

CONSTITUTION OF THE LOS ANGELES CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY

AS ADOPTED 14th NOVEMBER 1963

Article I. Name and Affiliation

The name of this organization is Los Angeles Congress of Racial Equality, to be abbreviated as Los Angeles CORE. The organization is an affiliate of the National Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of Los Angeles CORE is the elimination of discrimination based on religion, race, skin color, or national origin in all phases and at all levels of American life. To achieve this purpose, Los Angeles CORE will make use of various nonviolent methods, stressing the method of direct action.

Article III. Membership

Section 1. Categories of Membership

Los Angeles CORE is a multi-racial organization with two categories of membership: active members and associate members.

A. An active member is one who has fulfilled the qualifications for admission to the organization as described below in Section 2 and who fulfills the obligations of active membership as described in Section 3. An active member may vote on all matters brought before the meetings of the membership, and he may hold office.

- 1) Dues for an active member are two dollars per year.
- 2) An active member who is financially unable to pay dues may be exempted from payment by a majority vote of the membership committee.
- 3) Upon becoming an active member, the membership committee issues an active membership card.

B. An associate member is one who helps in the work of, or contributes financially to, Los Angeles CORE, and who desires to be kept informed of Los Angeles CORE's projects, but who does not participate in projects regularly as specified in Section 3. An associate member may attend meetings of the organization but may not vote or hold office.

- 1) Dues for an associate member are a minimum of five dollars per year.
- 2) Upon payment of dues, the membership committee issues an associate membership card.

Section 2. Procedure for Admission to Active Membership

A. An individual applies for active membership in Los Angeles CORE by filling out an application with the membership committee and paying one year's dues. He is then a member on approval.

B. A member on approval is one who has applied for active membership but has not yet been voted into membership. A member on approval participates in activities, meetings and discussions of the organization on the same basis as an active member, but while on approval he cannot vote in either general or committee meetings or hold office. A member on approval must change his status within four months -- either to that of an active member through the procedure specified in Article III., Section 2, or to that of an associate member through the procedure specified in Article III., Section 1.

C. A member on approval serves a probationary period of 3 months. He must attend two orientation meetings and one training session arranged by the Membership Committee.

D. At the end of the probationary period, upon recommendation of the Membership Committee and majority vote of the general membership at a regular meeting, the member on approval becomes an active member.

E. The applicant for active membership is judged by the following criteria: his commitment to nonviolence; his readiness to abide by CORE's rules for action, and to follow group decisions on direct action projects; his dedication to the principle of racial equality; his consistency in opposing all forms of discrimination as described in Article II.

Section 3. Obligations of Active Membership

A. Active membership shall not ^{BE} available to any person who (a) associates himself with any other group or organization which expounds a philosophy which is inimical or in contradiction to the fundamental principles of CORE; (b) persistently violates the CORE Rules for Action!

B. Every active member must participate regularly in direct action projects or perform other necessary work required to support CORE Activities.

C. Every active member must attend general membership meetings and must serve on one or more of the standing committees as determined by the Membership Committee.

D. Every active member must pay dues as specified in ARTICLE III, Section 1 ^{Paragraph} a.

Section 4. CORE's Obligation to Members

Los Angeles CORE has the moral obligation to provide all possible legal assistance to members, both active and associate, who are arrested in the course of direct action projects which are organized and approved by CORE.

Section 5. Withdrawal from Membership

Any member, active or associate, who wishes to withdraw from Los Angeles CORE will be dropped from the membership list after giving written notification to the Membership Committee. An active member may be transferred to the list of associate members if he requests, by following the procedure specified in ARTICLE III, Section 1B.

Section 6. Dropping from Active Membership

A. Reasons for dropping an active member from membership are: failure to participate in the activities of CORE for a period of three months without adequate explanation or permission of the Membership Committee; flagrant violation of CORE discipline; efforts to utilize CORE or CORE's name for personal aims or for aims contrary to CORE principles; failure to pay dues without adequate explanation. The Membership Committee must review files every three months to determine active membership.

B. An active member can be dropped from membership in the organization by:

(1) recommendation of the Membership Committee and a two-thirds vote by the membership present at a regular general meeting.

- (2) a petition signed by at least fifteen active members and a two-thirds vote by the membership present at a regular general meeting.

C. Before action is taken to drop a member from membership, he is informed that the action is being initiated. He may attend the meeting of the Membership Committee where his membership status is to be discussed, to present arguments on his own behalf. He may also present his arguments at the regular general meeting before a vote is taken on the recommendation to drop him from membership.

~~D. In Section 6 a paragraph "D" was added, as follows, "All charges against a member to be dropped from membership are to be presented in writing to the Executive Committee.~~

ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Function.

The Executive Committee discusses plans and policies for the organization, brings recommendations to the membership based on reports from the committees, makes decisions on matters referred to it by the membership, and is empowered to make decisions of an emergency nature which cannot be delayed until a membership meeting. (For this, a quorum is nine.) All decisions of the Executive Committee are subject to veto by the active membership. The Executive Committee must meet at least twice a month and may also meet on call of the Chairman or at the request of three Executive Committee members. Six members of the Committee constitutes a quorum, except as noted above.

