

The Southern PATRIOT

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Southwest Georgia Roundup:

Baker Movement Thrives

By JOY FENSTON
(Assistant Editor)

NEWTON, Ga.—Baker County, in the past one of the most notorious in the South for racist violence, is now the scene of the most flourishing movement in Southwest Georgia.

"Bad Baker," as it has long been labelled by Negroes in the area, has a history of lynching and brutality. Only a few years ago no Negroes were registered to vote here.

Today, although organizers from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) first entered the county only 15 months ago, its movement is considered to be the most solid, established one in the area.

And, in spite of Baker County's violent history, there has been only one instance of real violence since the movement started here last year. That was in August, 1965, when SNCC workers accompanied a group of about 50 local people to the Newton courthouse to register to vote.

Sheriff Warren L. Johnson (whose service station carried the sign 'we welcome white customers' until a few months ago) deputized and armed dozens of whites, and "Bloody Saturday" began. By the time it was over, dozens of SNCC and community people had been beaten; many of them were hospitalized.

But since then, the people have continued to hold weekly mass meetings, even though there were no outside organizers here for several months during the winter.

As the result of a school boycott last September, the number of Negro children admitted to previously white schools was increased.

The movement has already run two candidates for county offices. Their school board candidate came in second in an election in July

this year; the likelihood that their candidate for justice of the peace would win was so strong that his district was abolished a week before the by-election was to have been held.

Movement people have complete control of a flourishing Headstart program and the use of a local school to hold it in. They are presently making plans for a year-round child development center.

They plan to run a slate of candidates in the upcoming Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation elections, and three candidates for county offices in a November election.

Meantime, in several movements elsewhere in Southwest Georgia, people are searching for the next steps that can lead them on.

The most active of these movements is in Cordele, Ga., where this summer there have been large demonstrations, mass arrests—and vicious violence by white racists.

At one point in June, 40 Negro teen-agers from Cordele were beaten by an angry white mob at a nearby state park. One of their leaders was dragged from his truck by the sheriff who yelled to the mob "kill that nigger," then beat him till he lost the sight of one eye.

At one time more than 70 people were in jail for demonstrations centering around a school boycott in Cordele. Some of the leaders remained in prison a week before preliminary hearings. Two 19-year-olds were sentenced to 12 months in work camps; they are appealing the sentences.

The Cordele movement, militant and composed almost entirely of young people (with moral support from the older people), took on momentum in April after a meeting for voter registration turned

into a discussion about the inadequacy of local schools. The school boycott followed; more than 500 Negroes, most of them students, marched for four days.

By the time the marches and arrests were over, the basis for a continuing movement this past summer had been created and demonstrations at the state park began.

The Cordele Movement is typical of those which have shaken the white power structure of Southwest Georgia in recent years. It has successfully rallied and involved large numbers of people, brought attention to some of their problems, and secured some concessions from the power structure.

Yet leaders in Cordele and elsewhere in Southwest Georgia are finding severe limitations to organizing based only on mass demonstrations and marches. They are looking for ways to end the long periods of inaction between crises which bring the people into the streets, for ways to organize people against the basic, if undramatic, inequalities which surround them.

These difficulties have bogged down movements in Albany and Americus, both of which have shaken the nation with their headlines in recent years. Here the movements seem to lie temporarily dormant—not dead by any means, not over, maybe only half begun—but quiet as their active people search for ways to mobilize the people.

In Americus, "the issues slap you in the face," one civil rights worker there said—issues like bad roads, schools, the job situation. But Americus, which last year was a focus of national attention, has been quiet this year. Some say the people are tired and afraid. Others say it's a temporary complacency about the gains made last year.

(Continued on Page 4)

Jury System Revamped Albany Ruling Upset

(By Staff Correspondent)

NEW ORLEANS, La.—The U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals has freed six civil-rights workers accused of lying to a federal grand jury in 1963.

The decision was historic in that it changes a system which barred all but a few Negroes from federal juries in the South.

The high court killed the charges against leaders of the Albany Movement because it found that Negroes were kept off jury panels that indicted and convicted them.

Prosecution of the Albany Cases had shocked the nation because the charges were filed by the federal government at a time when the Albany Movement was in a crucial fight against segregation. A nationwide protest followed, sparked by a pamphlet called "Upside-Down Justice—The Albany Cases."

