

Report of San Diego Chapter C. O. R. E. on Direct Action ^{the} Against Bank of America

(1)

August 29, 1964

Background

San Diego Chapter of C. O. R. E. has been at the forefront of the coordinated California effort to ~~force~~ ^{persuade} the Bank of America to correct long-standing discriminatory employment practices. Since early June picketing, "coin-ins" and other demonstrations have occurred each Friday afternoon. These increased in intensity ~~and brought~~ ^{at least national} and resulted in ~~good~~ coverage through the TV and radio media ~~but~~ and the expected news suppression by the Copley Press. The bank ~~tried~~ secured a temporary restraining order and under it made several citizen arrests during the "coin-in" demonstrations. The first of these ~~have~~ ^{is} coming to trial ended in the conviction of ^{women} Paul von Bloom and ^{his fiancée} Sherry Phillips on the counts of trespassing, business disruption and criminal contempt.

On August 6 the Bank of America attorneys and the C. O. R. E. lawyer ^{David Knott} argued the case for temporary injunction and Judge Vincent Whelan of Superior Court #1 ruled in favor of the Bank and ~~imposed~~ enjoined C. O. R. E. from mass & violent

picketing, singing, chanting, amplified speeches
and restricted pickets to 4 per entrance.
In a C.O.R.E. meeting of the evening of ~~the~~
August 6 the membership voted to test
the validity of such a restrictive injunction.
On Friday, August 7, 23 C.O.R.E. demonstrators
picketed, sang, and finally staged a sit-in
across the 2 main entrances to the Down-
town Branch of the Bank of America. San
Diego C.O.R.E. Chairman Hal Brown
gave an impromptu speech which was
a classic in its defense of the C.O.R.E.
tenet of non-violent direct action. ~~to~~ Nineteen
C.O.R.E. members were served ~~a~~ injunction
papers during this demonstration but no
arrests were made at this time. →

This dramatic demonstration was well
covered by ~~the~~ TV and radio but was
played down by the Copley Press.
Arrests started at 5:00 a.m. on Thursday,
August 13 (see enclosed statement by C.O.R.E.
member Charles C. Collins ~~and~~) and continued
until the following 11 members have been
beached:

C.O.R.E. Chairman Hal Brown
C.O.R.E. Vice Chairman Ambrose Brodgers
C.O.R.E. Public Relations Representative Stanley Crockett
Mrs Charles Collins

Dr Charles Collins
Mr Frederick Cowley
Mr William Beard
Mrs Mildred Gustafson
Mr Alan Gluscoe
Mr Leroy Martin
Rev. Edgar J Robinson

(2)

~~The~~
The Trial

after a one week continuance the hearing for these contempt of court charges was held on Friday, August 28 before Judge Vincent Whelan in Superior Court # 1. C.O.R.E. Chairman Harold Brown elected to act as his own counsel to give himself the opportunity to argue the case for the moral issue which it is rather than to accept ~~pure~~ legalism as the frame of reference. The other ten C.O.R.E. defendants were represented by Attorney David Kroll. C.O.R.E. opened ~~the hearing~~ ^{to} asking for a two week continuance on the grounds that the California ^{CORE} negotiating team were confident of an unofficial acceptance by the Bank of America of all demands made by C.O.R.E. ~~The~~ rationale here was that such

an agreement would cast a different light on this entire case. The Bank attorneys denied any concessions on the part of their Main Office and the Judge Whelan ~~the overruled~~ overruled this motion by ^{C.O.R.E.} Attorney Knoll.

