ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR RURAL SCHOOLS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1962

HOTEL COMMODORE, NEW YORK CITY
Statement of Purpose

The National Committee for Rural Schools is concerned with education, particularly for the Negro children in the rural South. When the school issue came before the United States Supreme Court in 1952, it said:

"Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our democratic society. It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in keeping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such opportunities, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms."

The translation of the aim of the law to the living reality clearly demands still more effort of responsible men and women. As a program for action at the very edge of education, the National Committee for Rural Schools recommends its Statement of Purpose:

The NCRS is dedicated to the promotion of adequate unsegregated public school facilities extending from kindergarten through high school to which all children may have access. The NCRS believes that the inability of children in some parts of the nation to take advantage of existing school facilities and the lack of buildings and adequate teaching staffs in many areas still combine to deprive thousands of our children of the opportunity for education.

The NCRS supports the following program as a means for eliminating disparities and achieving the objective of real equality of educational opportunity.

1. Assisting and stimulating the establishment of pilot operations for new and improved schools in such a manner as to encourage maximum community interest and self-help.
2. Bringing areas and schools which need help in touch with institutions, agencies, and individuals able and willing to give help.
3. Supporting publicly financed programs directed at making it possible for all children to attend school, regardless of place of residence or economic status of their families.
4. Promoting local, state and Federal tax programs, based primarily on ability to pay, that will provide funds necessary for adequate school buildings, staffing, and operation.
5. Encouraging outstanding achievements by the making of awards to pupils, school boards or organizations which have made significant contributions to the building and enrichment of integrated school programs.
6. Conducting conferences, issuing reports and cooperating with all organizations concerned in promoting extension of educational opportunity.

7. Providing aid to school parents and communities who have become victims of economic retaliation because of their insistence on petitioning for integrated schools and their right to vote.