A first, limited victory came in the case last winter when the U.S. Department of Justice admitted error in the selection of the juries which convicted the Albany defendants (See January *Patriot*). Nathan Lewin, trial attorney for the Department, asked the appeals court to upset the convictions, set aside their sentences, and order new trials.

However, he did not confess error in picking the grand jury which indicted them. Defense attorneys said that the charges should be thrown out completely because there was as much bias in the selection of grand juries as in the picking of trial juries.

The appeals court ruled that lists for all juries must be made up from a pool of persons "broadly representative of the community."

"A person," the court said, "need only be able to read, write, speak and understand English; he need not enjoy that degree of excellence found only among the more fortunate classes of our society."

This means that Negroes must be on jury lists in at least their proportion to the population. It also has the effect of striking down the present 'key man' system for picking juries. Under this system, jury commissioners and clerks of federal courts have relied on prominent citizens in the area to nominate prospective jurors.

In its 8-to-1 decision, the court directed these officials to develop a jury-selection system which would represent the community in which the court is located.

The decision said it was Congress's intent when the 1957 Civil Rights Act was passed that Negroes be placed on federal juries even if it meant lowering educational standards for jurors.

"It (the act) constituted an effort to improve the judicial system where it most directly touches the lives of the average citizen," the court said.

The decision gave judicial support to Title One of the pending 1966 civil-rights bill, which would establish a "master jury wheel" filled with the names of at least one per cent of all registered voters in a judicial district.

If Title One is passed, it will widen the scope of the decision tremendously, since the present ruling is binding only on federal courts in Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and the Canal Zone (the Fifth Circuit of the federal court system).

The Albany defendants were indicted in the midst of the mass movement that was then challenging the entire system of segregation in that city. The case began after a student group picketed an Albany grocery.

Those indicted included Slater King, head of the Albany Movement; Mrs. Elza (Goldie) Jackson, recording secretary; Robert Thomas, a barber; Thomas Chatmon, a businessman; the Rev. Samuel B. Wells, who was also fired from his job as a sandblaster for the U.S. Marine Corps; and Miss Joni Rabinowitz, white civil-rights worker from New York, whose father, Victor Rabinowitz, became one of the attorneys in the case.

"Upside-Down Justice—The Albany Cases" was circulated by the tens of thousands of copies throughout the country and helped rouse public opinion against the convictions. It was prepared by the National Committee for the Albany Defendants, in cooperation with the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF).

Election in West Tennessee Returns Nine Negro Magistrates

SOMERVILLE, Tenn.—Residents of two West Tennessee counties have elected nine Negro magistrates to represent them on Quarterly Court.

The election, August 4, was the culmination of seven years of struggle for voter registration in Fayette and Haywood counties.

It is the first time since Reconstruction that Negro magistrates have been elected to these courts.

Seven of the 21 Negro candidates in Fayette County were elected; however, two of them were disqualified later on the grounds that they have criminal records.

The disqualification is being contested. Local leaders are challenging its validity; they are also asking why the men were not disqualified when they filed nomination papers, rather than after they had contested and won the seats.

In Haywood County, two of the four Negro candidates were elected.

The electoral campaign was organized by local people and members of the West Tennessee Voters' Project, which began work in the area in 1964.



HEADSTART PROGRAM IN BAKER COUNTY is only one of numerous successful programs initiated in "Bad" Baker County since SNCC workers entered the area 15 months ago. Already the movement is considered the most solid, powerful one in southwest Georgia. (Photo by John Spragens, Jr.)

Peace Movement Battles HUAC

(By Staff Correspondent)

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A victory for free speech in the civil-rights movement is the basis for a new struggle to guard the rights of people working for world peace.

The link came during recent hearings by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), which called before it members of groups trying to end the war in Vietnam. HUAC claimed these people were "aiding the enemy."

The hearings aroused a new counterattack on the Committee by civil-liberties forces. They said such questioning of individuals opposing the war was not only unconstitutional but would also serve to discourage public discussion of the war and the issues involved.

On these grounds, attorneys opposing HUAC went into federal court to seek an order stopping the hearings.

One of their main arguments was the 1965 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF), then under attack by a legislative committee and state officials in Louisiana, assisted by Sen. James O. Eastland.

