

Dahmer Slayer Gets Life Sentence

Murder Conviction in Miss.

BY JONATHAN GORDON

HATTIESBURG, Miss.--A jury of 12 white men made history last weekend when it convicted Cecil Sessums of murder in the 1966 night-rider slaying of Negro civil rights leader Vernon Dahmer.

Sessums, 31, was the first of 11 alleged Ku Klux Klansmen from Laurel to be tried in state court here on murder and arson charges stemming from Dahmer's death.

Circuit Judge Stanton Hall sentenced Sessums to life imprisonment, after the jury failed to agree on the death penalty.

During the three days of testimony, the jury heard a bizarre tale of a 12-man conspiracy to attack Dahmer's home in Forrest County.

T. Weber Rodgers, a crippled former Klansman, testified that he participated in a "dry run"--or reconnaissance mission--on Dahmer's house, led by Sessums as "exalted cyclops" of a Laurel klavern.

"The plans were 'projects three and four'--burning and annihilation," said Rodgers.

He also testified that Sam Bowers Jr.--Imperial wizard of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and another defendant in the Dahmer case--was furious because the assassination of "that damn nigger down

south" was behind schedule.

The state's key witness was Billy Roy Pitts, who has already pleaded guilty to participating in the conspiracy to kill Dahmer. He said he was Sessums' bodyguard during the attack on Dahmer's home.

Pitts recalled seeing Sessums throw gasoline and torches through Dahmer's picture window. "Cecil said, 'Let him die,' when we heard a man's voice inside," Pitts testified.

The defense tried to discredit the testimony by calling Pitts the "government's bought liar." Defense attorney Lawrence Arrington produced three witnesses--Sessums' mother and two others--who said they were with Sessums at the time of the killing.

One of them--James Yount--was arrested for perjury after he denied membership in the Ku Klux Klan.

In his final argument, Arrington said, "There are some men in Washington who will be awfully sick if you (the jury) return the right kind of verdict. The federal government has sent down FBI men, federal marshals, and bought phony testimony from Pitts.

"You know Pitts is a bold-faced liar. He'd sell his soul to LBJ. . . and everybody in Washington. You know why they waited two years to bring up this case--this is an election year. And if the football is kicked in the right direction, somebody might run for a touchdown. And you know who I'm talking about

--that little man from Alabama."

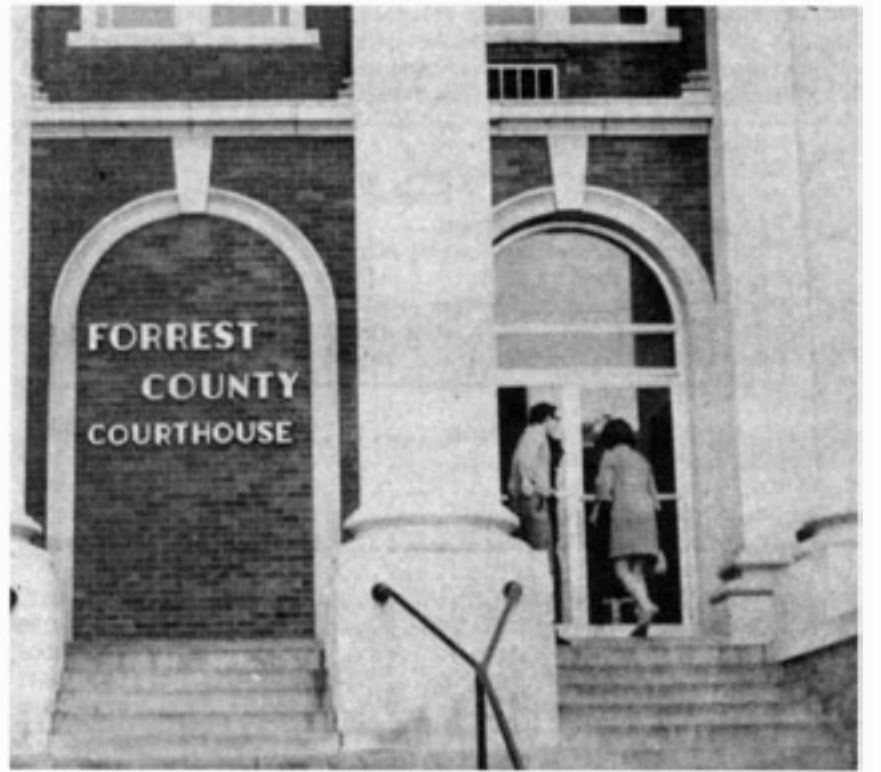
District Attorney James Finch replied, "Think of the trial Vernon Dahmer got. A farmhouse in the country--Sam Bowers, Judge, Cecil Sessums, prosecuting attorney. Vernon Dahmer was one of the finest men in our community--honest and hard-working. But these people from Jones County came down to Forrest County for projects three and four--arson and murder."

"If we turn justice over to the Klan," said Finch, "then we may as well tear down this courthouse, and send the judge and jury home. And I don't want to live here then. . . ."

"Now I didn't vote for LBJ. And I didn't agree with (former President) Kennedy. But that doesn't give me the right to kill him. I didn't want federal charges here. I wanted a Forrest County court, a Forrest County judge, and a Forrest County jury. "You 12 men represent Forrest County to the world when it comes to justice," Finch concluded. "May God help you in your deliberations."

Judge Hall carved wood almost continuously as he listened to the case. He said he was using a razor confiscated from a defendant in an assault case.

The two state witnesses--Pitts and Rodgers--were under constant guard by federal marshals and FBI agents. Pitts said he had moved his family to a secret location for safety. "You get a barrel of cement for crossing the Klan," he explained.



WHERE THE TRIAL WAS HELD

THE SOUTHERN COURIER

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TEN CENTS



JAMES K. BAKER (LEFT) ADDRESSES BOARD OF REVENUE MEETING

But Board of Revenue Says No

500 Demand Free Food At Meeting in Barbour

BY MARY ELLEN GALE

CLAYTON, Ala.--Five hundred people paid a visit to the Barbour County Board of Revenue last week at the courthouse in Clayton.

They overflowed the courtroom benches, crowded the jury boxes, and lined the walls three and four deep.

The visitors--poor people and their friends from all over Barbour County--came to ask the board of revenue to withdraw its application for food stamps and to support the surplus food program instead.

"Stamps cost money, commodities do not--it's just that simple," James K. Baker, attorney for half a dozen Negro civic groups, told the white revenue commissioners.

"These people here is just a few," added the Rev. L. C. Loman of Cllo. "Wouldn't have been able to get these people out here if they weren't terribly disturbed."

