

SPECIAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

JANUARY 15, 1965
National CORE Office

Members present: McKissick, Brown, Ussery, Hall, Burton, Rosenfeld, Gartner, Peck, Turner, Curvin, Lacey, Sprowal

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 by the chairman, Floyd McKissick. The agenda for the meeting was announced.

1. Affiliations and disaffiliations.
2. State of CORE report - by Wiley, Rich, etc.
3. Communications between staff and NAC including the following suggested items for discussion announced in the call for this meeting:
 - a. "The Dept. of Finance shall submit monthly statements of income and expenditures in addition to monthly budget projections for income and expenses to NAC members and key staff personnel. The Dept. of Organization shall submit monthly reports to NAC members on all national, regional and chapter projects authorized by NAC. Activity and plans for staff recruitment and training, as well as chapter servicing will be included in this report."
 - b. "That the Associate Director also submit monthly reports and note in them the disposition of all directives from NAC to staff."
 - c. "That minutes of staff meetings be promptly sent to NAC members and key staff personnel."
4. Staff issues, including the following suggested items announced in the call.
 - a. "That much more information be made available to the NAC about persons being considered for openings so that intelligent decisions in line with the NAC's responsibilities in hiring can be made."
 - b. "The serious absence of direction for program reflects the need for a program assistant in the department of organization. Every effort should be made to fill this position as soon as possible."
 - c. "That the fund-raising and community relations departments should be separated. A committee of the NAC and staff was appointed to study the question of fund-raising nation-wide August 8 and 9. This committee should either be vitalized or abolished."
5. National program.
6. Regional Action Councils, including the following item suggested in the call: "That the RAC be recognized as a significant level of organization and be strengthened and encouraged in every way possible. That the Dept. of Organization set up again the regional conferences that were discontinued last year and make its resources available to the RAC for their org. and development.
7. Allocations and priorities, including the following item suggested in the call: "That the NAC set up priorities for the allocation of funds and another set of priorities for cut-backs when they become necessary. It is our further recommendation that the training institute be given top priority in the plans for new expenditures."

8. National Director's overseas trip, including the following item suggested in the call: "That in the future no extended trips be planned by the National Director outside the country without prior approval of the NAC or its Steering Committee."
9. The National Convention
10. The next NAC meeting

The Steering Committee accepted by common consent the resignation of George Wiley from the NAC. Dr. Wiley is now serving as associate director. It was ruled by the chairman that Dr. Wiley in his new position does not have a vote in this session of the Steering Committee since there are no constitutional provisions to that effect.

Affiliations and Disaffiliations - James McCain

The following chapters were recommended for affiliation by the Director of Organization:

Tyler, Texas CORE
 Gainesville, Florida CORE
 West Ascension, La. CORE
 West Feliciana, La. CORE
 Davenport, Iowa CORE
 Westchester, N. Y. CORE (New Rochelle, N. Y.)
 Utica, N. Y. CORE
 Warren, Ohio CORE
 De Ridder, La. CORE

Motion- that the chapters be affiliated (Ussery, Gartner). Passed unanimously. It was further recommended that the following chapters be disaffiliated: San Fernando Valley CORE and Santa Monica Bay Area CORE. According to the West Coast NAC members, the latter chapter voted to disband itself. Motion- that the latter chapter (Santa Monica Bay Area CORE) be disaffiliated but that action on the former be deferred pending an up-to-date report by the Second Vice Chairman (Gartner, Ussery). Motion passed unanimously.

State of CORE Report - George Wiley, Marvin Rich, Etc.

General Discussion

The Associate Director described his views on the priority needs of CORE at this time---to take hold of the organization with respect to organization's problems, thus bringing the internal house into order, and to deal with the question of staff training and the direction of the program. He noted that some changes have already been made. Mr. Edwin Day, past executive secretary of Syracuse CORE, has been brought into the National Office as Business Manager. Mr. Day's initial assignment is the physical reorganization of the office, to oversee business functions (e.g. bookkeeping dept.), to improve the lines of communication within the organization, and to implement such economy procedures that are necessary to make the operation of the office more efficient.

