

July 20

Dear Madre and Ciffie,

I've taken the evening off for letter writing.

Things are at a low point. Albany IS the most frustrating town in the nation, I'm convinced.

Let's see what's happened in the last few weeks. Tift Park Pool opened on a white only basis. After Slater was arrested, Sherrod led seventeen people downtown ~~on~~ after a mass meeting. Rev. Wells went with Sherrod. Rev. Wells was dragged by his genitals — just to make clear the fact that the police here are beasts. During that week, groups of children demonstrated at the pool. One of them, an eleven year old boy, when being questioned by the police, was slapped and had matches thrown at him by a detective. (the matches were lit).

Last Saturday seven women and teenagers demonstrated at the pool (Betsy Wyckoff among them). While they were being arrested in front of the pool, three of the gang leaders came from different directions, leaped the fence, and took a dip. Then they strolled out the front entrance before the police could figure out what to do. At the same time, ten kids were driven out to the private homes of two of Albany's wealthiest men, and dropped off to picket. ~~Despite~~ In spite of attempts to keep preparations for the picketing secret, the cops were parked behind these two houses, and nabbed the kids before the kids could form a picket line.

Sunday we had a very long staff meeting, where a lot of re-evaluation of program took place. We're in a bind because the original demands in Albany were so broad based, that to make specific demands now is to abandon part of the original program. Albany is still thinking in terms of mass marches as a solution, although it is clear that the people won't march in numbers at this time. We decided to cut the time being devoted to pushing mass marches and develop a more long range program that could feed into a mass action program later on. We divided up the staff into groups that would begin studying the economic structure in Albany, work toward establishing a night school for Negroes, prepare for the boycott of a bread or other perishable goods company, prepare a statement for local and national outlets on the breakdown of facilities available to whites and Negroes (done in Atlanta quite effectively several years ago), to step up ~~amount~~ number of articles being written by staff, and to push a boycott of the Albany Herald which began a year or so ago. Demonstrations are continuing, but are now geared toward protest without arrest. Until numbers come out, the hope of getting reform by staying in jail is small, because the police force has accommodated itself so well to our presence in jail. Now we are sending twenty or thirty kids downtown daily with T-shirts that say "Don't Buy Downtown or Midtown", to walk around in twos. This keeps the cops running all over town, curs down considerably on the number of Negro shoppers, but has not as yet provoked arrest. We're also sending kids daily to read in the library's reading room and to apply for jobs in stores downtown. I hope we'll soon have carloads of Negroes driving casually through white residential neighborhoods, since Pritchett's speedy arrest tactics have shielded most whites from what is going on in Albany.



Sherrod is thinking of taking a vacation around August first, I think. Everyone feels I should leave in plenty of time to rest before school begins. He wants me to leave when he does, but I think the middle of August would be better. Both Joyce and Prathia have speaking engagements during August, so someone should be here at least part of the time. If I ~~could~~ come home around the middle of August, I can see you, Ciffie, before you take off to parts unknown. I'll also have time to work on the book and leave a week or so to relax before school.

Madre, the book looks good to me. I got it while ~~it~~ was resting at Carol King's (CB's wife). It made me see how overly much was put into the first version, and somehow made clear what it was I wasn't doing before. I haven't looked at it in a week or so, but I do remember that what had to be produced seemed ~~it~~ remarkably clear after reading your pages. We'll see about that when I get back.

On my "sickness." I feel much better. Nothing showed up in the tests. I do know I'm rundown, and susceptible ~~in~~ to anything in the air; like I had the sniffles for two days this week. I'm also very rundown emotionally, and find Albany so frustrating in the last month or so, that sickness has been a relief. I stayed at the Harrises, two nights at Carol King's, and two or three nights at Slater's country house. Then I got lonely, and came back to Albany. I've been mostly in the office ever since I ~~last~~ started feeling crummy. I won't fight anybody who suggests I get flu shots this year, Madre.

I was proud and told everybody "My Mommy is there", when I read in the paper that ALA had made a statement on the library integration situation. Well! How was ALA, Madre? Fun, I hope.

I spoke to Reggie about a week ago on the phone. That was before the Guards came back for the second time. He said things have been really hectic there, with up to 85 reporters there in a day. Gloria's taking a firm stand seems to have awakened that town. He'll be in NYC around September first for a visit.

Oh, did Roy Patterson ever call? He's Carolyn Daniels's son. He's in NYC for the summer, working, and I asked him to call. I guess he's seen you around the office anyway, Ciffie, since I gather he's been at SNCC affairs from Candy and Sherron.

Arrests have begun in Americus. Demonstrations at a movie theatre started it all. There have been seventy or so arrests up there, I think.

Love,

Daughter