"I don't want to see no demonstrations, I don't want to see no marching--if they march I'm not going to be in it--but people may march if they don't get what they are entitled to."

Jury Suits Filed

MONTGOMERY, Ala.--Several citizens of Barbour, Bullock, and Henry counties complained last week that they are excluded from state-court juries because they are Negroes--or because they are women.

In three separate suits, the people asked the federal court here to halt state-court proceedings in all three counties until the jury boxes are emptied and re-filled. The new jury lists should accurately reflect the ratio of Negroes to whites and men to women in each county, the suits noted.

Only a "token number" of Negroes--and no women--have ever served on juries in the three counties, the suits said.

The people applauded Loman's remarks. And they clapped even more loudly when Mrs. Jimmie Lou Osborne said, "I think I'm speaking for all the people here--I don't want no part of no stamps."

The board of revenue didn't respond to the demands at the meeting. But this week, chairman John M. Dismukes said that present plans are to go ahead with the food stamp program.

He insisted that the people had been "misinformed." "I think they'll come to feel (stamps) are a mighty good program, once they understand it," Dismukes said.

The board of revenue endorsed the food stamp program at an earlier meeting March 6--after several white merchants said that free food would put them out of business.

By its action, the board canceled a two-year-old agreement with the District 24 Community Action Program. The CAP was planning to begin distributing surplus food next month.

At last week's meeting, the board of revenue left most of the talking to Cllo Mayor Dan Easterling, a strong supporter of food stamps.

"I'm mayor of the white and I'm mayor of the colored," Easterling said. "I know something about the needs of the poor people--both races."

Although the Negro civic groups were not invited to the March 6 meeting, Easterling said, the purpose was not "to discriminate against anybody. We met to represent you."

He said surplus food consists mostly of "dried milk" and "wormy beans," but stamps are "something just as good as a \$1 bill." Given the choice between getting \$70 worth of free food and paying \$10 for \$80 worth of stamps, "I daresay you'd rather have the stamps," Easterling commented.

"No! No!" shouted back several people in the audience.

And John Kelly Jr., a civil rights leader from Eufaula, pointed out that surplus food is the same food the coun-

ty uses in its school free-lunch program. "I think the federal government puts out quality food," Kelly said.

Other people wanted to know whether it would take another two years to get the food stamp program started. Gorman Houston, the board's attorney, claimed that state and federal officials told him the program can begin very soon.

But Oscar Bentley, head of the Alabama bureau of commodity distribution, admitted this week that the U. S. Department of Agriculture has said it won't add any food stamp programs before July 1. "But you never know what the federal government will do," he added.

ACHR DIRECTOR RESIGNS

AUBURN, Ala.--Bob Valder, executive director of the Alabama Council on Human Relations for the last two years, is resigning as of May 1.

In a letter to ACHR officials, he outlined some of the reasons why he is leaving.

"The nature of human relations councils is that much of their work contributes to few TANGIBLE results--and sometimes to few intangible results," he wrote.

"Although fund-raising and membership drives are necessary and good," Valder continued, "they tend to take an inordinate amount of time--time which could better be used on projects."

In addition, he said, "I have found it to be extremely difficult for a staff person to have much influence in getting local chapters active and effective."

"Where you have a good, active and effective local chapter--and that's pretty rare--it is almost entirely due to the local leadership. Where the chapter is less than desirable--which is not rare--that is almost entirely due to local leadership, and there's not much

Police Chief, Trooper Arrested by Amerson

BY MARY ELLEN GALE

TUSKEGEE, Ala.--Shortly before midnight last Saturday, said Ocie Devance Jr., a 21-year-old Negro man, he was sitting alone in a friend's car outside the First and Last Chance tavern at the northern edge of Macon County.

Then, said Devance, Notasulga Police Chief Bobby Singleton drove up and arrested him for disorderly conduct.

During the next two hours, Devance told Macon County Sheriff Lucius D. Amerson this week, Singleton held a gun on him while State Trooper James Howard Bass beat and kicked him.

At one point, Devance, said, the two white law enforcement officers drove him out to the police pistol range between Notasulga and Tuskegee.

There, as the fog swirled up around his feet, Devance recalled, "Bass snapped the gun behind my head. Then Singleton said, 'Let's put this nigger off here and kill him. I don't want to get the blood all over me.'"

"I begged 'em please not to kill me. After that they taken me back to (the Notasulga) jail."

On warrants sworn out by Devance, Amerson--Alabama's only Negro sheriff--arrested Bass for assault and battery and Singleton for making threats with a dangerous weapon.

Both law enforcement officers were freed on \$300 bond to await the April 1 session of Macon County Inferior Court.

Neither officer could be reached for comment this week. But Amerson said Singleton signed a statement denying the accusations against him.

And Colonel C. W. Russell, state public safety director, said Bass is still on the job while the incident is being investigated. "A man's not guilty until he's proven so," Russell remarked.

Meanwhile, civil rights leaders and FBI agents joined in the investigation. "Things like this must not be allowed to happen," said the Rev. K. L. Buford, state field director of the NAACP. Devance, a soft-spoken young man, said his arrest for disorderly conduct

puzzled him. When Singleton and another Notasulga officer approached him outside the tavern, Devance said, "I asked why was they arresting me. I told them I hadn't said anything and I hadn't did anything."

But, he said, the officers put him in their patrol car and drove him to the jail in the Notasulga City Hall.

After booking him, Devance went on, Singleton took him into another room. "Trooper Bass came in and cut the

lights out," Devance recalled. "I was standing in the corner and he started beating me. He hit me one time with his hand, most times with his fist. He kicked me in the stomach and side."

While the beating was going on, Devance said, Singleton stood by, holding a gun.

Then, said Devance, the officers drove him out to the pistol range, and "Chief Singleton handed Bass a sawed-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE FIVE, Col. 4)

B'ham Company Accused Of Racial Discrimination

BY BOB LABAREE

BIH MINGHAM, Ala.-- Hayes International Corporation--a large federal contractor--employing over 4,500 people to make aircraft parts--has been accused of racial discrimination by one of its Negro employees.

And investigations by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) have supported the charge that certain hiring, training,

and advancement practices at Hayes work to keep Negroes in low-paid jobs.

In a federal-court suit filed here last month, Roosevelt Bitten claimed that he was turned down for a job as a stock clerk two years ago because there were "no openings at the time."

Instead, Bitten said, he was hired in the wash rack, an all-Negro department where aircraft parts are cleaned.

But the EEOC found that on the same day Bitten was turned down, six other men--one of whom was a Negro--were hired in the stock clerk department.

