

ORE  
CORE - Congress of Racial Equality  
38 Park Row  
New York 38, New York

MINUTES - National Action Committee  
January 26, 1962

Present: Oldham, Farmer, Rich, Carey, Peck, Coleman, McCain, Carter, Gartner  
Rachlin, McCummings. Invited Observers: Teer and Haley.

Office Procedures Survey: Mr. Farmer reported on a survey of the National Office by the firm of Apfel and Englander for the purpose of promoting greater efficiency in staff operations. He presented the recommendations for changes in clerical procedure to the NAC as well as a suggested office layout.

Staff Reorganization: Among the recommendations of the efficiency experts were: Bookkeeping would be set up as a separate department. Direct mail and special fundraising should be combined under one head. Mr. Farmer asked the Committee for permission to place these functions under Community Relations headed by Marvin Rich with two assistants, on a short-term basis. Fund-raising would ultimately become a separate department.

The Field Director, pointing out that the functions of this department have increased to the point of becoming unwieldy, suggested that it be divided into (a) Department of Organization, and (b) Program and Training. Accordingly, Mr. Farmer asked the Action Committee's permission to name Jim McCain as head of the Department of Organization. Gordon Carey would head the Department of Program and Training. (Department Assistants) Fredricka Teer will serve as assistant to Jim McCain and Norman Hill as assistant to Gordon Carey. (Functions) The Program and Training Department will handle Action Institutes, development of Direct Action Projects, and lend aid to CORE chapters in development of such projects locally. The Organization Department will work directly with CORE Field personnel, and through its field staff direct organizing and development of CORE chapters and service chapters in all possible areas of their operations.

The Community Relations Department, following staff reorganization, would combine public relations and fundraising. Jim Peck will devote more time to public relations; Bill Larkins will become assistant on fundraising.

Mr. Farmer reported that the present office manager, Cynthia Homire, has told him that the increase in staff, etc. now places more demands upon her time than she is able to give. Authorization was granted to hire a new office manager. Miss Homire will remain with the organization in another capacity.

The Action Committee was asked by the National Director to authorize hiring of an assistant for himself to assume some of the mounting load of this job. His duties would include trouble shooting, speaking engagements, organizational meetings, much of the desk work which must be handled, and setting up Council meetings and conventions. Permission to name such a person was given, and Richard Haley was named for this position.

The Committee discussed in detail the possible effect on the Field staff of moving Haley and McCain into the National Office, and it was pointed out that much of their activity would still be in the Field. Too, with additional people to assume some of the load of the National Office, all of the executive staff would be able to get into the Field more often.

A recommendation to the Committee was that Frank Robinson of Sumter, South Carolina be hired as a Field Secretary. Jim McCain, who has worked extensively with Mr. Robinson in Sumter and Dr. Frederick C. James feel that he would be excellent for the job, and the Committee approved the recommendation.

The consensus of the NAC was that the proposed changes were not only advisable, but necessary. Motion to adopt was made by Leroy Carter, - seconded by Laverne McCummings and unanimously accepted by the Committee, and will go into effect as of February 1st. Involved are three shifts of present office personnel and two additions to the staff.

Richard Haley reported to the Committee on Huntsville, Alabama and requested permission to return to this city and engage in more direct action which may lead to jail. He requested that he be allowed to remain in jail for the period of his sentence, feeling that this is necessary to gain needed support in the community if the CORE program is to succeed.

National Chairman, Charles Oldham, discussed with the Committee a re-evaluation of CORE policy with regard to jail and bail, pointing out the necessity of returning to the "going to jail and serving sentence" philosophy of the organization, to preserve its character.

Julius Hobson Memo: Mr. Hobson's memo presented an evaluation of the Route 40 project and indicated some conflicts between Julius Hobson and members of the Field staff in the direction of this project. Mr. Farmer read the entire memo to the Committee and his reply to Mr. Hobson. The issue seemed to hinge on the responsibilities and authorities of regional officers vis a vis the Field staff assigned to a project, and on the handling of press releases on national projects. The Committee discussed at length the position of the Regional Officer in a National CORE project, and the implications of the errors made in implementing the Route 40 project, and it was agreed that a clarification of the duties of the Regional Officer in such circumstances was needed. It was further agreed that National and Regional CORE projects come under the jurisdiction of the National Office. National Chairman, Charles Oldham, suggested that the position and duties of the Regional Officer be spelled out by the National Council, February 10-11, in Cincinnati, Ohio. It was further suggested that Mr. Oldham bring to the Council a statement of policy on the relationship of National Projects to the National Office.

The Committee adopted a motion that the Community Relations Director send a memo to all CORE chapters on the importance of correct handling of press releases. All press releases on National Projects must be cleared with the National Office.

Community Relations Report: Marvin Rich reported that he had viewed the CORE Freedom Ride film and feels that it is well done and will be a credit to the organization. Twenty-two premieres have been set for February 12, most headed by CORE groups. The film will be shown at the National Council meeting in Cincinnati. Available at the film showings will be CORE literature and Jim Peck's book, Freedom Ride.