Financial situation

Mr. Wiley commented on the problem of making decisions without adequate information and the need for a good picture of the state of the organization.

The information needed to complete such a picture is not presently available for a number of reasons (e.g. lag in bookkeeping dept., absence of adequate reports from field staff personnel) but a report will be able to be compiled by the week preceding the Feb. 6 NAC meeting. (Reports are being requested from all personnel in the Dept. of Organization by Jan. 25 in order to make the completion of such a report possible.)

A summary of the growth of the national organization was given:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. on staff</u>	<u>Annual budget</u>
1959	7	\$ 62,000
1960	14	125,000
1961	17	240,000
1962	42	617,000
1963	49	525,000
1964	92	900,000

CORE faces however serious financial problems, so serious in fact that the problems of retrenchment must be dealt with.

DEBTS

	12/20/64	1/15/65
Bills/supplies	95,200	85,593
Legal	21,047	6,000
Loans	41,667	71,667
Staff	5,350	9,377
Chicago Project	8,100	5,000
Western office	2,000	1,000
Taxes	6,000	6,000
Southern Project	2,700	3,000
CURRENT	182,000	187,000
	Cash in hand	<u>30,000</u>
	DEBT	\$157,000

The Financial Crisis

It was explained that presently the amount of staff time involved in dealing with creditors is unconscionable. It will take at least a year to get out of this kind of debt; a budget must be projected that will achieve this goal. In the month of January, as the result of personal contact, \$25,000 has come into the office thus far but this does not necessarily represent an increase in overall income (since some of these funds would have come in normally at a later date). The Scholarship, Education and Defense fund is getting off the ground and is a bright spot. In some areas it can absorb expenses. It has established a legal defense budget of \$77,400 annually. They have begun a voter registration campaign in South Carolina which now is in the \$9,000 -- \$10,000 range. Their next priority is for leadership development and training.

After that they will explore freedom schools and community centers.

Our changing financial situation is reflected in the fact that we have no longer been able to obtain interest-free loans as we once were, reflecting the frequency of borrowing attempts in recent months.

As the result of a number of problems (e.g. staff inadequacies and lack of adequate administration), the bookkeeping dept. is far behind in its work. The audit for the fiscal year ending May, 1964 was just begun at the beginning of January. The new business manager's next assignment is to put that dept. back on its feet.

A serious item among the debts owed is the amount of taxes owed to the government. This must be a top priority item for repayment for obvious reasons.

The budget must be projected within income and in the light of the debt owed. Mr. Wiley assessed that a monthly budget of \$65,000 would be appropriate in view of the above discussion.

Retrenchment and priorities

In view of the fact that a full financial statement is not available it was decided by common consent that discussion on retrenchment and the priorities for cutbacks be postponed until such information is available with the understanding that this information will be in the hands of the NAC before its next meeting.

Associate Director's Job Priorities

The Associate Director outlined his own job priorities as follows:

- 1) Next 10 days - prepare "state of the organization" report for the NAC.
- 2) Southern staff conference next week end. It is important to work out accounting procedures with the southern office, so that a more accurate financial statement from the region can be compiled.

Administrative changes

There have been certain administrative changes in the office:

1. Phone bill cut from \$5,500 to \$3,500 monthly through controls and some changes in the crisis situation of the South. Educational procedures on the use of the phone are being worked out.
2. The stencil department and the membership department have been combined. All contributions and internal lists are handled by the combined department. The new system has resulted in a reduction of the office staff by three clerks.
3. The office is being renovated at minimal cost (\$300-\$500) through the efforts of several volunteers and Mr. Day.
4. There have been a number of resignations in the office (cut of 6 persons on balance), but the retrenchment is not yet sufficient and more will probably be needed.
5. There has been a net loss of about 7 field staff in the South and 1 in the North as the result of retrenchment.

Hiring and firing

When asked for his interpretation of the NAC's authority in the question of hiring and firing, the Associate Director stated that in his opinion hiring was subject to review by the NAC but in the case of firing the question was less clear and the NAC had less authority. Discussion followed.

