

[Note: What follows is a transcription of a personal letter sent by the author to a friend in May, 1964. The author, Harris (formerly Jim) Boebel, lived in Los Angeles and worked as a carpenter. He and Abe Osheroff were involved in the construction of the Mileston Community Center in Holmes County, Mississippi later that summer. The letter has been transcribed from the original longhand, retaining the occasionally idiosyncratic punctuation, abbreviation and spelling. Editorial notes indicated for clarity are shown in brackets within the text.]

Sunday- May 31

Well now—

About a year ago Abe called me up and asked me to contribute a day's pay or whatever more I felt I could afford to an organization called SNCC (pronounced SNICK) and meaning Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee. I said he could count on me for \$50.

Later he explained that this was his technique for fundraising -- to speak to 3 or 4 close friends whom he could depend on and get pledges of large or substantial amounts (according to living scale) and when making a pitch at a party or public gathering he could indicate that he already had \$50 contributions, etc. and set a level of contributions - - to avoid people whipping out \$5 and \$10 to relieve themselves.

At this time I was not working for Abe so I had no advance information. He had set up a party for a Sunday afternoon with a local SNCC worker and the female leader of the Cambridge, Maryland integration movement.

They described their activities and Abe made his statement which struck me as the most cogent analysis of the integration dilemma I have heard. Abe was concerned that the existence of a large section of American population was denied civil rights and suppressed economically represented not merely a condition of evil in the South which required assistance on our part – but that it reflected a condition of mind and spirit among white Americans in the entire country—a moral decay of the spirit of humanity and fairness which is our advertised and self assumed heritage. He stated quite directly that donations, contributions were not generous gifts to “help” the poor nigger, but conscious money, expiation for the crimes not only of white southerners, but of ourselves, that non-intervention represents tacit approval. Non action represents acquiescence and the guilt is every man's.

He likened the condition to the situation in Nazi Germany during the rise of Hitler and after. We were smugly outraged—but non-interventionist. The U.S. turned away Jewish refugees. The guilt of Naziism lies on every civilized individual including the deaths of those in the war.

The white liberal Northerner going down to help the Southern Negro is not a case of helping the Negro- but an act of assuming the responsibility that white men everywhere bear for the outrages of white men in the South and in the North. The problem in the North is so much greater by the margin of hypocrisy that demonstrably exists. So Abe was not asking for contributions of generosity – but a contribution that

was large enough to require some sacrifice on the part of the individual – really conscience money.

He raised approximately \$800 that day --but for himself it was unsatisfactory as an act and it also set me thinking. Naturally, as I have indicated, this touched me. I can find enough to do helping others to satisfy my humanitarian responsibility, but the moral obligation of a human being to fight injustice--which obviously can reach proportions of genocide in an atomic war unless fought on the level of the individual, and which was obviously the case of every white American left me seriously wanting after just casual self inspection.

Like everyone else I was busy enough with my personal affairs from day to day that moral self examination and indignation could be ignored excepting at casual moments when it bothered me that people of my situation and conviction were in the South, braving dogs, guns and ferious hostility--psychological harassment can be terrible, as many Jews know too well, and I was doing nothing. I knew why – it wasn't that I didn't know what to do – I didn't, but I was too cowardly to find out. As you know and I have repeatedly stated – giving money is not really suffering any inconvenience. There is no personal exposure or humiliation, no danger, no physical deprivation.

I did not want to disrupt my life – to give up a few months or a year to do something which I know to be more important than the casual life I lead; my personal self improvement and artistic or mechanical search for *raison d'être*.

Such were my thoughts and feelings--occasionally. Early this year Abe, who had felt, for his own reasons, that he was not doing enough, and had experience and background in social action and political agitation, was invited to a gathering in Beverly Hills where he met Miles Horton, the founder and director of the Hilander Folk School in Nashville, Tennessee, the only integrated adult education and social action institution in the South, (since 1932 actively working to educate and assist Negroes).

