

TO: CORE Contact List

FROM: James Farmer, National Director

RE: Political Action

The elections of 1964 have given us new influence. It is now up to us to use this position wisely and effectively. Certainly our opponents will attempt to regroup their forces and to snatch victory from defeat. We cannot permit this. We in CORE must move quickly and affirmatively to formulate programs, secure support and see that pledges made in the heat of the campaign are kept.

Goldwater has been defeated and so have northern reactionaries such as Ben Jensen of Iowa, George Meader and Augustus Johansen of Michigan, John Pillion of New York, and Louis Wyman of New Hampshire. Some had represented their Congressional districts for decades. Their replacements will be more friendly to the cause of civil rights. In the South, such Democratic reactionaries as Huddleston of Birmingham and Arthur Winstead of Mississippi's Fourth Congressional District (that's the District for which CORE bears responsibility) were defeated.

Thus, at the Congressional level there is every reason to be pleased and to believe that we have increased prospects of support for our program.

The civil rights vote resulted in the victory of Johnson in Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Florida. It also brought about victory for John Volpe, the Republican candidate for Governor, in Massachusetts. Archibald Hill, chairman of the Oklahoma City chapter of CORE, was elected to the state legislature. However, there were important defeats as well. California and Akron adopted referenda ending fair housing laws. The California proposition was so extreme that it will probably fall in the courts but it is extremely disturbing to know that three million people voted for such a law. I have discussed the impact of this referendum with President Johnson. Already the Federal Government has moved to shut off funds for housing proposals in California until this proposal is modified.

What Should We Do?

In many states the state legislatures will meet shortly. In a number they will meet this week in special sessions. CORE chapters should get together and formulate their legislative programs quickly. Legislation carried over from last session should be examined for a possible CORE position. Consult known liberal legislators and organizations for information. These programs should then be presented to the legislative leaders and publicized and promoted. Among the important demands should be legislative reapportionment to secure the principal of "one man-one vote." The Supreme Court has ruled in our favor but now it's a question of implementation. We cannot be caught napping. In a number of cases there will be attempts to push reapportionment through quickly before more liberal legislatures can be seated. These should be vigorously opposed.

Parents and Taxpayers groups and others of their ilk will continue to press in state legislatures for laws which will seriously impede the already small and tardy efforts to achieve school integration. It is very important that we make our views known to legislative leaders first and then to the community. We must also continue to develop the muscle to back up our lobbying; we must continue to register tens of thousands of Negroes, Puerto-Ricans and Mexican-Americans.

Support should also be developed for the following minimum demands at the national level:

- 1) Expulsion of Albert Watson (South Carolina) and John Bell Williams (Mississippi) from the Democratic caucus. These Democratic Congressmen supported Goldwater.
- 2) The Federal government must take effective action to protect our people in Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama.
- 3) The tax laws should not be modified to provide lump sum grants to the states. Such a plan would decisively weaken the impact of Title VI of the Civil Rights Law. This is the Title which would forbid the Federal Government from financing programs which are discriminatory.