

CORE SOUTHERN OFFICE
2209 Dryades Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70113

February 15, 1965

Meridian COFO
George Smith, Jr.
513 25th Avenue
Meridian, Mississippi

Dear George,

I had a chance to read through the January Meridian report. It is certainly informative. It's encouraging, too; I know of the long struggle you've had with "status quo" Negroes in Meridian, and feel encouraged that you're still working to draw in more people to the militant side. The report raised several questions and comments which are notated below.

You mention there is a great deal of unused equipment; would you be willing to transfer some low priority items to some other project? Spiver Gordon in Florida has spoken of a need for sewing machines, for instance. You also wrote of shirt factories in Decatur. If we have their names and addresses perhaps some pressure can be generated to get the northern owners interested in hiring Negroes at upgraded levels.

In the political report there is an item on "canvassing the city to interest people in federal programs." What programs? The petition you mention—is this a petition from parents for their children to be entered in desegregated schools? Would you send a copy of the petition to the office here? It might serve several useful purposes—publicity, adaptation to other communities, etc. The Crusade for Voters certainly sounds interesting; I hope you're able to form a real working alliance with them.

I'm just as interested in how the seven-dollar excess occurred in your accounts as if it were a deficit. Please recheck; it may not be even there. By the way, national office bookkeeping department has been very upset about a bank account in Meridian for which there is insufficient information, or something like that. If you can give them any help, please clear up the matter as soon as possible.

There is a gargantuan effort underway in national office to do two things: (1) to arrive at a realistic figure for project budget; (2) arrange to transmit that amount regularly. But we must pay our pound of flesh in return. Mileage reports each week, biweekly project reports, personnel records on each worker—likely there'll be others, too. Dick Jewett will discuss this with you in more detail when he returns. He will also talk to you about the procedure for your proposed self-reduction in pay.

One more thing; can you conveniently arrange for a copy of this report to go to Jim McCain in New York? This is enough for one letter, I think.

Take care,

Richard Haley
CORE Southern Director

RH/vvj