

April 23, 1965

Dear Phil,

I am sending you all my back issues of Life with Lyndon, under third class mail. Please send them back when you are finished except the one marked "duplicated." CB and I are both on the mailing list so when I finish one from here on in I will just send it on x to you.

Here is a bit that I would like you to pass on to Don Harris. You could just type it on the bottom of the newsletter which you send to him, but I wouldn't want it in the general newsletter. I told you that Coolie (John Washington) was in jail on burglary charges. SNCC finally bonded him out but Atlanta has decided to take him off staff for this "indiscretion". People here are very pissed off about this, especially Randy, who feels that the people making decisions are "all college niggers, out of touch with the people" which might be an overstatement, but this sentiment does exist.

Also in the envelope with the Life with Lyndons' is a mimeo flyer from "The Young Democratic Clubs of Mississippi" which is pretty interesting if you read between the lines. The Hunter Morisy mentioned in the paper is a white guy who quit NYU Law and has been in Miss for a couple of years. Note the statement of Evers, the NAACP tool.

I thought I had m the letters you wrote with me at the office, but I see that I left them at home so I'll finish this at home and send it off tomorrow morning.

As it turns out I came back to the office tonight with Wendy. Her nursery school bank balance was a mess so I had to use the office adding machine to finally get it straight.

Miller's magazine is very bad - have you ever seen CORElator, the CORE magazine - it looks just like it. "lick and public relationsie, I guess its real good for fund raising, but... Did you put Miller on the mailing list?

I'm going to pass on the comments from Mayisela to Don Harris for whatever its worth. He's getting married May 1st so maybe I'd better hold on until after that date.

Yes we have access to a tap~~e~~ recorder and I'd like to hear the tape of Ida Berk very much. If you have another copy of the Ida Berk I might even erase it and try to talk Wendy into recording something about the Nursery School - but I cant promise anything. I think the idea of "new voices of the Movement" is a great idea and will talk to deLissovoy about it. Randy has gone off to help Julian Bond on his campaign. Julian is head of the public relations (whatever that is) division of SNCC in Atlanta and is now running for State Senaae - which would really be a gas and there's a chance he can win. Randy just came back from some SNCC sponsored institute whaee he got very excited about working with tape and sound equipment. It might just be a passing thing but he and Pete live together now and if both like the idea we might just start producing great documentaries from SWGa.

Dont pay any attention to my bitching. Its just that things were up around my ears, but I'm alot better now. We are going away Sunday. Frank Holley, the guy who owns a restaurant here, his family in law have a small lake in Sumter County (they're undertakers and very wealthy) and we are going there for a day to get the hell out of this damn town.

Dong give up on Perdeu - sees if you can get some kind of dialogue going with him because if he changes his attitude toward you he would be an invaluable source of info.

Some very exciting things have been going on in the actual setting up of the nursery school - some of which was mentaoned in kthis letter. Wendy promises to compile these things and put out a newsletter within

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Dear Friends,

If I write this today I can have it off my mind and perhaps we can even get away on Sunday. C.B. left town Thursday afternoon to go to an Inc. Fund conference in Virginia and he won't be back till Monday, so I have been "in charge" of the office yesterday and today. Since we have moved further out in the Negro residential community, away from Harlem, we have had an appreciable decrease in the drop-in trade we used to get - the drunk who wants to "hold \$5 until payday" (which is a day that never comes for most of the guys in Harlem) or someone who comes in to have lawyer King do something about the Roof Doctor who has put a curse on them, and the like, and tho this gives us more time to get work done we miss all of the interesting stories.

I was just interrupted in writing this because of a phone call from a white woman whose husband is stationed on the military base in Albany. She called to tell us that three Negro children who live across the street from her and who are about 3 or 4 years old were accosted by a white child of about 9 or 10 who took off his belt and was about to hit them. She saw this and came out of her house and yelled at him to get on home before she smacked him. Anyhow his mother came to her house, cursed her out and has threatened that "you haven't heard the end of this". The father of the white kid is an officer at the base. So I told her to call us again if the woman does do anything.

