

# Sophomore Comments on Virginia Trip

by J. D. Sholl

Two weeks ago 12 Bucknellians took part in a southern adventure, the likes of which few Bucknell students have ever experienced. This group, consisting of students Wynn Pfeif, Bruce McGraw, Joan Katagiri, Doug Sholl, Ted Odenwald, Phyllis Horine, Bruce Eldridge, Sandy Fehl, and Doug Gale; Professor David F. Martin; and Reverend and Mrs. Wesley W. Schrader, were guests at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Va. The purpose of the trip was to get to know VUU on a personal basis by completing the first exchange of this sort between our two universities (VUU students were here at BU from Feb. 13-16).

Included in a well-planned program was a panel discussion concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the civil rights movement. The most stimulating of the planned events was a lecture by and discussion with the Rev. Heslip Lee, executive director of the Virginia Council on Human Relations. He emphasized the difficulties of negotiation, as compared to those of demonstration, occurring in race relations in Richmond. The weekend also included sufficient opportunities to observe the working functions of VUU as well as two informal social evenings.

### Student and Voter Registration

It must be said, however, that the high points of the weekend

were found outside of the planned program. Staying near the VUU campus and working voluntarily with the local NAACP on voter registration were students from many northern campuses including Amherst, Cornell, and Ohio Wesleyan. It didn't take long for these students to arouse the interest of several Bucknellians who, on Friday, aided in encouraging the non-registered voters of Richmond to register for the national election. This was an overwhelming experience that proved to be extremely revealing and fruitful. Interracial dating, sightseeing, and bull sessions (usually lasting 'til the wee hours of the morning) were also unplanned and proved to be very rewarding.

### No "color lines"

Upon evaluating the trip to Richmond the BU students expressed several outstanding impressions. They found themselves unaware of the existence of any "color lines" except when reminded by outside statements such as one mentioning that Bucknellians were the first to participate in integrated dancing on the VUU campus. In a different sense, however, the BU students became aware, existentially, of other worlds that had not been a part of theirs previous to this experience.

The students found that civil rights no longer existed in their minds as an abstract, intellectual term found in the newspapers or classrooms. A statement by Bruce McGraw further exemplifies this feeling. "Though bull sessions provoked thinking and an exchange of ideas, one found that Civil Rights was not merely a bull session item but an area that calls for personal involvement." It was felt by all involved that personal contact was the most meaningful and significant part of the trip.

### Plans for Future Programs

Because of the enthusiastic response about the exchange, there are Bucknellians who feel this type of weekend ought to definitely be continued. Moreover, they are hopeful that semester or yearly student and faculty exchanges will be possible. Certain measures are already being taken to carry out these ambitions.

A vote of thanks goes to the Department of Higher Education of the American Baptist Convention and, especially to Rev. Wesley W. Schrader of the First Baptist Church, Lewisburg and Professor Barringer of VUU who co-ordinated their efforts to make this first exchange a reality and a success.

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Statement  
 Virginia Speech

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