The Bank of America attorneys insisted on demonstrating to complete redundancy that C.O.R.E. had in fact ~~violated~~ violated the injunction. Mr Knoll & Mr Brown and legal advisor John Porter conceded (stipulated in legalese) that the tape recording of Mr Hal Brown's speech, the leaflet explaining C.O.R.E.'s violation of the injunction, the professional movies & still pictures ^{taken by Bank representatives} were valid. Even so, the Bank attorneys insisted on proving the obvious & were sustained in their action by Judge Whelan. Mr Knoll did challenge them on the charge of "violent" picketing and forced an admission from Bank ^{assistant} Vice-President Ernest Holmes that no violence was practiced by the C.O.R.E. demonstrators even though violence had been inflicted on them.

by some ~~young~~ young "toughs" and further
 that the Bank officials had in no
 way made effort to stop this violent
 harassment of the pickets. He further
 forced an admission from an officer of
 the San Diego ^{Police} Bunko Squad that they
 had taken pictures of ^{written} notices on the
 C.O.R.E. ~~heads~~ Office windows ^{for purposes of identifying} ~~every~~ ^{negatives} ~~type~~ ^{evidence} of action
 though ~~they had never~~ this ~~type~~ of action
 was unprecedented.

C.O.R.E. Chairman Harold Brown gave a calm but
 effective closing argument refusing to
 accept ~~the~~ the specific issue outside
 the context of the entire civil rights
 revolution. The audience, if not the judges,
 was much impressed by the logic
 & the emotional impact of his remarks.
 Attorney David Krull in a most concise
 & lucid fashion pointed out that C.O.R.E.
 stood for law & order, was not anarchical,
 but was completely within legal precedent
 & the American heritage in challenging that
 segment of the law which in ^{C.O.R.E.'s} ~~their~~
 view countenanced & continued evil.
 He admitted the violation of the injunction

but asked that the motivation of the defendants be considered in the rendering of verdict + sentence.

Judge Vincent Whelan in his verbal deliberations stated that the issue at hand was ~~the~~ ^{the challenge to} ~~the~~ the order of the court and that the alleged discriminatory practices of the Bank or the wider civil rights crisis was irrelevant. He accepted the Bank of America position that this was an act of unison led by Messrs Brown, Brodus + Crockett and completely rejected Attorney Krull's ~~question~~ ^{argument} ~~challenge~~ that in fact eight of the demonstrators were permissible under the terms of the injunction and that Messrs Brown, Brodus + Crockett had neither picketed as such nor obstructed by sitting-in.

The verdict was that of guilty with the following penalties imposed: 1.) a five day sentence for the leaders Mr Brown, Mr Brodus + Mr Crockett with three days suspended on the proviso of no further violation of the injunction.

2) A five day sentence⁴ for each of the other defendants with four days suspended on the same proviso. ~~the~~ Mr Kroll requested + Judge Whelan ~~accept~~ granted a full suspension in the case of Mrs Collins ~~with~~ on the basis that her sentence would be served by Dr Collins 3) a fine of \$150 was imposed on the San Diego Chapter of C.O.R.E.

Subsequent Plans

Reverend Robinson ^{and Mrs Mildred Gustafson} will serve ~~to~~ ^{their} dayⁱⁿ on Monday August 31. Messrs Brown, Broder, Crockett + Collins will serve their 2 day sentence on Friday + Saturday, September 5 + 6. They will be joined by the others on Saturday the 6th. ^{The plan} ~~with the~~ is to have each ~~escorted~~ ^{accompanied} ~~to~~ the County Jail by a ~~group~~ of C.O.R.E. escort and ~~upon~~ upon release of the larger group on Sunday morning, September 7, the ~~entire~~ group plus sympathizers will go to Reverend Robinson's Messiah Lutheran Church for ~~services~~ Sunday services. On Tuesday, September 1, at 10:30 Chairman Hal Brown will hold a

news conference evaluating this whole episode and will make announcements on the status of negotiations with the Bank of America. ~~He~~ will at this time announce the decision of the local executive committee on the next project to be undertaken in this long struggle for racial justice.

Subsequent Plans

Government of Louisiana
 Monday August 31. 11:00 AM
 Governor, Governor + Governor
 their 2 day sentence on Friday + Saturday.
 September 2 + 3. They will be joined for
 the other on Saturday the 4th
 in to have each ~~separately~~
 for a ~~group~~ of
 and upon release of the larger
 group on Sunday morning, September 7, the
 group will ~~be~~
 to Reverend Robinson
 Church for ~~services~~
 on Tuesday, September 1, at 10:30
 Holbrook will hold a