

Bruce Hartford
C/O Browns Chapel
Sylvan St.
Selma, Ala.

4/2/65

Dear Lyn

It is hard to ~~ix~~ describe the situation down hear, as there is so much to tell that I can't remember what to say. I'm pretty tired and so my usual incoherence and poor spelling is even worse but maybe you can decipher what I am trying to say. I can't put things in any order so I will talk about things as I think of them.

The thing that is on everyones mind is, of course, trouble. Trouble with the cops and trouble with the Klan, and trouble with the plain old local whites. With-in 24 hours after the end of the march on Montgomery we had a worker shot and killed (which I am sure the you heard about), we also had here in Selma (with-in a few blocks of Browns Chapel) two diferant people shot at. The morning after the March a friend (Negro) and I were walking down Jeff Davis st. (a few blocks from the chapel) when a car load of whits pulled up to us and stuck out a double harrelled shotgun at us. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ I am not ashamed to say that we were both terrified and rooted to the spot. One of the white kids said "Were going to kill you niggers". We were to scaird to move so my friend said "If you're going to kill us go ahead and do it" Then the white kids just laughed and drove away while we shakily made our way to the chapel. We can not walk downtown during the daytime with less the 3 people in a group and we are not supposed to walkdowntwon at night at all. We can't even walk in the Negro communitie at night with out a group. We can't go into the white residential communitie no matter how large a group because if we go in a large enough gropue to be protected we will be arrested. Which brings up the police. Since the March there has been a number of arrests Ther were 6 people arrests for petty larceny (There were people from Boston and were all substaintial types) They were accused of stealing a newspaper from a gas station. There have also been other arrests. We are being sued by Selma for illegal activities and the cost of protecting us and also by the bus company for damages because of the bus boycott that is going on (started because they used the busses to haul away arrested demonstrators) the total suit comes to over \$150,000. Up untill a few day's ago all the news people had press passes issues by sheriff Jim Clarck. However a ~~fx~~ couple of days ago all press passes were cancelled and no more have been issued. I don't know for sure what that will mean as far as the operation of the press. I could mean that come trouble all of the press will be kept away.

The weather here is verychangeable Sometimes hot and sultry sometimes very very cold (~~ix~~ like 25) sometime raining. If teo days go by with out rain there is talk of the terrible drought.

I arrived here the night of the second attempt to March to Montgomery (the night Reeb was killed) (attacked rather) This was the march led by the ministerers which King had made a deal with the p police that he would turn back. The next day (Wednesday)we started a march to the court house to have a prayer for Reeb. We were stoped before we got out of the project. The march then split up into 3 or 4 sections a and each tried to get tot eh court house by a differant direction. The cops went ~~xxxx~~ afterus with their clubs. Eventually we were all stoped and turned around. I wasn't hurt but some of the group that I was with were hit with the clubs. Mostly by the Lingo kids. A word hear about the types of cops. First are the city cops wearing white helmets these are the best of the cops, then comes the conservations officers (green helmets) and the posse men (yellow helmets) both under sheriff Jim Clirk , the come the "lingo kids" these are the State troopers under Al Lingo they ~~xxxx~~ wear Blue helmets, of all the cops the "lingo Kids" are the worst. Anyway we got turned around on the march with some

John Lewis was beaten up by the cops. Later in the afternoon we started another march to the court house. We were again stoped. This time we said that we will wait there untill we were allowed to march. We were stretched across the street. They put up a rope across the road (Sylvan Ave) which we called the Berlin Wall, later they put up saw horses. At the same time they surrounded the projects which was the staging area for all of the demonstrations with police and they would not let any vehicles into the area. This meant that we could not bring in any

food which after a few days became in short supply. Anyway for almost a week 50 to 200 people were lined up at that wall singing at the top of their voices day in day 24 ~~hours~~ hours a day. During rain and heat ~~we~~ many slept in the street. I guess you read about that so I won't spend to much time talking about its. Anyway after a number of day's of this we got a court order allowing us to march. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the order said that we would be allowed to walk on the side walk. But we didn't want to walk on the side walk so we tried to walk on the street and were again stoped. Then the SCLC decided to walk on the side walk and we did all the way to the court house. After that there was marches attempted almost every day for a while some of which were stoped and some (those with court order were let through) alo of the were an the sidewalk. Most of the marches wer called so that the ministers who had come down to Selma for a few days would have had a demonstration they went on.

