

SUMMERLANE

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Box 686, Rosman, N. C.

June 28, 1963

Mr. Ray Ferris and
Mr. Joel Fleischman
Office of the Governor
Raleigh, North Carolina

Gentlemen:

The Rev. von Hilsheimer has asked me to inform you of the events attendant upon our opening an integrated camp in western North Carolina. Soon after our arrival, we received threats from local people which we were not inclined to take seriously, since these were members of a hoodlum minority. Recently, however, we have received warnings and offers of help which in themselves constituted warnings of a high degree of danger, both for ourselves and the children at our camp.

The first official warning came from the sheriff of Transylvania County, Carter McCall, who told us that he would do all he could to protect us, but that with two deputies there was not much chance for him to cover the entire county and that there was a very strong likelihood that he would only be able to arrive in time to investigate what had already happened.

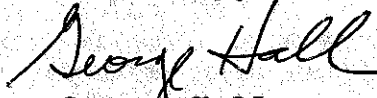
During our attendance at a meeting of the Rosman Town Council, we were told quite strongly by the County Clerk and Austin Hogsed, the Mayor of Rosman, that it was strongly against local custom for Negroes to even be in the area and that it would be an extremely dangerous situation for both us and the children.

Our most recent experience came at a meeting with the Rev. Dan Wallen, head of the local Ministerial Association, Mr. N. A. Miller, Jr., the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. John Smart of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, Mayor Hogsed and several businessmen. This meeting was arranged by the above gentlemen for the purpose of acquainting themselves with our plans and cautioning us against them. These men are of the group that was able to peacefully integrate the Brevard school system. We were told that Rosman is practically a different country and that they felt that the only response to an integrated camp or even to a single Negro in the area would be violence. They offered us their advice, which was to abandon our plans. Their interests lay primarily in their belief that there is no way to avoid injury or possibly death on one side or the other. They are also concerned about the effect that violence would have on their efforts to attract industry to Transylvania County and on the very profitable summer camp industry in the area. These gentlemen pledged their help in averting trouble. However, they felt that their efforts would not be effective.

In his discussions with the Rev. von Hilsheimer, Governor Sanford said that he would do all in his power to help us. This is a situation in which any help you could provide would forestall violent and illegal action, and avoid nasty publicity for the State of North Carolina, besides being of great benefit to ourselves.

Our official camp opening date is July 2nd. Since we are transporting the children to camp in buses, we do not anticipate their arrival before July 6th. I would greatly appreciate hearing from you concerning any action which you are willing to take.

Sincerely,


George Hall

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