

Moses

August 4, 1963

Anne Braden  
4403 Virginia Avenue  
Louisville, Kentucky

Dear Anne,

Forgive me for not writing sooner, to let you know where I was. Your check reached me en route and at the most crucial time! Again, thank you so much. And thanks to Carl.

I am in Mississippi, but not with Diane. Upon reaching Atlanta, I was informed that the Center had not materialized and the plan would be temporarily shelved. Bob Moses needed someone to work in literacy, to write prospecti, and to coordinate several projects in the Delta. That is what I'm doing. Presently, I am living at Tougaloo. After August 15, I am not sure...probably Greenwood for a while.

We are in the process of writing a prospectus for a Southern Education Center. This prospectus must be finished within the next two or three weeks. Briefly, we feel that there is a need for a new institution in the South to conduct adult education and to handle school dropouts. There is no existing institution to reach adult Negroes and school dropouts in the South. Obviously, we cannot work such a program through the public schools of most southern states - not yet. The few vocational schools are not going to be open to the idea of literacy for Negroes. No church-related schools deal with literacy and, with the exception of parochial schools, these would not admit Negroes anyway. The three possibilities, among existing institutions, would be: parochial schools, military establishments, and the Peace Corps. We will hope to use all of these when the literacy program gets underway. At the present time, these institutions are not ready to engage in a training program for literacy workers, nor are they physically prepared to conduct classes. For this reason, we are going ahead with the Southern Education Center - a new institution.

The Center is to serve these functions: (1) the training of personnel who will be working in literacy across the South. These could be staff people from various organizations who wish to concern themselves with literacy but who wish to operate independent projects, I. e., not projects connected with the Center permanently. (2) the holding of adult education and re-training programs at the Center itself. The Center will have its own staff or program writers. (3) research and production of program materials to be used in literacy and re-training. (4) a clearing house for southern education related to literacy, school dropouts, and job training. Organizations involved would be civil rights groups, colleges, church and civic groups. Staff would be recruited from these organizations.

In short, the Southern Education Center will be a part of the whole literacy program. Presently, the literacy program is in the hands of foundations, the Department of Labor, the Justice Department, and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Within the month we should know what they intend to do about it. We feel that a concrete plan for the Center will hasten a favorable decision from them, since the Center would be a place to initiate the literacy work immediately. (We are fairly certain of securing a former church camp-farm near Vicksburg.)

The thing that needs to be done right away is this - research on existing institutions which could conceivably be used in the overall literacy work. I am writing someone in the Southern Regional Council, also people in the various southern states who would do this research. If you could help us with Kentucky and, for that matter, all the states. What we need is

- (1) existing institutions which could be used
- (2) possible ways in which they could be used
- (3) cost of leasing for say five years
- (4) names of persons connected with institutions to whom we could write
- (5) problems which might be encountered

I am writing people like Ella, Septina, Myles and Will Campbell. Please offer your suggestions on all of this and give us names of existing institutions, people to contact, and so on. We want to hear from you and Carl regarding the whole literacy program, how you think it can best be worked out, the Southern Education Center. Furthermore, you are invited to come down and see the farm, the Delta, the people who are thinking about literacy. I really wish you could come and share your ideas and ... help me write this prospectus!

Have been in and out of Greenwood. Things are pretty tight over there and up in Clarksdale and Itta Bena. Lots of people still up at Parchman and it will take a great deal of bond money. They are getting organized for the August 6 election. There is a Mississippi law which says any person illegally denied the write to vote can present an affidavit to the election officials on election day. There will be thousands of those affidavits taken down Tuesday. If the officials refused to take them, we will collect and mail them to somebody like Javits. In addition, there will be a write-in vote for Medgar. Tim Jenkins has done work on this. It may be a turning point.

I still want to see you and Carl very badly. The trip from NYC was fast and via Atlanta. Shall we meet in Washington on August 28? Can you come here to talk some more, will you research this for us in Kentucky and elsewhere? It has to be included in the prospectus, so we should have data together in a week. Admittedly, this is very short notice - but for us as well.

Very eager to hear your thoughts on literacy in general, the Center, and if I can do some Delta features for the PATRIOT? Let us know.

love,

Jane

cc. Mr. Robert Moses