I finally got the brief off in Charlie Burkes case to the Georgia Supreme Court. Like everything else don in this office we mailed it off a few minutes before midnight of the deadline for it to be in. Just once I would like to complete a piece of work and have a full day before it was due. Just before we sealed the envelope I decided to thumb throught the seven copies to see if they were o.k. and discovered that two of them had the pages stapled in upside down. I cant imagine a favorable decision from the Court as what we are really asking them to do is acknowledge the fact that white lawyers do not give legal representation in any meaningful sense of the word to Negro clients. But there is always Federal habeas.

It really looks like I am going to get to practice in the Federal Court here. A friend appeared before the Judge of the Northern District of California and petitioned that the rules requiring my presence be waived because of "exceptional circumstances" and this was granted. I mailed off the petition last night so in a few days I'll be able to sign my names to briefs and maybe even help argue a case.

I guess our next trip to Federal Court will be in the Worth County school desegregation case. Worth is one of these little nasty rural counties with a long history of repression and brutality - tho not quite as bad as Baker County. After the Moultrie school boycott got started there were two churches burned in Worth (the neighboring county) which had never been used for any a civil rights activities, but probably was done as a "warning". Several of the people in Worth own their own farms and are relatively immune from white sanctions and these people seem very strong. So far there are about 20 children who want to transfer which is an astonishingly large number when the size and nature of the county is considered. The person out there who has been most active is the daughter of one of these farmers, a woman in her late twenties, whose husband is overseas in the Army. She is a substitute teacher but doesnt really need the income so she cant be reached. She has been traveling from one end of the county to the other encouraging people to let their children transfer. They held a meeting at which CB was supposed to explain how the suit works and what has to be done. We figured that two or three people would show up based on previous experiences with counties of this type, but every parent whose child wants to transfer was there, and they all seemed very eager to go ahead with the suit.

I think I mentioned in my last letter that there are about a dozen students from Georgetown University in Washington DC down here on their Easter vacation. Roy put a couple of them in each of the different projects in southwest Georgia. One of them was working with Randy in Ocilla and the cops picked him up and shook him up quite a bit. He's now back in Albany.

The ones in Albany were going to desegregate a bowling alley here yesterday but it was closed. They are supposed to go back again this evening. A bowling alley which is near the Negro college desegregated after the Civil Rights Act was passed and many of the students at Albany State use it. So most of the white business has gone to the other alley which is located out on the highway in an all-white neighborhood. SNCC got a phone call from a man who refused to identify himself (the people believe it was the proprietor of the alley near the college) who complained that the other alley didn't desegregate, so this is why people are going out to test it. Everything else in this town has been pretty good about complying except for one really crummy restaurant which is now a private club and which I assume we'll eventually get around to suing. But Albany is the exception because all the other public accommodations in the smaller town in southwest Georgia are still rigidly segregated. And this is true of most of the small towns of the South, contrary to the stupid syndicated articles that Toms are writing for the newspapers about the "wonderful cooperation of businessmen throughout the South". Its going to take a whole lot of demonstrating and a whole lot of law suits to ever change this so for most small towns the Civil Rights Act is still a lot of empty words.

I've been spending a lot of time writing letters and articles the last couple of days. We wrote one to the County Commission a while ago about the segregated toilets and drinking fountains in the Court House and while they never replied they took down all the signs. So we just wrote one to the Highway Patrol as they maintain a partition down the middle of the building where you get drivers licenses and Negroes are relegated to one side only. You've got to fight this stupid crap place by place and there is no end to it. I also wrote an article for the Negro newspaper about the correspondence school racket that thrives in the Negro community whereby a white salesman comes around and promises a guaranteed job with the federal government paying about ~~XXX~~ \$200 per week if the person will just sign up for this course which costs ~~XXX~~ \$200. The course which is supposed to prepare you to pass the civil service exam is some mimeographed crap with simple arithmetic problems or the capitols of the states on it. And of course the contract specified in tiny print that the school doesn't guarantee anything. If you fall behind in your payments they are all due at once - you are sued in small claims court (most people are never even served) and then they garnish your salary.

