facilities, organizations, finances, leaders, and an atmosphere supportive of collective action. The scope and intensity of collective action in a given community is greatly shaped by the movement centers of the dominated. On the macro-level, the indigenous political base consists of all the movement centers of the insurgent group. The concept of local movement centers directs the researcher's attention to fundamental processes and structures involved in concrete cases of collective action. Indeed, it will be shown that the sit-in movement emerged and spread through movement centers.

Through the indigenous perspective we have: 1) identified the system of domination that confronted Southern blacks during the 1950's and 1960's; 2) put forth the argument that powerless groups may be in a position to initiate political movements because the necessary resources are present in their own communities; 3) argued that collective action arises out of an indigenous political base; 4) presented the notion that sudden spurts of widespread collective action are likely to occur when the internal political base is well developed; and 5) argued that concrete instances of collective action are initiated through local movement centers. Through the indigenous framework a comprehensive analysis of the 1960 sit-in movement can be obtained.

### Indigenous Political Base

During the mid-fifties an indigenous political base emerged in numerous black communities across the South. During this period "direct action" organizations were built by local activists. Community institutions--especially the black church--were becoming political. The "mass meeting" along with political oratory and protest music became commonplace. This was the period that CORE entered the South with intentions of initiating protest, and NAACP Youth Councils were reorganized by young militant adults of NAACP who desired to engage in confrontational politics.

However, both CORE and the NAACP Youth Councils were incapable of mobilizing wide scale protest such as the sit-ins of 1960. Neither had a mass base in the black community. CORE was small, Northern based, white led and largely unknown to Southern blacks. Historically, the NAACP had been unable to persuade more than 2% of the black population to take out membership. The collective power of the NAACP Youth Councils was further weakened because the National NAACP failed to give unequivocal support to the confrontational politics of the younger militants. National NAACP was oriented to legal strategies, not sit-ins. Equally as important, following the 1954 school desegregation decision, Southern white power structures launched a severe attack against the NAACP. The repression was so devastating that between 1955 and 1960 numerous Southern NAACP branches were forced to close down (Morris, 1980). This repression forced the NAACP to become a defensively oriented organization. The organization committed its resources to court battles designed to save itself. Thus, neither CORE nor NAACP Youth Councils were able to provide an encompassing political base required to launch the massive sit-ins of 1960.

However, between 1955 and 1960 new organizational and protest winds were blowing in black communities of the South. They were the same winds that drew CORE southward and inspired the militant elements in NAACP to reorganize NAACP

Youth Councils. The Montgomery bus boycott was the watershed. Oberschall (1973:223-24) has argued that the historic significance of the boycott was that it catapulted King into prominence and demonstrated that massive outside support was needed for the emergence of a black movement. Contrary to this latter claim, the importance of the boycott lies in the fact that it revealed to members of the black community the indigenous resources, institutions, mobilizing potentials, and protest dynamics that they themselves could utilize.

The Montgomery mass bus boycott was the catalyst because it demonstrated the political potential of the black church and it thrust forth a new organizational instrument. By 1955 the massive migration of blacks from rural to urban areas was well underway. Indeed by this time many of the Southern cities had substantial black populations. Black urban churches were quite different from their rural counterparts. That is, they were larger, greater in number, better financed, and presided over by ministers who were better educated and whose sole occupation was the ministry (Mays and Nicholson, 1933; McAdam, 1979; Morris, 1980). Moreover, urban churches were owned, operated and controlled by the black community.

It was these churches that functioned as the institutional base of the Montgomery bus boycott. They supplied the movement with money, organized masses, leaders, highly developed communication networks and relatively safe environments where the masses met, and rationally planned strategy. These resources were present within the church prior to the boycott. Movement leaders transformed them into political resources and committed them to the ends of the movement. That is, the new duty of the church finance committee was to collect money for the movement. Rather than preaching merely of the heavenly gates, the new role of the minister was to use the pulpit to articulate the political responsibilities of the church community. The new role of the choir was to weave political messages into the serene spirituals. Regular church meetings were transformed into the "mass meeting"

where the dominated joined instrumental committees, offered up their hard-earned dollars to the movement, and acquired reliable information concerning the movement which local radio and television stations refused to broadcast. The resources necessary to initiate a black movement were present in the community. In Montgomery, they were transformed into political resources and used to launch the first highly visible mass protest of the modern Civil Rights movement.

The important role that the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) played in the emergence of the modern Civil Rights movement is seldom grasped. Prior to the creation of the MIA, black protest was largely initiated through the NAACP. The NAACP was highly bureaucratic (Kellog, 1967; Meier and Rudwick, 1973), and headquartered in New York. Southern activists were often frustrated by the NAACP because they had to follow the predefined bureaucratic procedures established by organizational officials in the North (Walker, 1978; Smith, 1978; Vivian, 1978; Williams, 1978; Simkins, 1978; Lowery, 1978). Mass action was, therefore, discouraged by NAACP's bureaucratic structure.

The MIA was an organization built for the specific purpose of leading a massive direct action movement. It was a non-bureaucratic church-based organization. Its organizational affairs were conducted like church services rather than rigid rule-bound behavior found in bureaucracies like the NAACP. Ministers held the top leadership positions in the MIA. Ultimate authority inhered in the president who was Dr. King. Decisions pertaining to local matters could be reached immediately. These ministers presided over the MIA the way they presided over their congregations. Thus, diverse organizational tasks were delegated to the rank-and-file on the spot. Rules and procedures emerged from a trial and error approach and could be altered when they inhibited direct action. Oratory, music and charismatic personalities subjectively energized MIA's organizational affairs. The structure of the organization was designed to allow masses to participate directly in protest activities. As a result,

the MIA proved to be more appropriate for confrontational politics because it was mass based, non-bureaucratic, Southern led and was able to transform pre-existing church resources into political power.

Southern blacks took notice of the Montgomery movement. For decades, black activists had unsuccessfully employed various strategies aimed at overthrowing an extreme system of domination. Such a system dictated where blacks could and could not work, ride on a bus, urinate, attend school, watch a movie, eat a hamburger, etc. The Montgomery movement offered an appealing approach. Thus, activists from the South visited Montgomery to closely observe the political role that the church and the MIA played in the movement.

For example, when Hosea Williams (at the time an activist associated with the NAACP in Savannah, Georgia) visited the Montgomery movement, he marvelled at its dynamics:

"You had had NAACP lawsuits, you'd had NAACP chapters, who had much less than 5% participation anyplace. But here's a place (Montgomery) where they got masses of blacks--they couldn't get a church big enough where they could hold mass rallies. And then, none of them (masses) were riding the buses. I was interested in these strategies and their implementation and in learning how to mobilize the masses to move in concert" (Williams, 1978).

Hosea, like countless others, did more than marvel at these dynamics. In his words, "I went back to Savannah and organized the Youth Council and nonviolent movement." Thus, another direct action organization emerged. The MIA bore fruits beyond Montgomery!

