



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

August 17, 1963

688-0331

Nathaniel O. Harris
5440 Mosholu Avenue
New York 71, New York

Dear Mr. Harris:

How are you. I'm sorry that our correspondence had to resume under such circumstances.

Don was arrested on August 9 with four other people, including two other SNCC workers.

Don and the other two were "roughed up" according to witnesses at the scene of the arrest, and Don called the Albany SNCC office the next day to report that all three had been beaten that night.

He was visited, however, by Albany Attorney C. B. King - in company with Atlanta Attorney Donald L. Hollowell, and a white law student working in Albany this summer, who reported all three bruised but in good spirits.

In his telephone conversation with Albany, Don reported the three were being held on:

- inciting to riot
- attempting to incite insurrection
- obstructing a lawful arrest
- unlawful assembly
- seven peace warrants

He also reported that their bail was \$43,000.00 each.

Americus' Sheriff, Fred Chappell, who refused to acknowledge to this office or to inquiring newsmen that he had been present when the arrest were made - witnesses report him as the arresting officer - has also refused to acknowledge the charges. However, a newspaper reporter did validate the bail, after a conversation with an Americus police official.

We have retained Attorneys Hollowell and King to defend Don, the other SNCC workers, and others jailed in the course of demonstrations there.

We have also received assurances that the Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. of the National Association For the Advancement of Colored People, that they will assume all legal costs in the Americus cases.



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

688-0331

You can contact Attorney King at:

436-3629

in Albany.

Charles Sherrod, Director of our Southwest Georgia project, is more likely to be in personal contact with Don and the others in the near future than is Attorney King.

You can contact Sherrod at:

436-4902
504 Madison Street
Albany, Georgia

We are working with the lawyers in the case in an attempt to get the bail lowered.

We are also aiming protests at the Federal Government, asking them to intervene to lower the bail, to investigate charges of brutality, and to insure the civil rights of Americas Negroes in general.

I might suggest you send protests to Attorney General Robert Kennedy, the Civil Rights Commission, and your representatives in Congress, asking them to take action to see that Don and the others are freed as soon as possible.

We will keep you informed here as to our progress.

Sincerely,

Horace Julian Bond
SNCC



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

September 21, 1963

688-0331

Nathaniel Harris
5440 Mosholu Avenue
New York 71, New York

Dear Mr. Harris:

How are you?

I wonder if you could send us a picture of Don. We have learned through the FBI that the Justice Department has information that they need to prosecute Americus officials for brutality against Negro demonstrators there. As you may know, Colorado congressmen have made an appeal for an investigation on behalf of John Perdew, and Senator Leverett Saltonstall did on Ralph Allen's behalf. Senator Javits and Representative Fitts Ryan have done the same.

They have only asked for investigations, however, and we feel that an investigation which has been underway since early August is investigation enough.

We intend to ask the Department - and to seek support from the Congressmen above - to prosecute in Americus under Section 242, title 18 of the United States Code, which gives them full authority to do so. We also intend to ask that they file an amicus curiae brief on behalf of the Americus four.

By the way, Attorney King informs us that a habeas corpus plea will be filed on Monday, September 30. The motion he filed on September 9 for admittance to bond was not ruled upon after ten days were up this past Monday.

As I mentioned before, and as you indicated in your letter to me, increased legal work in Americus will free Don and the others. But we are concerned that the government has not accepted its responsibility and that it can and must act to prosecute Americus officials who used brutality against Negroes and to halt prosecution of Don and the others.

I hope we can get the picture by September 30. We hope to try to initiate nation-wide picketing and protests over their arrest.

Sincerely,

Horace Julian Bond



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

October 2, 1963

688-0331

Mr. Nathaniel O. Harris
2225 Fifth Avenue
New York 37, New York

Dear Sir:

Many thanks for the note and the Riverdale Press with Don's picture in it.

We have a backlog of three or four requests for pictures of him.

Under separate cover, I am sending you copies of our Americus and Selma reports. Your letter would have been answered sooner, but I was away in Selma, where our chairman, John Lewis is in jail with several other staff members and local citizens.

