

C O P Y

3816 West Biddison
Fort Worth, Texas 76109

Sunday, Mar 28, 1971

Dear Friends,

This will explain why I cannot answer your letters for the moment. I was called home yesterday from my research trip to Gethsemani because our oldest son, Johnny, age 15, was attacked and severely beaten by a gang. He will be all right.

The police think he was the victim of a group of super-patriots from a nearby rural community who wear cowboy boots and hats and come in to Ft. Worth, cruise around until they find some long-haired youngster, and beat him up. Johnny was out with a group of schoolmates. He and one of his friends were separated briefly from the group. His friend had very long hair. The men approached them, pretended to be friendly, and then started beating on the friend. Johnny tried to help his companion, and although he was clearly crippled (his foot heavily bandaged from recent surgery for a foot broken playing soccer), the gang turned on him, broke his left arm, got him down and stomped his head and face with their boots. Both youngsters were left unconscious. Neither of them could identify their assailants except to say it happened very quickly and the men had on cowboy boots and western hats. In the same area a 20 year old college student with shoulder-length hair was similarly attacked and beaten just prior to the attack on our son and his friend.

Now, with one foot and one arm in a cast, we have Johnny home. There was no skull fracture, but concussion. The doctors want us to watch him very closely for a few days.

He is a remarkably good patient, though he is in a lot of pain. He seems not to have been psychologically damaged by this, though he was in shock for a time. He is now wanting to return to school tomorrow.

So, with the full-time work on the book, the problems that have to be solved in just helping Johnny "function" with only half his body, the police investigation, etc. I am not able to write you personally for the moment.

John Howard Griffin

Great love to you, Nell,

Joe