



# THIS IS CORE

**C**ONGRESS **O**F **R**ACIAL **E**QUALITY

**T**he CORE technique of nonviolence has come of age as a method of combatting racial injustice in the United States. It can justifiably be called the *CORE* technique because CORE was a pioneer of this method. Ted Poston pointed out in his 1956 *New York Post* series: "As part of the National Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the [New York CORE] group has been effectively fighting bias here on the Gandhi nonviolence principle, not only in hotels, but in swimming pools, barber shops, restaurants and other places of public accommodation long before Montgomery joined the passive resistance movement."

The student sit-ins, which started in February 1960 and within a year opened-up eating places in 130 southern communities, have created widespread interest in the CORE way. This pamphlet tells — in detail — just how CORE works. But first, let us take two examples of CORE action at its most exciting stage, direct challenge:

### THE SIT-IN



The Sit-In is CORE's oldest and most widely used technique. The CORE group, often divided into three units — one Negro, one white, and one interracial — enters a discriminatory eating place shortly before the busiest hour and quietly sits waiting for service.

Originally used to open a number of Chicago restaurants to Negroes, this method was later used to open dime store and drug store lunch counters in hundreds of communities.



THE *STANDING LINE* has been used at cafeterias, ticket booths and other places where one stands in line for service. When the Negroes at the head of the line are refused, those CORE members behind them refuse to step out of line, sometimes bringing service to a halt. CORE stood in line at movie theaters in Kentucky; at the swimming pool at Palisades Amusement Park in New Jersey, this tactic was important in successfully ending discrimination.

### YET WHAT IS CORE?

How does it build up to public action such as the Sit-In and the Standing Line?

The Congress Of Racial Equality is a national organization with affiliated local groups working to erase the color line through direct, nonviolent action. The local groups form the base of the CORE movement and carry on action against specific instances of racial discrimination in their own communities.

Local CORE groups function through action projects. Careful planning and a step-by-step process must precede any public demonstration such as those pictured above. Nor do the local groups grow up spontaneously. They are usually organized with the inspiration and help of National CORE.

### WHAT THEN ARE THE PRINCIPLES OF CORE?

And what is the organizational structure set up to put the principles into practice?



CORE's philosophic heritage is a rich and varied one. Its procedures, adapted to American race relations, are modeled on those developed under Gandhi to free India of foreign domination. CORE's basis goes back to all the great religious and philosophic traditions; it seeks future human brotherhood through the active practice of brotherhood here and now.

More specifically:

**1** CORE believes that racial discrimination in the United States affects *all* Americans adversely. Segregation is a problem that everyone — and not merely the members of minorities — should seek to solve. Although CORE's emphasis has been on Negro-white relations primarily, CORE stands ever ready to serve other minorities also.

**2** Because of this principle, CORE locals strive to be interracial. National CORE draws its officers, staff, National Advisory Committee, and its financial support from all groups. Only those Americans whose loyalty is primarily to a foreign power and those whose tactics and beliefs are contrary to democracy and human values are categorically excluded from participation in CORE.

**3** CORE believes in *direct* action. After careful planning, CORE members enter situations where they are directly in opposition to some specific discriminatory practice. Local action campaigns have succeeded in ending segregation or exclusion of Negroes from restaurants, theatres, amusement parks, swimming pools, YMCAs, etc. CORE has also opened up employment opportunities hitherto restricted to whites, and has worked for integrated housing.

Recently, CORE has urged Negro parents to send their children to newly integrated schools: CORE members have accompanied these children to the schools. Voter registration is a second major emphasis in the South.

**4** In carrying out the action program, CORE first *investigates* to learn all the facts; second, *discusses* the grievance with those responsible for the practice in an effort to bring about a change of policy; third, *appeals* to the wider public for support in the action; fourth, *publicizes* the unjust racial practice through picketing, leaflets and press releases; fifth, if all the foregoing fail to end discrimination, uses *direct challenge*, such as Sit-Ins, Standing Lines, and boycotts.

**5** It is the essence of nonviolence that it proceed step by step: where discrimination can be ended through negotiation, more severe steps are never used. Although CORE's distinctive method is direct action, it also employs broad educational techniques and, occasionally, court procedures.

