

June 6, 1965

Dear Phil,

If you haven't heard from my brother yet its because he went to Mexico with my uncle to shoot a film, and ~~wh~~ I dont know ~~hw~~ when they are due back in NY. I appreciate your long account of Vietnam Day. I've never seen a copy of Ramparts - is that the Catholic magazine, or ~~am~~ I confusing it with something else. The things that Savio said are damn important, but I wonder, like you, whether he knows the full import of what he's saying. Incidental intelligence that you might enjoy knowing. I've been talking with Fred Anderson, a SNCC staffer who comes from Hattiesburg, Miss., about the Challenge (He, by the way, fully ~~under~~stands the importance of the FSM and why SNCC should have supported it). He said that Aron Henry was all set to seal the FDP down the river and accept the compromise at Atlantic City. The word had come down from Rauh and Company, and he, ~~xxxx~~ along with Dr. Ed King, was the guy who would get the seat. When he started for the Mike to announce "we accept the compromise" Mrs. Hamer grabbed him and told him that non-violence aside, she ~~s~~ would cut his throat if he pulled that shit. So is history made. I didnt hear anything about the race riots in Siagon among the Marines - and I read the Atlanta Consti daily (also alot of weekly radical press) Did I miss it, or wasnt it in anywhere. I'm glad that Miller admits that it "would have been better to get out and do some neighborhood work before setting up a community house" - that kind of recognition is oftern a long time in coming, but howx the fuck can you expect to get anywhere when a dozen "beatniks" move into a slum in an apartment generally bigger than the ones the familes living around them have, set up a fancy hi fi unit for folk songs, and then go out to "canvas the community". I have to marvel at what Wendy and Bettye did with the N.S. They just arrived there one day, didnt say anything to anyone, and just started painting walls. Kids would drift in and ask them what they were doing and they just said that they hoped the place would eventually be used as a kindergarten for the little kids in the neighborhood and didnt do a whole lot of other talking. One at a time these kids grabbed paint brushes (because they werent asked to, and because they werent told ~~hem~~ not to) and started to work. When I think of the amonnt of work done there, the sporadic, and some destructive, I have to be amazed. Re. the tape recorded. SNCC has a big old one which I have been informed plays 3 3/4 or 7 1/2 ips (~~wjxx~~ whatever that means), but that Roy has a little cheap portable with lousey sound that plays 1 3/4 ips - so if ~~its~~ not quality sound that is needed but simply voice tapes, send it on. NC is still in Cordele - the other day a cracker warned her "that whites dont mix with niggers down here and if youre white you better be out of w town tonight" - I'll send her the carbon, tho I know she's extremely busy ~~and~~ with the freedom school idea and dont know if she'll reply. Well, on to the newsletter.

Dear Friends,

Rev. Wells filed for the seat on the City Commission at the last minute. I mean literally the last minute with him running about twenty blocks just before noon on Sat as the office he went to ~~the~~ was the wrong one and then he remembered he had left some paper or other somewhere else. The election is June 14, so SNCC will be working on that between now and then - and there are a bunch of white students who have come to town for the summer and they will be used for canvassing for his election. This student summer project promises to get a bit out of hand. Sherrod is bringing in about 20 ministry students

who were at Union Theological Seminary in NY with him this year. Then SNE SELC (Scope project) is also bringing in a bunch; also the 5 law students from the LSCRRC, and Roy is bringing some people down. There will be about 45 people coming all together, most of them white, with about half going into counties where SNCC has already worked projects and the other half staying in Albany. Housing and feeding these people will be an immense project in itself. A lot of SNCC staff is very sceptical about having this many people in the area, but we'll have to see how it works out.

