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June 10, 1963
University, Miss.

Dear Bill and Betty:

Tonight we are entering into a new phase of the Meredith affair. I hadn't seen Black Jim since May and decided to go talk with him and meet McDowell. His light was out and yet when I entered Baxter Hall, the two marshals there quizzed me as though they were sure I was an emissary of the Citizens Council. It soon was made clear as to why they were edgy. For the first time since September 1st, these two men in civilian clothes, were the only ones guarding Meredith and McDowell. The army is still out on the edge of town, in what numbers I don't know, but tonight there is not a soldier on the campus or in town. I'm sure that the word will get out quickly and then we'll see what will happen. I just don't know - but I can't believe that the idiots won't at least think of action in such a case. McDowell, whom I didn't see because he was at the Law library, and Meredith do have the Venetian blinds closed but anyone can walk up to their window and not be noticed, and as a matter of fact can also see into the lighted room. The word most certainly will get around about this. I'm sure that the army is taking its calculated risk but it is a big risk, it seems to me. Yet it had to be done some time. Meredith acts as though he couldn't care less and I'm sure this is the way he really feels.

As a matter of fact, Meredith, for the first time in my presence, seemed to be somewhat bored with the whole business. I suggested that as soon as he gets a degree if he does at the August commencement, and returns to Jackson without marshals, he may well be picked up to serve the sentence that has already been imposed by at least one court. He wouldn't have much recourse, I should think, because he not only was sentenced in absentia but he did not appeal. He says that he will just ignore the whole thing but how he can do this if he is put in jail is beyond my comprehension. I suppose that the Justice Department has this all figured out.

Also, for the first time, Meredith doesn't seem to be absolutely sure as to his next step. Previously, he had talked with me about going on a tour to raise the million dollars he wants for the Meredith Educational Fund. But he doesn't like the idea of trying to raise money by speaking all over the country and I don't see how he can do otherwise. I suggested that he would have to improve his Meet the Press appearance and he bridled at this, with the correct feeling that he had done damned well. He said as much. And when I pointed out a few technical deficiencies he came back with the idea that it is more effective if you don't speak too properly. Which may be all right but he will have to do better and I'm sure he will. His content on that program was excellent but not his stammering at the beginning of each sentence. Not stammering, but hesitating and starting each sentence with - "Well ---". I don't think that he knows at the moment what he will do in September. He was a little miffed at being "outmanoevered" in his attempt to get housing for himself and wife. He said that he had put in an application in 1961 and that the University just lied about it once more. Judge Mize apparently accepted the University view that the application somehow just had not been processed. Meredith also said that Binford Nash just lied in court about having taken all of his stuff out of his room back in January when, as a matter of fact, he had left everything there except the clothes he took home and a few books. He is definitely of the opinion that the Chancellor cannot be trusted, that he is just as "sly" and "immoral" as Willis said he was. He doesn't think much of going to school three hours in the morning and three more in the afternoon. This is the most he has ever gone to school, and he isn't too happy with having to take biology but he admitted he might learn something new there. He seems to like McDowell - roomed with him at Jackson State - and said, jokingly, that if someone shot into the room and didn't get both, he would now have a fifty-fifty chance of survival, something new for him. Of course he has never shown any real sign of physical fear and doesn't now. But he is a changed man, or was tonight, and I'm quite sure how. I guess that he just is tired of it all and wants to get on to something else. Love.