Bitten, who formerly worked as a stock clerk for a New York aircraft manufacturer, said his requests to be transferred from the wash rack have never been granted.

In addition, EEOC investigators said, no white man has ever been transferred into the wash rack department in its 15-year history.

Bitten said his job in the wash rack is not in the same seniority division as a stock clerk position, so he has little chance for advancement.

EEOC reported that between August and October of 1965, 62 men were hired for positions which are in the line of progression leading to stock clerk. But only five of the men were Negroes, the EEOC said.

The report also said 80% of the 210 Negroes who work at Hayes--Birmingham's third largest employer--are classified in labor grades 9 and 10, the lowest in the plant.

According to the EEOC, Hayes representatives explained the refusal to transfer Bitten on the basis of union agreements. The company said the unions do not permit employees to be transferred into a department until all men laid off from that department have been recalled.

And if Bitten had been hired as a stock clerk at the time he applied, the company claimed, he would have been laid off after June of 1966.



BOB VALDER

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Editorial Opinion

Suicide

The Barbour County Board of Revenue has decided to fill the pocketbooks of white grocers instead of the stomachs of poor black people. Despite angry protests from hundreds of Negro citizens, the board is not going to allow the local anti-poverty program to distribute surplus food. Instead, the county is planning to provide food stamps.

At last week's board of revenue meeting, civil rights leaders repeatedly pointed out that while surplus food is free, stamps cost money. But the board didn't seem to hear the arguments. It was too busy listening to Clio Mayor Dan Easterling. In an incredible oration, Easterling spoke about the "God-given right" to buy food--instead of getting it free. He didn't mention that God doesn't usually provide the cash.

Easterling also insisted that he knows what poor people need better than they do themselves. "I'm representing you," he claimed.

But the sad truth is that white officials in Alabama have seldom--if ever--been truly responsive to the needs of their black constituents. It was apparent at the meeting that most Barbour County Negroes place far more trust in federal officials they have never met than in local officials they have known all their lives.

By its action last week, the Barbour County Board of Revenue demonstrated the peculiar self-destructive tendency of local government in Alabama. White people in this state often complain that the heavy hand of the federal government is crushing "local control." But federal officials aren't really murdering local government. It's obviously a case of suicide.

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

I was pleased to see, in the March 9-10 edition, a couple of stories and a display ad concerning the war in Viet Nam. Anti-war activity and sentiment has been a little slow getting started in the South, even though it's way past time that we woke up and realized what the war is doing--not only to Viet Nam but also to the USA and to the whole world community.

I'm not a pacifist--maybe I should have been, but I've never thought through that position. Like most ordinary joes, I've just assumed that "war is hell," but what the hell, sometimes you have to go to war--sometimes you have to beat the Jesus out of the Adolf Hitlers and the John C. Calhouns. A bad show, but you got to do it.

Maybe at first that's what most of us thought was going on in Viet Nam. Well, it ain't so. To begin with, we are fighting a spook (something called "international communism," which doesn't exist, in spite of our State Department). Number 2: we're utterly annihilating a country and its people ("We found it necessary to destroy this town in order to save it"). Number 3: we are spending over \$2,000,000,000 a month on the war, which is a lot even for the USA. Number 4: we are, in the name of the war, turning aside from our domestic tragedies--poverty and racism--at the very time when these fatal diseases are in most need of treatment. Numbers 5, 6, 7 etc.--the list is disastrously long, and everybody ought to look and listen and find out for himself what's going on.

So I urge and beg--on my knees if necessary--every red-blooded American to say "NO!" to the war in Viet Nam. There are several forms of protest available, and protest has to be drastic because we've got a drastic situation. Young men of draft age have taught us certain ways of saying "NO!" For middle-aged types like myself there are other ways.

One way, and this is the point of my letter, is the INCOME TAX REFUSAL. When I file my tax forms during the next month, I plan to hold back 25% of my tax, which is the approximate amount of your and my tax that would go towards the war in Viet Nam. And I shall so state in an accompanying letter to the Internal Revenue Service.

Some of your readers may not find this kind of protest very meaningful; others may. But may I encourage everyone to find a way (or ways) of saying "NO!" Whether our combined protest will affect USA policy is a question I cannot answer, but one has to try. And I am afraid the liberal days of writing-letters-to-your-congressmen are past.

There are various ways of protesting via the income-tax-refusal route. I'll be glad to send information to anyone who would like to know more--and also information on the penalties you may incur.

Being a clergyman, I suppose I should add that unfortunately I am not speaking for my church, but only for myself as a person. And when the stuff hits the fan, that's what it always comes down to, isn't it?

John W. B. Thompson
Mobile, Ala.

* * * *

To the Editor:

I read in Sunday's paper a statement read as follows: it was agreed by both sides that Negro athletes now in integrated schools are being treated fairly and there have been no complaints of discrimination.

Attorney (Fred D.) Gray and the opposing attorneys, do you visit Lanier High School to see what's going on over there? Have you interviewed the students, the Negro students who trying to make the football team?

The Negro students tried last year. Did any of them play football on Lanier team? It is rumored that there will not be a integrated team.

I saw the white students hitting the Negro students in the back two and three at a time. Did the white coaches open their mouth? No. Did you ask any of the Negro students that walked off from the team practice why they walked off?

I have been going out there often looking. Ask the Negro students how many times the white students pick them up and throw them as they are a foot ball after the plays are over.

I am visiting Montgomery, Alabama. If you go to Bell Street Baptist Church on Monday nights, you will find out enough to make a new world. A member of the Alabama Action Committee showed me a copy of a letter sent to Mr. E. D. Nixon concerning the treatments of Negro students at Lanier High after we read the paper this morning.

Alabama Action Committee officers been going out there (to Lanier), and looking through the fence, and on the campus, taking pictures. They are awaiting the news media to tell their side, and they will tell and show their side.

Who do Mr. Nixon represent, as president of the local NAACP branch? I am here to see if the Alabama Action Committee need support financially morally.

John A. Ishom
Niagara Falls, New York

ASTA Head Calls Pay Increase 'A Move to Hoodwink Teachers'

BY FRANKLIN HOWARD AND BOB LABAREE

MONTGOMERY, Ala. --A 4% pay raise for Alabama's teachers is much too little and comes much too late, according to Joe Reed, executive secretary of the Alabama State Teachers Association (ASTA).

"It's just chicken-feed," Reed said about former Governor George C. Wallace's promise to give state teachers an average salary increase of \$230 next fall.

"I think it's a political move," charged Reed. "I think he's out trying to hoodwink the teachers into voting for him for president this year--or governor in 1970."