I am also sending you some news articles that have been written about Americus. The one from the Atlanta Journal was especially disappointing to us, but we were cheered by the others.

I am having your name put on our mailing list, and you will be receiving information from us on a regular basis.

I am sorry I missed Mrs. Harris when she passed through here this week.

Sincerely,

Horace Julian Bond
SNCC



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

688-0331

October 9, 1963

Mrs. Mary Harris
2225 Fifth Avenue
New York 37, New York

Dear Mrs. Harris:

I received your very warm letter of October 7. Actually, I had meant to write you first but things started piling up around here and I just haven't found the time.

The trip to Americus with you was most enjoyable to me also. I had heard quite a lot about both of Don's parents and was more than happy to be able to meet you. Now, I too am among the long list of admirers of the Harrises.

I know that seeing you meant as much to Don as it did for you to see him. It makes a big difference when one knows that his family is supporting him in what he does, especially when one is under tension.

Julian Bond has placed your new address on the mailing list. We will try to keep you informed.

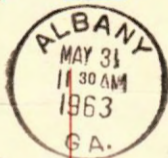
Again, thank you for your presence as well as for your contribution.

Yours in the struggle,

Ruby Doris Smith
Assitant Staff Coordinator

Hello Mr. Harris,

I know that you are very much concerned with your son. May I submit to you that those of us who are on the outside of the jails are also very much concerned and work every night and day sometimes without sleep and sometimes without food.



Mr. Nathaniel Harris
5440 Mosholu Ave.
New York 71, NY

Each of us who works down here has counted the costs and does the same daily. Our white brothers have held the hammer of jail over our heads for years and years and now we are turning the jails into havens of FREEDOM instead of dungeons of DOOM.

MR. C.B. King, our Attorney, lives at 830 Lincoln St.; Albany, Georgia.

I'm sorry that the time now is so hot with things to do-Suffice it to say that we are on God's side, the side of Truth and Justice and Love and Power and Trouble.

Love to your Family,

Charles M. Sherrod



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

May 29, 1963

688-0331

Nathaniel Harris
5440 Mosholm Avenue
New York 71, New York

Dear Sir:

James Forman, Executive Secretary of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, has asked me to answer your letter of May 15.

Don was arrested when he - and other members of our staff in Southwest Georgia and local citizens in Albany - participated in a prayer vigil before the Albany City Jail.

All of those arrested have pledged to stay in as long as they have to; that is, either until the charges against them are dropped or until significant changes are wrested from the Albany power structure.

He is being defended by Attorney C. B. King - no relation to Dr. King, Jr. - in Albany, a lawyer who has worked closely with us and the Albany Movement since its inception.

The charge against him, by the way, is disorderly conduct. This is the most common charge leveled against anti-segregation protestors.

I would suggest that you organize some sort of protest to the Federal Government in Don's behalf. We sincerely feel that the Justice Department has a real responsibility in these cases to protect the rights of citizens to peacefully petition their government - in this case, the Albany city government - for a redress of grievances - in this case, segregation in every aspect of life, public and private, in Albany.

We have sent telegrams to the Attorney General and the President, and Civil Rights Commission, protesting the arrest of people there. I do feel, however, that a similar telegram from you would add more weight, since we are cronic telegrammers and avid protestors. You might also try to get similar expressions of protest from Don's friends.

We stand prepared to immediately effect Don's release, whenever he requests it. We are also backing him with the best legal mind in that section, and are fully prepared to do anything we think needs to be done to insure his well being.

Although we have over 70 workers, we really do feel that what happens to the least of these happens to each of us.

Sincerely,

Julian Bond
Horace Julian Bond



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

May 31, 1963

688-0331

Nathaniel Harris
5440 Mosholu Avenue
New York 71, New York

Dear Sir:

We received your second letter after posting my answer, and upon seeing your letter to the Attorney General, feel almost ashamed that I suggested a course of action that you had already taken.

I spoke today with a Reverend Wells in Albany, who was released today after being convicted on the same charges Don was jailed on. He said that he expected the others - Don included - would be tried Monday, ~~May~~ ^{June} 3, and that they would also be found guilty. The important thing in this case is that the sentences were probated, and those already found guilty were released.