Yet, it was black ministers who were in the structural position to organize church related direct action organizations across the South. Even while the Montgomery movement was in progress, ministers in other cities (i.e. Steele in Tallahassee, Shuttlesworth in Birmingham, and Davis in New Orleans, etc.) began to

build mass based movements that were organizationally patterned after the Montgomery movement. It was these ministers who were in a position to organize and commit church resources to protest efforts. They were also organizationally linked to each other and the larger community via ministerial alliances and the church community. Therefore, between 1955 and 1960 a profound change in Southern black communities began to occur. Confrontational politics were thrust to the foreground through new direct action organizations closely allied with the church.

The creation of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957 marked a critical organizational shift for the Civil Rights movement. SCLC was created by Dr. King and other militant ministers from across the South for the explicit purpose of building a movement with a broad and encompassing organizational framework. The strategy of this organizational effort was to be "confrontational politics". These ministers clearly understood that historically the church had been the central institution within black society. They knew it was the church that nurtured and produced a preponderance of the indigenous leaders, finances and organized masses as well as being the main force in black culture. Furthermore, by 1957 these ministers, many of whom were in the process of leading movements, consciously and explicitly concluded that the church was capable of functioning as the institutional vanguard of a mass based black movement. Hence, these ministers organized SCLC to be a Southern-wide protest organization based in the church.

Prior to SCLC, the major black protest organization--NAACP--had been closely linked with the church. Yet, before SCLC was created the NAACP, and not the church, functioned as the organizational apparatus through which protest was initiated. With the emergence of SCLC the critical shift occurred, whereby the church itself, rather than groups closely linked to it, began to function as the institutional center of protest.

In 1957 the organizers of SCLC sent out a call to fellow clergymen of the

South to organize their congregations and local communities for collective protest. The remarks of Rev. Smith of Nashville typified the action of protest oriented ministers:

"After the meeting (SCLC organizing meeting) and after the discussion that we had and all that, it became clear to me that we needed something in addition to NAACP. So I came back and I called some people together and formed what we named the Nashville Christian Leadership Council in order to address the same kind of issues that SCLC would be addressing" (Smith, 1978).

Hundreds of ministers across the South took similar action.

From this collective effort resulted what can best be conceptualized as the "local movement centers" of the Civil Rights movement, which usually had the following seven characteristics:

- 1) They were built around a cadre of social change oriented ministers and their organized congregations. Often one of these ministers would become the charismatic symbol of a given center.
- 2) Central to all these centers were direct action organizations. These organizations varied in their complexity. In many cities local churches served as quasi-direct action organizations while in others ministers built complex church related organizations (i.e. United Defense League of Baton Rouge, Montgomery Improvement Association, Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights of Birmingham, Petersburg Improvement Association, etc.).
- 3) These centers were financed by indigenous blacks. The money was collected through the church.
- 4) These centers held weekly mass meetings. These meetings served as forums where community people were informed of relevant information and strategies regarding the movement. The dominated "tuned" into the mass meeting for the latest political news. These

meetings also built solidarity among the participants.

5) The leaders of these centers articulated and disseminated a message to the dominated that social change would come to their communities only through direct action carried out by masses.

6) The political activities of these centers were subjectively energized through a rich church culture.

The black spirituals, sermons and prayers were used to deepen the participant's commitment to the struggle.

7) Finally, these movement centers were mass based, given that they were rooted in the black communities through the church.

The basic assumption by scholars of the movement is that the period between the Montgomery bus boycott and the 1960 sit-ins was quiescent and relatively unimportant. At this juncture, the present study crucially departs from previous works. It is argued here that the organizational foundation of the Civil Rights movement was built during this period. Indeed, it was the period in which active local movement centers were built in numerous Southern black communities.

A few concrete examples of these local movement centers will provide substance to the claim. Between 1957 and 1960 the state of Virginia was loaded with active movement centers. Virginia ministers such as Reverends Milton Reid, L.C. Johnson, Virgil Wood, Curtis Harris and Wyatt Walker operated out of movement centers in such cities as Hopewell, Lynchburg, Portsmouth, and Petersburg. The direct action organizations of these cities went under such names as the Hopewell, Lynchburg and Petersburg Improvement Associations. Thus, they were patterned after the original direct action organization--MIA. South Carolina had its movement centers. For example, in 1955-56 the black community of Orangeburg initiated an economic boycott against twenty-three local firms. This action was taken after whites began exerting economic pressure against blacks desiring school integration. This extended

boycott resulted in a vibrant movement center which was headed by the Reverends Matthew McCullum, William Sample and Alfred Issac and their organized congregations. Movement centers existed in other South Carolina cities such as those organized in Sumter, Columbia and Florence by James McCain of CORE and militant clergymen.

In Durham, North Carolina, the movement oriented churches that made up the movement center were Union Baptist, pastored by Rev. Grady Davis; Ashbury Temple, pastored by Rev. Douglas Moore; Mount Zion, pastored by Rev. Fuller; St. Marks, pastored by Rev. Speaks; and St. Josephs, pastored by Rev. Swann. Movement centers were also to be found in cities within the deep South such as Montgomery, Tuskegee, and Birmingham, Alabama; Nashville, Tennessee; and Tallahassee, Florida.

These movement centers provided the rich organizational base for the movement. So prevalent were these centers throughout the South that when Gordon Carey, a CORE field investigator, surveyed the situation in 1959, he reported:

"In some Southern cities such as Montgomery, Orangeburg, Tallahassee and Birmingham nonviolent movements have been and are being carried on. But most of the South, with its near total segregation, has not been touched. Many places have FELT the SPIRIT of Martin Luther King, Jr. but too often this spirit has not been turned into positive action" (Carey, 1959).

The "spirit" to which Carey referred was actually church movement centers which he constantly found as he moved across the South. Most of these centers were affiliates of or patterned after SCLC.

Elsewhere (Morris, 1980), I have analyzed in detail the militant social movements and activities of these centers. Suffice it to say here that these centers were perfecting confrontation strategies, building organizational bases, leading

marches, organizing voter drives and radicalizing members of the community during the late fifties. Scholars such as Oberschall (1973:223) persistently dismiss these centers, viewing them as weak, limited and unwilling to confront the white power structure. Yet, concrete evidence suggests quite a different interpretation. For example, Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, operating through his mass based movement center, directly confronted Bull Connor and the white power structure of Birmingham on a continuous basis throughout the late fifties. As a consequence, Shuttlesworth's home and church were repeatedly bombed. Writing in retrospect and reflecting the erroneous assumptions generally held about this period, Oberschall claims that these groups were engaged in "low keyed registration drives" rather than direct action. But, Southern blacks functioned in a system of extreme domination. In this context, voting drives were acts of direct action. As many activists were to learn, attempting to vote could get one killed, thrown off the land or fired from one's job. Furthermore, previous writers have failed to give us any idea of the pervasiveness, structure and accomplishments of these pre-1960 movement centers.