Meanwhile, we continue preparing litigation at a merry pace. The School Board has come up with a very clever tactic. It seems that the Georgia High School Association (athletic board) has had a rule called the migrant student rule, which prohibits a student from participating in inter school activities for the first year after he transfers from one school to another. If he and his parents move into a new school zone than he can participate but he cannot transfer school zones on his own without incurring this disability. They have applied the rule against the Negro kids who are transferring to the white high schools and because a lot of the best transferees have requested withdrawals of transfer (which were immediately granted and you didn't need the signature of your parent like you did when you wanted to transfer in the first place) I can't imagine that the 5th Circuit would allow them to use a rule like this to thwart desegregation, but we'll have to go back into US District Court, to good old Judge Elliot, and see what he says first. The damndest thing is that some of the football players were out to see the coach at the white high school and feel that he was genuinely interested in having them transfer so he could use them on the football team, but then the Board came up with this one. We will argue that it is completely inapplicable here as under the Court order Albany has no school zones, and most of these kids are transferring to the school which they would have attended if Albany had one, non-racial school zone, and they are only transferring now because of the illegal action of the School Board kept them from registering there when they started high school in the first instance. The motion is all drawn up and we'll probably file it Monday or Tuesday - we are really giving the U.S. Dist Ct clerks office a work out this past week.

On the other school fronts there is varied news to report. Amazing things have happened in Worth County. There they came up with a school deseg plan which had all sorts of race criteria for whether the Board would accept an application or not - like criteria such as: "whether the transfer would cause unrest and disorder"; whether the transferee would impose different standards of moral and social conduct on the situation", etc. The people of Worth County got together and drew up a six letter complaining to the Dept of H E & W about the situation - HE&W must have contacted the Worth County Bd of Ed. because the President of the Worth County Improvement Association came in here yesterday with a letter which started off "Dear Mr. Young" (and you know the Crackers want something when they call you Mister) and went on to tell him that the original plan was drawn "before we had the benefit of the Dept of Education guidelines" and now they want to draw a new plan and would like him to come and represent the interests of local Negroes when they draw the new plan, "and you are certainly welcome to bring your attorney if you care to". The last time they drew up a plan they had two uncle toms ministers who they appointed to "represent the Negro community". So Mr. Young is going down on Monday with a few other strong people and tell them that he is not interested in representing anyone as this is a plan that affects the lives of people and the

welfare of their children and the group will be interested in sitting in on the new plan discussion and representing their feelings but that they cant agree to anything until they first discuss it with their attorney and then present it to a mass meeting for approval - which should give the Board a heart attack.

But in Lee County the news isnt so good - at least for the time being. They also announced "compliance" (the lure of Federal money is too strong to screw around) because they knew that no Negro in Lee would have the balls to register his kid in the white schools. But it turned out that four families applied. Then the white principal came to the Negro school and talked to the kids and told them what courses were available and they made out their program card, which accompanied their application on that basis. ~~Nowxthey~~ Then they (the parents) were summoned by the Board of Education to a meeting where they were asked stuff like whether they believed that the white teachers were better than the colored teachers; who put this idea into their heads (the idea of transferring); whether this was the child's decision as well as the parent, and on like that. Then they received identical letters telling them that the transfer application was denied "because the course of studies your child wishes to pursue is not available at the white high school". Two of the parents have backed out, but Mr. Agnew James and another very strong man want to appeal. Mr. James has been raising hell in Lee County a long time and tho they have tried to intimidate him in many ways they havent succeeded. So C.B. wrote a ~~its~~ letter to the Board telling them that they wished to appeal the decision, and well have to wait on the reply.

The companies here in town are starting to do all outk battle with the union. Several people have been fired at Bob's for absolutely no cause, other than that they were among those who helped organize the union - but it is very difficult to show this knowledge on the part of the company. One guy who has worked there 10 years, and who has never even had a warning reprimand filed against him was fired because he stacked candy too close to a cooler wall - tho they never told him how they wanted it stacked. Another guy was fired for coming in the wrong door, altho everyone has used this door for yeass. The NLRB guy ~~was~~ who works this area is a very fair and decent guy, however, and the people respect him so perhaps these things will be remedied. I never realized how worthless the National Labor Relations Act was, in the remedies it provides, until I started to see it in operation. Like if an employer engages in an §(a)(1) violation - unfair practices against the union in its organizing efforts - and they find that it was a violation (months later) the employer can only be ordered to cease and desist and perhaps post a notice that this conduct will not be done again. So what happens is that companies will engage in the most reprehensible anti-union tactics before an election, threatening employees, telling them they'll be fired if they join the union or the plant will be closed if the union wins, etc. If they do enough of it the Union will loose the election. Then the union will ask that the election be set aside because of these tactice and if they were bad enough the Board will agree. On the second election the employer will be very careful not to engage in any unfiar practices and in the great majority of cases the union will loose the second time because the ~~h~~ carry over effect of the employers first tactics will be sufficient to frighten them against the union.