~~In Section 1, the second paragraph is stricken and replaced by the following:~~

"The Executive Committee is comprised of five officers plus the chairmen of the standing committees of the organization. The five officers are elected by majority vote of the membership. Chairmen of the standing committees are appointed by the Chairman upon recommendation of the committees. They are ratified by the membership within 30 days."

Section 2. Officers and Their Functions

A. The Chairman sets the agenda for and presides at general membership meetings and meetings of the Executive Committee, and serves as an ex-officio member of all standing committees. If possible, he represents the organization at all major functions and meetings.

B. The First Vice-Chairman assumes the duties of the Chairman in the event of his absence or unavailability.

C. The Second Vice-Chairman assumes the duties of the Chairman and/or the First Vice-Chairman in the event either or both are absent or unavailable.

NOTE: Both Vice-Chairmen shall assume the job of coordinating all committees. They shall perform other such duties as may be delegated to them by the Chairman.

D. The Treasurer is responsible for all monies received and dispersed by the organization, presents a monthly report to the membership of monies collected and spent since the previous report, keeps records of all financial transactions and serves as a member of the Finance Committee.

E. The secretary is responsible for the minutes of the General Membership and Executive Committee meetings. The office manager is under the supervision of the Chairman.

ARTICLE V. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees

In addition to the Executive Committee, there are ¹⁰~~nine~~ standing committees. They are:

A. The Action Committee organizes and carries through, in cooperation with the originating committee and the negotiating team, direct action projects which have been authorized by two thirds of the membership at a membership meeting, such as picketing, demonstrating, rallies, sit-ins, etc. It organizes mass distribution of leaflets, and runs direct action training sessions. The Action Committee meets at least twice a month. Seven members are a quorum.

B. The Membership Committee keeps membership records, organizes orientation classes for new members, seeks to increase membership, collects dues, issues membership cards, regularly assesses the quantity and quality of active members' participation to ascertain whether members are fulfilling requirements of membership. The Membership Committee meets at least twice a month. Three members are a quorum.

C. The Finance Committee works on a continuing basis to devise ways of raising money for the support of the organization. It brings plans for major fund-raising to the membership for approval. (The membership is expected to give full assistance to fund drives.) The Finance Committee discusses expenditures and makes periodic recommendations regarding the budget of the organization. All ordinary operating expenses are decided by the committee and other expenditures are decided by vote of the membership. The Finance Committee meets at least twice a month. Three members are a quorum.

D. The Housing Committee investigates conditions of discrimination in housing and recommends action to eliminate such discrimination; presents, in cooperation with the Speakers Bureau, a sub-committee of the Community Relations Committee. CORE's position regarding integration in housing to community groups concerned with this question; when directed by the membership, it maintains organizational contact with outside groups concerned with housing; works in liason with the Legislative Action Committee in the field of housing. The Housing Committee meets at least twice a month. Three members are a quorum.

E. The Employment Committee investigates conditions of racial discrimination in employment and recommends action to eliminate such discrimination; presents CORE's position in cooperation with the Speakers Bureau, a subcommittee of the Community Relations Committee, regarding equal opportunity in employment to community groups concerned with this question; when directed by the membership it maintains organizational contact with outside groups concerned with eliminating discrimination in employment; works in liason with the Legislative Action Committee in the field of employment. The Employment Committee meets at least twice a month. Three members are a quorum.

F. The Police Practices Committee investigates conditions of police brutality and other police malpractices; presents, in cooperation with the Speakers Bureau a subcommittee of the Community Relations Committee, CORE's position regarding police practices to community groups concerned with this question; when directed by the membership, it maintains organizational contact with outside groups concerned with police practices; works in liason with the Legislative Action Committee in the field of police practices. The Police Practices Committee meets at least twice a month. Three members are a quorum.

G. The Education Committee investigates conditions of discrimination in education, presents, in cooperation with the Speakers Bureau, a subcommittee of the Community Relations Committee, CORE's position regarding equality in education to community groups concerned with this question; when directed by the membership, it maintains organizational contact with outside groups concerned with equality in education; works in liason with the Legislative Action Committee in the field of education. The Education Committee meets at least twice a month. Three members are a quorum.

H. The Legislative Action Committee plans campaigns to bring pressure for new legislation for equal rights, or for action by officials of government to implement existing laws; informs other committees in CORE of legislation pertinent to their area; presents in cooperation with the Speakers Bureau, a subcommittee of the Community Relations Committee, CORE's position on legislation for equal rights to community groups concerned with this question; when directed by the membership, it maintains organizational contact with outside groups concerned with legislation in this field. The Legislative Action Committee meets at least twice a month. Three emembers are a quorum.

