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2965 Imperial Avenue
San Diego, California 92102
February 19, 1965

Mr. James McCain
Director of Organization
National CORE
38 Park Row
New York 38, New York

Dear Mr. McCain:

This letter comes to inform you that San Diego CORE is in very serious trouble. While I realize that you are a very busy person and you would probably not care to take on another burden at this time, I feel that it is essential that our chapter's problems be brought to your attention and that necessary corrective measures be taken by your office or the National Action Council so that this chapter may survive and continue on with the important work that it has been capable of prior to the last three months.

It will be difficult for me to explain in detail the total situation in such a short letter, however I am in the process of assembling the details for documenting and will provide you with a copy as soon as it is complete.

Our chairman, Hal Brown, who has been effective as a chairman and leader in the civil rights movement in the area, is no longer functioning effectively, in a democratic manner. About three months ago a few members complained to our chairman about the membership of two or three persons whomt they felt was detrimental to the organization. This was the beginning of a period of coercion, intimidation, and an advocacy of separation(as regards to black and white) by our chairman, Hal Brown. All of this in an effort to force through the membership his views on the aforementioned subject.

During this three month period Hal Brown has not performed his duties as a representative, a member and an officer of the CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY.

Most recently, during a regularly scheduled membership meeting, a vote was about to be taken on the revocation of membership of two of the three persons involved in this dispute when a voice vote clearly indicated an opposition to the motion, which Hal had initiated through a person who advocates complete compliance to any and all recommendations made by the chairman without questioning the issue. When it was clear to the chairman that the motion was lost, he stated that "We will vote by a show of hands. At this point two members challenged the chairman's decision. He refused to recognize the challenge. At this time I rose and called for a point of order and another person asked for a point of procedure and neither was recognized. It was my feeling at this point that no business could legally proceed after this behavior of the chairman and I rose and stated as much. Most of the members left after this. I learned, however, that the chairman proceeded to take a vote on the motion after this incident. It is my belief that action following his refusal to acknowledge a challenge and a point of procedure was illegal.

You may have heard something of this before from Hal, but I am stating to you emphatically that there is a very definite split within our chapter, and I personally feel that this split would not be if this membership revocation bit had been handled differently. Hal may have handled it in the best manner that he knows how; if so, this was not good enough. His undemocratic methods have caused division between black and white within the chapter, a situation which I feel cannot be justified by the "black man's cause".

In the beginning, I was brought into the situation by way of an accusation which suggested that I am being used by persons within the chapter whose membership is detrimental to CORE and that I am a leader of a subgroup of the chapter. I have asked that a formal charge be made against me on this matter. As of this date nothing to this effect has come forth. There is no truth to this accusation.

I honestly feel that this chapter cannot function in any manner now without hurting itself, the region, national CORE and the movement in this area unless appropriate steps are taken by the NAC to correct this situation. As of now, this chapter is incapable of straightening out its problems, and I feel that the only workable solution would be through a receivership. If this chapter is placed in receivership, and I sincerely request that this be done, it will be extremely necessary that the person or persons assuming the responsibility be someone who can function in an unbiased manner. It would be preferable that they come from a state other than California.

In this matter I am only concerned with what is right and just for the chapter, and the movement in accordance with the local and national constitution, the CORE Rules for Action, and democratic process. I urgently request some very definite actions on this matter immediately.

Realizing that money is a problem, I am certain that there are enough interested people within our chapter to help defray the travel expense and living expense of any person sent to San Diego by national CORE.

San Diego CORE has been one of the leading chapters on the West coast and we certainly hope that we will be able to solve this matter soon.

Please let us hear from you soon.

A petition will follow this letter.

Yours for Freedom

Ambrose Brodus, Jr.
First Vice Chairman
San Diego CORE