

VIRGINIA STUDENTS' CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE  
Box 79  
Kenbridge, Virginia  
Phone: 696-2742

September 22, 1965

Mrs. Kenneth Montgomery  
875 Bridlewood Road  
Northbrook, Illinois

Dear Mrs. Montgomery:

Though your name has been on the VSCRC mailing list for the entire summer, I feel that a personal letter is certainly in order, in view of the fact that this organization grew out of the SNCC conference at Hampton Institute last winter which you helped finance.

As a result of the Hampton SNCC conference, an awareness developed and began to grow in Virginia students that conditions in certain parts of our state are very similar, in the aspect of racial prejudice and discrimination, to the conditions existent in the deep South. Representatives from approximately twelve colleges and universities throughout Virginia held a series of meetings after the SNCC conference to make plans for a summer project. At these meetings, in addition to conducting discussion as to the philosophies and goals of a civil rights project, students presented research papers on aspects of the summer project such as job opportunities, freedom schools, community centers, and voter registration.

These plans were finalized at a work conference VSCRC sponsored at the University of Virginia in April, 1965. A number of Virginia's civil rights and political leaders and several SNCC, COFO, and CORE field secretaries from the Mississippi and other southern civil rights projects were present to advise and lead discussions.

During the past three months, VSCRC has had twenty workers working full-time in six Virginia counties--Amelia, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Powhatan counties. In two counties, SCOPE and VSCRC have coordinated activities. Programs have varied sharply from county to county, similar only in the respect that they were instigated and developed at the request and with the support and participation of the local people in the counties. The enthusiastic participation and cooperation of local people is a direct result, I believe, of our respect for the people's ability to make the decisions which affect their lives. The role we wish to play in a community is described in a paper entitled "The Role of the Community Organizer," which is included in "A Project for Virginia's Black Belt," which I am enclosing.

Another phase of our program deals with dissemination of information concerning Federal programs which local white power structures often neglect to make available to Negro citizens. A community action program was brought