

January 15, 1959

Dear Comrades,

The most important development in the North Carolina "kissing case" to date is the Superior Court dismissal of a writ of habeas corpus filed by CCRI general counsel Conrad Lynn, and the reaffirmation of the two boys' "indeterminate" sentences. This means that there will be no quick victory for the CCRI, that the pressure of Southern racism continues to surpass that of the pro-Negro forces up North and abroad, even with the increased coverage given the case by the press over the last two weeks. It means that our own campaign now can and must go much deeper, heading towards the formation of a national youth committee to free Hanover and Fuzzy, with our groups doing real work around the petition drive in each locality.

As you probably know, the NAACP has had to commit itself on the case. Robert Carter, NAACP general counsel, has been assigned to collaborate with Conrad Lynn; at the Superior Court hearing in N.C. this week, Lynn had the help of a whole battery of NAACP legal talent. In addition, the N.Y. Conference of Baptist Ministers, largest in the world, has just given its backing to the CCRI. These are real victories and should help our campaign greatly. Responsibility for rallying mass protest, however, still lies in our hands.

Funds remain the primary need of the CCRI. Robert Williams' national tour to win trade union support -- the CCRI's main goal -- literally depends on the amount of money raised over the next few weeks. The petition drive should supply most of this but other methods -- house parties, soliciting individual contributions, public meetings -- must also be tried. Negro History week is coming up soon, a perfect occasion for this kind of work.

To show the wide public response to the case and to involve as many sectors of the community as possible, we should build up a national sponsorship list for the Youth Committee. Sponsor cards have been enclosed. Sponsors do not have to be immensely prominent people, but rather local youth in the leadership of or closely identified with local youth organizations. A Youth Committee letter-head drawn from such a list can act as credentials for Y.C. workers in presenting the case.

Using the petition drive as the axis of our campaign, we should also solicit letters of protest addressed to N.C. Governor Hodges from prominent local people and urge organizations to pass protest resolutions. The copy at the head of the petition can serve as a model resolution. Duplicates of such letters and resolutions should be forwarded to the CCRI. In general, we should attempt to get before as many campus and city-wide organizations as possible -- the case can be our best vehicle for reaching new strata of militant student and Negro youth.

New petitions are now at the printers, and will be forwarded to you on request. Good luck.

James Lambrecht, Secretary
Youth Section, CCRI
(Committee to Free Hanover
Thompson and Fuzzy Simpson)