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17 Yarmouth Street
Boston 16, Mass.
April 28, 1961

Dear Elroy,

This letter is being sent to you at Morris Brown. I hope it reaches you there. Perhaps I should try first to send it to the state prison farm? Or have you been behaving? Well, as far as I've heard no one is now in prison in Georgia so I trust you are in school.

As you have realized by now, I am now good at keeping up with my correspondence. I should have written long ago. I don't know how long this letter will be. I want to leave the apt. in about twenty minutes to mail it. Some FOR members are going down to the state capital to join a SANE demonstration and picket line, protesting Civil Defense Alert Day and the Mass. legislature plans now being debated, of building a civil defense shelter for the state govt. about thirty miles out from Boston costing many millions (of course, blueprint plans for the shelter are good but no one has yet worked out a plan to evacuate the governor and staff from the statehouse in the heart of downtown city traffic all the way out to Framingham, a minor detail----and if a bomb does hit Boston there won't be anyone left around New England to govern except the other state officials playing cave man somewhere). This SANE demonstration should be very interesting---probably half the group on the picket line itself will be profs (MIT, HARvard, BU, Brandeis, etc.).

Here I go already---this has to be a reasonably short note, and I'm already wanting to talk with you about all sorts of things. And you and I do have some more pressing personal business right now. I assume you've heard from Mr. Gray that we are to be back on trial May 8. Well, that poses lots of issues and ideas. I'll just hurriedly jot down some of my thoughts as they hit me here at the typewriter. No doubt, I'll omit something important, but maybe we can catch up on that later. At least we do have a few days now to think and plan.

1. Should you and I try to meet earlier to talk all this over? The best schedule I can arrange is to fly out of Boston late Sunday nite, May 7, arriving in Atlanta (Eastern Airlines) at 3:56 AM; then after a few hours leaving Atlanta at 7:05 AM (maybe that means a switch to Delta Airlines, I'm not sure) and reaching Montgomery at 7:25 (CST). That would then get me to Gray's office just about 8:00. That wouldn't give us much talking time---unless you might meet me at Atlanta airport in the middle of the nite. So, should we need more time, it can be arranged. I might plan on reaching Mtgny on Sunday----if that's where you'd be, you could meet me in Atlanta in the morning and then we could go to the church, talking, thinking, etc., then go on to Montgomery by bus or train (check into schedules if that seems worthwhile and let me know) The "idea" mentioned above was that a bus trip over Ga. and Alabama might be interesting.

2. Should we continue the appeal on our case---or should we serve the sentence? I don't know. The NAACP I think had planned on our cases being argued with the other trespass, sit-in cases before the US Supreme Court in the fall. Dr. AK Chalmers here at BUSTh. says even Thurgood Marshall himself has been in on our particular case because of the unique angles---i.e., two ministers, hotel seg., guest in hotel, etc., and etc.--as well as the more popular appeal our case would have, public sympathy and support wise, than some of the other cases.

really have no legal opinions on the matter at all) our case would be allowed out of Alabama state courts and into federal courts in time to reach the Sp. Ct. to be of any value in this particular ruling. (Of course, should the Sp. Ct. uphold the other trespass convictions, which is certainly possible, it might be good to still have our case "in the works" so that at least the courts might legally open up hotels if not a broader ruling for all restaurants)... If I sound confusing anywhere, its because I'm trying to type fast and these thoughts are just sort of pouring forth in a jumbled fashion). If our cases have no particular value beyond themselves then (althou I'm not saying that is the situation) I wonder if we should involve the NAACP in all the additional expe ses of carrying on our cases.....

3. I know very little about the current situation in the deep south, or in Montgomery. Perhaps you don't know that much more about Mtgmy. I know what they have done about the NYTimes fines, etc. Maybe, this is just another idea (I'm trying to think of all the possibilites), the witness of our serving the sentences might be very helpful to the general cause in the South and might fit in with Ga, SC., etc. students taking jail terms---or mightbe valuable because of particular situations in Montgomery---in either white, Negro, or both communities. Don't get me wrong, I don't want to go to jail, but if this will help, then you know I'm willing.

4. If it should be decided for whatever reasons that we should go ahead and serve our sentences now, I'd like to have some ideas before I leave Boston so I can know what to say to Jeannette (who takes all of this very well, altho I know it is very hard on her---really much harder on her than on me---but our God gives strenght to each of us to help bear our particular burdens....) In the second place, should it be decided that we are to go to jail, I'd like an idea how long it will be---the whole 3 months or possibly the court would cut it down---or make it longer..... School wise here it'd be good to have some idea before I leave..... Another thing, if we go to jail perhaps we should make the most of the occasion. Perhaps the Sunday before we go should be spent in Mtgmy, maybe in church....

5. You probably have as many thoughts on all this that I don't know about, so let me know some of your own personal involvements---perhaps the cases should at least be continued till fall because of your school term, etc.

Going rapidly is the time, to say the least. I've got to finish this and leave. How have you been? And how is the movement in Atlanta? News sounds good but I take all press reports cautiously. And what do you think of Miss.? I'm really thrilled and encouraged---and inspired!---by those students in Jackson. Let me hear from you soon---if you're too busy to write much, just send a few words. Should you need to phone, my number is Circle 7-9029.

Yours, In Christ,