[MS-0436.004.013.049]

April 23

Speaking Out

by Harold Brown

(Chairman, SD Congress of Racial Equality)

Are we going to fight? Or are we going to play the role of bystanders while the civil rights struggle accelerates into high gear this summer?

When I say "we" I mean "we" as Negroes.

Are we going to let the rest of the nation carry the fight while we sit by hoping that our team is going to win? Well, our team is not going to win unless every Negro marches on the white power structure and demands an end to all race bias.

You have been sitting back doing nothing but **watching** this game. Some of you have been watching very closely—closely enough to catch the opportunities to profit from the work done by civil right workers who are making great sacrifices.

Many of you believe (so you say) that you are helping to solve this problem because of your position in the community and the contact you have with whites.

Well, all the talking and elbow rubbing you can do in one year won't amount to as much that will be accomplished by one civil rights demonstration.

I don't know what everyone is waiting for. Are you waiting to see how some of us make out with our jobs before you get into the fight?

What about you self-employed doctors, lawyers, and business men? I guess you have it good enough. At least you don't want to take any chances, huh?

It's disgusting to watch so many Negroes still walking around either in ignorance or in fear. Most of us are begging for left-overs and being satisfied with getting just that.

San Diego is no better than other cities and a lot worse than some, but other than CORE and Ted Patrick's group, who else protests?

Another disgusting situation in this town is the fact that an organization that is supposed to be a civil rights organization, an organization that fights for the Negro cause, is doing nothing more in that respect for San Diego's Negroes than any social group in the city.

This is the day of Negro militancy. At least that's what everybody is saying.

Then why is it that we have a civil rights organization in this town that hasn't even got into low gear?

Isn't there any problem here?

No wonder so many whites think that everything is fine with the Negro. Isn't there enough work to go around? You can answer that as well as I can.

Then what IS the problem?

How can we expect the general public to become active in this fight, when an organization whose one purpose is to make life better for the Negroes in this country, is not even active?

You can call this vicious, an unwarranted attack, a splitting up of the community (that's a laugh), an irresponsible act, or anything you want to, but prove me wrong and I will be very happy to apologize.

my work day is over, to the area of civil rights. True, no one is forcing me to do this—I am doing it because I know it has to be done and the volunteers are very small in number. But because I do put in many hours (and I don't get paid one cent), I feel justified in saying that if a civil rights organization is not gonig to involve itself in action, then it should be stated by that organization that it has become inactive, and stop pretending that it is active when everyone knows it is not.

Why should we pour money into an organization that is not doing anything in our city? There are chapters in just about every city in the country organized for the purpose of bettering the racial situation in their respective cities. Therefore, the chapter in this city should be actively involved in the struggle here.

I say either get your organization moving or stop taking the people's money!

Let's everyone get moving. Let's not wait until it's too late.

Even if WE can wait . . . we're going to have a hard time explaining that to our children.