The school, on trumped up charges, was brought to court and it's property confiscated to pay enormous fines levied for such things as “practicing integration” (at a social affair and in its educational classes) which was conveniently against the law in that state.

A year later it was burned to the ground by the KKK. Now the Hilander School is operating on a decentralized basis throughout the South, in rented rooms and private homes. Abe became excited about the possibility of making a direct contribution – helping to rebuild the school, which falls in line with his skills.

He invited Miles Horton to supper at his place and invited me (by now I was working with Abe again) to hear Miles speak of his experiences – and – I suspect, he felt that I might want to assist – or that his (Abe's) idea might be interesting to me.

Miles was very interesting, of course, and his remarks further brought to the surface my own conflict – before he and Abe began discussing the idea – which Miles nixed. It was obvious to him that the folk school could no longer be centralized on one campus – it would just be fired again – besides which, the working directly, “in the field,” so to speak, was probably more effective even though not as efficient, and he suggested that what was needed in line with Abe's thinking, was a local, or many local community centers, belonging to the Negroes, where a program of self help could be established, and where both the Negro integration movement and possibly, the great foundations could assist in direct programs of assistance, remedial reading for instance,

basic housekeeping and family care skills, sewing machines are virtually unknown among the majority of the blacks, first aid and midwifery- (only in cities can a doctor be found) basic carpentry skills and the exhibition of movies – many (thousands) negroes do not know what motion pictures are, have never seen one – libraries, those that read (often still functionally illiterate) have no books available.

This then, was what Abe and Miles developed as an idea – who’s original inspiration it was, I don’t really know -- but it was decided that no matter how the struggle for civil rights fares, whether aborted for years or soon successful, the Negro must progress toward personal freedom – which entails primarily self-respect and personal dignity – the realization that he is a human being and can and must behave as such, which involves the incentive to work and learn skills – for even with the civil rights granted, he is intellectually impoverished and economically unable to enter the ordinary American social structure and enjoy use of his civil liberties.

The decision reached that night, that this was of importance and basic to the fight for Negro independence also carried the implication that it was an enterprise not of white administration, the perennial white father patting the backward Negro on the head and saying “Here, boy, take this which we have decided is good for you” but one of acceptance and control by the Negro, a necessary act of his. From the beginning Negro dignity and self respect must be involved.

Therefore, Miles would present the idea to the Negro leaders when he returned to the South and relay their decision to Abe and it would be entirely up to them to accept or reject and then to direct the action in their own interests.

Shortly after this evening Abe received word from Miles that the Negro leadership, particularly SNCC, in Mississippi were enthusiastic about the idea and wanted and needed such a project.

The SNCC group, to our way of thinking, is one of the most important forces at work in the South. Miserably poor, they are largely youths – under 30, for the most part, living and working with the Negroes, conducting voter registration drives and the self help programs in the communities. Their work and demonstrations are grass roots, and less overtly political than CORE, N.A.A.C.P., etc. Their situations and conditions, intolerable. Once these decisions were made, with my pledge to Abe, the program developed and crystallized.

The questions of working plans and the what, where, who, how, conditions, requirements were necessary – so Abe flew down to Jackson, Miss., to the regional headquarters of SNCC and COFO (the loosely organized federation of Negro civil rights forces.)

Mississippi had been picked for 2 reasons #1, a large combined push on all levels of the desegregation and civil rights was planned for Miss. this summer by all organizations, and, #2, Miss. is the most backward, intolerant, impoverished state in the South, where both nature and white have conspired to make life their inhospitable, intolerable, and as near impossible as it can be.