I think that the fast is not so much for you and I in New York and Atlanta, but for Negroes - and whites - in Albany. The thousands of arrests there almost two years ago didn't achieve any material gains for Albany's Negroes - that is they gained no jobs, opened no lunch counters, desegregated no movie theatres. What those demonstrations did was to weld Albany's Negroes into a unit, and to push the power structure there almost to the breaking point. What these demonstrations now are doing - and the fasting - is rebuilding the ties of that unit, and strengthening the big push that we hope will topple segregation there for once and for all.

Reverend Wells told me that he would see Don tomorrow - Saturday, ~~May~~ ^{June} 1 - and that the prisoners had visitors every day.

I think you can rest assured that he is in good spirits and good health. We intend to keep a close eye on Albany and those in jail there, and stand ever ready to jump to their defense when needed.

By the way, the Freedom Walkers' face trial Monday also, in Fort Payne, Alabama. We aren't too sure about what to expect out of that situation, since Fort Payne has few Negroes - and therefore no race "problem" - but we are hoping for suspended sentences so we can test an injunction we've filed there. If they return to jail, we hope to launch a petition campaign to petition the government to free them.

Sincerely,

Horace Julian Bond
SNCC



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

August 17, 1963

688-0331

Nathaniel O. Harris
5440 Mosholu Avenue
New York 71, New York

Dear Mr. Harris:

How are you. I'm sorry that our correspondence had to resume under such circumstances.

Don was arrested on August 9 with four other people, including two other SNCC workers.

Don and the other two were "roughed up" according to witnesses at the scene of the arrest, and Don called the Albany SNCC office the next day to report that all three had been beaten that night.

He was visited, however, by Albany Attorney C. B. King - in company with Atlanta Attorney Donald L. Hollowell, and a white law student working in Albany this summer, who reported all three bruised but in good spirits.

In his telephone conversation with Albany, Don reported the three were being held on:

- inciting to riot
- attempting to incite insurrection
- obstructing a lawful arrest
- unlawful assembly
- seven peace warrants

He also reported that their bail was \$43,000.00 each.

Americus' Sheriff, Fred Chappell, who refused to acknowledge to this office or to inquiring newsmen that he had been present when the arrest were made - witnesses report him as the arresting officer - has also refused to acknowledge the charges. However, a newspaper reporter did validate the bail, after a conversation with an Americus police official.

We have retained Attorneys Hollowell and King to defend Don, the other SNCC workers, and others jailed in the course of demonstrations there.

We have also received assurances that the Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. of the National Association For the Advancement of Colored People, that they will assume all legal costs in the Americus cases.



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

688-0331

You can contact Attorney King at:

436-3629

in Albany.

Charles Sherrod, Director of our Southwest Georgia project, is more likely to be in personal contact with Don and the others in the near future than is Attorney King.

You can contact Sherrod at:

436-4902
504 Madison Street
Albany, Georgia

We are working with the lawyers in the case in an attempt to get the bail lowered.

We are also aiming protests at the Federal Government, asking them to intervene to lower the bail, to investigate charges of brutality, and to insure the civil rights of American Negroes in general.

I might suggest you send protests to Attorney General Robert Kennedy, the Civil Rights Commission, and your representatives in Congress, asking them to take action to see that Don and the others are freed as soon as possible.

We will keep you informed here as to our progress.

Sincerely,

Horace Julian Bond
SNCC



Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

6 Raymond Street, N.W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia

September 5, 1963

688-0331

Nathaniel Harris
5440 Mosholu Avenue
New York 71, New York

Dear Mr. Harris:

Please excuse me for not answering your letter sooner. I was in Washington for the March and have been ill for a few days since my return here.

We have received no notice of detailed progress from lawyers working on the Americus cases, only assurances that they are doing all they can.

We still believe that public protest will be the most valid means of obtaining the release of those jailed in Americus.

We are circulating information about Americus to our mailing list, in the hope that we can raise some national attention about the cases there.

I am enclosing copies of this information.