Thus, from our perspective, between 1955 and 1960 an indigenous political base capable of generating and sustaining a heavy volume of protest activity was forming. These movement centers, combined with militant NAACP Youth Councils and CORE chapters, constituted the new political reality of Southern black communities on the eve of the 1960 sit-ins. The indigenous political base was firmly in place.

#### Greensboro

On February 1, 1960 Ezell Blair Jr., Franklin McCain, Joe McNeil and David Richmond, all students at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College, sat-in at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. Though most commentators mark this as the first sit-in, the four protesters knew that they weren't the first individuals to sit-in in the state of North Carolina. The sit-in movement in North Carolina had begun in the late fifties, when a young black attorney, Floyd

McKissick, a young Board member of SCLC , Rev. Douglas Moore, and a small group of other young people (including a few whites from Duke University) began conducting sit-ins in Durham.

These early sit-ins in Durham were part of that same network of sit-ins which occurred between 1957 and 1960. The majority of the young people involved in the early sit-ins belonged to the NAACP Youth Division which McKissick headed. These young protesters also formed their own militant direct action organization called the Durham Committee on Negro Affairs. During the late fifties, McKissick and Moore's group conducted sit-ins at local bus stations, waiting rooms, parks, hotels and the like (McKissick, 1978). In 1957, Rev. Moore and a few others were arrested for sitting-in at a local ice-cream parlor. The subsequent legal case became known as the "Royal Ice Cream Case". Being rooted in various community organizations, McKissick also headed the local Boy Scouts. Periodically, he would take the young "All American" scouts into segregated restaurants and order food. Thus, this militant group in Durham was persistently confronting the white power structure in the late fifties.

The four students who sat-in at Greensboro and sparked the widespread sit-in movement had been involved with these militant groups. They had been members of the NAACP Youth Council, headed by McKissick. According to McKissick, he knew them all well and they knew all about the Durham activities. Martin Oppenheimer, an early historian of the sit-ins, confirms this: "All of the boys were, or at some time had been members of an NAACP Youth Council" (Oppenheimer, 1964:398). Indeed, the four students had been involved in numerous meetings at the various social action oriented churches that were sprinkled throughout Durham. In these meetings, "movement talk" and activities were the order of the day. To be involved with the NAACP Youth Council meant that they were not only informed about the Durham sit-ins, but also knew about many of the sit-ins being conducted prior to 1960. Thus, the myth that four college students got up one day and sat-in at Woolworth's--and

thus sparked the movement--dries up like a "raisin in the sun" when confronted with the evidence.

The National office of the NAACP, and many of the conservative ministers, refused to back the Greensboro sit-ins. The NAACP's renowned team of lawyers did not defend the "Greensboro Four". Nevertheless, on the same day they sat-in, the students contacted a lawyer whom they considered to be their friend; thus Floyd McKissick became the lawyer for the "Greensboro Four". The network of the indigenous political base had begun to operate in earnest.

#### Greensboro and Beyond

As soon as the sit-ins started in Greensboro, the "hot lines" of the southwide movement centers began to light up. In the first week of February, 1960, students continued to sit-in daily at the local Woolworth's. However, the protest population began to grow. The original four protesters were joined by hundreds of students from A & T College and from several other local black colleges. Black high school students and a few white college students joined in the protest. A mass movement was building. Members of the white power structure decided to close the Woolworth's in Greensboro, hoping to take the steam out of the movement. It was too late.

Rational plans to spread the movement were formulated as soon as the first sit-ins in Greensboro were conducted. Floyd McKissick, Rev. Douglas Moore and others who had conducted previous sit-ins, were the central actors who formulated plans to spread the movement across the state. They were joined by CORE's white field secretary, Gordon Carey, whose services had been requested by the local president of NAACP.

Carey arrived in Durham from New York on February the 7th and went directly to where the sit-ins were being planned--McKissick's home. Carey was a good choice because of his knowledge of nonviolent resistance and because he was well aware of the indigenous political base in Southern black communities due to previous organizing

efforts.

On February 8th--exactly one week after the Greensboro sit-ins--the demonstrations spread beyond Greensboro. On that date sit-ins were conducted in the nearby cities of Durham and Winston-Salem. McKissick, Moore, Carey and others helped organize these sit-ins. These activists went to the local colleges and recruited students. The students were brought to the social action oriented churches where they were trained to conduct sit-ins. For example, the Durham students were trained at the same churches through which McKissick and Moore had planned militant action in the late 1950's. Following training and strategy sessions, these students went to the local lunch counters and sat-in.

The organizing effort was not limited to these two cities near Greensboro. Within the first week of the Greensboro sit-in, McKissick, Carey and Rev. Moore made contact with activists situated in movement centers throughout North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia, urging them to train students for sit-ins. They not only phoned these activists, but actually traveled to local cities to provide assistance. Moreover, when they arrived in these cities, they often found sit-in planning sessions already underway. According to Carey, "when we reached these cities we went directly to the movement oriented churches" (Carey, 1978). When asked why, Carey replied, "well, that's where the protest activities were being planned and organized." Thus, these sit-ins were largely organized at the movement churches rather than on the campuses. To understand the sit-in movement, it is necessary to suspend the assumption that it was a mere college phenomenon. For different reasons, Rev. Moore attempted to convey this same idea in the early days of the sit-ins, "If Woolworth and other stores think this is just another panty raid, they haven't had their sociologists in the field recently" (Moore, 1960). The sit-ins grew out of a context of organized movement centers.

As we would predict, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference was central

to the rise of the 1960 sit-in movement. It is well known that many black churches remained conservative during this period, despite SCLC's effort to get them involved with direct action. Nevertheless, a very significant number of churches throughout the South became politicized. It is critical to remember that when Rev. Moore and others reached the various churches in the cities of North and South Carolina and Virginia, they discovered that the leaders of these churches were already training students for sit-ins. Speaking of the ministers who headed these movement churches, Carey reported:

"All of these ministers were active in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. At least 75% were getting inspiration from King" (Carey, 1978).

Additionally, these ministers were well rooted in both CORE and the militant wing of NAACP. Importantly, they worked closely with these organizations and often provided leadership for them.

This network of ministers, churches and direct action leaders was already in place before the sit-ins. These leaders served as the "antennas" of the sit-ins. Once the massive sit-ins began at Greensboro, the "antennas" of the wide spread movement centers quickly recorded the information and directed it into channels which deliberately plotted the next organizational moves.

During the second week of February, 1960, solid plans to conduct sit-ins were formulated in a number of Southern cities. Communication and coordination between the cities was refined. According to McKissick, ministers and leaders contacted each other about their plans. For example, early in the second week of February, Rev. B. Elton Cox of High Point, North Carolina and Rev. C.A. Ivory of Rock Hill, South Carolina, phoned McKissick and other leaders informing them that their groups were "ready to go" (McKissick, 1978). Cox's group sat-in on February 11th and Ivory's on February 12th. Rev. Ivory organized and directed the Rock Hill

sit-ins from his wheelchair. Within this same week sit-ins were being conducted in several cities in Virginia. These sit-ins were organized through the dense network of SCLC movement centers that existed in the state (Southern Regional Council, 1960; Walker, 1978).

