

STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ACTION COUNCIL

January 24, 1964

Present: Curvin, Dodson, Farmer, Gartner, McKissick, Peck, Rachlin, Smith

Staff: Carey, C. Coleman, Haley, N. Hill, V. Hill, Hoffman, Lockett, McCain, Rich, McKenna

At the beginning of the meeting there was less than a quorum present; the Chairman used his authority to ratify said quorum. Before the conclusion of the first report, the last three members of the Steering Committee arrived, effecting a quorum.

Department of Organization:

Following chapters were recommended for affiliation: (A report on their activities was given, and in each case the chapter had been recommended by a field person)

Los Angeles State College
Pomona Valley, California
Vallejo, California

West Feliciana, Louisiana
San Antonio, Texas
Wheeling, West Virginia

The chapters were affiliated on a motion by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Mr. Rachlin and a unanimous vote by the Steering Committee. There is a proviso that the Pomona Valley chapter be clarified as to its name, since the area takes in several cities.

Jim McCain next reported on the location of his field staff. He stated that the only changes have been Mary Hamilton who now working in Plaquemine Parish, Louisiana; Winston Lockett who has been brought East to work with New Haven CORE; Ike Reynolds who has spent two weeks in Texas; and Marvin Robinson now working in West Virginia. John Schaefer is in Philadelphia. Bruce Baines is currently in Texas to take over while Ike makes a trip to Louisiana. Also, several Task Force people have been added to work in Mississippi. Ed Hollander has been hired as a Field Secretary working directly under Marvin Rich.

In voter registration the totals for January are as follows: South Carolina, 1,879; Florida, 63; Louisiana, 174, making a total of 2,016 additional voters in three states. A voter registration campaign is being set in the Tallahassee, Florida area by Pat Due, assisted by Judy Benninger who will be placed on the Task Force in that area.

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- * B. Brooklyn CORE
The National Director called a meeting with the Executive Committee of Brooklyn CORE to discuss certain of their actions and statements which it is felt are damaging to the CORE image. After discussion, the chapter agreed to clear future press releases with the National Office. The chapter also agreed to establish orientation sessions for its membership. Jim Peck offered a motion that a memorandum be prepared for all CORE chapters regarding issuing of statements, charges, etc. that are not in keeping with CORE philosophy. The memorandum is to cover public statements by one chapter which affect other local chapters without consultation with said chapters. This motion was seconded by Carl Rachlin and unanimously adopted by the Steering Committee.

Another item to be added to the NAC agenda was introduced at this point: The education of CORE membership in non-violence, including civil disobedience through orientation sessions.

- * C. New Haven CORE
This chapter is having serious political problems resulting in a breakdown in orientation within the group. Winston Lockett has been working with the chapter and reported that it sincerely desires proper orientation and education, but that outside influences make this very difficult. New elections have been set for May. There is ~~also~~ a direct action project scheduled for tomorrow, January 25, which Winston feels will be an orderly demonstration.

- * D. Chicago CORE
Norm Hill is to visit Chicago CORE within a day or so to clarify the affiliation of Southside CORE as reported in the minutes of the December 7 meeting. There has been evidence that remnants of the old Southside CORE are still in existence, creating some problems for the new group. Norm will confer with both Chicago chapters on these and other problems and report to the National Director.

E. Cleveland CORE

This chapter's request for financial aid in the form of bond money for Mae Mallory was turned down on a motion by the National Director, seconded by Alan Gartner and a unanimous vote by the Steering Committee.

- * The Steering Committee unanimously adopted a motion that CORE groups will not participate with other groups (specifically, the Monroe Defense Committee) in action on the Mae Mallory case. Cleveland CORE is to be so advised by letter.

- (*) F. Los Angeles CORE
There is evidence of some Communist Party infiltration in this chapter. In a recent election the desirable faction of the group won. However, the dissident faction then set up a separate group calling itself a CORE group. It was

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Delta Project

A statewide organization in Mississippi known as COFO, composed of representatives of CORE, SCLC, NAACP, and SNCC is currently working on an intensive voter registration drive. It is also their hope to establish community educational centers throughout the state. As reported in the December 7 minutes, CORE authorized \$1,000 to establish such a center in Canton, Mississippi. It is reported that the National Council of Churches is interested in this project and may provide financial and physical support.

