

Inner-Office Memorandum

January 27, 1965

To : George Wiley, Associate National Director
From : Robert Gore, Assistant Director, Organization Department
RE : Chicago

The project is under the jurisdiction of Winston Lockett. The program involves the operation of three "Freedom Centers" in Chicago's North, South and West Sides. The program is geared towards organizing the ghetto communities for meaningful action to provide the basic necessities of political, economic and social urban life.

Activities since September 1964 have included rent strikes, demonstrations regarding the lack of a viable education system, job referrals, classroom activities, work with the Illinois Democratic Clubs, and other varied CORE-type activities.

Presently, Winston Lockett is the only paid staff member working in Chicago. His duties are to coordinate the activities of the centers in addition to his general field work in the Mid-West region.

There are, as stated above, three centers run by CORE in Chicago. They are currently financed totally by Chicago CORE, through local contacts. Formerly, the centers were financed by National CORE to some extent, but the feeling there is that the local chapters can now finance and staff all three centers.

Major accomplishments of the program thus far are in those areas where CORE has been able to establish a good working relationship with the people who live in the communities surrounding the centers. On the West Side, for example, for the first time in recent Chicago history there is real concern on the part of the community people for organized action. In each of the centers, persons from the affected community **have** become involved with the operation rather than relying solely on CORE members. Predictably, these Freedom Centers will be the foci for many activities which will benefit the movement in Chicago.

Previous problems which are now being worked out with some degree of satisfaction have been relations with some local chapters. Because of a bit of misunderstanding during the early phases of the program, local chapter support was not as strong as desirable. At this point, however, all units of Chicago CORE are helping--in fact, they are carrying the whole program.

Recommendations would be that National CORE maintain closer contact with the Chicago project in order that previous misunderstandings will not occur. Also, National CORE should support the community center project in Chicago vigorously in a programmatic way. Although the program is moving along well, any assistance we can give would be helpful.