The movement hot lines reached far beyond the border states of North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, an active leader of the movement center in Birmingham, Alabama, happened to be in North Carolina when the first wave of sit-ins occurred. He was there to fulfill a speaking engagement for the leader of the High Point sit-ins--Rev. Cox. According to Shuttlesworth:

"He (Rev. Cox) carried me by where these people were going to sit-in...I called back to Atlanta, and told Ella (Baker) what was going on. I said, 'this is the thing. You must tell Martin (King) that we must get with this, and really this can shake up the world.'" (Shuttlesworth, 1978).

According to Miss Baker, the Executive Director of SCLC, she immediately began calling her contacts at various colleges asking them, "What are you all going to do? It is time to move" (Baker, 1978).

Carey and Rev. Moore called up the movement center in Nashville, Tennessee and asked Rev. Lawson were they ready to move? The student community and the church community tied together by the Nashville Christian Leadership Conference, answered in the affirmative. Speaking of the activities following the call, Lawson stated:

"Of course there was organizing because after the sit-in. the first one in February, people like Doug Moore, Ella Baker, myself, did call around to places that we knew, said, 'Can you start? Are you ready? Can you go? And how can we help you?' So there was some of that too that went on. Even there the sit-in movement did not just spread spontaneously. I mean

there was a readiness. And then there were. there were phone calls that went out to various communities where we knew people and where we knew student groups and where we knew minister groups, and said, you know, 'this is it, let's go'" (Lawson, 1978)

When asked, "Why did the student sit-in movement occur?" Lawson replied:

"Because King and the Montgomery boycott and the whole development of that leadership that clustered around King had emerged and was ready and was preaching and teaching direct action, nonviolent action, and was clearly ready to act, ready to seed any movement that needed sustenance and growth. so there was--in other words--the soil had been prepared" (Lawson, 1978).

This data and theoretical orientation provides insight into the complicated process of how a political movement can rapidly spread between geographically distant communities. Our perspective can account for the wide geographical spread of the sit-ins without succumbing to simplistic explanations put forth by contagion and diffusion theories. The sit-ins spread across the South in a short period of time because activists working through local movement centers planned, coordinated and sustained them. Furthermore, theories which maintain that social movements of the powerless spread via spontaneity, mass media, outside elites and physical proximity of the protesters, tend to overlook the political context of movements. Indeed, sit-in demonstrators often faced swinging billy clubs of policemen, Ku Klux Klansmen, white mobs, murderers, tear gas, economic reprisals, etc. (Southern Regional Council, 1960; Matthews and Prothro, 1966; Oberschall, 1973). An adequate theory of collective action must account for the rapid spread of some movements despite heavy repression by the opposition. Our perspective maintains that a key factor which determines whether such movements are able to spread is the existence of an indigenous political base. It is through such bases that power resources, capable of limiting repression

while sustaining protect activities, are mobilized.

### Sit-in Clusters of 1960

Central to the indigenous perspective is the claim that episodes of collective action stem from an organizational base. Therefore, we would predict that the sit-ins tended not to occur and spread in a random fashion. We have already analyzed the organizational and personal networks through which the first cluster of sit-ins occurred in the state of Oklahoma in 1958. The cluster concept can be applied to the entire set of sit-ins of February and March of 1960. Many of the cities where sit-ins occurred can be grouped into clusters because of their geographic proximity, and because the sit-in activity within them tended to cluster together in time.

Operationally, a cluster is defined as two or more cities within approximately 75 miles of each other and where sit-in activity took place within a 14-day time span. In Table II, forty-one of the sixty-nine cities having sit-ins during this two month period have been grouped because they meet the cluster criteria.

Table II here

Within this period 59% of the cities that had sit-ins and related activity were part of clusters. The percentage of these cities forming sit-in clusters is even more striking if attention is restricted to the first month. From available data it has been determined that during February, 76% of cities having sit-ins were part of clusters. By contrast, during March the corresponding percentage drops to 44%.

The clustering differentials between the two months can be explained by taking region into account as shown in Table III.

Table III here

In the first month (February) we see that 85% of the cities having sit-ins were located in Southeastern and border states. This pattern had been established earlier when most of the sit-ins prior to 1960 occurred in border states. It can be explained why most of the February sit-ins took place in cities of border states, given that

repression against blacks was not as severe here as it was in the deep South. This made it possible for activists in border states to build dense networks of movement centers. We have already seen that North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia were loaded with social action churches and direct action organizations. For example, by the time the sit-ins occurred in Virginia, SCLC had affiliates across the state and Rev. Wyatt Walker, who was the charismatic leader of Virginia's movement centers, was also the state Director of CORE and President of the local NAACP. Similar patterns existed in the other border states. Small wonder that in the month of February, 73% of cities having sit-ins were located in Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina. Similarly, these cities produced 88% of the February clusters. This clustering reflected both the great density of movement centers and the less stringent system of domination as compared to the deep South.

Table III reveals that in March, a major change took place in that the majority of the sit-ins occurred in cities located in the deep South. With the exception of a few cities, the sit-ins in the deep South did not occur in clusters. They occurred almost exclusively in specific Southern cities where movement centers had been established, that is, Montgomery, Birmingham, and Tuskegee, Alabama; Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Louisiana; Tallahassee, Florida; Nashville and Memphis, Tennessee; and Atlanta and Savannah, Georgia. Repression would have been too great on student protesters operating outside of the protection of such centers in the deep South. Thus, the decrease in clustering in the deep South reflected both the high level of repression, and the absence of dense networks of movement centers. An organizational perspective which takes movement centers into account is able to explain both the clustering phenomenon, as well as its absence.

The sit-ins did not spread in a random manner, given that a large proportion occurred in clusters. From a substantive standpoint, clusters represents the social and temporal space in which the sit-ins were organized, coordinated, spread and

financed by the black community.<sup>7</sup> Within these clusters, speeding cars filled with organizers from SCLC, NAACP and CORE raced between sit-in points relaying valuable information. Telephone lines and the community "grapevine" sent forth protest instructions and rational plans. These clusters were the sites of numerous midday and late night meetings where the black community assembled in the churches and filled the collection plates and vowed to mortgage their homes to raise the necessary bail bond money in case the protesting students were jailed. Black lawyers pledged their legal services to the movement, while black physicians made their services available to injured demonstrators. Amidst these exciting scenes, the soft serene black spirituals that had grown out of slavery calmed and deepened the commitment of the participants. A focussed view on the Nashville sit-ins provides a concrete example of how these dynamics actually operated. Indeed, the Nashville movement epitomized the dynamics of the sit-ins whether they occurred in clusters or singularly.