His report follows as he told it to me, and since, to others. As he expected to return this summer, Abe desired as little notice as possible, so flew down to Jackson, expecting to take a Negro cab to the SNCC Headquarters in the Negro section of town. No luck. Airport is 15 miles outside of Jackson and colored cabs can bring passengers to, but not the lucrative trade from the airport to the city. So he took the limousine to

downtown, got a city map, located a Negro college near the headquarters and proceeded to ask directions to get there. 1st mistake, he approached an old colored man, said “excuse me, sir, can you direct me...” and didn’t hand over his bag to be carried. The old man couldn’t help much, so he stopped another, more prosperously dressed Negro. This Negro looked in opposite directions then said, “You don’t want to go to Jackson College. You’re an integrationist, and everyone knows it. Its O.K. I’m active in N.A.A.C.P., but if you stand and talk too long we’ll both be arrested, so go two blocks to your left, there’s a Negro cab stand there. Good bye!” and the Negro turned and walked away.

It is morning. Abe gets a cab which takes him to a broken down store front, the Mississ. regional H.Q. of SNCC. Inside are about 15 young people, predom. Negro, bustling about quite busily. As Abe enters, Bob Moses, the leader, 27 years old and obviously taut to the breaking point, is leaving.

“Abe, I know you’ve come 2,000 miles from L.A., but I can’t see you, I’ve got to run upstate; 2 of our people have been arrested and I have to do something about it. I’ll be back this evening. Good-bye.”

Abe was non-plussed, and somewhat irritated. The app’t had been scheduled for over 2 weeks. He followed Moses out and asked at least to be introduced to someone there. Moses said sure, see Mendy over there, he’s empowered to help you, we’ve discussed the whole thing, and he left.

Mendy is about 27, a few months from a Ph.D. in history, an ex-teacher of history at Columbia who 3 years ago went down to Miss. to help and has stayed on, totally committing the rest of his life to this activity. He is a young man of Jewish origin, thin and sallow, and under strain.

“Hello Abe, let me introduce you to a few of our people, and then we’ll talk. Bob Moses and I have discussed this idea and have selected 3 possible areas where we feel it would have a chance and would do the most good.”

So they sat down and talked. Of the 3 places, one was a town, where obviously, without the sheriff, or white hooligans, the project could not get off the ground. The building department would tie it up forever. Many counties in Miss. have no such organizations, so two other locations were acceptable and these were to be examined. They were to travel by car.

The whole Miss. SNCC organization consists of 20 volunteers at Jackson and a few local field personell in other communities. They receive, to cover all personal expenses, \$9.64 a week – when they are paid. For the last five weeks, they haven’t been paid. They have one old car at their disposal to cover the entire state. For the rest they must dig up transportation among local Negro truck drivers and car owners.

Mendy checked on the car. He located it at the Jackson City Jail where 3 workers had been arrested and the car impounded. The charge: Driving a stolen car. The owner was not with them at the time. Mendy said O.K. and asked the owner, a student from Berkeley who had arrived with the car 21 days ago, to go down to the jail and straighten it out. And he turned his attention to other matters.

Shortly thereafter (all before noon) the 3 workers arrive and Mendy asks for the car. They report that they were freed, but the owner and companion had been arrested and the car impounded again. Charges: Failure to register for Miss. License plates (mandatory after 60 days in the state.) and accessory in conspiring to evade Miss law.

(Keep score! Before noon 5 of 20 in jail or just out of jail (1/4 of the whole staff.), 2 upstate in custody.

So – no car. Mendy invites Abe to go over to Tupelo College, (Negro, 500 + or – students, white president and few white staff members, a hot-bed of Negro integration activity, offering SNCC training courses in leadership, registration etc.) where they might scrounge up a car. They did. A white man they saw on campus lent him his – reluctantly. He is a former Baptist minister who has one side of his face disfigured, who is a quivering, demoralized wreck of a man. 3 years ago, he dared to stand up on a Sunday & tell his white congregation that this anti-Negro warfare, and de[*sic*]segregation was un-Christian and immoral. At least he started to. He was dragged out of his church and beaten to a pulp. Since then he has been threatened, home attacked, and despised, & without employment. The man is broken.

