EMS-0436.004.013.034

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League Corner

Speaking Out

by Harold Brown

(Chairman, SD Congress of Racial Equality)

SINCE I ALWAYS feel that the Negro community should know the reasons behind CORE programs, I've asked Stan Crockett, CORE's public relations chairman, to sit in for me this week and explain the current CORE action against Bank of America.

At stake in CORE's dispute with Bank of America is the sad result of the bank's announced "equal opportunity employer" policy; almost as sad, in fact, as San Diego's title of "All America" city.

BANK OF AMERICA, the world's largest bank, has approximately 30,000 employes. Only 2.5% of these employes are non-whites. Of the 2.5% only 1.9% are Negroes. This represents equal opportunity employment by word, not deed.

Two months of CORE negotiations with the bank's headquarters in San Francisco resulted in three out of five CORE demands being accepted. As usual, the two demands that would have allowed both the bank and CORE to measure the success of the equal opportunity employer policy were turned down by Bank of America.

CORE ASKED FOR specific statistics organized by job level and bank branch location pertaining to hiring, firing, advancement, and turnover for Caucasians, Spanish - Americans, Orientals, and Negroes. CORE also asked for periodic meetings with Bank of America following the receipt of these statistics so that the figures could be brought up to date and reviewed. Bank of America denied both of these requests by CORE.

The bank wanted to turn over a general set of figures to the FEPC. The bank would give FEPC figures on Caucasians and non-whites in the San Francisco Bay area, in Los Angeles, and the rest of the state. Such information would tell the FEPC nothing about specific conditions in any single bank in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and, for example, nothing at all about San Diego. Furthermore, the chief commissioner of the FEPC has stated that the more realistic figures demanded by CORE could not be adequately analyzed by the FEPC in its present state, FEPC being too small and too much restricted by its statutory functions.

But CORE has 26 chapters throughout California. CORE is able to analyze these figures and work with the bank to better implement its policies of employment. The bank appears to prefer, however, to drop a general set of figures into the lap of FEPC and let FEPC work for months to analyze these useless figures while the line of unemployed grows to greater lengths the State Employment offices. CORE finds such behavior intolerable, but all too typical of so-called people of goodwill who will say anything but really do nothing effective to alleviate the agonizing problems faced by the majority of Negroes ever since the first Negro arrived on this continent.

CORE IN SAN DIEGO, and throughout California, will continue to demonstrate until Bank of America agrees to turn over meaningful statistics to CORE. As always, CORE invites Negroes, Caucasians, anyone and everyone concerned, with taking a stand for equal rights and the abolishment of racial discrimination to join with us in our demonstrations.

Sometimes the warm weather and waving palm trees lead some Negroes to believe that San Diego is heaven on earth. But the very fact that many Negroes who are referred to as "successful Negroes" by both the Negro and non-Negro communities feel they have to escape identification with the problems faced by most Negroes in San Diego in order to be successful gives us the true geographic location of San Diego. Think of how much money is represented by the large cars driven around San Diego by "Negro leaders." And think of how much wasted energy those cars represent when the money could be invested in projects to raise the aspirations of Negroes and sting the hypocritical goodwill on the faces of San Diego's leaders.

THE NEGRO WHO believes that there are other ways to solve the problem, the Negro who believes that there is no problem in San Diego is of as much value in the fight for democracy in San Diego as the most rabid southern segregationist. As a matter of fact, such Negroes are of less value since their hypocrisy and their cowardice tells the white community that Negroes are happy, they are satisfied.

Lest we become too concerned about enemies outside of America threatening our American system of government, note what Senator Hubert Humphrey (D. Minn.) says about motel accommodations inside America. "In Augusta, Ga. . . . there are five hotels and motels that will take dogs and only one where a Negro can go with confidence. In Columbus, Ga., there are six places for dogs and none for Negroes. In Charleston, S.C., there are 10 places where a dog can stay and none for a Negro.

NEXT TIME someone begins bleeding for "states' right," remember this vivid result of states' rights.