Marvin Rich's Resignation

Marvin Rich announced his resignation to be effective in the spring. Motion with extreme regret the NAC accept Mr. Rich's resignation; this regret is tempered, however, with the knowledge that he will be working in his new position of the Executive Director of a fraternal organization, the CORE Scholarship, Ed. and Defense Fund (Gartner, Ussery). Motion to table - (Ussery, Lacey). Motion passed.

Communication - NAC and Staff

George Wiley explained that a memoranda was to be sent out Dec. 20 but was delayed. The minutes of staff meetings, which will be held weekly, will be sent out from now on. Motion - This Steering Committee direct the Associate Director to report on a monthly basis on the following:

1. State of implementation of previous NAC directives
2. Major staff decisions regarding finances, program and organization
3. General summary of department activities in the areas of finance, program and organization
4. Any other matters he considers important to communicate.
(Gartner, Ussery)

Motion passed, 1 against (Curvin)

By common consent it was agreed that Wiley will communicate to the staff such information that they must have in order to be kept abreast of the developments within CORE, recognizing that there are problems of communication there as well.

The Associate Director reported that the Business Manager will work on bringing the contact list up to date as a means of improving communication.

CLOSED SESSION

OPEN SESSION

Agenda

Motion - that the National CORE Convention plans and the mechanics of the next NAC meeting be discussed before breaking for the evening and that the Steering Committee divide itself into three groups to discuss program, community relations and the West Coast problem. (Turner, Brown). Motion passed.

Convention

The question was raised by Virginia Burton about Gordon Carey's functions in the two months after the last NAC meeting, since the convention was to be his main assignment. Motion - that the Convention Committee be free to look for other than campuses when selecting a site for the convention. (Brown, Turner). Motion passed. Motion - that the Convention Planning Committee bring in a report by the next meeting, even if they are able to communicate only by mail. (Turner). Motion passed.

Next NAC Meeting

By common consent the meeting will be held in New York February 5 to February 7, to be set up by Wiley and the administrative staff at a minimum cost. Tentative plans are being made for a Friday evening bull session. The probability of a cancellation of this meeting is near zero.

Steering Committee Meeting - January 15-17

It was recommended that the expenditures borne by Steering Committee members for this special call meeting, in view of the financial crisis of the organization, be borne on a volunteer basis by splitting up the cost and assessing it accordingly. Volunteers are Curvin, Lacey, Rosenfeld, Brown, Ussery and Turner.

Farmer's Trip to Africa

According to the staff, the trip was underwritten by AMSAC, to be taken at this time. It was further suggested that questions regarding the time of the trip should be referred to the next meeting, since the National Director feels strongly about his own time priorities. Rich commented that the time spent in Israel may be worthwhile financially. Motion - table discussion until such time as Farmer can be present. (Gartner, Ussery). Motion passed.

Church Burnings in Louisiana

Marvin Rich announced that there had been two church burnings in Jonesboro, La. It was suggested that a telegram should be sent to Katzenbach in the Justice Department on the need for significant increase of protection in Louisiana, in view of a number of recent incidents of violence in that state. Farmer should also bring attention to bear on the problem from Africa. Motion - instruct Marvin Rich to make whatever contact with the President and the press as seems appropriate to get action on the church burnings in Louisiana. Also that this body telegram its concern to the Jonesboro community and finally that the staff take those steps it deems appropriate to get the churches rebuilt. (Gartner). Motion passed unanimously. By common consent it was agreed that the Director of Organization would communicate with the Southern Office and

college contacts in order to involve students in the rebuilding of the churches.

California Fair Housing Fight

Motion - that the NAC send a telegram to the California authorities to protest any release of money for the building of California housing. That any appropriate additional contact to Weaver by the staff be taken to facilitate action. (Brown, Gartner).