Anyway, they get the car and drive 80 miles N.W. to Marsdon [*should be "Mileston"*], a rural Negro commun. on the Delta, in the so-called black belt. They would be back before nightfall, for SNCC has found it advisable to travel in pairs, and only by daylight.

Miss. and Louisiana, as most Northern draftees of the Army will testify, is not a place for people and you have undoubtedly heard stories about heat, swamps, mosquitos and water moccasins. The delta is swampy dark territory interspersed with patches of rich alluvial soil. The larger patches are organized white plantations with Negro share croppers & tenant farmers. Ladybird and some Republican congressmen can describe tenant farmers to you.

The smaller un-economic patches are largely farmed by Negro families who do own the land. This is progress – you can possibly raise food in a garden, and you do. But the cotton, ah, old King Cotton, must be ginned. And cotton gins belong to white men. Economic distress begins here. Clothes? (the Negro mends, and often makes, by hand; no sewing machines. Shoes must be bought out of profits from cash crops. Band aids, drugs – what are they? Unknown. TV? Dishwasher? Rugs? Danish Modern? Doctors? Clinics? Dentistry? Books? Schools? Motion Pictures? Not in the delta, not in the Black Belt.)

Marsdon! Where? One dilapidated; but broken down, really!; general store and worse church, about the size of a small apartment living room. (if the church holds 40 people, Abe will be surprised.) That's it. Almost a thousand Negroes live in the area around this focal point. (I didn't mention gas station, bar & pool hall or post office, because they don't exist.)

They turn and drive a dirt road to neat unpainted Negro farmhouse with an old, fairly large barn near it. This is one of the more prosperous farms and belongs to the leader of Marsdon. Leader, because Marsdon is somewhat unique. During the reconstruction after the Civil War many co-operatives were established among the Negroes, before the height of carpet bagging and its reaction. Most were destroyed, but Marsdon is one of the remaining. A group of families united in a cooperative association which functions as an individual trader in wholesaling the cotton grown on the small farms. Apparently they own or have access under slightly better condition to an ancient cotton gin a few miles away. But they still find it necessary and advisable to raise all food on their own land. This way they seem to avoid the widespread malnourishment in Mississippi and elsewhere.

Abe and Mendy arrived and were greeted by the leader's wife, Mrs. Hays, who explained that Mr Hays was in the county seat and would be home shortly. He was, with ice cream – a rare treat. They sat knee to knee in the living room, so small was it that a 9x12 rug would not have fit, had they one, and Mr Hays explained his tardiness. He had gone to register to vote, being one of the few literate Negroes in the community – for the 15th time. He was stoically optimistic. This time the white registrar had put Hay's application in his drawer. The other 14 times, the man had torn up the paper and thrown it in his face. "By the 40th or 50th time, he'll get so tired of seein' me, he'll break down and register me!" Mr Hays said. Abe learned that if that happened then there would be 2 registered negro voters in this "integrated" county of 27 thousand citizens, 23 thousand of whom are black. The other, already registered, is a retired Negro women principal of a high school from another county who moved into this one and transferred her registration. This county could not find a reason to reject her – and besides, it had a strategic value in that it made this county officially integrated.

Abe and Mendy then detailed the plan. He and I would attempt to raise the money and return to South to build a small structure to serve as a center for this community which, in this case, could be owned by the cooperative, and which would provide space where up to 150 people could meet at one time, which could be partitioned off to provide smaller rooms for educational activities as outlined before, the staff to be provided by SNCC volunteers and the program administered by them. Such a structure would be about 30 by 60 feet, one story, of the cheapest construction, which in the South is pine. Nevertheless, this, a shack in L.A., would be the finest structure the Negroes had ever known, and the largest. Interestingly enough, one of the items most important to these people was the inclusion of separate indoor toilets for the two sexes. Something they have never known, either. (In most of the South, Negroes are prohibited from using rest rooms in such trivial situations as gas stations. You can imagine the enormous difficulties of taking a trip of one day's duration, such as, for example, L.A. to San Francisco, or Milwaukee to Green Bay, where drinking water and toilet facilities are denied you, and eating, of course, is impossible publicly. If you choose to urinate by the roadside, you are subject to arrest. Not to mention that misdemeanors for you in Wisconsin are practically felonies there for Negroes, no bail, if set can be raised because Negroes have no money, and in most cases, dare not have currency.)