Along about this time the demonstration was beaten back in Montgomery and a lot of the attention shifted there. Any way I will here skip by all of the multi~~itudinous~~ happenings before the march.

Before I go any further I should mention that there is varying amounts of friction between SNCC and SCLC neither of whom are all right a or all wrong in my opinion. However I will leave to another letter to go into all of the complicated mess most of which is kept secrete from us privates anyway. I will say that generally but not always I agree with the SNCC policies, unfortunatly SNCC hass more fucked up people in it thew SCLC and it is extremely difficult for a white person the work with them. ~~SNCC xxxxxx~~ I might also mention that at this time neither SNCC or SCLC are allowing white workers into most of the counties because 1. it is to dangerous and 2. the Negroes would not know how to accept them. Anyway from my discussions with the SNCC leaders they are not accepting any white workers at this time, and few Negro workers as they are trying to recruit local Negroes into the movement. SCLC maybe accepting a very few white workers in a few weeks maybe. Anyway that is the situation I am going to stay here for a while and try to get on one of the staffes but I don't know how long I can stay here without some formal affiliation. ~~XX~~ There are about 30 of us (white and Negro) who want to stay on down here ~~xxx~~ and we are all trying to get on to one of the staff. If little sister thinks that she can come down here and get on staff she had better check not only with Atlanta but with the local SNCC offices here before she comes because I know of three people here from New York who were told by the New York office of SNCC that they would be accepted by SNCC as staff and when they got here they got a rude awakining, they had been pretty confidant as it had all been "arranged" by New York. Don't get the ~~xxx~~ idea that I am not doing anything down here because there is work for non-affiliated persons it is just that I am extremely limited in what I am allowed to do and it is very hard to keep in contact. Anyway things are pretty confused here and maybe in a few weeks things will be straightened out enoguh sos I can write you with some ~~xxxxx~~ concrete Positive information as to what people they are accaptng (if any).

A word also about the songs that are sung down here and who sings them . Everybody but everybody sings Freedom songs down here on demonstrations and off. The other day I was at one of the elementary schools and I saw some little girls standing in the yard during recess singing "this little light of Mine " The young children here are fantastic 6 year old girls lead mass singing, 7 year olds are already veterans on many demonstrations and arrests. They keep cool in situations where the ministers from the North lose theirs. Anyway the songs down here are sung all of the time. Generally they are the same songs we sing except that they have two that are new.

~~xxxxxxx~~

da dot da da da dot
da dada ~~xxx~~ dada dot etc.

I read in the paper
da dot da dada dot
just the other day
da dot dadad dot
that the freedom fighters
da dot ~~xxxx~~ da dada dot
was on their way
da dot da dada dot
they w^s coming by bus
da dot da dada dot
and by airplane too
da dot da dada dot
they would even walk
da dot da dada dot
if we asked them too
da dot da dada dot
ooohhhhhh Wallace
never can jail us all
oooohhhhhh Wallace
segregation is bound to fall

This song has other verses but I am too tired to write them, anyway you get the idea. Theysing this all the time.
Another song is the Berlin wall song.

We got a rope they call the
Berlin Wall
Berling wall
Berling wall

We got a rope they call the
Berlin Wall in Selma Alabama

Hate is the thing that
Built that wall
mbuilt that wall
built that wall
Hate is the thing that
built that wall in Selma Alabama

Love is the thing that'll
make it fall
make it fall
make it fall
Love is the thing that'll
make it fall in Selma Alabama

Were going to stand here
till it falls
till it falls

4-1-65

till it falls
were going to stand here
till it falls in Selma Alabama.