Reed said the increase will simply move most teachers into a higher income tax bracket, "so they won't experience even a \$230 raise. The tax will take it."

Reed noted that the former governor has also promised to build two new junior colleges next year--one in Fayette and one in Andalusia.

"They say over and over they don't have the money to do anything for teachers, and then, if you please, they come right back with \$900,000 for two new junior colleges," Reed said. "Alabama can't afford the ones it has now--and if you have that money, don't tell me you don't have it for the teachers."

"The whole educational system in Alabama is a political football. Something ought to be done to stop it--and I don't know what can be done."

Wallace announced the 4% salary increase last week at the 86th annual convention of the Alabama Education Association (AEA) in Birmingham. His words drew a ripple of applause.

But later, there were signs that the AEA--which has a membership of about



GEORGE C. WALLACE

25,000 white teachers--wasn't much happier than the ASTA--which represents about 10,000 Negro teachers.

Vernon St. John of Opp, the AEA's new



JOE REED

president, suggested that Wallace double the raise to 8%. But state officials said this week that the money isn't available.

In his speech, Wallace said "Alabama has done well" in providing for the educational needs of its citizens. He cited the free textbook program, and the recent appointment of an Education Study Commission.

"This administration will continue to put public education first in importance," he pledged.

While white educators were meeting in Birmingham, Negro educators met in Montgomery. The ASTA members were told that the two groups are moving steadily toward their planned merger, and may complete it by July 1.

Clarence Mitchell, head of the NAACP's bureau in Washington, D. C., told the ASTA's 85th annual convention that the merger is a step in the right direction.

At the meeting, Herman L. Harris of Montgomery was inaugurated as the new ASTA president.

Hattiesburg High School Youths Arrested on Vagrancy Charges

BY JONATHAN GORDON

HATTIESBURG, Miss.--"The summer has begun already, and it's going to be the worst we've ever had," the Rev. Peter Quinn, a civil rights leader, said gloomily this week.

Quinn was talking about several recent incidents involving white city policemen and Negro youths.

For instance, he said, six Hattiesburg High School students were arrested last Saturday and charged with vagrancy. "How can a person attending school be a vagrant?" asked Quinn.

Willy Moore, 18, said he was walking outside the Star Grill Cafe on Saturday night, when a policeman drove by and told him to "get in the damn car."

Moore said he told the patrolman that he was on his way home and was trying to borrow cab fare. "He said all right," Moore recalled. "(But) later he came back and took me in. I had just got the fare."

That night, Moore stayed in a cell with five other black youths, all arrested separately for vagrancy.

Although he wasn't allowed to make a phone call, Moore said, on Sunday evening he managed to talk through the jail window to a friend outside.

The friend got in touch with Quinn, who raised bail for the jailed youths.

In another incident, Rudolph Foster was charged with assault and battery and attempted murder--although sev-

eral people say he was defending himself.

"There are 100 witnesses," said a Negro teen-ager. "One kid's been after Rudolph for the last month. He pulled a knife on Rudolph, and Rudolph shot his gun."

"He purposely shot wide, just wanted to scare the guy with the knife. The bullet ricocheted off a car, and hit another kid in the leg. But Rudolph didn't try and hurt anybody."

Hattiesburg police officers refused to talk about the incidents, except to say that "just because (the youths) were arrested doesn't mean they'll get convicted."



MRS. CONSUELLO J. HARPER

Macon Gets Lady Deputy

BY MARY ELLEN GALE
TUSKEGEE, Ala.--Mrs. Consuello J. Harper of Shorter last week became the first Negro lady law-enforcement officer in Alabama.

She was appointed to serve as a special deputy by Alabama's only Negro sheriff, Lucius D. Amerson of Macon County.

Mrs. Harper has a tiny silver badge, and a card that says she is authorized "to enforce the law, make arrests, and to execute any legal papers placed in her hands."

Amerson put her to work right away. He sent her out to deliver six subpoenas--including one for her husband, Socrates Harper, a witness in a civil case.

When she gave the subpoena to her husband, Mrs. Harper recalled this week, "he said, 'Oh no, is that for me?' But then he laughed."

Mrs. Harper--a civic leader who campaigned for Amerson two years ago--hopes to organize a teen-agers auxiliary to the sheriff's department.

"Many of our drop-outs are getting in trouble in Macon County," she said. "This would give them something more constructive to do than fighting with each other."

She also plans to arrange a program for school-children, to answer the question, "What is the law?"

Kelly Loses

EUFULA, Ala.--John Kelly Jr. lost his bid to become Barbour County's first Negro office-holder this week. In the race for the city Democratic Executive Committee, he received just 717 votes to 1,882 for his white opponent, J. J. Jaxon.

But Kelly said he's not discouraged, and plans to run for office again. He also said that city officials switched opponents on him--to make sure he ran against the most popular candidate.

"I think I have proved a point," Kelly said. "We have to work for what we get. The citizens did a wonderful job, but they didn't go all the way."

RUBBER TALKING BUSINESS

NECK SUE FOLKS AND HERS TOO

Troy, Ala.

Brady Daniel, a graduate of Academy St. High School and now a sophomore at Tuskegee Institute, spoke at the annual youth program of the Bethel Baptist Church last Sunday. Daniel is also



BRADY DANIEL

president of the South East Youth Convention. The theme of the program was "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth." (From Mrs. J. M. Warren)

Montgomery, Ala.

John D. McDade, athletics director and basketball coach at Georgia Washington High School in Mt. Meigs, has been appointed by the Montgomery County Recreation Board to direct a recreation program this summer. He will organize and supervise centers throughout the county.

New Orleans, La.

The U. S. Department of Justice has filed a motion in federal court here to prevent the Plaquemines Parish (county) school board from closing down all public schools on April 1. The board said it has to close the schools because it has no money. But the Justice Department said the school officials have been supplying transportation and text books for local private schools for white students. Plaquemines Parish has been under court order to desegregate its schools since last June 27.

Tuskegee, Ala.

"America is determined to win the war in Viet Nam by a military victory--not a compromise--so you will not have people walking over you here at home." That, said Harold W. Webb, is what U. S. Ambassador-at-Large Averell Harriman told Democrats from

in our country, but the powerful economic and political managers who want to keep us down. We will no longer permit them to divide us." Cesar Chavez--head of the United Farm Workers Association and leader of the historic grape-pickers' strike in California--was unable to attend the meeting because of his 25-day fast in support of non-violence in the migrant workers movement. But he telephoned his approval.

Tuscaloosa, Ala.

