

[1964?]

SNCC file

Dear Bradens: Barbara Jones left after the last staff meeting to do field work in McComb, Miss. I'm trying to help out in her place. Anne, you may or may not remember my meeting you in Washington when you came to a meeting with some people who are trying to abolish HUAC, and we ate dinner at a chinese restaurant. Anyway, hope to see you when you come down. Perhaps we can have dinner again.

Margaret Lauren

Miss Elsie E. Smith
Route 1, Box 275
Thermal, California
92274

Dear Miss Smith:

Thank you very much for your contribution of \$50.00 which was forwarded to us by the Bradens of SCLC. We were encouraged by your contribution and your support of SNCC's programs of organizing in the black belt south around the right to vote. Since the Selma and Montgomery demonstrations, our staff in the field has continued the day-in, day-out work of talking to people about participating in their government.

SNCC staff now numbers 237, black and white students from the north and the south. Our goal is to bring local people from isolation to a place where they can make decisions about their own lives. We are working toward a democratic system where all people are able to participate and to decide about the quality and character of their lives.

There are many needs the field staff has which must be met if this work is to continue. One of them is our communications system which allows a worker to be in constant touch with his home base in case of trouble. Countless times we have received a call from a worker who was stopped by a crowd of threatening white hoodlums, armed with various weapons, and we were able to get help to him in time to save his life. Our long distance trunk line enables us to keep in touch with projects in times of harrassment and with jails when our workers and local people have been arrested and beaten. If we had been able to have such a communications system last summer, three young men who were working in Philadelphia, Mississippi, might not have been murdered.

Negroes in the Black Belt who have never had a chance to exercise their most basic right as citizens--the right to vote--are beginning to move to freedom and dignity. We appreciate your support for the movement and hope you will continue to help.

Freedom,

Betty Garman