Needless to say, Mr. Hays was overjoyed by the proposition. They had, literally, never expected or even conceived of such a possibility. Imagine that. He had the equiv. of 8th grade education from a lousy Negro school 7 miles up the road. A Negro teacher needs no qualification to teach elementary school in that state, and those who do get these jobs are often worse than useless as teachers. Negro high schools, colleges? How many Negro children in the entire South do you suppose can qualify academically let alone overcome the obstacles of transportation and finances. You can make your own conclusion about rural areas.

The truly amazing thing about the situation is that these people have electric power available, bottled gas, and a few pick up trucks. (You can guess why electric power is available.)

Abe asked that if SNCC decided on erecting this pilot center, what would the local community do if there was interference from the whites. Mr. Hays replied that if the sheriff came by there was nothing that could be done, for if resistance were given, the

sheriff would come back with ten, a hundred, a thousand, all with the peculiar due process of Miss. law behind them. However, he said, about 15 years ago the K.K.K. came by to raid the general store, and in Hay's words "We shot their ass off." They haven't been back. This is not unusual. The so called "Black Belt" is an area where white men, including the sheriff, don't care to travel alone. Also, the area is so deprived that there is no reason to aggravate the natives, they can hardly agitate for any equality with no resources and no education.

Building sites were offered by every farmer on his plot of land, despite the obvious certainty that such a center could be dangerous, not only to the entire Negro community, but especially to the farmer on whose property it was constructed.

Because of the sundown curfew, Abe and Mendy had to return to Jackson and as they left they reminded Mr. Hays that yet another community had to be investigated and they could make no commitment at this time. The farmer's eyes were moistened and the crestfallen look on his face was something one had to experience to fully comprehend. The heights to which such a simple proposal had raised him to for that short time is not to be known among those of us who have food, clothing, education, and acceptance in any community we wish to visit or live in.

They didn't have time to visit Rulesville that day and so returned to Jackson H.Q. It was evening and so far, other than a little ice cream, neither had eaten. Abe, being a big man, felt the rumbles of a complaining stomach, and asked about food. Mendy, however, had immediate work. The bulletin board had two or three more crises listed, among them the incarceration of a white man and Negro woman SNCC worker who had set out in the morning with 300 books to set up the first and only library one upstate county had ever known. The books and their borrowed vehicle were impounded of course. Quite possibly the pair had been beaten by now. Abe says the scars of police brutality were visible on the bodies of every SNCC worker at the H.Q. white & Negro, male and female. The organization had long ago learned never to send a white girl and Negro man together. That combination would disappear, never reach a destination, and never be heard from again. This is no exaggeration. The local, state and federal authorities have been asked to investigate, but no word has been heard from five SNCC field workers sent to a southern county two years ago. They are considered disappeared, but the H.Q. in Jackson has no illusions as to the possibility of their survival. You can imagine then, what would happen anywhere in the state to a white girl and negro man. Possibly she would survive, certainly he would not. It is only a few miles from Marsdon, in the adjoining county, that Emmet Till, 14 years old, was shot for looking at a white girl.

So Mendy said that the Library incident would have to wait until tomorrow, parceled out two or three other jobs and turned on the local news program. Abe said the reaction to the program, which alarmed him, was not visible among the staff. The news? A local man had chopped up his wife and spread the pieces around in local ashcans. No race mentioned, so presumably white. A Negro motel in the process of completions had been blown up. No casualties, and the police chief had stated it was not a racial incident. SNCC workers told him the motel was owned by the local chairman of NAACP.

