

National Action Council Minutes
Nyack, New York
October 10-12

The meeting was called to order by National Chairman, Floyd McKissick, at 9:15 A.M. The following members of NAC were present: Rudy Lombard, Will Ussery, Ruth Turner, Alan Gartner, Bob Curvin, John Due, Ralph Rosenfeld, Orëtha Castle, Hal Brown, Chris Sprowal, Shirley Lacey, Joan Drake, Gloria Montgomery, Loretta Hall, Sam Riley, Earl Allen, Julia Lewis, Virginia Burton, Mark Dodson, George Wiley, James Farmer. Members absent: None.

It was suggested that the following motion passed at the last Steering Committee Meeting be clarified: "The NAC and its Steering Committee will entertain no items submitted by staff for the agenda without the approval of the National Director and those other persons whom he may designate. Where there is a regional director, such reports submitted by staff must be cleared through him first." The motion was clarified in the following manner: "In order that the NAC may have the benefit of his judgment, proposals from staff members to the NAC must be submitted through the National Director and those other persons whom he may designate. Where there is a regional director, such reports submitted by staff must be cleared through him first." This does not mean, however, that a report has to have the approval of the National Director before it can be submitted.

Correction to the minutes: Will Ussery did not vote against the following motion: "CORE should hire and/or retain up to five lawyers, one of whom may be a legal coordinator working under Carl Rachlin and Richard Haley, for the South."

CORE Direction and Program

James Farmer submitted a general statement (see appendix) on CORE's direction which was then discussed by the NAC section by section. The question of the political involvement of CORE was the subject of discussion for four hours. Various aspects of the question were reviewed. The following factors were considered significant as reasons for changing CORE's position on political involvement: The passage of the civil rights bill which for many areas eliminates the need for the sit-ins of the early 1960's and necessitates the new focusing in North and South on the major basic problems (e.g. de facto segregation); emerging racial consciousness and pride among Negroes; the presidential elections; the potential political power inherent in the reapportionment decisions of the Supreme Court; the "backlash" indicated by the demonstrations in New York on the school issue; the riots, "stall'ins", and the growing strength of the nationalists--expressions of the frustrations arising from the inability to make real progress; the existence of certain (albeit limited) federal programs which raise the question of the need for political representation so Negroes can get their share. The involvement of CORE in political action also creates certain problems: The relationship of CORE's traditional kinds of activity to a more political approach; how CORE shall maintain its

moral basis in order that it might be distinguished from other political organizations, the need for a CORE base in the community in order to realize our political goals. Motion: to approve the statement as presented by James Farmer with the recommendation that the following ideas be incorporated: the place of direct action techniques in the movement in the light of these new goals; the relationship between community organization and the new direction; the problems resulting from going into politics and not doing so. (Turner, Burton). Passed unanimously. Motion: that Gene Tournour give a report on the Freedom Democratic Clubs in Chicago to the next NAC meeting and a recommendation from him as to whether the FDC is a group to be assisted by National CORE as a pilot political action project. (Due) Motion passed.

Education: After a presentation by Mr. Farmer on the educational issues a discussion of the ramifications of the report followed. It was felt that there was a need to determine what we mean by an integrated education, a successful compensatory program and our short-range and long range educational goals. We must learn to use the money presently available for our own programs. A discussion of the Freedom Schools and their relation to CORE's overall educational goals continued; what we do in the schools must be related to our general fight for integrated quality education. The schools also must come to grips with realities of our society (no jobs, for example) and prepare the students for those realities. The fight for integrated curriculum materials might be considered as a national project and other ways should be found to bring national pressure to force school integration. After a short recess, it was moved that the discussion on the rest of the items in Farmer's report be limited to 15 minutes each (Brown, Turner). Motion passed, Gartner opposed. Motion: that the Director of Organization be directed to instruct the chapters to carry out a neighborhood survey of the community's educational problems (Turner, Riley). Motion passed, nays - Castle and Wiley). Motion: that the NAC direct a person on national staff to prepare a pilot educational project with goals, means of financing, etc. outlined to bring back to the January NAC meeting. Motion passed, nays - Burton, Wiley, Castle). Motion: that Staightor Linn, Director of the Miss. Freedom Schools and now at Yale, be approached by said staff person mentioned in the above motion to discuss with him the program of the Miss. Freedom Schools, their structure and the relevancy to our needs. (Due, Sprowal). Motion passed, nays - Burton, Rosenfeld, ad Castle.