#### Nashville Sit-in Movement

A well developed church based movement center headed by Rev. Kelly Miller Smith was built in Nashville during the late 1950's. The organizational apparatus of this center was an affiliate of SCLC named the Nashville Christian Leadership Council (NCLC). Rev. James Lawson, an expert tactician of nonviolent protest, was in charge of NCLC's direct action committee. Lawson received a call from Rev. Douglas Moore about two days after the Greensboro sit-ins began. The Nashville group was ready to act because a cadre of students had already developed and received training in direct action even before the Greensboro sit-ins. They had conducted "test sit-ins" in two large department stores in downtown Nashville, prior to the 1959 Christmas holidays. Moreover, the group had already made plans in late 1959 to begin continuous sit-ins in 1960 with the explicit intention of desegregating Nashville (Smith, 1978; Nash Revel, 1978). Thus, Greensboro provided the impetus for

the Nashville group to carry out its pre-existing strategy.

Rev. Smith's First Baptist Church became the official headquarters of the sit-in movement. A decision to sit-in at Nashville lunch counters on Saturday, February 13, 1960, was arrived at after much debate. The adults (mostly ministers) of the NCLC met with the students at movement headquarters and tried to convince them to postpone the demonstrations for a couple of days until money could be raised. According to Rev. Smith:

"NCLC had \$87.50 in the treasury. We had no lawyers, and we felt kind of a parental responsibility for those college kids. And we knew they were gonna be put in jail, and we didn't know what else would happen. And so some of us said, 'we need to wait until we get a lawyer, until we raise some funds'" (Smith, 1978).

NCLC leaders told the students that they could collect the money through the churches within a week. Then, according to Rev. Smith:

"James Bevel, then a student at American Baptist Theological Seminary, said that, 'I'm sick and tired of waiting,' which was a strange thing to come from a kid who was only about nineteen years old. You see, the rest of us were older...(Bevel said) 'if you asked us to wait until next week, then next week something would come up and you'd say wait until the next week and maybe we never will get our freedom.' He said this, 'I believe that something will happen in the situation that will make for the solution to some of these problems we're talking about.' So we decided to go on" (Smith, 1978).

Thus, the Nashville student sit-in movement was launched on the sunny Saturday of February 13, 1960.

There are four black colleges located very close together in Nashville: Fisk

University, Tennessee State College, American Baptist Theological Seminary, and Meharry Medical School. The proximity of the campuses facilitated the mobilization of large numbers of students. In this respect, Nashville resembled the state of North Carolina, where the sit-in movement was relatively easy to coordinate because, "within a ninety-mile radius of Greensboro there are ten Negro colleges" (Wolff, 1970:59). Other writers (Von Eschen et al, 1971; McAdam, 1979) have pointed out that these college networks consisting of student councils, fraternities, and sororities played a key mobilization role in the sit-in movement. That they did, is indisputable. However, the present analysis goes beyond this insight by demonstrating that the sit-in movement cannot be explained without explicating the crucial interaction and interconnections of black college students with local movement centers. A "within campus" analysis will yield the erroneous view that the sit-in movement was a college phenomenon *su generis*.

On the first day of the sit-ins in Nashville, students gathered in front of their respective campuses. NCLC sent cars to each college to transport the students to Rev. Smith's church. Again, the major strategizing and organizational tasks are being performed in local movement centers rather than on the campuses. This procedure was by no means limited to Nashville. For example, the Montgomery sit-ins were planned and organized in Rev. Ralph Abernathy's home (Lee, 1978); the Birmingham sit-ins were organized in Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth's home (Shuttlesworth, 1978); in Eaton Rouge the sit-ins were organized at Rev. T.J. Jemison's church (Jemison, 1978); in Little Rock, it was Mrs. Daisy Bates who presided over the NAACP Youth Council that sent cars to Philander Smith College to pick up the students whom she trained to conduct sit-ins (Bates, 1980). The list could continue indefinitely.

Another central point is that many of the students (especially student leaders) were immersed in these local movement centers prior to the sit-ins. We have already seen the close connection that existed between the student demonstrators and

the adult leaders in places such as Greensboro and even in Oklahoma City in 1958. Indeed, this pattern undergirded the entire movement. Rev. Jemison's remark that the Baton Rouge sit-in demonstrators, "were schooled right over there at our church; they were sent out from here to go to the lunch counters," typifies the relationship between the students and the local movement centers. Jemison continued, "the student leaders attended church here. We had close ties because they were worshipping with us while we were working together" (Jemison, 1978). This finding bears out Gerlach and Hine's (1970:79) important finding that movements spread among people who have had face-to-face contact with the movement. Local movement centers and the hundreds of social action churches provided the contact between students and the larger movement.

Once the Nashville students arrived at movement headquarters, they participated in workshops on nonviolence. Experts such as Rev. Lawson, Rev. Metz Rollins, Rev. C.T. Vivian, and the core group of students that Lawson had already trained, were on hand to prepare the new recruits. After the workshops, the students were then organized into groups with specific protest responsibilities, each having a spokesperson. The spokesperson came from the group of students that had been trained by Lawson during the late 1950's. They then marched off to confront Nashville's white power structure.

The adult black community immediately mobilized in support of the students. Shortly after the beginning of the demonstrations, large numbers of students had been arrested. According to Rev. Smith:

We just launched out on something that looked perfectly crazy and scores of people were being arrested, and paddy wagons were full and the people out in downtown couldn't understand what was going on. people just welcoming being arrested, that ran against everything they had ever seen. . . I've forgotten how much we needed that day, and we got everything we needed. (That particular day?) Yes, sir.

About \$40,000. We needed something like \$40,000 in 5's. And we had all the money. Not in 5's, but in bail. Every bit of it came up. You know--property and this kind of thing. . . and there were fourteen black lawyers in this town. Every black lawyer made himself available to us. (Smith, 1978).

Thus, we see how pre-existing resources in the community of the dominated were transformed into power resources and utilized to accomplish political goals. These are basic resources of the dominated communities, and not what McCarthy and Zald (1977) refer to as discretionary outside elite resources that are being transformed. It was suggested to Rev. Smith that it seemed that such a massive movement as that in Nashville would need outside resources. He replied:

"Now let me quickly say to you that in early 1960, when we were really out there on the line, the community stood up. We stood together. This community had proven that this stereotyped notion of black folk can't work together is just false. We worked together a lot better than the white organizations. So those people fell in line" (Smith, 1978).