87 Wired and fused sticks of dynamite found by police on a certain street. SNCC workers filled in. The street was behind a local Negro high school where the student body was actively integrationist. On the state level one law passed that day – the

criminal syndicalism act which provided 3 to 5 years imprisonment for the listed felonies, which list included every COFO & SNCC program for this coming summer, and was so broad in scope that its application was limited practically to the imagination of the arresting officer.

Another bill passed out of the lower house to the Miss. senate provided that to bear an illegitimate child in that state was henceforth declared a felony and subject to three years in prison for the first offense, 5 years for the second, amended to read three years for a second offense and 5 years for a third. Context: illegitimacy touches most families in Miss., white or colored, and legislators felt that a white girl might make a terrible mistake such as this once, but certainly not twice, however the others However, to avoid incarceration for 3 or 5 years, the accused felon could submit to voluntary sterilization.

(This law will be enacted, without question. Even though unconstitutional, it will take a long time to fight it through the courts, and as a weapon of terror in a state so economically poor that the majority of marriages are common law it defies description. At this moment the national leader of SNCC, James Foreman, is in Europe and Africa rallying support for the integrationist presentation before the U.N. this summer under its genocide provisions.) What is fantastic in Abe's observations of this day was that no one got excited. These incarcerations, continual police harassments, the crises in areas of the state, the set backs, losses of materiel and transportation, news reports; all did not faze them and he concluded that what he saw and upset him, these experiences, were daily routine to them. Every day, every single hour this was routine, to be expected, S.O.P! They are incredible. The impression is that nothing will stop them, harassment they know, vilification, arrest, beating, even death, (most of them have been shot at; Bob Moses has been nicked two or three times). If one is lost, one or two more will step in to work – as they are strictly non-violent.

As to food which he mentioned earlier. "Well," Mendy said, "The white places we can't eat in, the local Negro cafe down the street nobody wants to eat in, even if you're very hungry, so we buy package stuff from the grocer across the street and eat at the apartment. We'll go up there."

The apartment for the men, the women live in another apartment elsewhere, ironically called Freedom House (fraternization would be dangerous – so the workers are forced to be unwilling ascetics.) is a 3 room affair with a broken chair, a broken down sofa, a couple of well used mattresses, two iron bedsprings, a couple piles of paper and blankets, a tiny kitchen and books, all over the place.

As Abe's greedy stomach told him – in ways it was fortunate that some were in jail, for the meal included a large can of beans, two small cans of ravioli and coffee. Abe provided more cigarettes that they had seen in weeks. (\$9.64 a week, no pay the previous 5 weeks). This was for four men.

Although they told Abe he could sleep there, on a mattress since he was a guest, in practice it did not work out, for when SNCC H.Q. closed, this apartment became operating H.Q. for the crisis never stopped, the problems kept on; night no respecter of persons. About two a.m. a lawyer rushed in – he needed transportation up beyond Greenwood before morning to try and get an arrest case remanded to the federal jurisdiction before 10 AM or some impossibly short time, Etcetera, Etcetera. And then

discussion, on rights, economics, history, philosophy, every conceivable subject matter. “These kids are phenomenal”, was the only way he could describe them.

That was one day. Abe stayed a total of thirty-six hours; they decided on Marsdon, discussed many details and he flew out.

I have gone into this detail so that you could appreciate the attitude that I now share from the story as Abe told me on his return – and I don’t feel that he exaggerated to me or that I have to you. He stated that the natural atmosphere in this unnatural state is itself rather spooky, but the human tension felt on the streets of Jackson and throughout the state is un-believable.