Bad news from the Georgia Supreme Court: This week they announced that they sustained the habeas court in the Burkes case - went on to say that he had adequate legal representation, didnt talk about the fact that the lawyer himself admitted that he gave Burkes no advice whatsoever. We sent the opinoin and other relevant matters to the Inc. Fund in NY and now its up to them whether they will finance certiorari

to the USSC.

Wendy also got arrested the other day. She and Bettye were shopping down town and stopped to wait for a guy to pull out of a parking space that she wanted. He didnt pull out so she waited a minute and then drove on and got another space. One of the Albany cops came over and ~~gxxxxxxxxxx~~ told her that she was "obstructing traffic" and told her to follow him down to the police station. She said she didnt want to drive ~~xxxxxxx~~ because he had her license (he said that was o.k.) and also because she couldnt be sure of ~~fin~~ finding parking there, so he said ~~he~~ she could walk. She phoned here on the way and I met her down there. One of the cops in the station recognized her - "where are your pigtails" - the arresting cop came up with alot of stupid crap because her license said she was born in 1904 (a mistake on the part of the motor vehicle bureas who issued her a duplicate license) and also because the license was issued to her as Wendy Roberts (and they knew her as Gweneth Mann). He couldnt understand that her ~~xxxxxx~~ last name was changed when she got married and when I told him I was her husband he wanted to see my license. I told him that he had no right to see my license and that I wouldnt show it to him, but he didnt pursue it further. Then the desk sargent wanted to see our marriage license as "how do I know if you're really married" and I told him that if he'd would like like to charge us with adultery because we were living together that was certainly his perogative, but that I wasnt going to establish for him that we were married. So he came off that crap pretty fast too. Actually the desk sargent isnt a bad Cracker as the cops go and he finally told the arresting officer to just forget the marriage business and the last name, and that any mistake on the license was Atlanta's fault. Then he made her post \$12. bond - which I had - and we went on home. We talked to CB about it but agreed that, at least in this situation, it was better to just forfeit the bond than to argue it in Durden's court where he could fine her up to \$200; and there wouldnt be any constitutional issues to appeal - simply a matter of the cops work against hers. So that's how it ended.

The need for representation of the indigent becomes more and more clear every day. A week doesnt go by that we dont have a half dozen people come into the office with some tiny small claim, or a problem with Welfare or their landlord or a finance company or the like. The other day a woman came in with an insurance policy. She had been paying ten cents a week on it for about 30 years. She had it in the name of her daughter but after a few years decided she wanted to put her granddaughter in as beneficiary, so she went to the insurance office and told them - the agent told her she could just convert the policy by putting on the last name (the daughter was Mable Hill and her married name was Mable Hill Hester, and this was also the grand daughter's name) - so instead of issuing a new policy the agent just wrote Hester after Hill. Now the company cliams that the policy was never changed for beneficiary, but simply changed to show ~~xxx~~ change in name after marriage. This kind of bullshit for a stinking \$30. So CB wrote to the insurance co telling them that he thought their good will was worth more than ~~\$\$\$~~ \$30 but if they dont buy this there is really nothing we can do for her; and to her \$30 is a hell of a lot of money. There was also a lady who came in from Funsten Nut Co (division of Pet Milk) where there is union organizing activity. She has no husband and 5 kids and works the day shift. The foreman told her he wanted her on night shift and she said she couldnt because of her children (the oldest is 16) He said she was lowest seniority, which isnt true and she told him but he told her not to argue and if she didnt want to work nights she could go on home. So now ~~xxx~~ unemployment wants to dock her 6 weeks benefits because she "voluntarily quit" her employment, and we'll

file an appeal for her - but on \$20 weekly benefit with 5 kids how the hell can she pay for legal servies. When she came into see CB she said she wanted to see him "about getting her pennies". I had heard the expression before ~~and~~ in relation to unemployment compensation and had thought that it was a corruption of "pension" but CB explained that the Negro communities called unemployment compensation "pennies" because during the New Deal when employers started taking out for social security and unemployment compensation they told the worker - "Now Annie, we take these pennies out of your check and when you get too old to work or if there is not more work you can go down and get them" (and it was pennies very literally as the wage scale ~~for~~ for Negroes is so low that the deductions only amounted to a couple of pennies a week).