The Rev. William McKinley Branch, a candidate for the U. S. Congress in Alabama's Fifth District, spoke to the Tuscaloosa Citizens for Action Committee on March 4. If he is elected, Branch said, "I will strive to bring the people to a standard--not because of the color of their skin, but because every man from a base black to a treble white is a keeper of God." "Any government should be for the people, by the people, and of the people, and for ALL PEOPLE," Branch said. "The government today have this on paper only. It is not being practiced." He promised to seek legislation that would "bring all Southerners from the east, west, and northern ghettos," help farmers, and end "discriminatory practices." (From Mrs. Ethel Thomas)

Atlanta, Ga.

Leaders of American minority groups met here last weekend and pledged their support for the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign in Washington, D. C., this spring. The session--called by SCLC--included representatives of American Indians, Puerto Ricans, poor whites, Negroes, and Mexican-Americans. They elected eight people to serve on the National Poor People's Steering Committee. The minority leaders also talked about the poverty and oppression of their people--and about their rich culture and heritage. There were songs and stories of the Negro slave, the poor white miner, the Mexican-American migrant worker, and the original American--the Indian. Said one poor white person, "It is not really the poor people who are responsible for hatred



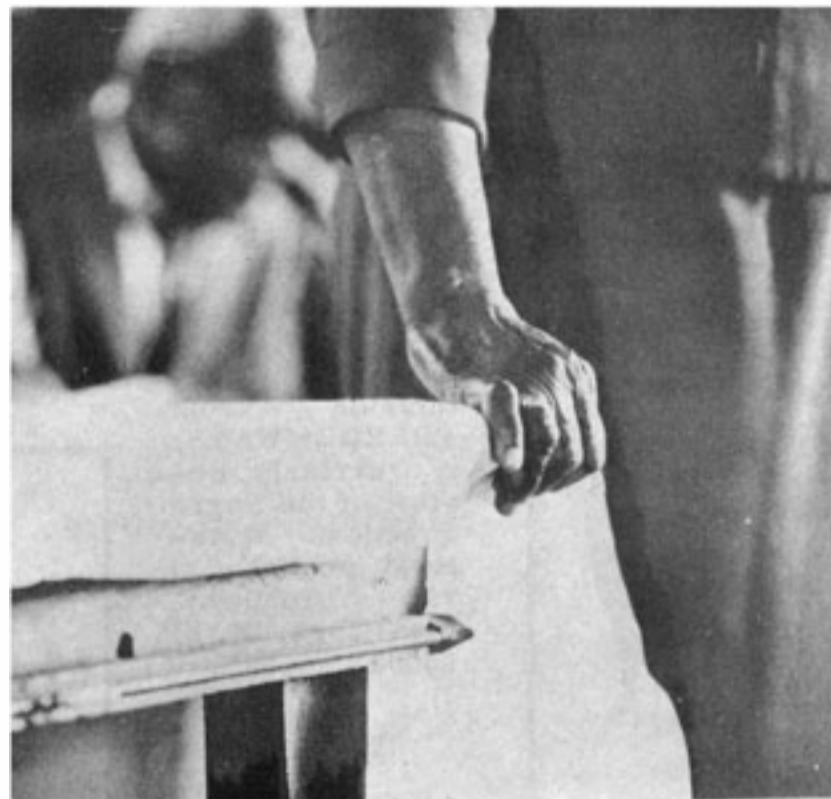


**Lowndes County Christian
Movement for Human Rights**

**THIRD
ANNUAL DAY**

BEECHWOOD, Ala.--A black man put a penny in a weighing machine in a bus station. He got back a card saying, "You're a black nigger and you weigh 156 pounds." He turned his back, tried again, and got the same reply. So he disguised himself in an Indian head-dress. This time the card said, "You're still a black nigger--and while you were fooling with that Indian head, your bus left." Solomon Gort Jr., the Delta Ministry's project director in Tallahatchie County, Miss., told that story Sunday, March 10, at the Third Annual Day of the Lowndes County Christian Movement.

"We should not try to play with the white machine," said Gort. "We (black people) must develop a machine of our own that means business." By uniting politically and economically, he said, "you become black power at work in your community."



Photos by Jim Pepler





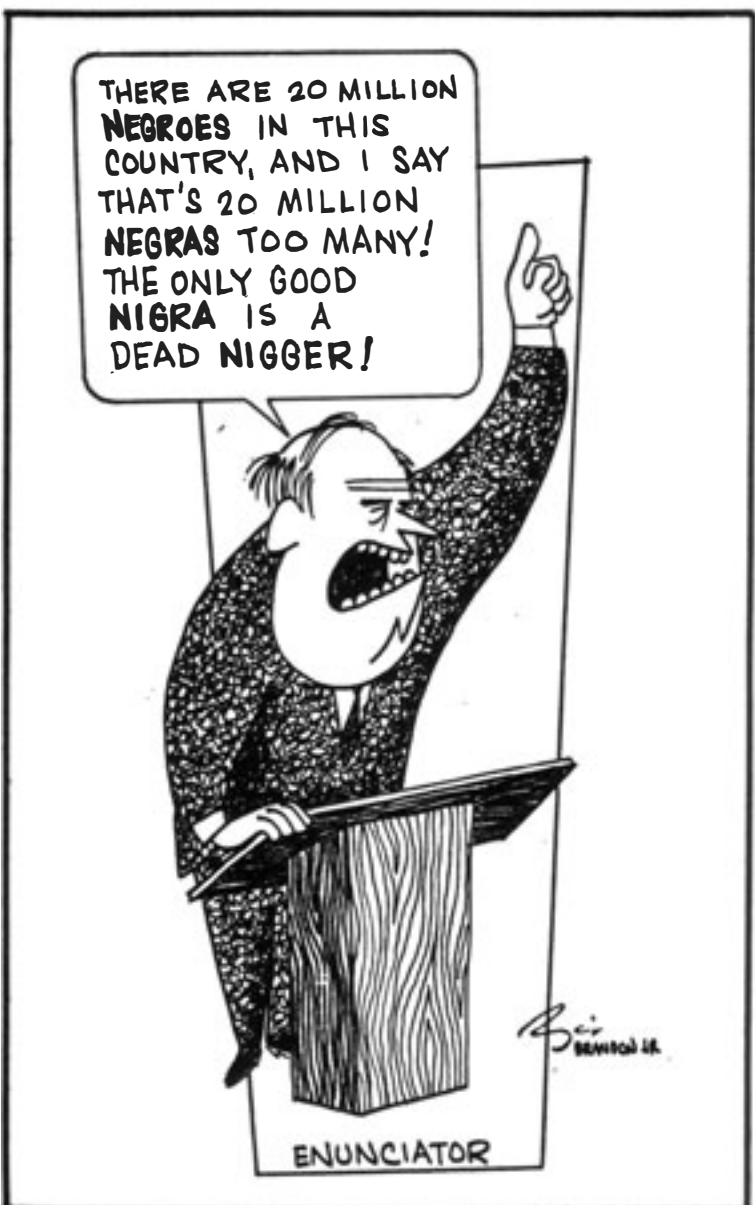
By
Brumsic
Brandon
Jr.

