

To: Mr. George Wiley, CORE Associate National Director

From: Benjamin A. Brown, Staff Associate, CORE Southern Education Project

Subject: Recapitulation of C.S.E.P. Operations

As the supervisor of the Membership Department I organized the clerical volunteers originally into an ad hoc committee called "CORE Books for Mississippi Committee." The purpose was twofold: 1) to involve these workers in meaningful non-actionist activity that would advance the program of CORE; and 2) to cement their relations with the National Office in a way as to guarantee continued group production of clerical services to reduce the cost of office operations.

Systematic organized mass appeals were made through mass letter writing appeals to manufacturers, dealers, trade unions, churches and publishers asking for contributions of books, equipment and funds to help us equip new CORE centers in the deep South. Although some scepticism was voiced by some staff people, the campaign proved immediately successful. We obtained enough supplies from our efforts to fully equip two centers: Canton and Meridian. Letters came from the South indicating that new centers were in the making despite funds shortages, so, expanding our activities: fund-raising and solicitation of supplies, we changed our name to CORE Southern Education Project, and set about to fulfill their needs. Simultaneously we launched campaigns to have the public ship supplies direct to the South. These campaigns were successful even beyond our expectations. After a year of operations we could report to the National Director that we had shipped over 50,000 general books and specialized books about Negro and African life and history, plus enough mimeographs, phonographs, tape recorders, typewriters, sewing machines, etc. to meet at least the basic needs of all centers functioning in the South. Total value of all books and equipment shipped as of 10/22/64 was estimated at \$27,584.79 by the C.S.E.P. auditing committee.

Concurrently with our book/equipment campaign we organized small scale fund-raising programs: talent programs, recitals, a Harlem rally with Jim Farmer and two art shows. Due to the National Office's desperate financial situation we contributed an approximate total of \$1200.00 to it.

Presently, along with our book/equipment efforts, we are presenting an AFRICA NIGHT program of songs, dances, music and dinner. Also we are issuing an all occasion greeting card with a poem written for us by Langston Hughes and a drawing done for us by Tom Feelings. Moreover, responding to the many requests from South and North, we are compiling bibliographies of Negro history, literature and culture, which will, we hope, be the most comprehensive collection in existence. When it is complete we plan to produce an illustrated CORE GUIDE TO NEGRO HISTORY AND LITERATURE with synopses of the most outstanding books, and with brief references to lesser and less significant books. With the approval of the organization we plan to have this booklet printed (including appropriate statements by CORE leadership and/or staff) and made available as a popular fund-raising project for CORE. We urge the endorsement of this project at a time when The Negro Personality, our history and culture have become basic factors in the freedom movement.

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Moreover, we urge that more greeting cards with the Negro image, however projected, are produced for sale by CORE. Finally, there is a great demand today for books about the Negro people. Cannot we profitably include such books as John Hope Franklin's FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM, the anthology, NEGRO CARAVAN, Dr. Carter G. Woodson's NEGRO MAKERS OF HISTORY, the works of Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, E. Franklin Frazier, et. al. for sale to our associate membership? Surely such contributions to Negro culture are obviously vital to our many-sided struggle for freedom, dignity and equality in America. Incidentally, publishers offer us a 40% discount, and such an undertaking could be a profitable venture for CORE.

In summary, I think that we can learn from the experiment of the C.S.E.P. that clerical volunteers can be effectively utilized in sustained interest by involving them in vital educational and fund-raising activities when this endeavor is undertaken by experienced and patient direction. I have found that there are thousands of sympathetic people willing to make a contribution to civil rights short of direct action. I suggest that this vital energy, which has saved the National Office at least 1/3 of its working man hours under my direction for the past 2½ years be tapped across the country. Similar ventures could be launched from Chicago and the West Coast.

Much credit for the success of the C.S.E.P. must go to the following volunteers, past and present, who have contributed so much to our pilot program: Mary Buckley, my wife, Robert Daniels, June Corbett, Virginia Hood, Ashley King, Iris Smith, Samuel Akesson, Marily Einhorn, Virginia Talarico, Peter Windsor (staff) Willie Mae Webb, Rose Gordon, Pamela Day, Carolyn Goslin, Peggy Howard, David Holderidge, et. al.

Since the first C.S.E.P. report was issued we have shipped over 25,000 additional new books South, acquired an estimated \$4,000 worth of art works contributed by participating artists in our two exhibits, and acquired about \$800.00 worth of equipment for shipment South.