

the horrible part about being aware of changes in your thinking and feeling about mississippi and civil rights is that in the back of your mind are all the taunts of the older generation and all the generations before you. part of the reason why you stay is an unwillingness to join the waves of disillusioned humanists of the past. nevertheless with each day the problems get more and more complex, your consciousness of the tentative solutions you propose as inadequate more and more acute, your state of mind, your emotions, more harried, your nerves more frayed. you have begun to split yourself up. you keep on doing the same things you began to, only the emotion that backs them is no longer enthusiasm, but endurance, and endurance is a type of schizoid thing, it consists of watching yourself wondering how long you can keep on functioning. you have developed an inner life in conflict with your outer one, and are therefore isolated from simple channels of communication with others. even when you know others around you are going through some of the same changes, you do not talk about it, in an honest way. there is still too much outward loyalty for you to talk aloud about doubts, except at times when things are the most difficult, and then only to perhaps one other person, and in the strictest confidence. if you leave, you leave with no grand tirade against what you have been working for, no lashing out at what you no longer believe is possible to effect, but with a feeling of personal inadequacy to keep on fighting. why should it be that way? you must have put alot of your personal feelings and beliefs at stake to feel so personally defeated. probably part of the reason that you keep on going is because the alternatives are so grim. no matter how little is being accomplished in respect to how much is necessary, it soon becomes clear the holocaust that will ensue if everyone gives up. the reeducation that is necessary for even the negro community to evolve the type of society you're interested in is impossible, and yet changes will continue at an alarming rate, no matter if you are there or not.

and aside from the fate of the movement or of the negro in the south or any of that, there's your own fate to think about. when you turn your back on an unpleasent situation with unpleasant perspectives, does this mean you have given up a life populated with anything else but yourself? no, the alternative is not necessarily scarsdale, but then, what is it? does leaving mississippi mean leaving behind idealism, which has been taught to you as synonymous with leaving your youth? what will you have conceded when you leave, and can you afford that concession? how does a life centered around yourself look, or a life centered around the cultivation of the arts, or of pleasure, or of the mind? you are still too much caught up in your old feelings about the world for any of these things to look fulfilling. they at times look attractive, but not fulfilling. and you keep on. the distance between you and others increases. the new people are naive. you need them, as long as you continue to do your job, but you cannot really be honest with them as people. you wait for them to learn what you know, and then you still don't talk to them. the ones who are here and never see, or are here for other reasons than you, annoy you, irritate you, but you say nothing to them either. you keep on doing your job, and then this becomes destructive in itself. you stop thinking in terms of the whole movement and concentrate on trying to do your job well. you become petty and chauvinistic about your particular work, unable to get along with people in other fields, and slightly inhuman in your own field. the abstract ideal does not generate the warmth and love necessary for a leader to love the people he leads. you have stopped thinking of the abstract anyway. you are just going on.