The other day I went to the Welfare Dept (in Georgia its called the Dept of Family and Children's Services which is certainly a more pleasant sounding name for the same old corrupt system). The lady adross the street, Mrs. Domlgy, is on old age assistance. She had no support other than the rent she gets for renting out part of her house. They have been giving her the munificent sum of \$17 per month, but a while ago they decided to cut her to \$7 per month. The explanation given was that a note she was paying off on her house was all paid off. Since I dont know a dman thing about how welfare works I went down there to see what I could find out before I raise a whole lot of hell. I told them that I was interested in finding out whatever I could about the way welfare worked so they gave me some little dopey pamphlets. In them I discovered that the state of Georgia provides ~~between~~ anywhere between \$4 and \$70 per month for old age assistance and total disability. ~~xxxxxxx~~ I asked them how they determined where between 4 and 70 dollars a person should fall and they said they had charts for computing income, need, and the like. Then I asked if they had an extra chart which I could have. Oh, no, they were in the welfare workers case book and they only had one book per worker. Well then, can I see the chart and make a copy of it. Oh no, that's against regulations. Finally one of the workers took me into a little room and wanted to know why I wanted the information so I came up with some vague paternalistic crap about "a woman I know who is on welfare and didnt understand why they cut her check down" - and this sounded sufficiently like Mr. Charlie fulfilling an family obligation to the old trusty domestic who has been put out to pasture so she was very cooperative. One of the things I learned was that they compute that the MINIMUM need of a single person living in a household of one is \$79.98 per month. So I asked her how that was possible if the maximum allowance is only \$70. per month. Where was the person going to get the extra \$9.98 which Welfare admits is necessary to survive. She didnt know the answer. The budget broke down into \$28/month maximum for rent so I asked her to please let me know of the next apartment that she saw which rented for that as I'd like to take it. This really cracked her up and she told me "I dont think you'd like to live in a place like that, I mean they're terrible" (but good enough for the old folks I guess). So now I have to sit down with Mrs. D and go over her bills, etc. and see how badly they're screwing her and file an appeal there too. She is the lady who brings Wendy the laundry soap which she makes that eats through steel.

Things will be getting very active in southwest Georgia with the arrival of summer and the "volunteers". In Cordele they just burned two ~~xxx~~ crosses after the Negro community started writing letters to the press protesting the unfair treatment the paper gave them and also after they went down and raised hell with the city fathers about the unpaved streets and the fact that they wouldnt apply for surplus food under the federal program. There is a white chick, Nancy Cooper, who has been working with SNCC for a long long time and is there now