The Community Relations Director asked the NAC for permission to make tapes available for radio stations. This was unanimously granted.

Fund-Raising: CORE's income since the beginning of the fiscal year was \$460,000. The organization borrowed \$90,000. Total expenses, including bond, amount to \$565,000. Total cash on hand amounts to \$26,000. Bills amount to \$34,000. A contribution of \$5,000. was received today from the United Auto Workers. A cocktail party with Father Robert L. Pierson as guest of honor on February 7th



is expected to bring additional funds. Other smaller fundraising events are planned in the near future.

Marvin Rich reported that Jim Peck's book on the Freedom Rides is scheduled for publication February 9th. National CORE will receive 50% of the sale price on all books which it sells.

Provisional Program Report: Gordon Carey reported to the Committee that a package would be presented to the National Council for its approval which would -  
(1) Suggest a continuation of the Freedom Rides to wipe out discrimination in interstate travel facilities. (2) Extend the Route 40 project into other states. (3) Seek to change the image of the non-white in America through television, radio and the theater. (4) Seek improvement in retail hiring. (5) Seek improvement in airline flight crew hiring. (6) Possible library read-ins. (7) Continue activity against segregation in YMCA's. (8) Seek negotiations with national chain stores. (9) Housing programs. (10) Voter registration activity. (11) Desegregation of schools. (12) Continue lunch counter project. (13) Home cooperative industries in Haywood County.

Organization Plans: Jim McCain gave a report on suggestions which he has drawn up to aid the Field staff in more effectively and efficiently carrying out its program. The suggestions include visits to groups to acquaint them with organizational procedure, giving suggestions for local activity and advising them of assistance they may expect from the National Office.

Staff: (Provisionals to Permanents) - Field Director, Gordon Carey, made a motion that Henry Thomas and Elton Cox be made permanent members of the Field Staff, and this motion was adopted by the Committee. He reported to the Committee that Edward Blankenheim had tendered an oral resignation for family reasons, and at the same time asked the organization to consider rehiring him at a future date. The oral resignation was to be followed with a letter formalizing the matter; this letter has not been received to date and the Committee accepted the oral resignation.

(New Staff) - In addition to Frank Robinson, the Committee was asked to approve the hiring of Mary Hamilton as a Field Secretary. Miss Hamilton, a Freedom Rider from California, has for the past few months been working in the National Office on a temporary basis and was recommended on the basis of her dedication to the CORE program and her organizational abilities. The Committee so authorized.

Chapter Affiliations: Gordon Carey recommended affiliation of eleven new chapters: Seattle, Washington; New Haven, Connecticut; San Francisco, California; Denver, Colorado; Alexandria, Virginia; New York University; Bergen County, New Jersey; High Point, North Carolina; Tuskegee, Alabama; Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Some of these still have to complete requirements and the recommendation was on the basis that this is done by the time of the Council meeting. Motion was made and adopted for affiliation of these chapters on the basis recommended.

The matter of affiliation of a Dayton, Ohio CORE group was again discussed, and the Committee felt that another visit by a CORE Field Secretary was needed. This was approved and the findings will be brought to the National Council for its decision.

Affiliation of a Detroit Youth CORE group was brought to the Committee. The affiliation was rejected. A letter from Anna Holden concerning this group was read to the Committee as well as correspondence between the President of the group and Field Director, Gordon Carey.

A letter received from National Secretary, Anna Holden, was read to the Committee, together with Marvin Rich's reply which attempted to clarify questions raised by Miss Holden. Among these was the matter of the salary of the National Director. The minutes of December 15th stated that Jim L. Farmer had been granted an increase in salary of \$1000.00 annually, which means that Mr. Farmer will receive \$1000.00 additional, over a year's period - not that he will receive \$1000.00 additional each year. Miss Holden's letter made additional recommendations for a re-evaluation of the matter of serving jail sentences. This was in agreement with statements made earlier by National Chairman, Charles Oldham, and approved by the Committee. Another issue was the matter of individuals raising money in the name of CORE. Marvin Rich pointed out that it is most difficult if not impossible to control this. While some of the Freedom Riders have raised their own bond money in this manner, there is no doubt that in some cases such appeals to the public have been made unscrupulously. We have publicly denounced such unscrupulous appeals when they have come to our attention.

Jim Farmer presented to the Committee a request received from Mr. Henry L. Gerner, currently working on his doctorate at the Pacific School of Religion, to do a motivational study on the Freedom Riders. Based on the commitment that all information will be held in strict professional confidence, such a study was authorized. The Committee also authorized the National Director to prepare a covering letter which will be sent with Mr. Gerner's questionnaire to each Freedom Rider contacted. Another stipulation in the authorization of the study is that names of individuals will not appear in any published material.

Council Meeting: A third of the CORE Chapters have already advised that they will send representatives to the meeting in Cincinnati, February 10-11. Fredricka Teer presented a proposed agenda, which will be sent to all chapters after revisions.

Office Space: Mr. Farmer advised the Committee that additional office space is badly needed and requested permission to negotiate for such space in CORE's present quarters. Permission was granted.