8/64 Thursday

Dear Family –

Have we been busy! Can't tell you how exciting it is to be in the midst of the "birth of the freedom party." As you may or may not know, the 2nd District Caucus was held here in G-ville on Sunday with delegates coming in from all over the Delta. Can you begin to imagine what an experience this was for the people who participated? as one woman said "I've never seen such a mixed-up audience before!" She was talking about the integrated gathering. It's hard to remember that commonplace phrases like "I make a motion..." are new words in these months.

Today the state convention is being held in Jackson. You can imagine how we all wanted to go along. ~~about~~ It's such a change for me to be in the midst of action rather than reading about it in the paper. Really exhilarating. It gives me an idea of what JFK called the sense of destiny - something that in 40 years I can look back on, too, and say - I helped do that - it's a sense of belonging, which I've rarely felt before, to something bigger than myself.

We got a short breather yesterday afternoon: Hodding Carter invited us all out to his house for a swim. What a treat it was for the time it lasted. Now the pressure is on again. As you may have heard, the Miss. state legislature has set up a group to "investigate Communism within COFO." To my knowledge we have no communists on our staff, but someone seems to think there are since Washington County (G-ville) was one of the foremost up for investigation. We have taken certain security measures which I can't mention, but if the Highway Patrol wants to, it can still ransack our office and put us in jail. ~~If they wish~~.

The main kind is that not only is the week-end about to start (which is the golden time for the roughnecks from outside to come in and cruise around - which they do), but also the police chief stopped by to tell us he'd be out of town until next Monday - at a civil rights convention in Kansas City! The implication is this: we have a feeling that the chief was the only power standing between us and trouble from local people & the fact that he came over here explicitly to tell us he was going out of town was a general message of warning to be prepared. Actually everyone seems to doubt that we'll have trouble, but working here in the office (which is the place the highway patrol hits first) I have a horrible feeling the axe is about to fall. It's virtually impossible to convince our staff (especially the younger ones) that the way they act is just asking for trouble. Oh well.

Am not sure that I told you am planning to stay on here this winter. I will be home at the beginning of Sept. sometime to recuperate and get winter clothes. Have a feeling this winter will be longer & colder than the ~~winter~~ summer was hot. So - you might start talking up shoe - clothes - food - and money drives for this winter.

Have a good time in NY - have a swim for me.

Love,

Pat