

October 15, 1962

Dear Faith,

Gee, you have been gone just a few hours, and already I feel as if there were some things terribly missing in New York. I wish I could have accompanied you to the station, although I had assumed that it might be a purely family affair. With my most precious folks all scattered - you, Peggy, Hank, Bonnie, etc., - I feel so detached and lonely about the whole movement, because it is hard to feel related to it unless you are in close communication with people who "swing with it."

I am truly sorry that we cannot communicate better than we do. There is always so much to say, and so much difficulty involved in the saying of it. I can only say that when you are not present at a given gathering, your absence is felt, and when you are present, your presence is felt and noted. A poet once sang:

Where e'er you walk, cool breezes fan the glade;

Trees where you walk shall draw into the shade -

Trees where you walk shall draw into the shade....

You may hear that song down there. I envy you the opportunities you will have to sing lustily about freedom, or better still, to "be present at the birth of a song." (I hope you like to sing). If they ever sing "Soldiers in the Army" or "Been down into the South" - my favorites, aside from "Overcome" and "Freedom," I hope you will think of me.

ALL-Benny will be quite an experience. I hope you keep personal notes about your experiences for the future records, since it is in the nature of social movements to wax and wane, to stumble and to stride forward, to "goof" and to progress, to fail and to overcome. I hope that it is within your capacities to be a combination of Rev's King and Abernathy - with your head in the clouds and your feet on the ground.

I miss you so much, Faith. I hope you can hit the optimum balance necessary in the movement - the "me" and the "us" - or in the words of the songs, "freedom over me" and also "we shall overcome." Sociologists call it "Autonomy and Interpersonal Competence" which is just another way of saying "If not I, then who; if not ~~there~~, then ~~where~~;" and if not now, then when?"

Oh Faith, much might happen. Jail - that's your business - though not your central mission. The Negro community of Albany @ I hope and pray and assume that many will be like my dear Beau and Goldie - please give them my regards. The "discipline on the line" - I don't know what happened to that, except that I hope they retain enough of it to sustain their "image." Directions of social movements change daily, and I hope you are adjustable. I may have to depend on you to let me know wherever I can be of help. Stay well, dear Faith...

Love - Bob