"WHITEY'S" WONT

IN MY OPINION, THE WHITE MAN'S HABITS OR CUSTOMS IN HIS RELATIONSHIPS WITH BLACK MEN, BEG TO BE CATALOGUED AND ILLUSTRATED. SHOWN HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS "WHITEY" IS WONT TO DO.



Reprinted by permission from FREEDOMWAYS, A Quarterly Review of the Negro Freedom Movement, published at 799 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10003.



Tuskegee Residents Complain

'We Get Rural Mail in the City'

By MARY EILEN GALE
TUSKEGEE, Ala.--"The mail truck goes within a stone's throw of my door," said Mrs. Mabel Williams. "But the mailman won't come up to my house. He says he's not allowed to."

"This is something I've never been able to understand," said Mrs. Elaine Benn. "We've been inside the city limits my whole life--but we're still getting (rural) route mail. It's hard to believe, but it's true."

Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Benn live in Rockefeller Hill, in the northeast corner of Tuskegee. They went to a city council meeting last month to ask why they can't get the same services other Tuskegee residents get.

Mail delivery is only one of their problems, the ladies said. They told the council that most of their streets are unpaved and unlighted. Although some homes have running water, they said, the sewer line doesn't go as far as Rockefeller Hill.

The councilmen promised to do what they could. But, said Mrs. Benn this week, it looks like it's going to be a long time before there is any change for the better.

When Tuskegee elected its first biracial city council in 1964, she said, the Negro people who live in Rockefeller Hill began petitioning for facilities and services.

"We got two streets paved through Mr. (John) Sides (a white councilman), but we haven't been able to get anything else," Mrs. Benn said. "And four years is almost up."

Sitting in her home on Auburn St., Mrs. Benn can look out the window at her rural mailbox. But many people in Rockefeller Hill have to walk a block or more from their front doors to pick up their mail. And, said Mrs. Benn, "if you get a telegram or special delivery, you have to wait till the next time



MRS. ELAINE BENN



MRS. ANNIE ADAMS DRAWS A BUCKET OF WATER

the route man comes."

When she complained to Tuskegee Postmaster John Fletcher Segrest, Mrs. Benn said, he told her one reason she can't get city mail is that she doesn't have a house number.

"He said house numbers are the city's business," Mrs. Benn recalled. "So I went to City Hall." But City Clerk Bill Ross sent her to John A. Price, chairman of the city planning commission.

"Mr. Price said, 'That's one of the things we plan to do,'" Mrs. Benn continued. "My patience was pretty well at an end. I said, 'This looks to me like another do-nothing committee.' 'It seems to me that since we live in the city limits, they have a legal obligation to treat us the same as everybody else. Sometimes you feel you're bumping your head against the wall trying to get something--while others get it without any work.'"

But Segrest--the postmaster--said Rockefeller Hill isn't the only area that doesn't get city mail service. "There are some white sections, too," he noted. "The rural route has been established for years."

Why can't it be changed "I have tried, but the financial squeeze is on in the post office," Segrest said. "All I can do is say I can ask for (an extra man) again."

And Tuskegee Mayor Charles M. Keever said, "It don't make any difference to us how rich or how poor you are

--we go where the need is greatest."

According to the city's "priority list," he said, the homes in Rockefeller Hill will get house numbers by Sept. 1--and some streets will be paved and lighted even sooner.

But--although Tuskegee has just been awarded a \$500,000 federal grant to expand its water and sewer system--Keever said the city can install sewers only where "the people pay for them. You'd be surprised how much these things cost."

Many property owners in Rockefeller Hill can't afford to pay for sewers. And some people don't want them. Mrs. Lula Williams--who owns several small frame houses in the area--said her tenants don't need sewers.

"They're getting along all right," she insisted. "They're not interested, because so many have spent money digging cesspools."

Mrs. Annie Adams, one of the tenants, agreed that sewer and water lines cost more money than she has to spend. But, she said, straining to pull a bucket of

Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights

The weekly meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 25, in the First Baptist Church, Woodlawn, 301 S. 62nd St., the Rev. W. E. Jones, pastor.

water up from her rented well, "sure would be nice to get 'em."

And Mrs. Benn said her son left Tuskegee because he wanted a better home--and better services--than he could get in Rockefeller Hill. "I would like to see my little grandson stay here," she said. "These are the things I'm fighting for."

MACON ARRESTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

off shotgun. He fired the gun three times--down around my feet, up over my head, and the last time over my right ear."

That, said Devance, was when Singleton threatened to kill him.

Although he was bruised and dizzy, Devance said, the law officers left him overnight in the jail. He didn't get out until Sunday afternoon.

"I just don't think they did me right," said Devance. "They mistreated me for no reason at all."

Last December, Bass shot and killed another young Negro man, Clayton Pitts of Loachapoka, following a similar arrest. State officials said the trooper fired in self-defense, after Pitts pulled a knife. No charges were filed against Bass.

Why did Devance take his story to Sheriff Amerson? "I thought about it for a while," said Devance this week. "It seemed to me that if I just let it go by, it might happen again. Someone had to speak out."

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED--The Montgomery Head Start needs all the volunteer help it can get to work in the classrooms. Men, women, and teen-agers (minimum age 16) can all be of use. Volunteers will assist as teacher's aides and cook's helpers, and will take children on field trips in the area. A volunteer can choose his or her own hours between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. on a convenient day Monday through Friday. Transportation and lunch will be furnished. If you are available, apply to the Rev. E. W. McKinney, volunteer director at 419 Madison, call 263-3474, or go to the nearest Head Start center.

ART EXHIBIT--Alabama State College is now showing the works of Dick West, the painter-sculptor whose powerful impressions of the American Indian have won national awards. The exhibition is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday until March 31, in Kilby Hall on the Alabama State campus, Montgomery, Ala.

SPARE-TIME INCOME--Write orders for hosiery. Earn up to \$10 an hour servicing racks in stores. Recruit other agents (easily done by mail), and receive up to \$2 for each \$5 they earn. Franchise, complete outfit provided. NO FEE. Write Joe N. Ross Jr., Agent Manager, 101 University Blvd., Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401.

