

October 2, 1964

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Sayer  
1270 E. 19 St.  
Brooklyn 30, N.Y.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Sayer:

I have been telling Mike for two weeks now that I was "intending to write right away" to find out your schedule. What with travelling and other stuff, and just plain laziness, however, I haven't done it. Mike said that he talked with you the other day and that you have some commitments other than COFO, that things are all up in the air, etc. If you have gone off to greener chapters because I didn't follow up or something, I accept the blame, but I assume that you would come back based upon our understanding made at Holly Springs. At any rate, please let me know about your plans, and if you are not planning to come back to Mississippi immediately, please reconsider.

I had been sounding out the possibility of your returning either to Meridian or Hattiesburg. I had been favoring Hattiesburg, because of the staff shortage, when I met Muriel Tillinghast, the project director in Greenville, at a staff meeting. The story she told me was similar to that of Hattiesburg, but worse. We have a problem in that there is a good base for a Freedom School-Freedom Center program, but no people to do it. There is a lot of manpower hanging around, but because there has been no one to organize and tie things up, these people have been absorbed into voter registration and sent out into the counties. The educational program is pretty much at a standstill. This is especially regrettable because Greenville is in a strategic location and is the single most progressive and moderate city in Mississippi. The white community is starting to give a little, and we very badly need a stable, constructive image in that community. Besides that, just on the merits, we need a stable, constructive educational program. I cannot overemphasize the need. I talked to Muriel some time about your qualifications, and the fact that there were two of you (always an advantage), and about the fact the Mrs. Sayer's health is not perfect, although not totally bad. She doesn't think Greenville is so rigorous that it would damage your health and she is DESPERATE for someone to come. I have met her casually once since then, and talked to her on the telephone once, and both times she has asked me why you hadn't come yet. I wish you would please tell us if you can come back, and if possible if you can come SOON. Muriel would like you to stay longer than February, but I understood from Mike that your sabbatical leaves did not extend any longer than that. The fact that you won't be with us long, however, makes her doubly eager to get something started.

Muriel is also enthusiastic about the handicraft project. I, too, want to see you about it when you come. We could have workshops in Greenville for all the staff people interested in working with arts and crafts, and teach them the method there. But we can talk specifics when you arrive. Hope to see you soon.

*live*