


VOTER VEP UPDATE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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APRIL 30, 1985

Today I wish to publicly announce my resignation as Executive Director of the Voter Education Project, Inc. My resignation was tendered on April 5, 1986 and accepted by the Board on April 28th. Although my resignation was effective on the 5th I wanted to complete some of the tasks on which I was working, thus April 30th was set as my last day of service.

I chose to resign on April 5th for personal reasons even though I was unanimously reappointed as Executive Director during the January 18, 1986 Board meeting and received a resolution of commendation for exemplary performance at that meeting.

I have selected this time to leave because I have completed the tasks set before me with great personal sacrifice, having worked without pay since June, 1985. Since that time we have completed an important internal assessment and used its findings to better guide us in matters pertaining to our organization and programs. We have added eight dynamic new members to our Board, elected new officers and reestablished lines of communication with our major funders.

Under new leadership the organization can carry on its vital programs of voter registration/education. Even though much has been achieved in the field of voting rights, there still remains much to be done. There are over 5 million blacks that are registered in the South yet over 3 million remain unregistered. The number of black elected officials represent only 1% of the total number of elected officials in the South. There still remain barriers to voter participation that VEP must continue to remove such as at-large election schemes, one-man county commission systems and limited registration sites. VEP must also continue to accumulate important statistical information so that black voting strength and trends can be properly assessed.

Bringing about change is a thankless and difficult task that must be performed but it should be financially supported by contributions from the public and not dependent upon dwindling funding from private sources. Thus VEP will be making public appeals to fund a portion of its annual budget.

(Continued)

Page 2

The challenges ahead are as great as they have always been. For that reason the President of VEP, Mr. Harold Sims, has appointed a Search Committee to move expeditiously to find my replacement. Until my successor is found, the office will be run by an interim director with assistance from several members of the Executive Committee and our office manager. All inquiries should be made by calling 522-7495.

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