PHOTO EXHIBIT--The art department of the University of Alabama is showing a selection of "Pictures from The Southern Courier" from 2 to 5 p.m. every day through March 31, in Garland Hall on the university campus, Tuscaloosa, Ala. Also featured are paintings by Carl Holt.

CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS -- "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." This verse from Isaiah is part of the Responsive Reading of the Bible lesson on "Matter," to be read in all Christian Science churches this Sunday, March 24.

REGISTERED NURSES--Lee County Head Start needs a registered nurse for part-time employment, beginning in early April. For more information, write P. O. Drawer 1632, Auburn, Ala. 36830, or call 887-6536.

BAHA'IS The Baha'is of Montgomery invite you to their weekly fireside at 8 p.m. this Saturday, at the Community House, 409 S. Union St., Montgomery, Ala. For transportation, call 265-4394. Meet Baha'ullah.

FOR A BETTER ALABAMA--The Alabama Council on Human Relations has active chapters in Birmingham, Mobile, Montgomery, Huntsville, Florence-Tusculum-Sheffield, Auburn-Opeilka-Tuskegee, Talladega, and Tuscaloosa. It has a staff that works throughout the state. The Alabama Council is integrated at all levels: its staff officers, staff, and local chapters all have people of both races working side by side. The Alabama Council wishes to establish local chapters in every county in the state. If you wish to join the Council's crusade for equal opportunity and human brotherhood, write The Alabama Council, P. O. Box 1310, Auburn, Ala. 36830.

PHOTOGRAPHERS--The Southern Courier is now accepting applications for the position of staff photographer. Candidates should be willing and able to travel. They should have a driver's license, imagination, and ambition. Experience will be considered, but it is not a necessity. Salary: \$30 a week plus expenses. Write to Jim Peppler, The Southern Courier, 1012 Frank Leu Bldg., Montgomery, Ala. 36104.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES -- Last year, more than 5,000,000 students were involved in home-study courses. A directory of accredited private home-study schools, listing 95 accredited schools with quality courses, may be obtained without charge by sending a postcard to National Home Study Council, 1601 18th St. NW, Washington, D. C. 20009.

MONTGOMERY REGISTRATION--The Montgomery County Board of Registrars will be in session to receive applications for voter registration for the rest of this month as follows: Monday, March 25 (all precincts), 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at the courthouse; Tuesday, March 26 (precincts 2S2, 2S1, 2N), 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Davis School; Wednesday, March 27 (precinct 11), 10-11:30 a.m. at Chesser Community Center; Wednesday, March 27 (precinct 22), 12:30-2 p.m. at Snowdown Community Center. Under the law, only those people who live in a precinct will be registered when the board is in that precinct.

TUSKEGEE SUBSCRIBERS -- You have TWO local post offices: Tuskegee 36083 and Tuskegee Institute 36088. Your Southern Courier will arrive on time if it is sent to the correct one. Please check your mailing label, and let us know if it should be changed.

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VIET-NAM VETERANS SPEAK OUT

We are veterans of the Viet-Nam war. We believe that this "conflict" in which our country is now engaged in Viet-Nam is wrong, unjustifiable and contrary to the principle of self-determination on which this nation was founded. We believe that the activities and objectives of our forces in Viet-Nam are directly contrary to the best interests of the Vietnamese people and of the people of the United States. We believe that our policy in Viet-Nam supports tyranny and denies democracy. We believe this because of our experiences in Viet-Nam. We know, because we have been there, that the American public has not been told the truth about the war or about Viet-Nam.

We know:

- that Viet-Nam is one country--historically, culturally and as specified in the Geneva Accords of 1954.
- that this conflict is basically a civil war.
- that the government in Saigon, despite the recent "election", is a military dictatorship--supported by a small feudal aristocracy, the ARVN (Saigon) officer corps and half a million American troops.
- that the majority of the people we are fighting in south Viet-Nam are south Vietnamese.
- that the basic problem in Viet-Nam is not military--but social, economic and political; not American--but Vietnamese. There is no military "solution." There is no "American" solution.

We believe that if the American people realized this they would join the dissent of the millions of Americans already against this war.

We believe that true support for our buddies still in Viet-Nam is to demand that they be brought home (through whatever negotiation is necessary) before anyone else dies in a war the American people did not vote for and do not want.

Sgt. Alfred L. Ackerly, USMC	Sp/4 Steven Conway, USA	Sp/4 Jonathan Horwitz, USA	Sp/4 Carl D. Rogers, USA
Sgt. Albert B. Adams Jr., USA Special Forces	SM George Cross, USN	Lt. (jg) Richard M. Howland, USNR	JO3 Joseph M. Ryan, USN
Sgt. Dominic Albanese, USA Special Forces	Sp/4 Jan B. Crumb, USA	A/1c Lee Ivy, USAF	L/Cpl. Steven A. Schaefer, USMC
S/Sgt. Theodore G. Albert, USA	Sp/4 Marshall D'Arcy, SA	Pfc. Milton C. James Jr., USA	Sp/4 Stanley J. Scholl, USA
Sp/4 Robert F. Barnes, USA	A/2c Richard J. Davis, USAF	Pfc. F. J. Johnson, USMC	Sp/5 Jeffrey J. Sharkey, USA
Cpl. Joseph J. Barr, USMC	Sp/4 Dennis M. DeMello, SA	YN3 Stephen J. Kessler, USN	Cpl. Larry R. Slevers, USMC
MI2 Bernard Barz, USN	YN3 Mark E. Donnelly, SN	Sp/4 Preston J. Lay Jr., USA	SM2 Dennis V. Sinclair, USN
Capt. Arthur S. Blank Jr., USA	Sp/5 Garrett J. Dressler SA	Sp/5 Frederick R. Lee Jr., USA	Sp/5 Edward Walter Smith, USA
Sp/5 Philip E. Beck, USA	M/Sgt. Donald W. Duncan	Sp/4 Anthony Lotta, USA	Lt. Robert L. Silvers, USNR
Sp/4 Steven C. Bergmeister, USA	USA Special Forces	Sp/4 James Mackenzie, USA	Sp/4 Gerald M. Smith, USA
Maj. John Bjornson, USA	GM2G G. Newell Eisele, SN	Sp/5 Peter Martensen, USA	Sp/4 Thomas V. Viscuso, USA
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Capt. Peter G. Bourne, USA	I/Lt. Carl Fogelberg, USMC	Sp/5 Dan McCarrier, USA	Pfc. Joseph Washington, USA
Sp/4 Allen D. Brandon, USA	Sp/4 Steven M. Fox, USA	Pfc. Armin S. Merkle, USA	Sp/5 Donald Wales, USA
Sp/5 Lewis C. G. Braxton, USA	Sp/5 Neil Friedman, USA	S-L Michael Mutnick, USMC	Sp/4 Roger Whaley, USA
I/Lt. N. Daniel Burdakis, USA	Sp/4 Christian K. v. Graevenitz, USA	Pfc. James N. Oes, USA	Lt. (jg) John W. White, USNR
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	Sp/4 George Hilton, USA	Sgt. Francis R. Rocks, USA	(This is a partial list.)

