

838 Lutz  
Canton, Mississippi  
January 25, 1965

Mr. Richard Haley  
CORE  
2209 Dryades  
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Haley:

At Dick Jewitt's suggestion the Canton staff sat down this afternoon to evaluate our experiences at the New Orleans meetings. The general feeling was one of disappointment and dissatisfaction with the meetings. Specifically we were disturbed by the superficial nature of most, if not all, discussions: such crucial matters as the summer project, the CORE-COFO relationship, the sources of authority existent in that relationship, the merits and problems presented by the MFDP all call for far more probing than we even began to give them. We also share Mrs. Devine's feeling that what Jerome Smith had to offer was very valuable. Perhaps better scheduling could have avoided his having to crowd it all into a few brief minutes.

Then, too, we would like to offer some criticism of the resource persons set-up. The ideal would have been to have someone like Saul Alinsky around. Is there a chance that we might be able to have several days of continuous discussion with such a person sometime? Barring that, we hope that future speakers might <sup>be</sup> of somewhat higher quality than the gentleman who presented the anti-poverty bill to us. Also, we question the effectiveness of using CORE "high officials" as workshop leaders. This time at least curiosity, the desire to know and be known tended to get in the way of discussion of the questions at hand.

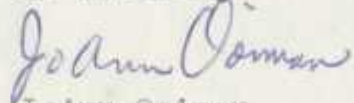
Another problem, which is probably more COFO's than CORE's in this case, is that of timing. We had just spent three days in meetings in Harmony, Mississippi and came to New Orleans feeling rather talked out and sore-seated, besides which our work here went too long neglected. The couple days' interim between meetings was hardly long enough to really get into the community and now there's some trouble reestablishing contact with what was happening before Harmony. Finally, we recommend better planning and further consideration of the role local people can play in meetings of this type. They should represent all areas represented at the meetings and staff should take special care in asking for local peoples' opinions that the "proper answer" is not implicit in the request for the opinions. Then, too, the local people should be prepared for the discussions in which they'll be expected to participate so that they can avoid suffering from a feeling of being put on the spot unexpectedly.

But all this is not to say that we're sorry the meetings occurred. Such gatherings are important for us and we hope

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that they will continue, improving as they go.

In Freedom,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "JoAnn Coiman". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

JoAnn Coiman  
Canton CORE

cc: Dick Jewitt