

NATIONAL ACTION COUNCIL MINUTES
National CORE Office
Feb. 6-7, 1965

Roll call was taken at 10:20 A.M. and a quorum was declared. By common consent the reading of the minutes of the last Steering Committee were waived. The agenda was approved.

The first order of business was a report from Jim Farmer on his trip to Africa. He explained that he received an invitation, the second week of December, from the American Society of African Culture. It was requested that he reply within 24 hours as to whether or not he would be able to make the trip. The purposes of this trip were fourfold:

- 1) to attempt to gain closer ties between civil rights movement in the United States and the African nations,
- 2) to interpret us to them,
- 3) to be able to come back and interpret them to us, and
- 4) to help increase the impact of civil rights leaders on the United States' African policy.

Mr. Farmer noted the desire on the part of several countries to have Negro Americans with special skills come there on a contract basis; also the possibility of tours by civil rights persons. Statements by Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and Azikiwe of Nigeria were read. Areas of concern by African nations were stated to be:

- 1) U. S. support of South Africa,
- 2) U. S. role in supporting Portugal colonialism, and
- 3) U. S. Congo policy.

Mr. Farmer also noted that Israel is giving constructive aid to Africa at a significantly greater rate than even the U. S. He sees the possibilities of training in Israel of persons from the agricultural South in "Moshavim", which are cooperative settlements.

George Wiley gave a report on the state of CORE since the last meeting. He feels that the lines of responsibility and communication are firming up. He sees that the Southern staff has a problem of dedicated staff persons who do not necessarily have adequate CORE orientation. George also noted the need to set priorities in recognition of lack of program direction from National CORE. He noted the relation, in employment, between the areas that are unorganized by unions and the predominance of Negroes in these areas.

Marv Rich reported regarding income. He stated that some new sources have been discussed including churches and noted the need to tap financial sources in the Negro community and the need to mobilize chapters in fund raising.

Richard Haley noted the significance of gains made in small rural areas such as Jonesboro and stated that in Canton, Mississippi, there has been an agricultural department election for county committeemen. In the past, no Negro has been on this committee - one was elected this time.

Committees were appointed which will meet and report back to the whole body.

The committee discussing program will be made up of Wiley, Peck, Due, Sprowal, Hall, Lewis, Laffert, Lesser, Ware, Mann and Lombard. The committee on the convention site will be Day, Lacey, and McKissick. The committee on community relations and fund raising will be Rich, Levy, Ussery, Moore and Gartner, and the committee on

regional action councils will be Burton, Gore, Smith, Curvin, Rosenfeld, and Brown. We then broke for lunch and the committees were to meet during lunchtime.

After lunch, Alan Gartner chaired the meeting and introduced Harvey Pressman who was to talk to us about the poverty program. Mr. Pressman made some general remarks about the skills required in order to gain federal funds for various government programs and specifically discussed some areas and some programs which he felt might have specific application to CORE needs. Some of those that were mentioned were:

Title I, Part B of the Neighborhood Youth Program where federal funds will be available to non-profit organizations to help pay wages for youth working locally,

Title II, Part A of the Community Action Program where up to 90% of the cost of the program is to be paid by the federal government,

Title V called the Work Experience Program for Unemployed.

The Job Corps which is administered through the states breaks down into two categories:

- a) a CCC type and
- b) job training in centers.

The Neighborhood Corps is administered by non-profit agencies and there is training and placement in neighborhoods. Section 202A3 deals with representation on planning and administration. This is important where one may wish to challenge the integration of the administration and the use of community people in planning an administration of these programs. Where there seems to be a difficulty, it is suggested that it is worthwhile starting at the top and protesting directly to Sargent Shriver. Mr. Pressman stated that the way you write your proposal often has more to do with whether or not you get funds than the content itself does.

Carl Rachlin gave the report from the Legal Department. He referred to the chronology that we had received which indicated the various activities in the Legal Department over the last period. He noted that there is a need to better utilize volunteer attorneys and that he is working on that. He also said the Cox case has great implication as far as breach of the peace statutes are concerned. He announced that there will be a Legal Conference held in New York, February 19, 20, and 21.

Bob Gore gave a report from the Organization Department where he recommended that the split-off group in St. Louis not be affiliated because of problems that seem to evolve when we have split groups and the conflicts that exist where two groups come into existence because of a split.

Motion: was made that the Chicago chapter known as Metropolitan CORE be dis-affiliated as per the recommendation of the Organization Department (Alan Gartner). Seconded by Loretta Hall and unanimously carried.

Motion: By common consent, the NAC affirms the right of Chicago CORE to operate in the Chicago area determining its units in a manner consistent with its constitution.

Motion: that as per the Organization Department's recommendation, the NAC not affiliate the St. Louis action group (R. Rosenfeld). Seconded by R. Curvin and unanimously carried.

Bob Gore reported that on the status of the training program, he hopes to have area conferences functioning by the end of March.

