

July 25, 1961
17 Melton St.
Montgomery, Alabama

Dear Robins:

I was delighted to hear from each of you and sorry to hear later from Clara that Jeannie is in the Hospital and is threatned with the loss of her baby and I hope all of you will write her right away and not wait for the Robin to come around. She cannot make the trip to Miami and is, of course, very much disappointed.

Since the 20th of ~~May~~ when the riots broke out I have been so busy I have not yet had a chance to catch up. I was at the office when the riots broke out and while I did not see the actual beatings of the Freedom Riders, I did see and was very conscious of the reaction of the mob of people who had surrounded the bus station and the awful thing was that the reaction was one of general satisfaction that they "were getting what was coming to them", "they came looking fro trouble and they got it" and the whole crowd had a sort of holiday air about it, and if they were watching a big fine parade. Only two of the white people of Montgomery of all the hundreds that were there came to the rescue of the Riders, Fred and Anna Gach, and they were later convicted of "disorderly conduct" and fined \$300. Cliff took their case on appeal and before a Jury he got their fines reduced to \$75.00 but still they were found guilty of "disorderly conduct" when they had been trying to be Good Samaritans. It was simply shocking to see the indifference and ~~the~~ actual approval of such brutal violence and I am afraid that on the morning of Saturday, May 20th, a lot of my former hope for the Southern people disappeared. They have been conditioned so long that I do not see how they will change unless they are made to.

After they are made to, they accept it very well. Yesterday I saw this same bus station where all of the violence took place was integrated and all the signs were down, so the Freedom Riders did win their point. But how to change their minds as well as their actions is the point and I confess I don't know how to do it.

We lead a very busy life indeed. Cliff has had a lot of cases against the Montgomery City police for brutality and for false arrest and while we don't win any, at least we keep them on the defensive. He is bringing suit for false arrest on account of the arrest of the MacMurray students two years ago and that should be an exciting and interesting case.

All of the children and grands are fine and Ann is expecting another in September. She also has a new house. Lucy and her husband will be in New Haven where he will be getting his PH.D. and Tilla has a good job with the MIT in Cambridge Mass and is having the time of her life. Lulah is still here with us but we are wondering if we will not have to send her off to school as she is not doing well here in her studies at all and seems to have nothing to stimulate her mind and curiosity.

Lots of love to all of you and good luck and happiness .

Va. Durr

