



to abolish racial discrimination by direct, nonviolent methods

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11 January, 1965

Mr. Robert Penn Warren
2495 Redding Road
Fairfield, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Warren:

James Farmer is now in Africa, but I shall be glad to try to clear up the discrepancies. Gordon Carey went to Greensboro at the request of Dr. Simpkins; in the request Dr. Simpkins also asked that we begin negotiations with the companies involved. This happened because he had just read a copy of "Cracking the Color Line". I am enclosing a more recent edition of the one he read, but I think you will see from the section on Baltimore why he asked us for assistance.

It is true that Gordon spent most of his time holding workshops in Durham, Raleigh, Winston Salem and then in Portsmouth, Petersburg and Norfolk, Virginia. Jim McCain was working in South Carolina at the same time. I, myself, was active in sit-ins in Saint Louis in early 1949. Enclosed is a reprint of, "The CORE Way", by Helen Buckler, which appeared in The Survey Graphic in 1949. It gives some indication of our use of sit-ins.

In the summer of 1959 we had a major workshop on non-violent direct action in Miami, Florida which drew participation from all over the country, including a number of people, such as Pat and Priscilla Stevens, who were to lead sit-ins in the spring and summer of 1960.

In addition, there were many sit-ins by CORE chapters in Miami, Charleston, West Virginia and Lexington, Kentucky during 1959. These were televised, and many of the students active in 1960 were later to tell us that they had had their first taste of direct action by seeing these TV shots.



In regard to Mississippi, we had never considered by-passing the state. We had intended to take a Freedom Ride from Washington to New Orleans with only the one stop in Jackson. Medgar Evers wrote us a two-page letter suggesting that perhaps we should not go to Jackson, but we chose to disregard it. As you know, the bus was burned in Anniston, Alabama and another busload of CORE people was mobbed in Birmingham. Thus, the first Freedom Ride did not in fact go to Jackson; but when the Rides were resumed they did drive from Montgomery to Jackson. It was there that several hundred were arrested in the summer of 1961. In a very real sense, we did not choose Jackson - it chose us. After that, our commitment of staff and resources to Mississippi gradually increased.

Andrew Goodman was a summer volunteer like so many others, and it would not be accurate for us to take credit for him. But James Chaney as well as Michael Schwerner were members of the CORE task force and were paid, trained and directed by CORE.

Certainly you may use the account of the way in which our people disappeared into the Negro community in Neshoba County. We would appreciate checking the draft.

Thank you so much for your concern in these matters. I do hope that the information I have given you will be helpful. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me in Mr. Farmer's absence.

Sincerely yours,

Marvin Rich

Marvin Rich
Director
Community Relations

MR:nm
Enclosures