There are also some other verses to this song.
There is another song they sing here which if sung in L.A. would sound ridiculous but somehow, down here, it doesn't sound ridiculous at all and in fact they really do in a sense. There is nowhere near the hatred down here that there is up there.

I love everybody
I love everybody
I love everybody
In my heart

I love Jim Clark
I Love Jim Clark
I love Jim Clark
In my heart

etc etc etc etc.

I am too tired to write to much more so I will describe the march in another letter. I looking over what I have written (i am to tired to correct the spelling and typing sorry) I see that I have cleverly managed to miss the whole point, and the is the people who are so fantastic I can't tell. Anyway I'll have to try in next letter.

One last thing please, please, please, try to send Money, FOOD repete FOOD, clothes, and if possible books (If you have a book drive only collect those \$1.75 paperback college books or other good books (we are trying to get Selma University (Negro) on it's feet. Also books to help lower grades of school. But don't waste money shipping down Mickey Spillane or ten copies of a book by some obscure author in the original latin which somebody sent down)))

Your ~~nigxx~~ nigger loving, white nigger, human flotsam, beatnik, mother fucking, son of a bitch, stupid bastard, commie fascist, left wing, dirty, ~~xxxx~~ crazy, ass hole, loving friend

Bruce Hartford
Bruce Hartford

P.S. I just heard that Saturday we are going into the downtown area to picket the white stores to dramatise the boycott. Boy, that gonna cause some trouble! Be prepared to hear of some arrests and or beating. They are going to try to have picketing all over the State of Alabama and you know that some where thers going to be trouble.

If you send any food or money etc. send it to

Dallas County Voters League
Rev. F.D.Reese
1566 Range Street
Selma, Alabama

4-2-65

Right here I would like to show you a representative sample of the News coverage of our activities here in the south. This article I copied out of the Montgomery Advertiser. I would have copied an article out of the Selma papers but they are not as objective as the Montgomery papers are. This article is reporting on a speech given by congressman Dickinson however it is almost the same as what is printed as straight news stories. I am sorry that I could not find the news story reporting on how the nuns were screwing in the streets but I lost that paper before I wrote this letter.

DRUNKENNESS, SEX ORGIES
BLEMISHED MARCH**DICKINSON

WASHINGTON- (ap)

Rep. Wm. L. Dickinson R-Ala. charged today that "Drunkness and sex orgies marked last weeks big civil rights march in Alabama.

He said in a speech to the house that such misconduct was the order of the day in Selma, on the road to Montgomery, and in Montgomery. He charged that the Communist Party and the Communist apparatus is the under girding structure for all of the racial troubles in Alabama for the last three months.

Dickinson who represents the congressional district in which Montgomery is located, was in Montgomery last week and witnessed the conclusion of the voting rights march.

Human flotsam flock to the standard of civil rights, he asserted because this clothes them with morality and a purpose which they otherwise lack.

He said they were recruited and promised \$10 a day and all the sex they want from opposite members of either race.

Free love among this group is not only condoned it is encouraged. he said It is a fact and their way of life. Only by the ultimate sex act with one of another color can they demonstrate they have no prejudice

He read from a pamphlet he said was passed out to the marchers inviting them to a burlesque show. This show was held nightly in one of the tents during the Selma-to -Montgomery march.

There were many-not just a few- instances of sexual intercourse in public between Negroes and whites he said

Negro and white freedom marchers invaded a Negroe church in Montgomery and engaged in an all-night session of debauchery within the church itself. The leadership of the church had to get help to have these "freedom marchers" put out of their church...

There is very little straight news coverage of our activities down here most of the coverage is in the form of statements by prominent people like the one above. Techniquelly the paper is not guilty of any of the lies above Mr. Dickinson is. But almost all the coverage of our activities is as I said in the form of such statments. By the way in all the News media and T.V. down here I have never once seen Mrs. Liusso's picture either in the papres or on T.V.