Economics: Mr. Farmer then presented that part of his report dealing with the economic issue. It was mentioned that one of the premises upon which the report is based is that we accommodate ourselves to the fact of the existence of the ghetto. There is a need for greater emphasis on the need for jobs for Negro males, more attention must be given to the problem of organization of the unemployed and present discriminatory practices which seek to exclude Negroes from the jobs they now hold. More attention must be given to the problem of discrimination of unions and the possibilities of organizing unions ourselves. It was suggested that the general approach to be used in organizing the community should be to formulate our major objectives, then go into community and work on its specific problems, but CORE chapters should try not to get into activities that will take them in directions different from the major objectives. Motion: NAC receive the economic aspect of the report. (Turner), passed, nay - Lewis.

Cultural Department: It was noted that just as there are government propaganda efforts on other matters considered important (e.g. hate the Japanese

during the World War II) there could be such efforts on getting rid of prejudice and discrimination. The NAC spent a good deal of time discussing the implications of "thinking black". Motion: that we request from the chapters information as to what educational programs they are now carrying on related to Negro history, self-pride and awareness, etc. (Gartner, Montgomery). Passed. Housing: this section of the report was referred for discussion to another day.

By-Law on Chapter Incorporation:

"No chapter, nor any officer or officers, nor any member or members thereof, not anyone on their behalf, shall form or cause to be formed a corporation, in any jurisdiction whatsoever, which includes in its name or title, or any part thereof, the words "Congress of Racial Equality," "Committee of Racial Equality," "CORE" or any combination of words the first letters of which spell "C.O.R.E." and any such corporation presently and or hereafter in existence shall be dissolved by the chapter or chapters so affected. Motion: table discussion until Carl Rachlin arrives. (Due, Turner). Motion failed, 11 to 7. Motion to adopt - passed, 18 to 2 (nays - Burton, Curvin). It was suggested that Carl Rachlin send out an accompanying memo explaining the by-law. Clarification of Article XIX in the Constitution was made by the National Chairman; "a 2/3 majority of the National Action Council" shall be interpreted as "2/3 of members of the NAC present and voting."

Departmental Reports --- Jim McCain, Department of Organization:

Mr. McCain offered no recommendation on the affiliation of the Wilson Jr. College chapter because he has received no up to date written report from Field Secretary Gene Tournour. Motion: East River CORE be put under trusteeship and the trustee be Louis Smith (Turner, Ussery). Motion passed, nays: Sprowal, Castle).

Election of Co-opted Members:

The following names were nominated: Jim Peck, Ollie Leeds, Tim Martin, Cecil Brown, A.D. Moore; Jim Peck and A.D. Moore were elected. It was the interpretation of the chairman that the term of these new members last until the Convention.

Convention Site:

The recommendations of the National Convention regarding a site in the South were discussed at length; the problems of discipline and possible repercussions shed new light on that recommendation. Motion: Instruct Gordon Carey to consider North Carolina for the next convention site (Sprowal). Motion failed - 3, 11. Motion: chapters be informed of reasons why this body has chosen to disregard the recommendations of the National Convention, Gordon Carey be instructed to find a campus or camp site in the Mid West, and if necessary that North Carolina be considered. (Gartner, Rosenfeld) Motion passed with one

dissenting vote, (McKissick). Motion: committee of three be appointed for the purpose of convention planning and site acquisition (Allen). Passed. Members of committee are Lacey, Riley and Allen.

Department of Community Relations - Marvin Rich:

Financial Report for 4 months ending September 30, 1964

CORE List.....	\$ 67,891.34
Outside Appeals.....	88,933.34
Associate Membership.....	1,210.22
Specials.....	8,689.16
Art Show.....	1,252.00
Ballad of the Winter Soldiers.....	15,469.00
Honoraria.....	3,914.10
Books, Literature, Misc.....	3,823.22
Chapter's Fees, Assess., Contrib.....	8,301.53
Loans.....	52,500.00
Project Reimbursement (VEP, CEP, Miss.).....	31,063.05
Bail Refunds.....	3,943.00
Other Refunds.....	1,449.89
Organizations.....	23,200.45
Special Events.....	7,175.82
Miss. Project.....	14,857.22
	<u>\$333,673.33</u>
	Less Loans..... <u>52,500.00</u>
Net Income for Period.....	<u>\$281,173.33</u>
Disbursements for Period.....	\$382,962.10
(Includes \$5,000, Loan Repayment)	
(" \$14,857.22 for Miss. Project)	
	<u>19,857.22</u>
Not Disbursed.....	<u>\$363,104.98</u>
Supplier Bills Payable 9/30.....	13,419.76
Legal Bills Payable.....over..	18,000.00
Balance in CEP.....	3,385.40
" " VEP.....	2,979.21
" " Miss. Acc.....	2,846.84