Ed Day gave a report on the office reorganization, many of the fruits of which we were able to observe as this meeting was held in the office. He indicated that the bookkeeping department is the next area for attack. There are certain reforms that are going to have to be made there but he also noted that some of the problems come about because of poor procedures in reports that are sent in, and he feels that this can be corrected also.

The RAC Committee reported that they thought that RACs should be formed in such a manner as to leave determination of structure to each area subject to approval by the NAC. Areas of suggested interest included education, communications, program and jurisdictional disputes. The problem was noted of financing the functioning of Regional Action Council as well as the cost of running meetings and the problem was raised that if regions attempted to do fund raising, this would cause us to have fund raising on three levels: the chapter level, regional level and national level. It was felt that this would not be desirable. Distinction was made between fund raising and fund generation, the second being where a registration fee might be charged for persons participating in a regional meeting, and this fund generation would cover the cost of the meeting. Fund raising would be where the region had some sort of function in order to raise money for the region.

Motion: was made that direct fund raising under the name of CORE should be limited to the national organization, its designees, and individual chapters (Gartner). Seconded by Curvin and unanimously carried.

Motion: that when the national office designates some one to raise money in a region that it also specifically delineates the cooperative role and responsibilities, if any, to be assumed by the RAC and chapters within the region (Ussery). Seconded by Brown and unanimously carried.

A discussion of the Western RAC was held and some discussion about their constitution was brought up but because not everyone had the constitutions with them, the following motion was made by Brown and seconded by Farmer.

Motion: to place on the agenda for the next meeting the issue of the Western region RAC constitution. This was unanimously carried.

Motion: that in all business concerning the regional organization in which funds are required that the regional organization may request such funds from the National Director (Brown). This was carried, 8 for, 3 against.

There was then a ruling by the chair that the RAC cannot be recognized to legally exist. This is because the minutes of the convention do not show that any action was taken to get around the problem of the correct election of delegates to RACs at the convention as specified in the constitution.

Motion: to overturn the ruling of the chair (Rosenfeld, 2nd Hall). Failed, 3 for, 6 against.

Therefore, it was by common consent agreed that the regional structure already in existence may continue functioning as provided by by-law No. 1 of the constitution.

Report of Finance Committee:

A need was recognized to utilize friends and foundations and other outside institutions in raising funds. While not allowing the financial and fund raising implications of program to be determined by them, we should be sensitive to the financial response of crisis situations. Ussery noted that there is a cyclic nature to many of the external factors which affect our program and fund raising. He suggested that we become sensitive to this.

Bob Curvin suggested that charging \$25 per person to hear Jim Farmer speak on his African trip will be one way of getting to the untapped Negro middle class. \$2,000 was raised by downtown CORE in three weekends by going into the streets with canisters. Chapters should check to see if they need a permit before trying this activity.

Motion: was made that a permanent fund raising committee be set up and that it report back with a set of plans at the next meeting (Brown). Seconded by Sprowal and carried with one against.

Motion: was made that a memo incorporating the instant fund raising ideas be sent to all chapters over the signatures of the National Director and the NAC requesting that chapters give special support for the next 60 days. All such monies raised to go to the National office (Sprowal). Seconded by Brown and unanimously carried. A suggestion was made that canisters and businesses in churches can be utilized during this campaign.

The Regional Action Council committee met with a delegation from the Employment Committee of New York CORE, the chairman of that chapter, the NAC representatives from the North East region, and Lou Smith, the National staff person with responsibility for this region. The problem which was discussed had to do with a jurisdictional problem between New York CORE and West Essex, New Jersey CORE. Briefly, the New York chapter became involved in a boycott against a New Jersey firm, which marketed its product in New York, in spite of the fact that the New Jersey chapter was engaged in a project and negotiations with this firm. The New York chapter was unaware of the involvement of the New Jersey chapter initially because, in violation of the "CORE Rules for Action", there was no contact with the firm in question before the direct action was started. Ultimately, a working settlement was reached between the New Jersey chapter and the company which was not satisfactory to the New York chapter. The New York chapter decided to continue its boycott. Lou Smith directed the New York chapter to disassociate itself from the project. The New York CORE representatives came to the NAC to appeal this directive. When the committee told the representatives of the chapter that their recommendation to the NAC would be to support Lou Smith's position, the committee was told that it was the intention of the Employment Committee to continue this project "--- either in CORE or out of it".

Motion: to accept Lou Smith's recommendation regarding New York CORE.
(Rosenfeld, 2nd Sprowal)

Motion: to table above motion. (Gartner, 2nd Rosenfeld) Unanimously carried.

Above motion was removed from the table by common consent and a substitute motion was offered by Gartner and seconded by Ussery.

Motion: The actions of NYC CORE in the Ballantine Beer matter being in direct violation of the CORE Rules for Action in the failure of the chapter fully to investigate the situation or to engage in negotiations, and the failure of NYC CORE to follow the authorized instructions of the Regional Field Secretary, Louis Smith, and the failure of NYC CORE to follow the instructions of the National Director (29 December 1964) to cease immediately all public actions, on the basis of the authority given to the NAC in Art. V of the national CORE constitution, we suspend NYC CORE effective immediately. This suspension shall last until NYC CORE and all of its officers and members completely desist in participation in the matter of the Ballantine Beer Co. This suspension shall continue until the National Director reports to the NAC or the Steering Committee that this has been done to his satisfaction. In no case shall this suspension exceed 30 days. The terms of this suspension are delineated in Art. V, Sec. 3 of the national CORE constitution and state, "During the term of such a suspension, the chapter shall engage in no public activities and make no public statements without the written consent of the National Director."

