

September 20, 1964

Dear JoAnn,

Thank you so much for the wonderful pictures that you sent us. They are going to be a tremendous help for us in our proposed program. We have made a bulletin board on Mississippi and with your pictures and the tape recordings that we hope that you'll be able to make, we intend to send this program into as many clubs and church groups as possible, so that they can find out about what's going on in Mississippi. Mr. Newman and Mr. Wilson have also said that they would go along with this program and sing Freedom Songs, so I think that we are going to have a program that will be very worthwhile and appealing to many groups.

We have sent to New York to get the tapes for you and we will send them on to you as soon as we receive them. We sent for the tapes because we can get them cheaper in New York, so please bear with us for a little bit.

We had a trial run of our program Friday night when we had a "Freedom Party" at our house. Really, it started out as just a social occasion so that people from Knox could get to know people from the Research Hospital better, as well as people from the N.A.A.C.P., but we didn't see any reason why we couldn't collect some money for Mississippi at the same time, so that's what we did. We posted all of the pictures and the poster (I think that poster is just great; I have it hanging in my kitchen when it's not out for programs) and people were very excited at being able to see how the work was progressing. I don't know who took those pictures and processed them, but they are simply wonderful; please thank him or her for us. We didn't collect much money, but it was a start--after all, these were mostly the same people that we have been hitting for contributions in the past. We also have collected boxes and boxes of clothing and will be sending it down to you soon; we intend to wait until we have enough to send it by truck--it's evidently cheaper that way. Also, there is talk of a drive for canned goods. We intend to split these items between you and Brian, since there seems to be a good deal of confusion about all of this COFO business. We feel assured of you and Brian and know that you will know how to make best use of these items.

The Galesburg Branch of the N.A.A.C.P. is pretty stirred up about Mississippi because Mrs. Allison, president of the Jackson, Mississippi Branch of the N.A.A.C.P. was here a week ago Friday night to tell us about life in Mississippi. At the end of her speech, the audience stood without prompting to applaud this frail, tired little woman who was endowed with so much courage. We had no advance publicity on Mrs. Allison, as she said that she had mailed us her only picture and her biography, but they had somehow become mysteriously lost in the mails. This alarmed all of us, coupled with your last statement about how we were beginning to distrust the local officials there in Canton. We have received everything that you said you were mailing us, but we wanted to check with you and see if you are the one who uses Scotch Tape to seal your letters; I imagine that we are becoming overly cautious, but we are now becoming suspicious of officialdom in Mississippi too.

By the way, my husband said to tell you that he is writing to Syd Finley to see if your N.A.A.C.P. membership is still good for your jail bond. Mrs. Allison didn't mention any unhappiness with Charles

Evers, but I didn't get to talk to her afterwards to ask her this question.

I am enclosing some copies of a newsletter that the chapter printed. This is about as close as we came to having the letters from the children which you forwarded to us, printed. We gave them to the reporter from the Galesburg Register-Mail and he kept them for a month, but never printed one of them. The Galesburg Post did include one of the letters that we printed in this newsletter.

The N.A.A.C.P. has printed a fairly good, cheap pamphlet on Negro history. The chapter has ordered some of them, but as yet, we haven't received them. As soon as we do, we will forward one of them on to you and if you think that they will be useful in your work, perhaps we can work out some arrangement whereby we can send more of them to you. They cost about 75¢, so this is pretty nominal.

I have just one more week of leisure before school starts again for me. I pre-registered last spring, so at least I don't have to worry about that part of it--I just have to part with my hard-earned money, or I should say, my poor husband's. My little daughter asks me from time to time if I am ever going to finish school. I am encouraged, though--this is the last year that I will have to go part-time; I hope to be able to go full-time starting next year and then I will just have about two years to go, I hope. Of course, all of that is dependent on my being able to obtain one of those dear old Federal loans, as I just can't make full-time Knox tuition on my own. I will take that silly old mathematics course for people who haven't had anything other than high school geometry and more German. The German I will enjoy, but I am rather dreading the mathematics.

We have really been up to our necks in parties around this house. Besides the afore-mentioned Freedom Party, we also had two birthday parties for our two children who were born on September 12th and September 15th, respectively. Last year I had sort of a party for both of them together, but this year, such a party won't work, so we had to have two separate parties. Really, the seven-year-olds were pretty well-behaved, but what chaos we had when Chris and his three-year-olds had their party. Really, I don't think that I can stand to have another party--I am just not cut out to be another Pearl Mesta.

The Chicago Daily News and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch have been full of a story about a Heffner family from McComb, Mississippi--a white family who were driven out of town because they befriended some Civil Rights workers. I guess that they really weren't too enthused about integration, but then, on the other hand, they didn't want to see people getting killed either, so they tried to work out some sort of liason between the Civil Rights workers and the town and that was the beginning of the end...some of the things that happen in that state sound like something straight out of the Twilight Zone.

Well, I guess that's about all of the news from here. We will be sending more money and clothing to you as it comes in. Keep up the good work--our thoughts are with you all of the time.