I was pleased to see the replies you received from Senator Javits and from Ryan.

Their influence - if brought to bear against the Justice Department - could be influential in obtaining Don's release.

I am also sending them copies of the enclosed information.

By the way, the mother of another of the SNCC workers being held there - Mrs. Allen, of Melrose, Massachusetts - has also attempted to interest Massachusetts Attorney General Brooke in her son's case.

Thank you again for your letter. We will keep in touch with you if the situation changes.

Sincerely,

Horace Julian Bond
SNCC

enc:

5440 Mosholu Avenue
New York 71, N. Y.

August 23, 1963

Mr. Horace Julian Bond
SNCC Office
6 Raymond Street
Atlanta 14, Georgia

Dear Mr. Bond:

To-day we received your letter dated August 17th and thank you for the information contained therein.

Enclosed are copies of replies received from Senator Jacob K. Javits and Hon. William F. Ryan, New York Congressmen. We have also written the Justice Department, Civil Rights Division, for Federal intervention to reduce charges and set reasonable bail for Donald's release.

We are extremely grateful to know that the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Inc., will assume all legal costs as we are not in a financial position to do so,

We brought the situation to the attention of Dr. John Scott, an active Civil Rights fighter, who was one of Donald's professors at the Fieldston School. On his own, he contacted Mr. Arthur Kinoy of the law firm of Kunstler & Kunstler, 511 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Dr. Scott says this firm has been active and successful in Civil Rights cases, especially in Gadsden, Virginia, and they would like to participate in this case.

We have not communicated with Mr. Kinoy as we believe this to be the province of your legal staff. This information is sent to you only for whatever action may be deemed proper by your Attorneys and the NAACP Legal Defense.

Very truly yours,

2 encls.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

FPAL34 RA304 WC451

Aug 22, 1963 (03)

WW SNB066 GOVT PD SN Washington DC 451 P EDT

Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel O. Harris
5440 Mosholu Avenue, New York

With reference to your letters of August 16, 1963, regarding the recent arrest of your son, Donald, in connection with Civil Rights Demonstrations in Americus, Georgia, I have been advised by the Justice Department that an investigation is being made concerning charges of police brutality. I am awaiting a written report from the Department and will be in touch with you further as soon as I receive it.

Jacob K. Javits, U.S.S.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

FPAL34 RA304 WC451

Aug 22, 1963 (03)

WW SNB066 GOVT PD SN Washington DC 451 P EDT

Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel O. Harris
5440 Mosholu Avenue, New York

With reference to your letters of August 16, 1963, regarding the recent arrest of your son, Donald, in connection with Civil Rights Demonstrations in Americus, Georgia, I have been advised by the Justice Department that an investigation is being made concerning charges of police brutality. I am awaiting a written report from the Department and will be in touch with you further as soon as I receive it.

Jacob K. Javits, U.S.S.

William F. Ryan
20th District, N. Y.

1517 New House Office Bldg.
Washington 25, D'C'

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D'C'

August 19, 1963

Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel O. Harris
5440 Mosholu Avenue
New York 71, N. Y.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Harris:

Thank you for your letters of August 16th concerning your son, Donald.

I sympathize with your son's situation and have great admiration for his dedication and courage.

I have contacted the Department of Justice on his behalf and have been assured that they are investigating the situation in Americus, Georgia, and will immediately look into the facts of your son's case. The Department of Justice has told me that they will do everything they can to assist your son.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

(signed)

William F. Ryan
Member of Congress

WFR:ssg

William F. Ryan
20th District, N. Y.

1517 New House Office Bldg.
Washington 25, D.C.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

August 19, 1963

Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel O. Harris
5440 Mosholu Avenue
New York 71, N. Y.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Harris:

Thank you for your letters of August 16th concerning your son, Donald.

I sympathize with your son's situation and have great admiration for his dedication and courage.

I have contacted the Department of Justice on his behalf and have been assured that they are investigating the situation in Americus, Georgia, and will immediately look into the facts of your son's case. The Department of Justice has told me that they will do everything they can to assist your son.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

(signed)

William F. Ryan
Member of Congress

WFR:ssg