



CORE

working to create a society in which all men are equal

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Dear Friend,

The American bigot is smiling this October and he has much to be happy about.

The 1966 Civil Rights Bill is dead.

Northern cities resounded to the cries of "Burn the niggers! Kill the niggers!" Hate the niggers!" this summer. Little black children were beaten mercilessly this September in Southern towns while the police looked on.

And, best of all, a wedge is being driven between the Negro members of leading civil rights organizations and their traditional white liberal support.

It would be a banner year indeed for the bigot if he could see CORE die in the same year that the 1966 Civil Rights Act was killed.

The bigot's favorite weapon in this fight to split the friends of freedom is his use of the term, black power. As he interprets it, black power becomes black supremacy, black violence and black hatred for the white man.

Black power is none of these things to the members of CORE. We believe that black power is a very clear and very constructive step toward the realization of liberty and justice for all.

Black power means the organization of the Negro community into a tight and disciplined group for six purposes:

1. The growth of Negro political power.
2. The building of Negro economic power.
3. The improvement of the Negro self-image.
4. The development of Negro leadership.
5. The encouragement of Federal law enforcement.
6. The mobilization of Negro consumer power.

As David Danzig of the Columbia School of Social Work wrote in Commentary, "The effort to encourage Negroes to see themselves as a power bloc, and to act as one, is entirely in keeping with American minority politics."

The Irish, the Italians, the Jews, the Poles and virtually every other minority in our country have organized themselves into power blocs in order to achieve precisely the same goals listed above.

And yet, now that the Negro has finally begun to do what the white community has always asked us to do --grab our bootstraps, consolidate our political power and act in the framework of this democracy to change our own lives--we are faced with a crisis of confidence among our former supporters and friends.

CORE's attitude toward the white person is very clear. We have no wish to exclude the white American from the Negro revolution. CORE believes that all good men must join together in a common moral and political struggle. White men and women have been at CORE's side since its founding and they are with us now. They will always be with us.

The American bigot has also been hard at work creating unreal division between CORE and other civil rights groups. I went to school at Morehouse College with Whitney Young of the Urban League and Martin Luther King. We are in constant communication as friends and co-workers in the same cause. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund fought my case that allowed me to be the first Negro to go the University of North Carolina Law School. I am proud to be a cooperating attorney of the Legal Defense Fund to this very day.

CORE is a friend of all groups that are fighting for the cause of the black man in America. Each of these groups fights in a different way. CORE is doing a very different job than these other groups and that is as it should be.

CORE has always lived and worked in the ghetto. The elevation of the Negro poor---and that means 50% of all Negroes---is our project and we go about it in very different ways, many of which have been extraordinarily effective.

CORE workers have registered thousands of Negroes in South Carolina, Mississippi and other Southern states in the last year.

CORE ran eight candidates for school boards in Democratic primaries this year in the South. All of them won. This is political black power.

CORE organized a sweet potato cooperative in Louisiana. 375 farmers, including fifteen white men, are growing and marketing

their sweet potato crops. This is economic black power.

CORE organized 99% successful boycotts in Madison Parish, Louisiana. This is the mobilization of black consumer power.

CORE is teaching 250 Negro youngsters Negro history in a Freedom School in Baltimore. This is the improvement of the Negro self-image.

CORE named Baltimore its Target City for 1966. A long hot summer left Baltimore as one of the only major cities unscarred by riots. Mayor Theodore McKeldin cited CORE's contribution: "I can't help but recall that a large number of our citizens felt that CORE's coming to Baltimore would create the spark which would result in disorder. In retrospect, we see that this not only was a false assumption; but, that in fact, it was your staff which helped avert a major incident."

CORE started a Job Training Center in Watts ("Operation Bootstrap") whose slogan is "Learn, baby, Learn." It also provides a community library, an organization for welfare mothers, a teen age center, and a distribution point for food and clothing for the community.

I believe that you as a sensitive and intelligent American will support CORE in every one of these endeavors. CORE is entering into the most important phase of its eventful life. There is much to do and we must have your help if we are to do any of it.

Please be as generous as you can afford to be. Without your immediate financial support, CORE can die this year. And with it the dreams of the Negro ghetto of improving its condition within the framework of our democracy.

Don't fear black power. Encourage and nurture it. The kind of America you believe in cannot endure with a powerless, isolated slave population in its midst.

Sincerely,


Floyd B. McKissick
National Director