The black community and adult leaders stood behind the student demonstrations across the South. In Orangeburg, after hundreds of students were arrested and brutalized, the adult black community came solidly to their aid. Bond was \$200 per student and 388 students were arrested. Over \$75,000 was needed, and adults came forth voluntarily to put up their homes and property in order to get students out of jail. Rev. McCullum, the leader of the Orangeburg movement center, remarked that, "there was no schism between the student community and the adult community in Orangeburg (McCullum, 1978). Jim McCain of CORE who played a central role in organizing sit-ins across South Carolina and in Florida reported that community support was widespread (McCain, 1978). According to Julian Bond, a student leader of Atlanta's sit-ins, "black property owners put up bond which probably amounted to \$100,000" to get sit-in demonstrators released from jail (Bond, 1980). Rev. Bernard

Lee, one of the student organizers of the Montgomery, Alabama sit-ins, said:

"We were very fortunate to have an organization (MIA) committed to nonviolence, committed to some discipline, and a tactic for social change, that could give guidance to babes out of there facing wolves" (Lee, 1978).

Rev. Lee added that the NAACP had been outlawed in Alabama, and that in his opinion, the Ku Klux Klan and White Citizens Councils would have killed the students had it not been for the MIA and its leadership.

The veterans of the movement centers employed various strategies designed to out-manuever the opposition while sustaining the sit-in movement. Rev. Jemison of Baton Rouge provides us with one illuminating example:

"But the whites got wind of it (sit-ins), those who didn't want that sort of thing, and they went to all the lunch counters the next day to see if we were coming back so they could cause some trouble. But our strategy was not to go back the next day. Our strategy was to go back on Thursday. And since they didn't see us on the second day, they said, 'well they're not coming back'. We went on the third day and had no trouble. And we missed two days the next time. So they couldn't get our pattern. So they gave up. And we never had a problem. They finally decided that, 'they're too smart. they got organization!' They gave up" (Jemison, 1978).

Movement leaders, like corporation executive, engage in rational planning so that outcomes can be shaped. By 1960, the Southern black community housed countless indigenous leaders who were skilled organizers of collective action.

These basic patterns occurred repeatedly across the South. Moreover, this community support should not be surprising, considering the number of ministers and congregations involved before and during the movement. And yet, Professor Howard Zinn, an eyewitness to many of these events, could write, "Spontaneity and self-sufficiency were the hallmarks of the sit-ins; without adult advice or consent, the students planned and carried them through" (Zinn, 1964:29). This myopia

symptomizes the inadequacies of 'outside' analyses of social movements in general; and of the Civil Rights movement in particular. This bias which assumes that dominated communities cannot provide the resources for their liberation leads many social scientists to neglect or ignore the internal structure of oppressed communities and protest movements.

The continuing development of the Nashville sit-ins sheds further lights on the interdependence of the movement and the black community. A structure called the Nashville nonviolent movement was developed to direct sit-in activities. The two sub-structures, the Student Central Committee and the Nashville Christian Leadership Council worked closely together and had overlapping membership (Reverends Lawson and Vivian were members of both groups). The Central Committee usually consisted of 25 to 30 students drawn from all the local colleges and universities. NCLC represented adult ministers and the black community. The two groups established numerous committees to accomplish specific movement tasks. Thus, there was a finance committee, a telephone, publicity and news committee, and a work committee. The work committee had sub groups responsible for painting protest signs, providing food, and transportation. The city's black lawyers became the movement's defense team. Students from Meharry Medical School became the movement's medical team.

This intricate structure propelled and guided the sit-in movement of Nashville. A clear-cut division of labor developed between the Central Committee and the NCLC. The Central Committee's major responsibilities were to train, organize and coordinate the demonstration. The NCLC developed the movement's financial structure and organized and coordinated the ongoing relationship between the community and the student movement. Diane Nash Eevel, a major student leader of the Nashville sit-ins was asked why the students did not take care of their own finances and build their own relationships with the larger community. She said:

"We didn't want to be bothered keeping track of money that was collected at the rallies and stuff. We were just pleased that NCLC would do that, and would handle the bookkeeping and all that trouble that went along with having money. . . Besides, we were much too busy sitting-in and going to jail and that kind of thing. There wasn't really the stability of a bookkeeper, for instance. We didn't want to be bothered with developing that kind of stability. . . We were very pleased to form this alliance with NCLC who would sponsor the rallies and coordinate the community support among the adults and keep track of the money, while we sat-in and--well, it took all our time, and we were really totally immersed in it. My day would sometimes start--well we'd have meetings in the morning at six o'clock, before classes, and work steady to extremely late at night, organizing the sit-ins, getting publicity out to the students that we were having a sit-in, and where and what time we would meet. Convincing people, and talking to people, calming people's fears, going to class, at the same time. It was a really busy, busy time for all of the people on the Central Committee. We were trying to teach nonviolence, maintain order among a large, large number of people. That was about all we could handle" (D. Bevel, 1978).

Students are ideal for protest activities. Usually they do not have families to support, employer's rules and dictates to follow, and crystallized ideas as to what is 'impossible' and 'unrealistic'. Students have free time and boundless energy to pursue causes they consider worthwhile and imperative (Lipset and Wolin, 1965:3; McCarthy and Zald, 1973:10). Thus, black student demonstrators engaged in protest demonstrations continuously. Nevertheless, a one-sided focus on the students diverts attention from the larger community which had undergone considerable radicalization. Speaking of the adults, James Bevel, a student organizer of the Nashville sit-ins, remarked:

"But when you talk to each individual, they talked just like we talked--the students. They had jobs and they were adults. But basically, their position would be just like ours. They played

different roles because they were in different--they had to relate based on where they were in the community" (Evel, 1978).

The militant adults of the NCLC organized the militant black community to support the militant student sit-in movement.

Once the movement began, NCLC instituted weekly and sometimes daily mass meetings in the churches. Rev. Smith recalled:

"Sometimes we had them more than once a week if we needed to. When things were really hot we called a meeting at eight o'clock in the morning. We'd call one for twelve that day, twelve noon, and the place would be full. We had what we called our wire service. People got on telephones, that was our wire service, and they would fill that building. They'd fill that building in just a matter of relatively short time" (Smith, 1978).

At these mass meetings, ministers from across the city turned over the money that their respective churches had donated to the movement. Thousands of dollars were collected at the mass meetings while black adults, ministers, and students sang such lyrics as, "Before I'd be a slave, I'd rather be buried in my grave." Then too, bundles of leaflets packed with movement information were given to adults at mass meetings. They took the leaflets and distributed them throughout the black community.

Thus, we have a concrete example of how movements of the oppressed are able to build internal communication channels through which information, strategies and plans are disseminated. From the indigenous perspective, it is obvious that basic resources such as telephones, 'CB' radios, church pulpits, barbershops, beauty salons, taverns, etc., are transformed into important communication channels. In short, movements of the oppressed are able to build their own 'mass media' through the transformation of pre-existing resources.

