[MS-0436.001.008.005]

November 20, 1964

Statement to probation officer; Mrs. Gell

I am gravely concerned about the inability of our courts to recognize the reasons behind our actions against the Bank of America. I must constantly convince myself that these are good people who mean no harm and entertain no prejudice against me and the rest of the Negro people. But to sit through four court trials involving San Diego CORE defendants, and listen to the prosecution as the prosecuting attorneys as well as the judge declare irrelevance when the true reasons for the actions of the defendants are presented, makes it very difficult for me to believe that there is no collusion between the prosecution and the Bank of America. If the suggestion that, "this is the law" is applicable here, then I find the courts unable to aid in alleviating the severe problem of racial discrimination.

The reason I am active in CORE is because I am concerned about maintaining law and order. There is a racial powder keg in this country that offers a thunderous explosion. The leadership of civil rights organizations is the instrument through which harmonious relations between Negroes and whites can

exist; or the instrument through which bitterness, hatred, and riots will be the daily scene. It is through Non-violence and understanding that CORE hopes to overcome four hundred years of suffering, suspicion, and bitterness. It is our aim to prevent violence and uphold the law - but we will fail as long as the courts deny us the opportunity to speak to the real issue. That real issue, the one that has been smothered to death in the court room, is that CORE was fighting against a practioner of Un-American beliefs, because in fact indeed, discrimination, intentional or unintentional, did exist at the Bank of America.

If CORE is denied the respect and understanding that it deserves; if CORE methods fail to bring substantial gains that will satisfy the deep frustration, suffering, and impatience of the Negro, then the Black Muslim philosophy shall prevail, as it will be the key for many which will unlock the frustrations resulting from a million rebuffs.

The courts, in their pledge for justice, cannot look at our trials resulting from action against the Bank of America, without looking at the side which

is basic and directly responsible for our being in court.

I strongly request, giving full respect to the high position of a judgeship, that the CORE defendants be given complete suspension of sentence on the grounds that a moral wrong has been corrected as a result of the action taken by CORE, and as a recognition that the burden of finding a solution to the racial problem falls on the shoulders of each citizen.

Respectfully,

Harold K. Brown