**6** CORE believes that *nonviolence* in action and attitude is essential to the realization of our aim — interracial brotherhood. Where CORE members maintain an attitude of persistent goodwill, public support for desegregation is won, the police are less apt to interfere and sometimes may even give active support; often, not only a change in policy results but also the respect and regard of the opposition is gained. Then a change of policy no longer involves loss of face or a sense of defeat for the opponent.

To put the principles of CORE into ever wider and more effective use, CORE, begun in Chicago as a local

**5** Represents CORE on a national level.

**6** Sponsors training programs such as action workshops and national action projects.

### THE STRUCTURE OF CORE LOCALS:

Although CORE locals are semi-autonomous and have varied set-ups to fit varying size, emphasis and locality, each group has many of the following:

**1** Weekly or bi-weekly membership meetings to carry on business, approve action project plans, etc.

**2** Executive or Steering Committee to pre-digest some discussions before the membership meetings. Some groups have Special Action Units or Committees which serve this function in setting up action projects.

**3** Membership Committee to recruit, orient, and screen applicants for membership and make recommendations to the General Membership Meeting for final approval.

**4** The usual organizational officers, including chairman, vice chairman, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, treasurer and financial secretary.

### HOW DOES ONE JOIN CORE?

**MEMBERSHIP:** One becomes an *active* member of CORE by joining one of its affiliated local groups. In addition to a sincere agreement with the CORE Rules for Action and the constitutions of both National CORE and the local involved, an applicant must be acceptable to the local in which he is seeking membership. Most local groups require a period of trial membership, and other requirements are sometimes stipulated.

However, any individual who supports CORE principles and action may contribute to the national organization and receive its publications, including the *CORE-lator*. Such persons are considered *associate* members.

### HOW IS CORE FINANCED?

The local groups support themselves financially, often using a regular pledge system or membership dues, plus contributions from local supporters.

National CORE is financed largely by contributions from interested individuals. Churches, unions and its local groups also contribute to its financial support.

### NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(As of November 1, 1962)

Ralph Abernathy  
James Baldwin  
Roger N. Baldwin  
Algernon D. Black  
James B. Carey  
Allan Knight Chalmers  
Grenville Clark  
John Cogley  
Earl B. Dickerson  
Eugene E. Frazier  
Harold Gibbons  
Roland B. Gittelsohn  
Sidney Hollander  
George M. Houser  
E. Stanley Jones  
Bishop F. D. Jordan  
Martin Luther King  
Douglas Levin

David Livingston  
Will Maslow  
A. J. Muste  
Dorothy S. Norman  
A. Philip Randolph  
Ira DeA. Reid  
Walter P. Reuther  
Jackie Robinson  
Arnold M. Rose  
Fred M. Shuttlesworth  
Lillian Smith  
Gardner Taylor  
Howard Thurman  
Bishop W. J. Walls  
Goodwin Watson  
Joseph Willen  
Jerry Wurf  
Charles S. Zimmerman

**CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY**  
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group, has functioned as a national organization since 1942.

## THE STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL CORE:

CORE is governed by its Annual Convention. Advice and help is given by the National Advisory Committee. Day-to-day planning is carried out by the National Action Council, which may also make policy decisions where necessary between Conventions. These groups determine development and policy of National CORE within the framework of the Rules for Action and the Constitution.

## WHAT DOES NATIONAL CORE DO?

- 1** Maintains a national office and a field staff to stimulate organization of new groups and to encourage the growth of established locals.
- 2** Publishes literature of two types: (1) material for the use of its groups (such as the Organizational Manual); and (2) pamphlets of wider interest on race relations, usually involving nonviolent direct action (such as Martin Luther King's pamphlet on the Montgomery bus protest).
- 3** Publishes the *CORElator*, to give wider circulation to action stories of local groups and of projects (such as The Freedom Rides) sponsored by National CORE itself.
- 4** Serves as a clearing house for its local groups, setting up Training Conferences and Conventions where the locals may interchange problems and solutions involving action and organizational practices.