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CORE Action Discipline

CORE AND NONVIOLENCE

The Congress Of Racial Equality is a national federation of local inter-racial groups committed to the goal of erasing the color-line through methods of direct nonviolent action. All groups affiliated with national CORE agree to follow to the best of their ability the nonviolent procedure in all action which they sponsor. The discipline which is set forth here, and which has been approved by the national convention, is simply meant to make explicit what seems to be implicit in the nonviolent method.

This method consists of relatively undeveloped techniques for solving social conflicts, but it has great possibilities for good. It makes two assumptions. First of all, it assumes that social conflicts are not ultimately solved by the use of violence; that violence perpetuates itself, and serves to aggravate rather than resolve conflict. Moreover, it assumes that it is suicidal for a minority group to use violence, since to use it would probably result in complete control and subjugation by the majority group. Secondly, the nonviolent method assumes the possibility of creating a world in which nonviolence will be used to a maximum degree. In working for this type of world, it confronts injustice without fear, without compromise, and without hate.

In overcoming injustice a threefold type of power characterizes nonviolence: (1) the power of active goodwill and non-retaliation; (2) the power of public opinion against a wrong-doer; (3) the power of refusing to cooperate with injustice, such non-cooperation being illustrated by the boycott and the strike. On occasion CORE will cooperate with official and semi-official law enforcement agencies in the advancing of justice in certain projects.

Below are listed some of the implications for action of the nonviolent method.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE GROUP

1. A CORE member will investigate the facts carefully before determining whether or not racial injustice exists in a given situation.
2. A CORE member will seek at all times to understand both the attitude of the person responsible for a policy of racial discrimination, and the social situation which engendered the attitude. Such understanding may be advanced through discussion with the prejudiced person. In the discussions the CORE member will be flexible and creative, showing a willingness to participate in experiments which seem constructive, but being careful not to compromise CORE principles.
3. A CORE member will make a sincere effort to avoid malice and hatred toward any individual or group, while struggling relentlessly against practices of discrimination.
4. A CORE member will never use malicious slogans or labels to discredit any opponent.
5. A CORE member will maintain an understanding attitude, and will be willing to admit his own inadequacies.
6. He will endure the anger of any individual or group in the spirit of goodwill and creative reconciliation, and in so doing he will submit to assault and never retaliate in kind, either by act or word. He will not submit out of personal fear of embarrassment or punishment.