I. The Community Relations Committee informs the public of CORE's aims and methods through various means such as a speakers' bureau, classes and discussion groups, etc. It establishes contact with groups (community, neighborhood, etc.) for the purpose of mobilizing support for CORE's actions. It supervises the Publicity Department which, under the directive of the executive committee, frames and releases statements on CORE actions and policies. The Community Relations Committee shall be responsible for the content of all statements to all press media (radio, television, newspapers and magazines) whether oral or written; and shall further be responsible for all oral or written material directed to the general public or to organizations other than CORE. It maintains organizational contact with other civil rights organizations.

Section 2. *SEE CORRECTION #12* Subcommittees and Temporary Committees

A. The various standing committees often have a number of specialized subcommittees to handle aspects of their work. The Chairman of such subcommittees are not members of the Executive Committee.

B. From time to time, by vote of the membership or the Executive Committee, temporary committees are organized for a particular function. All such committees are assigned to work under one of the standing committees. Chairmen of temporary committees are not members of the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Committee Procedure

After appropriate investigation and ~~negotiation~~ negotiation is carried out by committee, recommendation for direct action is made in this manner:

- A. Recommendation for direct action is voted on in the committee.
- B. If passed by committee, the Chairman of the committee makes a report to the Executive Committee.
- C. The Executive Committee (with majority approval) makes recommendation to the membership at a regularly scheduled general membership meeting.
- D. If passed by the membership, it is sent to the Action Committee for implementation.

In an emergency, the originating committee may bring its report and recommendations directly to the membership by presenting a petition signed by at least 15 active members.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

A. There should be at least two regularly scheduled general membership meetings per month.

B. CORE meetings are not open to the public. Only active members, members on approval, associate members, and individuals invited by a member have the right to attend.

C. All meetings are conducted under Roberts RULES OF ORDER.

ARTICLE VII. ELECTIONS

Section 1. Nominations and Elections

A. Election of officers is held annually on the third Thursday in November.

B. At least one month prior to the election a nominating committee of five active members is elected by the membership. The nominating committee prepares a slate of one or more candidates for each elective office. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the election meeting.

C. Written notice of election meeting, containing nominating committee's slate, must be sent to all active members at least two weeks in advance of said meeting.

Section 2. Terms of Office

All officers serve for a term of one year--commencing at the first regularly scheduled meeting after the election meeting...unless the office is vacated due to the resignation of the officer or his removal from office by procedures specified under Section 3.

Section 3. Removal of Officers from Office

A. Reasons for removal are:

- (1) Actions detrimental to CORE
- (2) Failure to carry out duties of the office

B. A member of the Executive Committee is removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the membership at a regular membership meeting action upon:

- (1) A petition signed by at least fifteen active members or
- (2) recommendation of the Executive Committee

Before action is taken to remove an officer from office, he is informed that the action is being initiated. He may present arguments on his own behalf at the regular general meeting before a vote is taken to remove him from office.

Section 4. Filling a Vacancy

A vacancy is filled by Executive Committee appointment and ratification by the membership at a regularly scheduled general membership meeting.

ARTICLE VIII. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GROUPS

CORE's affiliation with other groups and organizations is permitted provided that the aims of these groups are not in contradiction to the aims of CORE. The representative to such a group is not empowered to commit CORE without approval

by the CORE membership at a regularly scheduled membership meeting, or by the approval of the Executive Committee as provided in ARTICLE IV, Section 1.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Amendments to the Constitution are proposed by the Executive Committee or by a petition signed by at least fifteen active members. They are adopted by a two-thirds vote of the active members present at a membership meeting. Written notice of the meeting, including the amendments, must be mailed to all active members no later than ten days before the meeting.

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ERRATA & CORRIGENDA

1. pp 2-7, delete the word 'proposed' at the top of each page.
2. p 2, line 12, insert the word 'be' between the words 'not' and 'available'.
3. p 2, line 15, replace the exclamation mark with a period.
4. p 2, line 17, for 'performs' read 'perform'.
5. p 2, line 21, for 'ARTICLE III, Section 1 a' read 'Article III., Section 1, Paragraph A'
6. p 2, line 35, delete the period after the word 'Committee'.
7. p 3, line 8, delete 'In Section 6 a paragraph "D" was added, as follows, "'
8. p 3, line 22, delete 'In Section 1, the second paragraph is stricken and replaced by the following: "' , as well as the quotation mark at the end of the paragraph.
9. p 3, line 40 & line 41, for 'monies' read 'moneys'.
10. p 4, line 3, for 'nine' read 'ten'.
11. p 4, line 39, insert the word 'meets' between the words 'Employment Committee' and 'at least'.
12. p 5, insert the following paragraph after Paragraph I.: 'J. The Mexican-American Committee investigates conditions of discrimination in the Mexican-American community, maintains organizational contact with outside Mexican groups concerned with the elimination of discrimination and engages in the recruitment of Mexican-American members. The Mexican-American Committee meets at least twice a month. Three members are a quorum. This Committee is to recommend action to the Membership Committee.'
12. p 4, line 26, replace the period at the end of the line with a comma.
13. p 6, lines 18 & 19, replace the dash and the hiatus with commas.