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August 3, 1965

Bruce Hartford,
c/o SCLC, 21 Franklin St
Selma, Alabama

Dear Bruce:

I have received inquiries from nearly all of you who are defendants in the Van De Kamp sit-in case concerning the status of the case. We are tentatively scheduled to go to trial on August 30. My several attempts to get the case dismissed have proven futile and the City Attorney insists on prosecuting the case. I am now working on the possibility of having some of you dismissed out of the case in the interests of justice upon the agreement that the remainder may be willing to enter pleas or submit the case on the arrest report. I have discussed this possibility with some of you and fully realize the undesirable implications of this proposal. On the other hand, many of you have now undertaken jobs or civil rights responsibilities elsewhere, and rather than compel your further attendance at any trial proceedings in this case, it would seem to me to be more desirable to work out an equitable solution if possible. In any event that is my present objective; and I hope to have an answer by the end of this week.

None of you should return to Los Angeles on account of this trial until you have heard further from me. If my efforts to work something out with the City Attorney prove unsuccessful, I will try to arrange an absentia trial for those who are still out of town. I will be advising you of the results of these efforts no later than August 18th.

In the meantime, good luck to all of you.

Sincerely yours,

Hugh Manes
F.T.

HUGH R. MANES

HRM/ft