Motion to accept. (Gartner, Ussery). Motion passed.

Evaluation Committee Report:

The discussion of the report began with general remarks on the commitment required of staff, the task before us as a national organization, the evaluation of ourselves and others, discussion of program and how it relates to structure. Motion: that the agenda for the discussion of the report be constructed as follows: the items on the relation of the NAC and staff, commitment and salary

scales and the evaluation of current personnel and structure be conducted in closed session (although the first of these will also be discussed in open session); the items on organizational needs and future requirements, organizational structure, priorities for implementation of changes, and resource potential for implementation (personnel and finance) will be discussed in open session. (Gartner, Rosenfeld). Motion passed unanimously. By common consent a discussion on the salary scale was placed at the end of the agenda.

The following points were made in the discussion on the relationship of staff and NAC: there is a close relationship between the NAC and staff; there is also a separation of NAC and staff; decisions can be originated by staff and agreed upon by NAC or by the NAC itself; the staff is responsible to the National Director but the NAC is also involved according to the Constitution in hiring and firing; there is a real need for honesty in the relationship. A committee was appointed to design procedures for the review of staff problems; committee members are Gartner, Dodson, Sprowal, and McKissick, M. Rich and Richard Haley.

Motion: to approve a political action department as outlined by Farmer and as indicated in the organizational chart. Gartner, Sprowal. Motion passed, 12 for, 7 against (Brown, Riley, Montgomery, Hall, Ussery, Lacey, Turner)

POLITICAL ACTION

- I Lobby on behalf of CORE on national level and present our views in Washington.
- II Relate information on legislative, executive and judicial matters to the National Office and through the office to the chapters.
- III Develop political program materials for use by staff and chapters.
- IV Become versed in all programs of the respective federal agencies relevant to CORE's interests and activities and relevant to the interests of the Negro community and provide analyses and program suggestions for the chapters.
- V Develop liaison and cultivate relationships between CORE and various branches of federal government.
- VI Expedite and facilitate approaches and pressures by local CORE chapters, CORE regional organizations and the National Office relative to their action programs and interests.
- VII Follow up on platform commitments of congress men relative to matters of local, regional and national interest to CORE.
- VIII Expedite emergency needs of CORE via federal law enforcement agencies.
- IX Establish liaison with Washington Press Corps for purposes of dissemination and analysis of CORE program and activities.
- X To cultivate and maintain liaison with Washington offices of non-governmental organizations whose activities relate to CORE's interests.

Staff: Director, Assistant (when funds allow)

Clerical help as required

Motion: authorize the position of the Program Assistant as outlined in the Organization Department's report. (Gartner, Due). Motion passed unanimously.

Assistant Program Director

1. Prepare manuals for use by chapter and staff dealing with means by which the chapters attack the functional areas of CORE's concern, such as, for example:
 - 1) Slum housing
 - 2) Urban Renewal
 - 3) Housing discrimination
 - 4) Employment campaign
 - 5) Voter registration
 - 6) Education
2. Prepare guidelines on operational skills for use by chapters and staff, such as, for example:
 - 1) Conducting negotiations
 - 2) Organizing a boycott
 - 3) The role of civil disobedience
 - 4) Organizing a rent strike
 - 5) Conducting a voter registration campaign
 - 6) Community organization
3. Assist in implementing the above activities where necessary.
4. Prepare material for distribution among CORE chapters on topics such as:
 - 1) Philosophy of non-violence
 - 2) The direction of CORE
 - 3) Role of CORE in the community
5. Prepare outlines of projected National projects and campaigns.

Motion: receive the evaluation committee's report. (Sprowal, Riley). Passed unanimously.

