Introduction to *Cracking the Color Line: Non-Violent Direct Action Methods of Eliminating Racial Discrimination*

**[1960]**

**[New York, N.Y.]**

In 1958 King wrote the foreword to a CORE pamphlet on school integration. The following year, CORE officials arranged for King, a member of the organization’s advisory committee, to write this introduction to a follow-up booklet, detailing the group’s activities and strategies for ending segregation.

I like what CORE is doing. The techniques so graphically described in “Cracking The Color Line” should be widely studied by all who work to achieve a just and democratic America. You—the people who carry on CORE action—realize the difficulty of achieving full integration and use brains and imagination as well as good-will, self-discipline and persistence.

I especially like the non-violent CORE approach. I cannot see how means can be separated from ends, how the process can be judged in one light, and the goal in another.

We can and must win the mind of the prejudiced person. Force doesn’t change minds. Anger reinforces fears. And that is why it is so terribly urgent to work out the techniques of changing people’s minds, of allaying their fears about integration.

CORE puts before people’s eyes a new way of acting. You say and you show that feelings about segregation are silly, that customs can change without disaster following, and that this is the time to change them. And you proceed to demonstrate. Here is a method of achieving social change which we all may use.

[signed] Martin L. King Jr.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.


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2. In a 30 December 1959 letter, CORE executive secretary James R. Robinson enclosed the text of this introduction, thanked King for signing it, and assured him that it would “not be used for fund appeals” (King, Introduction, “Cracking the Color Line,” 30 December 1959). King later allowed this text to be used as an endorsement letter to a foundation interested in underwriting the booklet’s publication (Maude L. Ballou to Marvin Rich, 8 January 1960).