Contemporary writers have failed to explore the crucial role that indigenously built 'mass media' play in movements. This neglect probably stems from the tacit assumption that movements are spread through the mass media. From our

perspective, this assumption is suspect. That is, it fails to take Molotch's (1979) insight into consideration, namely: mass media is an integral part of the power structure of ruling groups. During the sit-ins the Southern white power structure attempted to destroy the movement through the media. After studying every Southern state where sit-ins occurred, Pollit (1960) concluded that, "with a few notable exceptions, the press was generally critical." In an exceptional account of the Knoxville sit-ins, Proudfoot (1962:70, 84) explains how the power structure refused to print anything about the sit-ins. He wrote that the news barrier, "has kept many people in Knoxville unaware that sit-ins are even going on." Lonnie King and Julian Bond, both student leaders of the Atlanta sit-ins, reported that the Atlanta Press refused to print news of the sit-ins (King, 1980; Bond, 1980). In Lonnie King's words,

"We were forced to set up our own networks because the white press stopped printing news about the sit-ins. They did not want us to know that sit-ins elsewhere were being successful" (King, 1980).

Speaking of the role of the press during the Nashville sit-ins, Diane Nash Bevel recalled that,

Sometimes they would report an event where I was right there, and I swear, I could not have recognized the event when I read it. It was just that distorted" (D. Eevel, 1978).

Against this backdrop, indigenous 'mass media' are crucial in movements of the dominated. Indeed, a political view of the media helps make sense of Gerlach and Hine's (1970) finding that 'outside media' played an unimportant role in movement recruitment.

During the Nashville sit-ins, word went out to the black community not to shop downtown.

"We didn't organize the boycott. We did not organized the boycott. The boycott came about. We don't know how it happened. I tell you there are a lot of little mystical elements in there, little spots that defy rational explanation. . . Now. we promoted it. We adopted

it. But we did not sit down one day and organize a boycott. . . ninety-nine percent of the black people in this community stayed away from downtown during the boycott. It was a fantastic thing--successful. It was fantastically successful." (Smith, 1978).

This quote seems to breathe life into classical collective behavior theory.

Yet the boycott was largely organized by NCLC. According to Bevel, Dr. Vivian Henderson, who was head of Fisk University's economic department and a member of NCLC, played a key role in the boycott because:

"Vivian Henderson was basically responsible for calling the boycott. He got up at a mass meeting and said, 'at least what we could do to support students, if we've got any decency, we can just stop paying bills and just don't shop until this thing is resolved.' A very indignant type of speech he made. It just caught on. All the bourgeois women would come to the meeting, and they just got on the phone and called up everybody, all the doctor's wives and things. They just got on the phone and called 300 or 400 people and told them don't shop downtown. Finally there was just a total boycott downtown. There would be no black people downtown at all" (Bevel, 1978).

Activists were stationed downtown to insure that blacks knew not to shop. According to Rev. Smith, shortly after the boycott was initiated, merchants began coming to his home wanting to talk. Diane Nash Bevel attributed the boycott's effectiveness to reduced profits during the Easter shopping season. It also changed the merchant's attitude toward the sit-ins.

"It was interesting the difference that the (boycott) made in terms of how the managers were willing to talk with us. because see we had talked with the managers of the stores. We had a meeting at the very beginning and they had kind of listened to us politely, and said, 'well we just can't do it. We can't desegregate the counters because we will lose money and that's the end of it.' So, after the economic withdrawal, they were eager to talk with us, and

try to work up some solution" (Nash Bevel, 1978).

Historically the black community has effectively utilized the economic boycott in numerous conflict situations. Boycotts and picketing remained a central strategy throughout the student movement. Indeed, the official paper of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The Student Voice of August, 1960, revealed that economic boycotts were usually associated with sit-in demonstrations. In this connection, it reported that boycotts were underway in at least nine Southern cities undergoing sit-ins. By the same token, picketing, which can partly be an economic form of protest, was being carried out in at least ten other Southern cities (The Student Voice, August, 1960).

It is interesting that contemporary scholars of the Civil Rights movement (Lipsky, 1968; Hubbard, 1968; Oberschall, 1973; McCarthy and Zald, 1973; Garrow, 1978; McAdam, 1979) have failed to analyze the strategic role that the economic boycotts played in the movement. This oversight is not a result of a lack of data. Luper (1979) and Proudfoot(1962) have given excellent accounts of the economic boycotts associated with their sit-ins. The Southern Regional Council's study (1960) of the sit-ins which most scholars quote, reports that:

"The Negro potential for economic pressure is great. The New York Times (February 19) reported the statement of an S.H. Kress executive that business in some of the affected stores has dropped 15-18%. Other reports have said that a variety store in Charlotte has had a 65% drop in business, and a Greensboro store is down 35%. The Wall Street Journal reported that Negro expenditures in Charlotte are estimated at \$150 million annually" (Southern Regional Council, 1960:xi).

Again in 1961, the Southern Regional Council's study of the sit-ins reported that, "The economic boycott, a natural by-product of reluctance to buy where not served, soon emerged

as a powerful--and successful--means of achieving equal facilities and equal treatment" (Southern Regional Council, 1961:1).

Thus, indigenous resources that were extremely valuable to the white power structure were withheld until movement goals were accomplished. These economic boycotts were the products of complicated organizational efforts. Indeed, in some places blacks en masse even returned credit cards to segregated stores. Nevertheless, writers employing "outside" perspectives on movements such as Lipsky (1968) argued that, "the essence of political protest consist of activating third parties to participate in ways favorable to protest goals." In this view, movements of the powerless are doomed to failure if they are unable to attract critical outside assistance. In the present paper, evidence has been presented which suggests that theories of social movement still have much fruit to bear by focussing on the basic confrontation between the insurgent groups and the opposition.

In early 1960 the white power structure of Nashville was forced to desegregate a number of private establishments and public transportation facilities. SNCC's Student Voice reported that in Nashville:

"A long series of negotiations followed the demonstrations, and on May 10, 6 downtown stores integrated their lunch counters. Since this time others have followed suit, and some stores have hired Negroes in positions other than those of menial workers for the first time" (Student Voice, August, 1960).

Daily demonstrations by hundreds of students refusing to accept bond so that they could be released from jail, coupled with the boycott, gave the dominated the upper hand in the conflict situation. Careful organization and planning was the hallmark of the Nashville sit-in movement.

### Conclusions

Employing an indigenous perspective I have arrived at an interpretation of the sit-in movement which departs from previous analyses. Scholars of the sit-in movement (Lomax, 1962; Zinn, 1964; Matthews and Prothro, 1966; Killian, 1968; Meier and Rudwick, 1973; Oberschall, 1973; Piven and Cloward, 1977) have persistently neglected to explore the central role that indigenous social organization in general, and formal movement organizations in particular played in the emergence and development of the sit-in movement. In these writings, organization is portrayed as an "after-the-fact" accretion on student spontaneity. Indeed, the dominant view is that SCLC, CORE, NACCP and adult leaders of the black community rushed into a dynamic campus movement seeking to enhance their stature by getting on the student bandwagon. The analysis presented in this paper argues that these organizational and community forces were at the core of the sit-in movement from the very beginning. We go even further by arguing that these organizational forces which became consolidated following the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott, provided the base and resources that made the sit-in movement possible. The community organizing which occurred between 1955-60 seemed to have produced and developed the movement rather than serving as a mere situational trigger. This finding that organizations played a key role in the sit-ins is consistent with resource mobilization's stress on the role that organizations play in collective action (Oberschall, 1973; Freeman, 1973; McCarthy and Zald, 1973; Gamson, 1975; Tilly, 1978; McAdam, 1979). By the same token, the analysis presented here is inconsistent with classical collective behavior theory (Leban, 1896; Parks and Burges, 1921; Blumer, 1946; Turner and Killian, 1957; Lang and Lang, 1961; Smelser, 1963). That is, the sit-ins appeared to have been fueled by spontaneity and contagion. Nevertheless, this analysis has shown these assumptions to be incorrect.