Jim McCain is scheduled to visit Mississippi within a very short time and make recommendations on extended CORE involvement in these programs.

Coöperative Industry:

Richard Haley advised that Eric Weinberger, who established the tote bag cooperative in Haywood County, Tennessee, is interested in setting up sample industries in other Southern states and would like to choose locations in which there is an active civil rights group or groups. Mr. Weinberger specifically requested limited travel expenses from CORE. The Steering Committee approved cooperation as far as is feasible with Mr. Weinberger in setting up these projects.

Freedom House:

Chairman Floyd McKissick advised that there is an available building in Durham, North Carolina which could be used as a training center and as living accommodations for CORE personnel engaged in civil rights activities in that area. The building would require some \$6,000 for repairs and enlargement. The Steering Committee adopted unanimously a motion to support the principle of Freedom House. Details are to be worked out.

Literacy Program in South Carolina:

(Part of the President's Equal Opportunity Program aimed at functional illiterates.)

Jim McCain reported that an integrated literacy program is in operation in South Carolina. The majority of functional illiterates in South Carolina are Negroes, and it has been found that special efforts must be made to acquaint them with the program. McCain pointed out that these programs will be operating throughout the South, and CORE field personnel can play an important role in aiding Negroes who qualify. Participants are paid while training.

NAC Vacancies:

There are currently three vacancies--Velma Hill, Patricia Due, and Carl Rachlin are now working full time for the organization. This will be an agenda item

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function efficiently, he would need a desk on the CORE premises and part-time secretarial help. The Steering Committee approved this and authorized an annual salary of \$12,000, which represents a small increase over Mr. Rachlin's previous retainer fee.

The Steering Committee voted against Mr. Rachlin's continuing as an NAC member while employed full time by the organization and expressed its gratitude for his past services on the NAC.

St. Louis Globe Democrat:

This St. Louis, Missouri daily carried a series of 10 articles on alleged Communist infiltration of CORE. It also printed a statement supposedly made by a CORE Field Secretary that no check of a person's political background is made by CORE chapters prior to granting membership. The Steering Committee discussed a possible libel suit against the paper in conjunction with suits by some of its Advisory Committee members, also attacked by the paper.

Specifically, the following action is to be taken:

1. A clarifying statement from the Field Secretary to the newspaper, asking that said statement be published.
2. A statement of CORE policy from the National Director to the newspaper, requesting its publication.
3. Demand retraction of its charges and a public apology from the newspaper.
4. CORE's General Counsel and its National Director will consult further and proceed with whatever action is advisable.

Another agenda item at the forthcoming NAC meeting will be CORE's policy regarding endorsement of political candidates. CORE's varied activities in voter education and registration demand that this subject be seriously discussed; particularly, what constitutes an endorsement.

Jim McCain gave a brief report on the operation of the Manpower Development and Training Act to aid functional illiterates in South Carolina. A large percentage of the group is Negro. South Carolina has received a grant of five and one-half million dollars to aid persons in this unfortunate category. Mr. McCain suggested that CORE's Field Staff acquaint themselves with these programs to attack poverty in areas where they work and lend their aid in securing all possible help for minority groups.

School Boycott:

CORE is a member of the City-Wide Committee for School Integration, and is actively supporting the February 3 boycott. Bronx CORE Chairman, Herb Callander, has been assigned to work full time on mobilization for the boycott which at this point seems to be gaining momentum. The Board of Education has stated that it will submit an integration plan on or before January 31.

Lou Smith asked for clarification on National Office policy regarding boycotts by chapters in other cities in support of the New York boycott. The National Director explained that chapters were not being urged to support the New York boycott but rather that they work on their own particular school problems.

* A memorandum is to be sent to all CORE chapters asking that they contact the National Office before affiliating themselves with any groups on joint projects. The subject is to be further discussed at the staff Conference and NAC meeting.

