

November 1, 1965

Dear Phil:

As I wrote you yesterday, I am coming to California and will be there Nov. 7th. The clippings and material on the Viet day committee are much appreciated; also info on the Community group. I believe last week's National Guardian mentioned it also, in an editorial.

I remember I wrote you a while ago mentioning Martin's statement about Vietnam as a "hopeful sign" or something like that. You never responded - which is generally your way of showing disapproval; after having thought the whole thing through I must have been dreaming. The next question then, why did he say what he did? Is it an administration "trial balloon" - that seems too dangerous. Did he just forget himself for a moment - that makes more sense. What do you think about it. I also notice nothing more has been said about DeLoew in the press since those statements.

Your letter on the march was excellent. I'm not surprised to learn the CP agrees with King in the Selma fiasco. I get more and more disappointed with them; I guess I was just weaned on a militant anti-Red baiting and any criticism of them was ranked with Fascism. But I just read that they are supporting some NAACP Democrat in NY against a really militant cat running against him as an independent - I forget who the candidates are or what they are running for; but shit like that just puts them completely out of touch with what's really happening.

Please send me the first available draft of Mac Bird. Stuff like that really cracks me up. I know she probably won't be too crazy about the idea but I'd like to see it appear, at least parts, in Insurgent (which I feel could be a damn good magazine if it had some decent material if you know what I mean - I think it looks great - the first eye catching radical publication I have seen in terms of its covers and layout, but some of the crap they publish is just nowhere.

Now for news of my world: Today we are moving into our new office. C.B. and Slater built it and share a large, modern, EXPENSIVE building. I really can't begrudge it to him because it's a lifelong dream but I think he's out of his head - the note payments will kill him. He just doesn't make any money at all, and takes on case after case which cost him, rather than earning anything. The other day a guy came in from Lee County. He had gone to a white grocery store in Smithville, a little mean ass cracker town about 14 miles south of Americus, to buy a loaf of bread. It was Saturday night and a group of Negroes were hanging around outside, some of whom were drunk and cursing. The owner came out just as he walked up and started cursing out the Negroes for swearing where his virginal white wife could hear them, and then turned on our man and started to really curse him. He said he just came up and hadn't done any cursing which really infuriated this cracker - now his word was being doubted. As our man tells the story, "He hit me and knocked me down. I

got up and he hit me and knocked me down again. I got up and said please dont hit me no more Mr. Bob and he hit me again. I couldnt hardly see him and my head was hurting real bad. Then I stuck him." Seems he went into his pocket for his knife and cut this cracker ear to ear. They charged him with assault with intent to murder as the cracker lived. After he told CB that he had 3 kids and a pregnant wife and wasn't working, CB took the case for \$75. - which he'll never get.

We were talking about that and he told me about the case he took free which really bothers him. A Negro "root doctor" from Detroit was in a car accident here a few years ago. He was charged with drunk driving (which wasn't true) and because he couldnt make bail he was held in jail about 4 months. He finally got word to C.B. who went and talked to him. He told CB that he was a con man and didn't give him any bullshit about his "profession" as most of these guys do, and told him if he would represent him that he would be able to raise the money and pay him back. C.B. threatened to raise the jury question and the Solicitor agreed to nol pross if he paid for the damage his car did, about \$90. So besides representing him free, CB went on and loaned him the \$90 - and has never seen the guy again.

He also spends hours "hand holding" and just listening to long sad stories which have no "legal" solution but it seems to make the people feel better just being able to tell him about their problems. For this he charges \$5., which he rarely gets. The other day an old woman came in, paid the \$5. conference fee, and for the next two hours told him one of the most fascinating stories I have ever heard. She suffers from a paranoia very frequently found in Negroes - a huge white conspiracy being directed against her - on second thought, who says its paranoia. Anyhow, it seems that she feels certain people have insured her life and are plotting to murder her - which could be reasonable until you learn that the people are the white folks her mother worked for for years, one of Albany's most prominent white folks; also involved in the conspiracy are an Atlanta orthopedist and an architect from Atlanta, both well known and friends of these Albany people; also the local judge who is in on it because he refused to give her a peace warrant against these people, and also her mother. CB just doesn't know what to tell her, other than that he is checking all the insurance companies to see if they have policies on her, especially since she told him, "Lawyer King, I hope you don't sell out to those people too; there's no one else I can trust".