The analysis put forth here presents a fundamental challenge to the thesis put forth by writers (Hubbard, 1968; Lipsky, 1968; Marx and Uscem, 1971; McCarthy and Zald, 1973; Oberschall, 1973) that claim the Civil Rights movement was dependent on outside resources, elites, courts, organizers, Northern white liberals, mass media, and the federal government. By utilizing an indigenous perspective, I have shown how a powerless group was able to build its own movement by: 1) transforming pre-existing resources into power resources, 2) creating local movement centers capable of initiating and sustaining concrete instances of collective action, and 3) building an indigenous political base through which widespread collective action (sit-ins) was rapidly disseminated and coordinated.

In my view the timing of the sit-ins can be explained by taking into account the indigenous political base that had taken hold in the black community by 1960. This base nurtured and sustained the movement and made it possible for the Greensboro sit-ins to become the unique link in a long chain of previous sit-ins.

Finally, it is believed that the central concepts presented (i.e. transformation of pre-existing indigenous resources, local movement centers, and indigenous political base) have generalizability. For example Alidoost-Khaybari (1981) has presented a strikingly similar analysis of mobilization and development of the 1978-9 Iranian revolution. It also is believed that various college campuses during the student movement of the 1960's and 1970's can usefully be conceptualized as local movement centers that served as the concrete micro-structures that gave vitality to the white student movement. Similarly, it is suspected that the timing of innovations such as sit-ins and teach-ins of the white student movement can be explained by examining the indigenous political base built by student activists.

In this paper an important social movement of the 1960's has been analyzed to show the difference that an indigenous perspective makes.

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## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>It should be pointed out here that to appreciate the volume of protest activity engendered by the sit-ins, it is necessary to note that the total number of cities (69) refers only to those cities having sit-ins, and not to the actual day-to-day demonstrations. The actual numbers of sit-in demonstrations during these first two months ran into the hundreds if not thousands.

<sup>2</sup>Morris, Aldon, "Origin of the Civil Rights Movement: An Indigenous Perspective" 1980. Free Press.

<sup>3</sup>King papers at Boston University; SCLC papers at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference headquartered in Atlanta; Rev. Kelly Miller Smith's papers housed at First Baptist Church of Nashville.

<sup>4</sup>All of the King papers at Boston University were examined. All of SCLC's files in Atlanta were examined. The portion of Rev. Smith's papers dealing with the sit-ins were examined.

<sup>5</sup>It is suspected that further research will reveal that sit-ins occurred in more than these fifteen cities between 1957 and 1960.

<sup>6</sup>It could legitimately be argued that outside resources were central to these early sit-ins, given that in some cases CORE was involved. However, it seems that the emerging black direct action organizations of the late 1950's and the church served as a resource base for CORE. Thus, CORE which was very small at the time, "piggybacked" on indigenous resources of the black community. Elsewhere (1980), I have presented supporting data for this argument. Meier and Rudwick's account of early Core suggests a similar conclusion.

<sup>7</sup>It is not claimed here that every city we have identified as part of a particular cluster is not actually part of another cluster(s). We are simply making the basic

assumption that the probability that shared coordination and organization of the sit-ins is high if two or more cities within a 75-mile radius had sit-ins within a two week period. Our data and analysis confirms this assumption in many instances.

TABLE 1

Number of cities with sit-ins  
and related protest activities  
during February and March, 1960,  
by state.

STATE	NUMBER OF CITIES WITH SIT-INS AND RELATED PROTEST ACTIVITIES DURING FEBRUARY AND MARCH, 1960
North Carolina	18
Florida	11
Virginia	9
South Carolina	7
Texas	5
Tennessee	4
Alabama	4
Georgia	2
West Virginia	2
Louisiana	2
Arkansas	2
Maryland	1
Ohio	1
Kentucky	1
Total	69

\*Source: Southern Regional Council. "The Student Protest Movement,  
Winter 1960". SRC-13, April 1, 1960 (revised)

TABLE II

Clusters of cities with sit-ins and related activities occurring during February and March, 1960, number of days between sit-ins within cluster, and maximum number of miles (approximate) between farthest two cities within the cluster.

Cluster of Cities N=41	Number of days between sit-ins within cluster	Maximum number of miles between farthest two cities within cluster
Fayetteville, Raleigh, N.C.	1 day	50 miles
Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota, Fla.	2 days	50 miles
Montgomery, Tuskegee, Ala.	2 days	25 miles
Florence, Sumter, Columbia, S.C.	2 days	70 miles
Austin, San Antonio, Tx.	2 days	75 miles
Salisbury, Shelby, N.C.	2 days	60 miles
Wilmington, New Bern, N.C.	2 days	75 miles
Concord, Charlotte, N.C., Rock Hill, S.C.	3 days	50 miles
Durham, High Point, Winston-Salem, N.C.	3 days	75 miles
Chapel Hill, Henderson, N.C.	3 days	50 miles
Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Fla.	3 days	40 miles
Charleston, Orangeburg, Denmark, S.C.	4 days	70 miles
Sanford, Orlando, Daytona Beach, Fla.	5 days	54 miles
Houston, Galveston, Tx.	6 days	65 miles
Richmond, Petersburg, Va.	7 days	30 miles
Hampton, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Newport News, Suffolk, Va.	11 days	35 miles

Compiled from: Southern Regional Council. "The Student Protest Movement, Winter, 1960." SRC-13 (April 1, 1960)

TABLE III

Number and percentage of cities having sit-ins and related activities in February and March, 1960, by geographic region.

Month	Geographic Region			Total
	Deep South*	Southeastern & Border States**	Non-South***	
February, 1960	5 (15%)R (19%)C	28 (85%)R (67%)C	0	33 (48%)
March, 1960	21 (58%)R (81%)C	14 (39%)R (33%)C	1 (3%)R (100%)C	36 (52%)
Total	26 (38%)	42 (61%)	1 (1%)	69 (100%)

\*Deep South states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana

\*\*Southeastern and Border states: South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Maryland, Kentucky, North Carolina, West Virginia

\*\*\*Non-South state: Ohio

Compiled from: Southern Regional Council. "The Student Protest Movement, Winter 1960," SRC-13 (April 1, 1960)