trying to get ready for SNCC's residential freedom school (where a large group of kids from Miss and other places in the south and a large group from Chi, NY and other northern ghettos will be brought to gether, first for three weeks in Chi and then for three weeks in Cordele, and which promise to be an excellent idea.) The other day some cracker came up to her on the streets and asked her if she was white. She told him she wasn't sure. He said that if she was white she had better get the hell out of town as "white and niggers didn't mix in Cordele". A couple nights later the crosses were burned (one outside of a church used for mass meetings and the other outside the housing project where Rev. Fullwood, who works for SNCC, lived). But the really exciting news is coming out of Baker county. Baker is one of the most notorious and repressive counties in the South. This is where the ~~deputy~~ Sheriff beat Bobby Hall to death in 1943 by hitting him with a black jack in the courthouse square for 45 minutes and dragging his body around town behind his car; and where the new sheriff, L. Warren Johnson, put three bullets into Charlie Ware's neck, and has murdered many ~~star~~ other Negroes which he boasts about. A little while ago - I mentioned this sketchily in my last letter I think - a young Negro guy and his cousin were coming back from a party. The Deputy Sheriff stopped them but couldn't find anything to charge them with. He made them go into the woods with him and ordered them to fornicate so that he could watch. The guy told him that she was his cousin but that didn't concern him any. They refused and the Deputy pulled out a dirty book and started reading to them, also got out a couple of pints of whiskey and told them to drink it. Finally after a whole lot of pleading he let them go without making them go through with it but told them to come back to the jail the next morning and bring him \$25 or he would charge them with drunk driving. Well this was the final straw for a lot of ~~pas~~ people in Baker who have put up with some bad shit for a good long while. Her father is an old tommish guy but this has forced him into a position where he has to do something. Also the ~~saxsaxsfx~~ uncle of the guy is a very strong guy who is fairly immune from local pressure as he is a dog trainer on Ichauway Plantation (owned by the Coca Cola family who has extensive land holdings and use it for a hunting preserve - much like the plantation Huber Humphrey visits in Thomas County, and I guess it's a whole ~~st~~ lot of fun if you don't see how the people live). But they came to the office and brought about 6 other guys with them. CB was really at his best - didn't take over the situation at ~~k~~ all but let them all talk about things that had happened there and then turned the discussion ~~xxxx~~ around to what they thought they could do about it. He also had Sherrod come to the meeting and some very good things came out of it. They promised to come up to a mass meeting on Monday night in Albany (they can't get a church in Baker) and a couple of guys said they would let SNCC workers stay in their homes and not put them out when the pressure was put on. So maybe SNCC will get into Baker yet. They were going to go in in '63 but the Justice Dept sold them out by going to the power structure and working a deal whereby about 300 Negroes were added to the voter rolls - and this squelched a voter registration drive there. CB did make one long speech about how their sons were murdered and their wives raped and beaten in Baker and they better start to realize that they couldn't talk about "talking to the good white folks in that county" as that just didn't exist. He said that there was no difference between Baker and the Union of South Africa. It was a damn good morning, but of course the work we are supposed to have done three months ago is still sitting there.

I got some very bad news the other day. Pete deLissovoy was arrested in Rochester, N.Y. and ~~sax~~ charged with possession of marijuana. The local paper just carried an AP story, but he said the papers there were filled with it all week - talking about a nationwide dope ring and all that other

crap, also that he was a former civil rights worker in Georgia and that he was supplying dope to college students and to civil rights workers in the South. He called the other night, he's out on \$10,000 bond - says it's only a matter of time until the Feds use this as an excuse to turn the SNCC house upside down in a search and start raising a whole lot of hell in Albany.

One of the law students just got here, a guy from Columbia U who did his undergrad work in Berkeley. He is ~~sixxx~~ staying in ~~our~~ house as Wendy left for Athens this afternoon to attend the Project Head Start training session. This whole Head Start business is such a fiasco. They seem to be totally unconcerned with quality but only with quantity. They have some very good people working for them ~~in~~ but the bureaucrats who run the program are something else. Their promotional material talked about "don't be afraid to ~~us~~ propose exciting new ideas" and a couple of people were very excited about ~~the~~ the idea of the training session for local people here in Albany and told Wendy to put it into her proposal, but they refused to fund it. There were a lot of phone calls back and forth and they finally agreed to pay two roundtrips of teachers from NY but that's the only part of the training session they would finance. The training Head Start envisions for the people who will work in the centers this summer will be conducted during 5 days at the U of Georgia in Athens. It is for "professional staff" only - non-professional staff will not be allowed to attend the session at the U of Ga. When Wendy asked them what arrangements they had made for training the "non-professionals" she was told that the professionals could train them during the week after they got back from U of Ga (and also set up the Head Start centers, interview parents, order supplies, and a few other minor details. I didn't expect much from the program but this crap is really ridiculous. There is also the story that they set up a fantastic Head Start program for the State of Miss which is administered by very good people, SNCC is supporting it in some places, etc. Anyhow Shriver was very happy about the way it worked out and was boasting about how good it looked that HeadStart had set this up in Miss. They are putting over a million dollars into that one state. He was then asked whether he would set up similar programs in the ~~so~~ other states of the ~~the~~ deep south - and said no. In other words he is interested in one "model" project which the government can put out a lot of good press releases on and maybe even make a couple of films - but is not interested in building good nursery school projects throughout the south; there he'll let the local cracker politicians and school officials run the show.

Dennis