Wendy has been canvassing the white neighborhood around the nursery school with Betty. Not that they think that any white would send their child to a Negro nursery school, but it seems as if the Federal Government intends to check up on those people who sign the non-discrimination compliance clause and they want to know what efforts have been made to integrate the program. But the response has been very interesting, ranging from a couple of really hostile people: "Y'all get the hell out of here; y'all get Martin Luther King for your school" to a woman who expressed quite a bit of interest and promised to think it over as to whether to send her child. She was mainly concerned with the cost as she earns about \$50 per week and her husband isn't working and when she was told it wouldn't cost anything it didn't seem to matter that there would be Negroes there. The white neighborhood adjoining the school is also very poor, tho the general income there seems to be about \$20 per week higher than in the Negro neighborhood. One guy, a former factory worker who is out of work because of his bad back but can't collect compensation and whose 6 children live off his wife's salary of \$30 per week was very friendly and said something about how/ "its tough for white and colored these

days". This afternoon Carol King and a couple of other Negro school teachers will be canvassing white neighborhoods near the two Negro grammar schools where they hope to set up Project Head Start programs this summer, and those reactions should be pretty interesting. Aside from a couple of the very hostile whites, everyone else answered all the questions about income, rent, etc. Poor people, no matter what their race, pretty well are threatened by any "official" type questions and generally comply with this stuff so that Wendy's survey of the neighborhood should be pretty complete even if they don't find any whites who will send their kids to the nursery school.

The reason I am ~~am~~ writing about the school in this letter is that Wendy simply doesn't have time to write anything about what is happening and probably won't be able to until the school is well under way, and since people keep writing to find out what's happening I thought I would take on the responsibility for a while.

Another interesting facet of the school is the neighborhood kids who come by to help. Every day anywhere from two or three to a couple of dozen kids of all ages ~~is~~ show up to "help". Many of them don't go to school anyhow so they are around all day but after school the number generally increases. The amount of "help" varies from a small group who go out into the playhouse and get drunk and gamble and then come in to ~~to~~ play the piano, to one or two guys who put in about a 12 hour day, every day, painting, sadding floors, etc. Wendy has made one of them "foreman" and he is in charge of deciding who does what work, who gets to drive the car to go buy lumber, etc. Since he has become "boss" he sees to it that the drunks stay outside. He doesn't go to school very often and sits around on his porch until he sees the car drive up and then he rounds up a couple of his buddies and ~~comes~~ comes over. A couple of days ago Wendy and Betty got a late start and when they got there he cursed them out for not coming to work on time. Easter vacation is over but this morning we got a call about 8:00 a.m. from him. He just wanted to let Wendy know he wasn't planning on going to school this morning so he would be over to help today.

A few days ago his brother-in-law came by. He was very hostile at first - we later found out he was very active in the Movement a couple of years ago but got very bitter. He said that the Movement never produced anything tangible that would benefit him. But the Nursery School seemed to be something real. He had a lot of questions about what each room would be used for and what kind of equipment they would have. A friend of his who works as a carpenter stole a lot of lumber and brought it by the other day, and he spent the last couple of evenings after work painting the ceilings. However, yesterday he propositioned Wendy and she told him she wasn't interested so we will have to see whether he shows up anymore.

There is also a great big woman who lives next door named Miss Bea. She carries a big stick and has quite a bit of authority with the children. She also knows everyone in the neighborhood and was a great deal of help when she canvassed a couple of days with Wendy and Betty. She would knock on a door and if people didn't answer she would just walk in, telling Wendy and Betty, "y'all just sit down" and then she would march through the house to see if anyone was home and drag them into the living room to answer the questionnaire. A lot of people turned out to be home under Miss Bea's prodding.

Then a few days ago a drunk showed up who criticized the way they were sanding the floor, told them they were stupid for renting the kind of sander they did, etc. He works for a floor sanding place and ~~is~~ promised to borrow a sander from his boss (who he thinks rides with the Klan). But he showed up the next day, drunk, without it, and continued to criticize. Paul, the guy who does most of the work around there was getting very pissed off with all the bragging and criticism of Paul's work, so Wendy told the drunk that unless he came back with a sander they ~~were~~ weren't interested in his suggestions.

Dennis