

March 14, 1965

Dear Phil,

Must a fast question at the outset. I believe I put Julie Rice 42 Sideny Place Brooklyn on the original mailing list I gave you. I haven't heard from her for a very long time and someone told me she went to Italy, so I was wondering if you were sending the letter to her, and whether it was being returned to you or what. Please let me know on this. The format of this letter will be a little different than usual because Ann G wrote me a letter with a bunch of questions she wants answered, so rather than write her a separate letter I will just include what she wants in the N/L. You might do me a favor and put a note into the N/L that you send her telling her that I hope this answers what she wanted. Charlie Cobb stayed with us last night. We invited him for supper, and Rawlin Browner, my neighbor came over to borrow the car to go to the union meeting, and after it was over he came back and we talked about unions, all different kinds of unions and groups of people getting together to make things better in their strength, and he finally left at midnight and then Cobb sat up with us until about 3:30 telling stories about the early days in Mississippi and how the idea of the freedom schools and the summer project got started. He told one great story about how Miss staff was arguing whether or not to have a summer project right up until the first summer people started arriving and that the question never was resolved, but that there was a kind of resignation among local staff which found voice in the words "They're coming?" which were spoken as a kind of password and scribbled on walls. Its times like these that I wish I could get a tape recorder working because the ~~thing~~ stories he told us were amazing.

Dear Friends:

We are in the middle of trying to decide whether to move, and if so, where, or to stay here and go on paying exorbitant rent. The crummy falling down building where CB's office is was recently bought by a local Negro businessman who wants to turn it into a hotel (using hotel as a euphemism). This put CB in the rather uncomfortable position of having to take down the blueprints for his dream office from the shelf, where they had grown yellow with age, and seriously start to consider building. He and Slater have talked about having joint offices for a long time but ~~the~~ they have really been too busy to even consider building. But now the whole thing became a reality. Back in January we were given two months notice to vacate (the lease had expired a long time ago and nothing was ever done about renewing it). So we would occasionally talk about finding a place to go temporarily while the building was being erected - or we would talk about talking the new owner into letting us hold over a while - or we would just avoid thinking about it as it was just one more pressure. So March 1 came and the new building still hadn't been started and the new owner here came and threatened eviction - which we could fight but it would be bad "public relations" I have been advised - and finally agreed to let CB stay on at \$105. per month rent. Which is a rather substantial increase from the \$40 per month we had been paying here. So this makes looking for a new office a little more of a reality but we never had the time to do anything about this, so we go on paying \$105; but at least they are starting construction on the new office on Monday and it will be ready in about 90 days (they say). I remember talking about the whole problem of offices for Negro professionals two years ago when I was here - how CB's office came as a rude shock to my whole stereotype concept of what law offices were supposed to look like; how in the South Negro professionals cannot rent downtown office space and have to take the broken down buildings that are available in the ghetto unless they can afford to build. I also remember writing about CB's office a couple of years ago when it only had the reception room and his office and the three law clerks for the summer were jammed together in the reception room in the intense heat, scattered

But now let me tell you how the War is going. On this front a new development. If not for the Ellie-Edgar fiasco I would almost be excited, but I force myself to let history be a teacher. Today Wendy got a phone call from the assistant to the Director of the Project Headstart (the war on poverty nursery school division). The lady who called, as a cute aside, is the sister of Jack Greenberg, NAACP Legal Defense fund leader. She had just gotten the prospectus that Wendy sent (one is coming by separate cover) to apply to them for funds. The prospectus is really a combination and consolidation of her last prospectus and also the training center proposal letter of which you got a copy. Anyhow she raved on and on about how this was the first proposal they had received that was exciting, etc, etc, etc (which is like "this is the first organization that is really involving the poor in its own problem solutions" from a prior experience). Anyhow she is sending official applications and will give it special attention, etc. I assume she's probably the same type as Cahn - well meaning, unused to beauracracy, and will be stepped on x like a bug when the officials get wind of this. Oh well, it really does serve as a good vehicle to teach local people what the war on poverty is all about and which way the guns are pointing.