Further, on the basis of the authority given to the NAC in Art. V, Sec. 1 of the national CORE constitution, we disaffiliate NYC CORE effective in 30 days from date for taking "action not in accordance with CORE Rules for Action" and failure "to follow the duly authorized instructions of the... National Director."

This action shall take effect within 30 days from date unless NYC CORE and all of its officers and members shall cease and desist from any further participation in the Ballantine Beer Co. matter, and further gives written notice that NYC CORE, its officers and members have suspended all public demonstrations and all forms of public activities, and will in the future do so, in regard to the Ballantine Beer Co. This letter shall be sent by the chairman and officers of NYC CORE to the National Director, who shall, in consultation with the national chairman and the national vice-chairman, determine as to whether this action constitutes compliance with the letter and intent of this resolution, and the National Director is given by the NAC authority to declare this disaffiliation suspended and shall report to this effect to the next meeting of the NAC or Steering Committee, whichever meets sooner, which then may act accordingly. (Adopted)

Convention Report:

Motion: that the annual National CORE Convention be held on the weekend encompassing July 4 at Durham, N. C. (Ussery, 2nd Burton). Carried 9 for, 4 against.

It was agreed that the first call for the convention should include an explanation as to why the convention is not being held in Mississippi.

A letter from Ruth Turner was read explaining her absence.

Resolutions passed at the Jan. 23-24 meeting of the North Central RAC were read. They stressed the need for program direction from the national office and specifically urged the immediate filling of the position of Program Assistant in the Organization Department.

Program Committee Report:

George Wiley gave four points which related primarily to the North:

1. Need to convey to chapters that they must become involved in the community.
2. Need for direction that can help chapters in their relations to such issues as the Poverty Program and Welfare.
3. Need to develop materials that are relevant to chapters getting involved in the Negro community.
4. Need to develop program which is related to the needs of the Negro community.

Richard Haley reported that John Due is to become Northern Florida Legal Counsel. He also reported that the Summer Project in Louisiana is to have top priority in the South.

Dave Dennis told of groups of Negroes in Jonesboro, Louisiana, called "Deacons" or "D.J.D.'s" who have armed themselves for defensive purposes. These are community people who support CORE in all respects except in our non-violent approach. The question of CORE's relation to such groups was brought up.

Motion: that the Chairman appoint a committee composed of the National Director, the National Chairman, Jim Peck, Staff persons from both North and South and such others as he wishes for the purpose of reviewing the "CORE Rules for Action." (Lacey, 2nd Brown) Unanimously carried.

Dave Dennis outlined a proposed extension of CORE work in South Carolina and presented a draft of a project aimed at protesting unsolved lynchings. Unfortunately, these proposals inadvertently had not come to the NAC through normal channels and, therefore, the NAC did not feel in a position to accept or reject in toto.

Motion: that we accept as the direction for our Southern Program the recommendations of Mr. Dennis for South Carolina and Louisiana and that further, the Southern Staff in consultation with the general counsel look into the matter of anti-lynching programs. (Gartner, 2nd Curvin) Unanimously carried.

Motion: that the NAC accept Philadelphia CORE's recommendation that we have a nationwide boycott of goods from South Africa. That we urge our chapters to participate in the March 19 demonstrations at Chase Manhattan Bank or other appropriate places in cooperation with S.D.S. (Farmer, 2nd Rosenfeld) Unanimously carried.

Motion: that the NAC declare that CORE is deeply concerned about the status of public welfare in the United States and urges its chapters to engage in programs directed toward improving welfare services in their communities. (Curvin, 2nd Ussery) Unanimously carried.

Motion: that staff seek to determine the feasibility of a workshop on automation and cybernation utilizing various community resources. (Ussery, 2nd Sprowal) Unanimously carried.

Dick Jewett, head of our Mississippi project, briefly described our relations with COFO and MFDP. He explained that local persons in Mississippi are taking over many functions which were originally performed by COFO. He also stated that there is little or no staff involvement in the MFDP. MFDP is a local peoples organization which is politically autonomous and which would like to have CORE support.

John Due announced his resignation from the NAC in order to join the Legal Staff.

Motion: that Pat Due be elected to replace John Due as Regional Vice Chairman from the South East Region. (Moore, 2nd Farmer)

Motion: to table above motion. (Gartner, 2nd Curvin) Carried, 10 for, 1 against.

By common consent the NAC reaffirmed its support of Home Rule for Washington, D. C.

Motion: to suspend the next Steering Committee meeting. (Ussery, 2nd Curvin) Unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 P.M., Sunday, February 7, 1965

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph Rosenfeld
Acting Secretary