Or the really ancient man, drifting in and out of reality, who came in one day and asked CB to write a letter for him. CB said o.k., who was the letter to go to. "The doctor". What doctor. "At the hospital". What do you want to tell him. "That I know he wunt the one". Wunt the one what. "Wunt the one what killed that woman". How do you know he didnt kill her. "I saw the ~~one~~ one who it was killed her". Where'd you see it. "on the t.v." - anyhow, it turns out that he has been watching some kind of soap opera on t.v. where a doctor is being framed on a charge of murdering a patient, but it's really the nurse who did it. He learned

from his wife what this was all about as she watches the same soap opera. Anyhow, this old man wanted the lawyer to write the doctor to tell him that the old man would serve as a witness for him as he had seen the whole thing.

Twice more it was pointed up to us how important it is to do things yourself and not just assume that someone can do it for you. In the bowling alley case we learned that there was a bowling alley owner in Florida who received announcements from the place we were suing, advertising tournaments. He didnt want to come up and testify but we knew if we subpoenaed him he wouldnt have any choice. Rather than drive 180 miles round trip we sent it to a lawyer in Florida and asked him to see that the guy got served. He gave it to his secretary who didnt realize there was a time element involved and finally served him after the time of legal notice had run. It all worked out tho because we got a friend of his to call and prevail upon him to honor the subpoena anyway. Also, a guy came in who had been charged with drunk driving in Hazlehurst and McRae two nights in a row (100 and 130 miles from Albany) and wanted CB to represent him. We went up and got a copy of the jury list but needed to figure out how many Negroes were on it. So rather than drive all the way up to Hazelhurst again CB mailed it to the guy and told him to go to Hazelhurst (he lives near by) and sit down with the Negro undertaker (the best person for this kind of information) and find out which of the people on the jury list are Negroes. A couple of days later he phoned the office to say that he had contacted most of the Negroes on the list and told ~~his~~ them that his lawyer was C.B.King and he wanted them to vote to acquit him if they got on the jury next term. CB about shit.

Last week I went up to Ellaville, a little town about 15 miles north of Americus. Ellaville is the home of the famous Rosa Lee Ingram case - a Negro woman who murdered a cracker who had been her lover, and she and her teen age sons were sentenced to life imprisonment. I went up because Clarence Jordan, the guy who runs Koinonia Farm, was charged by the State Patrol up there. It was the same officer who charged Eugene Goodin from Americus so we will fight the case just to bust his balls. Dr. Jordan also has no money and CB would never take any from him anyhow, so this is another one of those cases. I stopped off in Americus at Barnums Funeral Home to get some information on which Negroes in Ellaville would be able to give me information on the jury list - it turned out to be so obvious there that I didn't need anyone to tell me who was black. Anyhow, I got talking with one of the SCOPE workers, a really wierd guy. Terribly sick and disturbed, covered with tatoos, most of them home made, a homosexual and drug addict (if you can believe what he says) and in violation of NY parole...this is not typical of what has been appearing in the south lately but maybe he's a composite of all the problems that most of these people bring with them and hope to be able to cure their own neurosis by immersing themselves in the Movement. Also learned how the introduction of Negroes onto southern police forces is going. Of course

as a general rule the very worst thugs and white man's watchdogs are hired (tho there are a couple of notable exceptions in Albany). Two were hired in Americus recently - one of the demands of the Movement having been met - a week ago a young Negro guy was passing by one of the bars where he saw his sister in a fight with another women. He went up to separate them and the cops came along and arrested him for drunk and disorderly. He argued with the cops but got into the car, and as he did one of them shot him in the back and then beat him up on the way to the hospital. He says he has no idea why the cop would do this - but it is common knowledge that this new Negro cop once served 10 years in the penitentiary for murdering another guy by tying him on the railroad tracks - so that might be some indication of his character.