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In Dallas County

Farmers Get Loans to Buy Land

BY BETH WILCOX

SARDIS, Ala.--For over 50 years, Charlie Griffin lived on a white man's plantation in the Dallas County community of Sardis. But in 1966, he says, he was "run off" the land.

Arthur Brown and his family worked on J. A. Minter's plantation until Jan. 8, 1967, when they were told to leave. Then "we rented us a two-horse farm, they call it," said Brown--who is nearly blind. "It's supposed to be about 50 acres, but I don't think it's quite that. We paid \$490 to rent that land."

Anderson Watts was not allowed to farm on the Minter plantation after civil rights workers camped on his land during the Selma-to-Montgomery civil rights march in 1965.

Last month Griffin, Brown, Watts, and the heads of nine other families signed loans to buy small farms. It is the first land any of the men has ever owned.

The farmers received \$40,000 from the Farmers Home Administration (FHA) and a total of \$6,000 from the Southern Consumers Cooperative and the American Friends Service Commit-



CHARLIE GRIFFIN

tee. Each family will pay about \$3,333 for 18 to 34 acres, depending on the agricultural value of the land.

Albert Turner, state director of

had done all the talking us could do without money--we had to put up the money."

As he spoke, Griffin sat under a pine tree near the spot where his brother, Lin Griffin, hopes to build a house. Nearby, Charlie Griffin's son helped survey the family's new property.

There are old houses on the farms, and Charlie Griffin plans to repair his and move into it soon. But, said Mrs. Hattie Green--another new landowner--most of the families "won't be able to live out there now. We got to build."

Turner hopes to find more loan money to help the farmers put up their homes. "The average person can build a house for \$2,000," he said.

Even without homes, all the farmers plan to work their land this year. They will plant crops like cucumbers and okra, and probably try to sell them through the Southwest Alabama Farmers Cooperative Association (SWAF-CA).

And for the first time in their lives, they will get to keep whatever profits they can make.

People Dispute Over Head Start in B'ham

BY BOB LABAREE

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.--A controversy began when the Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity (JCCEO) announced last fall that the summer Head Start program would be run by local boards of education instead of local churches.

Many people in the communities, represented by the members of the Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NAC), said the boards would be less sympathetic to what the people want.

The debate grew hot when the NAC suggested that more non-professional people from the poverty areas be hired as teachers and other staff members in the Head Start centers.

The boards have agreed to a JCCEO recommendation that they "consider" people from the poverty areas, but they have made it clear that they favor a professional staff.

Now G. Virgil Nunn, superintendent of the Fairfield schools, says he may not run the local Head Start program after all. Nunn complained this week that Head Start has still not been finally approved by the Southeast regional branch of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).

With another summer federal program in Fairfield waiting for teachers

to be hired, said Nunn, the board can't afford to wait any longer.

Nunn suggested that the reason for the delay in approval is that OEO "has never been willing to turn the programs over to the local boards."

"I think it's a very fine program," he said, but OEO officials prefer to "come in with their own staff, take over the schools, and just pay us rent. Now they're finding that they have to have the cooperation of the local people."

Officials of JCCEO, which will run the Fairfield program in local churches if the board doesn't, said there may be another reason.

When the Fairfield proposal was first submitted, they said, there were no white teachers or pupils in it, and white schools were not chosen as Head Start centers. Although the board said the white schools were already reserved for other federal programs, "the regional (OEO) office didn't approve of this," said David Singleton of JCCEO.

JCCEO is already preparing to take over Fairfield's Head Start, but Nunn said if the proposal is approved soon, the board "could still try to revive it." But, he added, "the first of April is pretty late to recruit teachers for a program which begins in June."

SCLC and a field worker for the Southern Consumers Cooperative, helped the displaced families get their loans and make arrangements to buy the farms. He said it wasn't easy. The price of the land went up when the original owners discovered who wanted to buy it, Turner said, but "we produced the extra money."

"We just stayed in this thing," he said. "Every obstacle they put up, we overcame. I finally got the owners to freeze the price of the land, so we could buy it."

In the past, the FHA has often been reluctant to make loans to Negro farmers. But now, said Turner, "the whole system is softening up in Alabama FHA."

The new land-owners agreed that Turner's help made the difference. Without him, said Griffin last week, "we never woulda gotten it (the land). Us

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b. AREA SUPERVISOR, health-homemaker services. Desirable qualifications: High school graduate is desirable. Applicant should have experience as a licensed practical nurse, currently registered in the State of Alabama, should have experience record that proves ability to supervise others and to plan work; or a combination of education and work experience will be considered in lieu of the foregoing. For example: a person who has received formal classroom and in-service training as a home nursing aide or as a nursing aide or orderly in a hospital or nursing home and who is literate will be considered, provided experience record demonstrates ability to work with others, to use initiative, and to plan work.

c. HEALTH-HOMEMAKER AIDE. Desirable qualifications are: Applicant must have been graduated from the Health-Homemaker Aide Program, or must be able to present a record of equivalent training in a hospital or nursing home. In addition, applicant must be literate and able to comprehend simple written and oral instructions, must be in good physical and mental health and free of contagious diseases, must be willing to serve in homes where an active communicable disease may be present, must be willing and able to serve irregular hours and willing to accept changes in tour of duty.

d. CLERK-TYPIST. Desirable qualifications are: Type accurately at rate of 40 words a minute. A high school graduate who has studied commercial courses is desirable; ability to use acceptable English and to spell correctly is required. In addition, applicant needs to know how to operate simple adding machines, and must have aptitude for learning to operate other simple office machines.

e. ACCOUNTS CLERK. Desirable qualifications are: Ability to use touch-typing system--speed is not essential but accuracy is a must. Must be able to compute simple mathematical problems, including addition, multiplication, percentages, division, subtraction, and ratio. Familiarity with double-entry bookkeeping system is desirable. Experience in keeping accounts receivable or payable ledgers would be an asset.

f. HOME NURSING SUPERVISORS. Desired qualifications are: Applicants for home nursing supervisors should have experience in home nursing or be a licensed registered or practical nurse or be a graduate of a four-year college or a major in home-economics or a similar subject.

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