National Program

The program subcommittee reported on its discussion of Saturday evening. Turner reported that much of the discussion concerned the question of membership training and education as a crucial first step to program development. Area conference should become more disciplined training institutes for the development of second line leadership. Extensive memos should be sent on many program ideas so that chapters can choose the one or ones most appropriate to their own community needs. Suggested memo topics are:

1. The War on Poverty - a CORE interpretation
2. The CORE Community Center - how it differs from other social agencies, its purpose and function
3. Urban renewal - e.g., Trenton, New Jersey's experience
4. Target groups for organization by CORE; their problems and techniques for organizing them (e.g., veterans, mothers on public assistance, unemployed, people in public housing, unwed mothers)

If such a membership education program is to succeed, however, chapters must also communicate with the National Office, giving them up-to-date information on chapter membership lists and names of officers.

Discussion

The national training institute proposed by the NAC has not yet been financed (although the Scholarship Fund has made the institute a major commitment). The Department of Organization reported that certain memos are being prepared and articles on community organization are being readied for circulation. Shirley Lacey commented that the "what" of program is less important for chapters than the "how". It was the general feeling that national action projects such as the Freedom Rides are no longer what is required in order to rejuvenate CORE chapters and give them direction. Motion - instruct staff that the priorities of the NAC are as follows:

1. Develop a comprehensive series of local training institutes for more intensive training for leadership and program development
2. That a series of instructional memoranda be prepared and disseminated through the Department of Organization
3. Regarding national projects there are two priority items
 - a. Development of a special South Carolina political program focused on the November, 1966, Senatorial election.
 - b. The planning and development of a nationwide Mississippi boycott.

(Gartner, Brown. Motion passed. Clarification of the motion - that the statement prepared by the National Director of Nyack be the first in the series of memoranda referred to in the motion.

Other suggestions for memos were tenant-landlord relations and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party; what is needed in the reports is not just the advice of experts, but "gutsy" descriptions by CORE people. Motion passed unanimously. It was agreed by common consent that NAC members also prepare such memos on policy, program items and direction, to be turned in to Wiley by January 25.

The Associate Director informed the NAC of a leadership training program in community organization being conducted by Syracuse University with Poverty Bill money. Applicants are being sought now.

Community Relations

Jim Peck requested that chapters send information on their projects and activities to the CORElator for wider circulation. James Farmer will have a weekly column starting next week in the Amsterdam News. Marvin Rich reported that in the area of fund-raising, several years ago 100% of all income came through direct mail; now 60% comes in through direct mail. The rest comes through personal solicitation, rallies, benefits, associate memberships, etc. (There is a need for a competent, meticulous technician to handle direct mailing now.) One of the problems in the fund-raising area is that there is no separate fund-raising department, although CORE cannot really afford to pay a professional fund-raiser at the present time. It is hard to get volunteers to do fund-raising; training is needed for people in CORE who can learn fund-raising techniques.

Mrs. Eva Levy spoke of the relation of program to fund-raising; in the case of giving money to specific Southern projects, this can be problematical. There has to be an education of givers; in the Negro community, for example, there is no pattern of giving to CORE. New standards for giving have to be set. The problems of fund-raising in the Negro community were discussed at length. Suggestions were - to pressure national organizations such as lodges and fraternal organizations from the top as well as on a local level; CORE might also adopt a singing group and sponsor jazz or rock and roll entertainers. (There are special problems with entertainers, however--timing, arrangements, the artist's own preferences.) It is important for CORE to analyze its attitude toward the Negro community if it is to be successful in fund-raising there (e.g. accepting or critical). The income-cost ratio of any venture must always be kept in mind.

The Poverty Program

A number of questions were raised regarding CORE's role in the President's War on Poverty. Overtures have been made to CORE chapters across the country to get involved. Questions raised, however, are: what are we organizing for? who are we organizing for? why the overtures to CORE? do we as CORE apply alone or as part of a community configuration? what are the possibilities of being bought off? There is a possibility of seeing the program as a short-term way to get a toehold, to develop a political base and train leadership, with the realization that the funds will be cut as soon as we get too militant. Motion - that there be a workshop session at the NAC meeting on the real "ins and outs" of the Poverty Program. (Turner, Rosenfeld). Motion passed unanimously. Wiley shall arrange it.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 P.M., Sunday, January 17, 1965