

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

12th & CENTRAL
HORTON, KANS. 66439

Harvey G. Beach, Minister

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July 15, 1964

Mrs. Annie Devine
347-D, Pritchard Apts.
Canton, Mississippi

Dear Mrs. Devine:

I do hope that things have settled back down to normal after the invasion of these preachers. For some, I fear, it was "I came not to serve, but to be served." As I remarked to Claude Wess, "It takes all different kinds of us to make up the world." And now that I have revealed myself as a judge of my fellow preachers, I must look out for the beam which is in my own eye.

My thoughts have never left Canton. In the midst of all the activity of trying to get back into the routine, different persons steal in, and a prayer goes up for your continued safe-keeping. I hope that the registration program has been a success, and that this will be a significant moment at the Democratic Party Convention a few weeks hence. You can rest assured that I shall sit glued to my television set. Since being in Mississippi, it seems that any news items just seem to leap out of the paper at me.

You asked me about any ideas I might have to give, and I responded with a rather shallow suggestion that education for voting should be stressed among the adults. After reflecting on it from a more objective viewpoint, I feel it is still important, but that it should be only a part of a total educational program for all qualified adults. The matter of communicating depends upon knowing the language, and this basically is the teaching of English. I don't think it should only be practical things, but also an attempt at cultural uplift as well.

Would there be any possibility of utilizing some of the local teachers in such a program of adult education. Perhaps one or two nights a week to begin with, then expanding it as needed. This would mean that possible church buildings would be needed, or other suitable building space which could be adapted.

At the moment there should be some attempt to prepare local leadership to assume responsibility for taking over the program and directing activities when these summer volunteers are gone. I know that Rev. McRee is burdened with his church duties, in addition to the time which he is already giving to leadership in the movement, but would there be a qualified person who could serve as coordinator, who could work with Rev. McRee, yourself, and others who have been giving leadership all along. I suspect the CORE staff workers have already been thinking about this, and have some plan of action in mind.

I would appreciate very much being kept informed about Canton. As I said, it is still very much a part of me, and always will be. One does not come into a community and live in such close harmony with you, without leaving something of himself. I never felt so guilty about leaving. Your extreme patience, and yet quiet persistence was certainly an encouragement at times when things seemed futile. (I'm not referring to the opening day, which was a real "ball" as the college students would call it.) I mean the days when people just didn't seem to respond as you called on them. Just talking with you sent me back more determined the next day.

Thank you so much for all that you did for me.

Cordially, *Harvey*