The agreement we have made is to raise \$10,000 here, a small part to be used to feed Abe’s family and to provide transportation to Mississippi and back for us. We will drive down in an old car Abe has with as many elementary carpentry tools as we can obtain and two sets of more sophisticated tools and leave them & the car in Miss. for SNCC when we finish.

We will attempt to build a simple large structure 32 feet by 64 feet approx. with an office, small kitchen, toilets and possible partitions for making smaller simultaneous work-study areas and deliver this to the Marsdon Co-operative as legally theirs. Extra money, if any is left, will be donated to the co-operative or handled by SNCC to program the various activities contemplated for the community.

There are some hazards, of course, particularly of obtaining that much construction materials without attention – for secrecy at first is in our favor. With actual erection, then publicity is almost necessary for some protection. Anyway it will be important for future projects in the South.

Others have asked what happens if there is interference, the structure burned or bombed. Why become involved in a project which has a risk of failure and difficulty. The answer is obvious to me –Precisely because there is this difficulty – that such a single, simple project can be difficult, even dangerous, to this extent it is imperative that it be accomplished – for it’s greatest purpose is merely to serve elementary human needs.

The Southern movement feels it is important, in the long range the right to vote will be effective or useful to the extent the man can read, write, and have enough self-respect and opportunity to live as a normal citizen. Whether the civil rights movement pushes ahead (and leaders believe this is a critical year) or loses ground, these other programs become focal to Negro progress.

If our small project succeeds the national leadership will go [*to the*] national foundations to finance and augment other such basic projects. If it fails, it is felt this can become, with publicity, a national issue of some consequence through which other community centers will arise – for this will be an attack on private property, sacred even to segregationists.

Abe is, of course, raising the funds, arranging parties, giving talks – saying the same thing that I have told you. This is not a gaudy, bandwagon, “help the nigger” appeal – but exactly as above. The response is quite interesting, all who have heard, whether completely enthusiastic or not, have been moved emotionally. Ordinary people like ourselves are responding vigorously and generously. Little children who have listened, although naturally not fully comprehending, have brought Abe there own savings for him to use (without any prompting from their parents, obviously).

Notably, the few wealthy people so far addressed have been enthusiastic and affirmative but have found the road from conscience to pocketbook a rugged one indeed. A man who contemplated hiring Abe for an unnecessary room addition costing \$8,000, found it a sacrifice too great to entertain beyond contributing \$25.00. Lamentably, which apparently makes the struggle so difficult, and the possibility of violence so imminent is this prevalence of moral decay and atrophied conscience among the powerful.

There are 12 unsolved, unreported murders in Mississippi in the last two years. The FBI, the Department of Justice have been informed. No action. The Federal Government has shown no interest in protection of its citizens, or concern for their lives, before or after the fact, excepting generally notable work in federal court, when cases reach it. Part of the national concentration in Mississippi this year will be a deliberate attempt to combine in a small concentrated area the ruckus and terror tactics of the South so that the Federal Government is moved, if humanly possible, to really act to enforce federal statutes and guarantee human rights.

Our project is small and isolated from this big push, for relative quiet and no agitation is important and the rest may serve to distract what little attention we would ordinarily receive. We expect to leave about July 15th for a maximum of 3 months, less if all goes well, for Abe has a new baby daughter and a family and heavy responsibilities to them. I, of course, do not, but I doubt if you will be able to accuse me of malingering. In the next five weeks we have much to do, and of course I'll be rather busy, having promised too many customers to much, besides the fund raising, planning, etc. but I'm sure Beverly will keep you informed.

I'm extremely pleased that you are relatively calm and happy, money does help and delighted that Raph is writing and planning to publish.

All my love,

Jim

[Photos of Abe Osheroff, Jim Boebel, and the Mileston Community Center project are here:

<http://www.takestockphotos.com/imagepages/imagedetail.php?PSortOrder=22&FolioID=20>

<http://www.takestockphotos.com/imagepages/imagedetail.php?PSortOrder=11&FolioID=20>

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