Internal Affairs:

A. New York CORE

At a meeting on January 19, attended by Messrs. James Farmer, Richard Haley, Marshall England, and members of New York CORE, the losing faction in the recent election asked for permission to form a separate chapter with headquarters in East Harlem. The National Director suggested that the second group present its program and activities along with its official request for affiliation. It was agreed that boundary lines would be drawn and that "Harlem" would not be used as part of the name of the new chapter. Also that persons who wish to leave New York CORE would submit a resignation to the group, so advising. There was further agreement that all information given to the press would be cleared through the National Director. Mr. Farmer will recommend to the NAC that the trusteeship be removed, effective February 1, but that Richard Haley be assigned to work with New York CORE as a consultant for a period of one month. He would be asked to see that proper machinery is set up regarding the constitution, financial records, membership records and orientation meetings. Orientation sessions are to be established, supervised by the chapter working with the Program and Organization Departments of National CORE. Both groups accepted the above proposals.

This report was accepted by the Steering Committee with two abstentions.

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advised by the National Office that it could not use the CORE name, and after some insistence the group complied.

* G. Dayton CORE

Two factions exist here. Richard Haley will attend elections next week and report on the outcome.

Automobile Leasing:

Insurance problems on cars owned by and loaned to the organization resulted in looking to the possibility of leasing cars in areas where needed. Gordon Carey is handling this matter which was approved on a motion by Carl Rachlin, seconded by Alan Gartner, and unanimously adopted by the Steering Committee.

Financial:

Total receipts December 1 - December 31, 1963	\$ 88,432.39
Disbursements for December 1963	104,257.32
Total disbursements, June - December 1963	557,673.29
Total receipts, June 1 - December 31, 1963	590,435.31
Balance in checking	15,000.00
Balance in savings	50,800.00 (approx.)
CORE's Christmas store gross	6,000.00 (approx.)

The Community Relations Director suggested that if internal problems are correctly handled, the financial picture should brighten during the next months.

This report given by Treasurer Alan Gartner was accepted by the Steering Committee.

Union Contract

The union contract which was negotiated by a committee composed of Carl Rachlin, Floyd McKissick, Alan Gartner, and Gordon Carey was reviewed for the Steering Committee and was accepted on a motion by Mark Dodson, seconded by Bob Curvin, and unanimously adopted by the Steering Committee.

○ Pension Plan

A pension plan to protect CORE employees whose prime earning life has and is being spent full time with the organization was presented for action by the Steering Committee. Possible plans and terms of each have been investigated and copies of the proposed plan will be sent to members of the NAC for further study.

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at the next NAC meeting where all recommendations will be considered.

Convention:

Letters were sent to all CORE chapters in the Upper and Mid-South asking if they were interested in hosting the 1964 Convention. No replies have been received. At the moment Kansas City now seems the most likely prospect. It is understood that Memphis, Tennessee might also be interested. If no additional invitations are received, the decision will be left to staff. Tentative Convention dates are July 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Summer Project:

Will probably center around voter education activity in Louisiana and in Mississippi.

North Carolina:

Chapel Hill is the center of nonviolent direct action against segregation in public accommodations. (A survey shows that 25% of such accommodations are still segregated in this citadel of higher education) There were 235 arrests during December. Demonstrations have been highly successful from the point of view of mobilizing the Negro community. Some violence has been encountered.

The Board of Aldermen met, supposedly to pass a public accommodations desegregation bill, but it is understood that they instead appointed a committee to work on such a bill. If no clear cut action results by the first of the month, direct action is to resume. The Governor of North Carolina asked for a private meeting with Mr. Farmer and Mr. McKissick, but they declined, as the Governor had publicly denounced the desegregation efforts in Chapel Hill before calling for such a meeting.

The situation in Chapel Hill strongly points up the need for the public accommodation section of the civil rights bill, and it was the consensus of the Steering Committee that all CORE chapters be apprised of the situation in North Carolina and urged to initiate action on desegregation of public facilities. The Committee further authorized the staff and the National Chairman to step up to whatever degree necessary the activities in Chapel Hill. Any aid possible from other CORE chapters is welcome in Chapel Hill.

General Counsel:

CORE's various legal entanglements have taken a great deal of the General Counsel's time, curtailing much of his own private practice. He now finds it possible to devote almost full time to organizational needs. In order to

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