This past week was spent in Federal Court. First four days was *Kunney v. Holt*, injunctive action against the Sheriff and other officials of Baker County (situated of *Screws v. US*, a famous case where the sheriff murdered a young Negro by beating him to death with a black jack in the courthouse square to stop them from harrassing the Movement. It was a nightmare, complete with Old Uncle Lee who testified as to what a fine gentleman the Sheriff was. He seems to have forgotten that the present Sheriff was deputy to Sheriff Screws when the good sheriff murdered Old Uncle Lee's cousin, Bobby Hall, back in the '40s - or that the present sheriff, L. Warren Johnson, has killed at least three other Negroes and brutally beaten ~~many~~ and shot many others that we know of. On Friday, after a grueling 4 days of the Baker County case, we argued *Shields v Midtown Bowling Lanes*. At the end of the week CB was a physical wreck. In *Shields* they argued: they dont serve outside agitators; they dont serve anyone in commerce; they never exclude Negroes; no Negro has ever sought service; they would have served the plaintiff Negroes who presented themselves but they were "full"; they never saw the plaintiff Negroes present themselves for service, and more of the same. They lied like crazy. So the Hon. J. Robert Elliot, a former right hand man to Ol' Herman Talmadge, and Jack Kennedy's star judicial appointment, took both these cases "under advisement" like he takes every other case we bring "under advisement" and we wont be able to get an unfavorable ruling for about half a year. This is a terrific problem, especially in these injunctive actions against police brutality directed towards the Movement because the man just sits on the case for month after month, giving the crackers a free hand, and by the time he finally rules against us and we can go up to the Fifth Circuit and reverse him, the Movement is destroyed. When the Albany Movement was strong and every demonstrator was arrested CB moved for an injunction. Elliot tied it up for over 6 months and then ruled against him. Fifth Circuit reversed. But this took a couple of years. So now Pritchett is enjoined from arresting demonstrators - but of course no one demonstrates now. To illustrate the man's disposition towards us, on several occasions CB objected to opposing counsel referring to our clients and witnesses as "niggers". Elliot told CB he was being overly sensitive and that Elliot heard the lawyer pronounce it "Negroes" so he should stop making these objections which only delay the case. And when

CB asked the Court to instruct opposing counsel not to address Negro witnesses by their first names I thought the judge would have a heart attack. Elliot used to be in the Georgia Legislature - at the time when Twitty (opposing counsel in the Baker County case) was Speaker of the House - so you can imagine his reaction when CB told him to stop calling people by their first names.

Now for the clippings: One about CB's oldest brother who has been expelled for his Nationalistic politics from more countries than one can count. This is the latest in his lifelong adventure. The other one is on SCLC in Lincolnton. SCLC went into Crawfordsville which had an organized movement and took it over - similar to the Americus situation. But then they went into Lincolnton, in the next county, which had no Movement - and of course they just started marching - and not only did no one follow, but the Negroes ran them out of town. These are not the middle-class Negroes who are making their own little deals with the white folks down town and don't want outsiders coming into their action - but poor folks who are just fed up with all the bullshit, all the promises, and being left to take the beating. They saw what SCLC did in Crawfordsville and don't want it to happen to them. This cult of the leader with SCLC is really grotesque. Not only is Martin "The Leader", but Hosea is also "Our Leader", and now Bolden has become a "Leader" too.

The last item is one which Wendy suggested you would be interested in - it helps give a clearer picture of Albany and explains why our time here is limited. There are 6 movies in town. Three drive-in's, two white movies downtown and one Negro movie. Last weekend we decided to go to the movies, so I called them all and this is what was playing:

State - "Darling"

Albany- "Old Yeller"

Capitol Drive In - "Demolition Derby" "Thunder in Dixie" "Nature Girl and the Slaver".

Georgia Drive In-"Cavalry Command" "Second Fiddle to a Steel Guitar"

Ritz (Negro) - "My Baby is Black" "Back Door to Hell".

Slapppy Drive In - "Mole People" "Deadly Menace" "Tarantula" "Von the Unbelievable".

(the drive in's here often have three and four films in an evening.)

See you in a week,