Motion: that recommendation No. 4 in the short range proposals be removed from the rest of the report in view of the lack of acceptable procedures in dealing with personnel problems. (Curvin, Dodson) Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: to take note in the official records that all presently relevant recommendations (short-range) have been or are being implemented and the recommendations of the evaluation committee (intermediate and long range) have been or are being implemented except for No. 4 and items III-V which we commend to the National Director. The recommendations are listed below:

I Short Range:

- A. Acquire additional space;
- B. Hire an Assistant Director;
- C. Appoint a staff person to be responsible for office maintenance;
- D. Conduct more staff meetings and disseminate information;
- E. Clarify role of Southern Director.

II Intermediate Range:

- A. Hire a researcher;
- B. Outline specifications for each job position in organization;
- C. Initiate a recruitment program for field staff;
- D. Have necessary changes made in telephone system to meet the needs of the organization;
- E. Initiate training program for field personnel

II Intermediate Range continued:

- F. Initiate training program for field personnel;
- G. Establish screening procedures for recruitment of organization personnel--testing, etc.;
- H. Hire additional field secretaries.

III Long Range:

- A. Purchase table top off-set press;
- B. Relocation of National Office;
- C. Establish departmental budgets.

IV Organization Department:

- A. More direction to chapters in the area of development;
- B. Training programs and chapter guidance;
- C. Increase minimum salary of field secretary.

V Office:

- A. Improve communications with complete staff;
- B. Professionals to set better standards for office behavior and decorum;
- C. Use field personnel to brief staff people on field problems and experiences;
- D. Initiate program for prompt reporting to work;
- E. Distribute mail before work day begins;
- F. Establish a set time for coffee breaks;
- G. Limit free access to office by visitors;
- H. Construct a table of organization with clear delineation of responsibilities.

(Gartner, Brown). Motion passed; 2 abstained (Castle, Turner).

Motion: commend evaluation committee for its past work by common consent and appoint an evaluation committee provided they be afforded a budget until the appointment of the administrator (Due, Ussery). Motion failed, 8 for, 11 against.

Motion: to accept guidelines of structure outlined by Farmer with the exception of the position of administrative assistant. (Turner, Sprowal). Motion passed. 11 for, 5 against (Castle, Lombard, Gartner, Montgomery, Lewis). See attached diagram.

Next Steering Committee Meeting:

Motion: next regular meeting of the Steering Committee be held, December 5. (Gartner) Motion passed.

Southern Office:

It was brought to the attention of the NAC that following the last Steering Committee meeting the staff had reclarified the role of the Southern office as follows:

- I Administers SE and SC regions
- II Develops program
- III Organizes, recommends and services chapters

- IV Determines needs in personnel, material and equipment
- V Recommends employment and release of personnel to National Office
- VI Recommends acquisition of facilities, materials and equipment to National Office.
- VII Makes general budgetary recommendations to National Office, including above #'s 4 & 5.
- VIII Makes specific budgetary recommendations for particular projects.
- IX Maintains sufficient financial base to take care of running expenses of running expenses of Southern office, traveling field secretaries, emergency regional expenditures, etc.
- X Approves requests for funds and/or program from field or project within the Southern office budget. In case of personnel, these will be handled directly. In case of projects, these will be passed on to National Office.
- XI Receives expense and program reports from projects, field secretaries which will be approved and forwarded to National Office.
- XII Receives reports from program director and research assistant, same to be incorporated or included with monthly report to National Office.
- XIII Reports monthly on expenditures to National Office (receipts & disbursements).

It was further recommended that the Southern office be responsible to the Director of Organization. Motion: to accept the above description of the Southern office. Turner, Montgomery). Motion passed, 1 against (Castle).

Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party:

It was moved that the following letter become a part of the minutes of this meeting:

Dear Mr. Farmer:

On behalf of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, and particularly the delegation to Atlantic City, I want to thank you one more time for the dedicated support you gave us at the Convention.

Our refusal to accept the decision of the Credentials Committee was a measure of our determination to keep fighting for full justice and equality in Mississippi. Despite the Convention's decision, Atlantic City was for us a great victory, because for the first time it told our story to the country and demonstrated our growing strength.

This victory was a direct result of your efforts. Without your insistence that we be heard and be seated, we would have been forgotten even before the Convention was over. But because we were not forgotten, we have been able to return to Mississippi with new strength and potential. From the bottom of my heart, I was to thank you for this opportunity.

