

103 North 10th Street
Monroe, Louisiana
May 14, 1964

Mr. Ronnie Moore
308 Ivey Street
Plaquemine, Louisiana

Dear Ronnie,

This is a quick summary of our scouting so far with some preliminary recommendations and thoughts.

1. Tensas. We have not been there yet, but a priest, Frere Thompson, from Ferriday, is going to check the parish out for us this weekend, and according to his report we will decide whether to scout it next week. However, from recent reports things are very tough there since Negroes started to register, and reprisals have frightened the most militant people there.

2. Madison. Brown and Richardson are in Tallulah as I write this, and we will let you know what we think when they return.

3. East Carroll. Rev. Scott seems to have the parish pretty well in hand. He and his citizens group are carrying out registration work, although from his description it is not as thorough and effective as we would do. But, it seems to be the best organized parish we have visited, outside of those we are working. They are having a meeting on May 21 which we will try to attend.

4. West Carroll. Rev. Scott says that Negroes are greatly outnumbered by whites here. Oddly enough he says many school teachers are registered. But, there is no leadership. We have had no contacts there, but will try to scout it.

5. Richland. From all indications so far we can and should work this parish. There are leaders here, but no leadership-if you get what I mean. There are potential leaders who do not provide any continuing leadership and direction to the community, but only get together momentarily on individual issues. Jasper Williams and Dr. Merrick talk militantly, but we have doubts as to their willingness to stick their necks out. We are planning a meeting with "community leaders" after school lets out. Might be able to find housing. The problem here is apathy. Registration is easy.

6. Catahoula. We have spoken to one contact in this parish--the high school principal in Sicily Island. He infers that there is no problem in registration and that they don't need us. Our impression is that Negroes have been used politically by white office holders who contact this principal and one or two other "Negro leaders" to herd Negroes to the registration office at election time. We plan to go back and contact other people in the parish.

7. Concordia. This is a real rough area. Our only contact is a young Negro Catholic priest, Frere Thompson, who has been in the parish only 1½ years, and who has already been reprimanded by the bishop for his civil rights activities. Frere Thompson is a very courageous man and wants to help, despite his Bishop and despite the fact that he is under constant surveillance by the police. He is very pessimistic about the people in the area and feels there are no local Negroes willing to sacrifice for the movement. However, he plans to try to arouse some interest, and we have promised to come back this week to meet with him.

8. Franklin. This may be the worst parish of all. Our only contact is under constant harassment by the local busters, according to reports, and the KKK is very active. We are trying to make contact with other people here.

9. Morehouse. Registration is no problem. Getting Negroes to register is. We have made better contacts than Mr. and Mrs. Adams, and have spoken to one, Doug Riser. He feels that we could be of great use in the parish, but that local people would be scared off by interracial teams working and living in the parish. He doubts we could find housing for whites. Some Klan activity. Our feeling is that we should work the parish and commute from Monroe at the start. More scouting.

10. Jackson. We have contacted Mr. Flanagan again and he was as enthusiastic as before. Says however, that he can't get meeting together until school lets out at end of May. We think we should work here. Should be able to get housing.

11. Lincoln. You probably know more from your talk with McNeal. at Grambling. We should scout the Ruston area. Probably won't work there but should offer parttime help.

12. Caldwell. Caldwell parish is full of good white folks who give Negroes what they want if they ask--as long as it isn't integration. The leadership in this parish seems to be old. The head man is W.P. Moore, high school principal who lives in

a white residential area and was MCKeithen's guest at the inauguration last week. There is one man we have seen who shows promise, and one or two we havent seen. But, generally it seems the folk don't want trouble--spelled CORE. Registration is pretty easy. The registrar is a lovable old man and the sherriff is "peachy keen." And our school is as good as theirs and white folks love Negroes and everybody is happy. Yes, the whole parish is segregated. However, there does seem some basis of organization. Negroes have boycotted some places which have been the scene of incidents. And, we might have some grass r oots support for a program. Needs more scouting.

13. Union. We have not yet returned to Union parish, but feel, after our talk with Miss. Bright that we should plan to work here. Will go back next week.

O.K. Now let me give some personal observations which Henry Brown concurs in. It is my feeling that we should choose 4-6 parishes in the 5th Congressional District for the project and concentrate our efforts with no less than 4, and more if possible, workers in each parish. Some parishes will need 7-8 workers. I do not feel we will find housing for interracial teams in most of the parishes--if any housing at all, and we sho should plan to house the workers in Monroe and 1 or 2 other places, and have them commute daily to their areas. I feel this will be necessary, at least at the beginning. I think we can work it so that noone need travel more than 30 miles to their area from where they will live.

I think we need to concentrate our efforts in a few parishes rather than spread out into 8 parishes. My reasons are grounded in the reception I feel the whites will give us--tough. After we have begun we can then spread out. But, initially, the Negroes in most of these parishes will be scared to death of us. The approach used in moving into W. Feliciana from E. Felic. is like what I mean, although in most of these parishes the problem is not the registrars as in W. Felic.

Well, we can talk about this when we have more complete information.

Fredon brother,

Mike
Mike

cc: Dick Haley
File