

PROBLEMS NOW BEFORE CORE

This is a beginning list. When you've read it over and thought about it, you'll quite likely have some questions to add to it. Please write down your questions and send them to Yates in the Baton Rouge Office. After an interval to allow for the receipt of questions, a more comprehensive list will be sent out.

It is hoped these lists will stimulate workers to consideration of the problems facing CORE and to expression of concepts of policy, organizational structure, and activities that will enable CORE successfully to meet these problems.

Staff conferences and retreats will deal with these problems. This Is It will publish any articles received on them.

Where is CORE headed?

Should CORE remain primarily oriented towards voter registration? If so, what technics do we try for increasing voter registration? Do we seek more government involvement? Can we use CORE workers and contacts in the North in any way -- in simultaneous demonstrations in Louisiana, Mississippi, other Southern states, and in the North, for instance? Should we ask for lawyers to take on more voting suits, pushing voting as a primary goal? Should CORE concentrate in areas of Negro majority voting population? Is work in white majority areas too long range for much benefit? Are bourgeois Negroes and "Toms" the ones who really benefit from the voter registration work CORE does?

If CORE does more than just voter registration, what else should it do? What is the function of long range programs such as Freedom Schools, Community Centers, Federal Programs? What is the function of action-oriented programs such as sit-ins, boycotts, picketing over specific issues? What is the interrelation between these considered simply as tactics and the long range programs?

Should CORE have an independent economic program? Should CORE work with the unions? Should CORE work to integrate Negroes into the existing economic institutions, or should Negroes set up their own stores, their own corporations, their own farms?

Should CORE enter into Rural Area Development Programs, into Farmer Committee systems, the Farmers Home Bureau? What kind, if any, housing programs should we have? Should CORE enter into MDTA (Manpower Development and Training Administration) programs; into Area Redevelopment Administration (ARA) programs? What should be our relationship to these programs?

Should CORE have an independent political program? Should CORE work to get Negroes elected to office? Do they run as independents, in a third party, in the Democratic Party? What kind of policies, organizational structures, and tactics are required in each case?

Should CORE's programs be oriented mainly toward the more deprived Negroes? Could they who are more numerous and have everything to gain and nothing to lose supply the motive power of a sustained drive to real equality? Or should CORE programs strengthen and extend Negro middle class institutions on the assumption that 'merica's rising economy will soon lift all to the middle class?

If there are more activities than voter registration, how are the activities related? Does the staff decide which to emphasize? Does the local project? Will the emphasis be changed from locality to locality and ~~from locality to locality~~ end from time to time? Must the programs all tie together? Can the Freedom Schools run without ~~tie~~ing into the political program? Can Federal Programs be undertaken which seem at first to have nothing to do with politics?

How do we determine what programs or combination of programs to have? By talking with local people? Talking amongst ourselves? Through decisions made by Project Directors or by state committee meetings?

What is and what should be CORE's relation to the community?

Are we a special group set apart by our actions from the community? Are we community organizers trying to develop community consciousness and action in a grass-roots democratic way? Is it necessary that we always lead, or should we develop indigenous leadership?

Should CORE seek to organize state-wide campus groups? What would be the function of these groups? What sort of organizational form should we try for?

Should CORE expand into the white community? Should we attempt to reach the white moderates to counteract cracker propaganda? Can long range programs work without winning sectors of the white community to our views?

In terms of CORE structure, how do the programs get carried out? Should we have state-wide coordinators? If so, how much independence should they have? Should they be able to institute new programs on their own? Should they decide who will work on their programs at the local level? Should they be required to tie-in with other activities?

What is and what should be CORE's relationship with other organizations? With SNCC? With NAACP? With SCLC? LCDC? National Sharecroppers Fund? U. S. Departments of Agriculture and Labor? FBI? Etc.

Decision-Making

On the local level should decisions be made by group leaders?

By staff? Do local people enter into decision-making?

How and how much? What kinds of local organizational structures would best carry out single action programs?

Multiple-action programs?

On the state level are decisions to be made by Field Secretaries only? By state staff conferences? By executive meetings of state coordinators? What role should community organizations play? Should there be separate state CORE and community structures? If so, what should be CORE's relationship to them? What is the relationship between Field Secretaries and state coordinators?

Do outside organizations have a voice at local or state levels?

How should the state office relate to the field? Should state people travel much in the field? Should field people rotate in the state office jobs? What is the necessity and frequency of state communication with local activities?

Personnel

Should we recruit local people or Northerners? What are the values of each category?

Should we prefer black to white in recruiting? In filling positions of leadership? If we don't tolerate white crackers, should we condone black ones?

What are the criteria that determine when a person should be transferred or dismissed? Who applies the criteria and gives judgement? Should there be means of appealing the judgement?

To what extent should local organizations have a part in determining project personnel?

Finances

Should CORE seek to raise money in local communities for staff projects? Or should locally raised monies be retained by local groups, or at most used for state organizations of local groups?

Should Louisiana CORE try to raise money on its own in the North? By what means? Or should it join with other Southern state groups through the Southern Regional Office in raising money?

Assuming it possible, should CORE support local groups? What kinds of groups and what should the relationship be?

Staff Training

Should there be staff training? Should training be left to group leaders? Should there be a series of formal programs of training? What would be desireable subjects in a program of training? What technics of training could be used? State-wide conference? Visiting experts? Local seminars? Should each CORE group have a reading list and library of books that are being read by all workers?

To what extent and how should local people be involved in training?

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