Our plans for the fall and winter are a direct continuation of the challenge at Atlantic City, We are fulfilling our pledge to the National Democratic Party by campaigning for the Johnson-Humphrey ticket, which will appear under the

Democratic label. We will also be running Independent candidates for the Senate and the House of Representatives. Dr. Aaron Henry will run for the Senate, Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer for the House from the 2nd District, Mrs. Victoria Gray from the 5th District, Mrs. Annie Devine from the 4th District, and Mr. Harold Roby from the 1st District.

These candidates will appear on the November 3rd ballot. But we will also run these candidates, including President Johnson and Senator Humphrey in the Freedom Vote October 31st through November 2nd. The Freedom Vote will allow those who are officially registered to show the true preference of the people of Mississippi.

On the basis of these votes, the Freedom Democratic Party will challenge the seats of the Regular Democratic Party candidates and will ask that the Democratic Caucus strip seniority from Mississippi's representatives in the Senate and House.

To continue telling our story to the country and to help support the National Democratic Party, we would like to arrange speaking engagements for F.D.P. members all over the country. In particular, the FDP candidates would like to trade campaigning engagements with politicians from other parts of the country.

I trust that we can count on your support for these efforts, as we were able to depend upon your support in Atlantic City.

Sincerely,

Theresa Del Pozzo
for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party

P.S. I am signing this letter for the MFDP, because the chairman, Lawrence Guyot, and other officers, including Mrs. Annie Devine, Mrs. Victoria Gray, Dr. Aaron Henry, Reverend Edward King, Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, Reverend R. L. T. Smith, Mrs. Peggy Jean Conner, Mr. Leslie McLeMore are currently enjoined and therefore unable to act as representatives of the Party.

TDP

Gartner, Sprowal. Motion passed.

CORE Direction and Program - Housing:

After a discussion of the various aspects of the housing picture, as presented by James Farmer with the addition that legislative lending programs for private housing be looked into, it was moved to receive the report and add it to the earlier part. (Gartner). Motion passed unanimously.

Report of the Legal Department

According to the resolution passed at the last Steering Committee meeting, the General Counsel brought in a prospectus for the next 8 - 9 months for the

entire South. It is proposed that at least three lawyers be hired (in No. Florida, Miss. and one with a broader area of responsibility) and retainer relationships be continued or established for the first time in the remaining Southern states. The total budget worked out with Richard Haley is \$83,500. It is hoped that the CORE Legal Department could obtain tax exempt status in order to better meet the financial needs of this ambitious program. The following outlines the proposed program of the department:

- I Program and Function
 - A. General Legal Policy and Philosophy
 - B. Defense of CORE Members
 - 1. Criminal proceedings
 - 2. Injunctions
 - C. Affirmative Actions
 - 1. Enjoining State proceedings
 - 2. Testing Constitutionality of laws and acts
 - 3. Habeas Corpus
 - 4. Civil suits for damages
 - 5. Public hearing by CORE Boards.
 - D. Appellate matters
 - E. Training and Information
 - 1. Legal conferences
 - 2. Material for Chapters
 - 3. Speaking program in chapters
 - 4. Speaking activities to other organizations concerning CORE work.
 - F. General correspondence of CORE as to legal matters.
- II Administration
 - A. Defense & protection of Organization
 - 1. Incorporation
 - a. National
 - b. Local
 - 2. Insurance
 - a. Liability
 - b. General
 - 3. Compliance with State & Federal Law
 - 4. Tax problems
 - 5. Leases & Contracts
 - 6. Legal relations with DSAE

Motion to receive report - (Turner, Gartner), Castle abstained.

Training Institute:

It was suggested that the important sessions of the training institute (proposed as a national training institute for community organizers and chapter leaders who will become part of a reservoir of professional CORE talent) be taped and circulated among chapters for their use. The December holidays have been suggested for a possible time. It was further suggested that there might be federal funds available for this kind of program and this should be investigated. The progress report of the committee was received and motion passed to

that effect. (Gartner, Dodson)

National Projects

Motion: that regional vice chairmen discuss possibilities for national projects with their regions and bring them back to a committee composed of themselves to then make recommendations to the Steering Committee. (Hall, Brown). One suggested national project was that CORE acquire a radio and TV station as a pilot project (McKissick).

Meeting adjourned --- October 12, 3:00 P.M.