In the SCEF case, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the contention of SCEF that such attacks

produce a "chilling effect" on peaceful action for social change. It held that the federal courts have the right and the duty to stop such attacks by injunction before irreparable damage is done.

Attorneys opposing HUAC in the recent court action cited the same "chilling effect" that the recent hearings would have on public discussion of the life-and-death issues of the war.

A federal judge upheld their contention and at first granted the injunction to stop the hearings. A three-judge U.S. court then overruled this action and set aside the injunction, so the hearings went on.

However, the three-judge court agreed to study the question. Thus, for the first time in years it appeared that the basic civil-liberties issues posed by HUAC would be aired in the courts of law as well as in the court of public opinion. (Hearings on the case were pending when the *Patriot* went to press.)

Among the lawyers filing the suit against HUAC were William M. Kunstler and Arthur Kinoy, acting with others on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Kunstler and Kinoy are also the SCEF attorneys who successfully carried its case to the Supreme Court and have fought many other battles for civil rights and civil liberties throughout the South in recent years.

Kinoy himself was arrested and violently ejected from the hearing room at the HUAC sessions. The entire proceeding gave new life to the drive to end the committee's long life. These efforts are being led by the National Committee to Abolish HUAC and the ACLU, with support from most civil rights groups, including SCEF.

Meantime, another head-on clash between the committee and the civil-rights movement seemed a possibility soon. Two HUAC members called for an investigation of SNCC, CORE, SCLC, SCEF and other civil-rights groups. This bore out what many in the civil-rights

movement have been predicting: that HUAC's investigation of the Ku Klux Klan was mainly a prelude to this kind of an attack.

Most sections of the civil rights movement seemed ready to fight back if such an attack comes.

Recently a national leader of the freedom movement, the Rev. C. T. Vivian, appeared in Washington to oppose a proposed new bill that came out of the Klan hearings. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Charles Weltner of Atlanta, is similar to the discredited McCarran Act. Vivian said it was a threat to civil-rights organizations and all other groups working for social change. (Vivian, now with the Urban Training Center, is a SCEF board member.)

Book Notes

"Hurry Sundown" Reissued in Paperback

In 1964, a 1046-page novel about the South became a best-seller. It was *Hurry Sundown* by K. B. Gilden (Doubleday Co., 277 Park Ave., New York City, \$7.95). Unfortunately, many people active in the civil rights movement missed the book—perhaps because they doubted that anything so popular could tell the truth about the South.

They were wrong, as was the *Patriot*, which neglected to review it. The book has recently been issued as a Signet paperback (Published by The New America Library, 1301 Avenue of the Americas, New York City, \$1.50). We urge anyone who has not read it to do so.

It is especially timely now when more people in the freedom movement are realizing the unanswered challenge of our day: the need for poor Southern white people to organize in coalition with Negroes because their needs are the same.

That is part of what *Hurry Sundown*, prophetically, is all about—although its setting is 20 years ago.

Two World War II veterans, one black and one white, come home to find their land threatened by a mechanized farming operation that is gobbling up the small

Appeals Court Reverses Poret, Labat Convictions

Other convictions which have been reversed as a result of the Appeals Court hearings (see page 1) include those of Edgar Labat and Clifton A. Poret, who have been in solitary confinement on death row for 13 years.

The court ruled that they did not get a fair trial because Negroes were systematically excluded from the grand jury which indicted them and the petit jury which convicted them of raping a white woman.

"The systematic exclusion, as a class, of all manual laborers, outside workers, artisans and earners making a daily wage deprived the petitioners of an impartial jury, a cross-section of the community, in violation of the due process and equal protection clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment."

The Court said statistics show that through this method 47 per cent of all Negro workers were excluded from the jury system.

The two men are subject to reindictment and retrial but Judge Griffin B. Bell of Atlanta pointed out that "little is apt to come of new indictments. It is unlikely that adequate proof would be forthcoming under the facts of this case for conviction at this late date."

Attorneys in the case included Benjamin E. Smith, a member of the SCEF Board.



KATYA AND BERT GILDEN, whose best-selling novel, "Hurry Sundown", was recently re-issued in paperback.

farms in fictional Colfax County, Ga. Determined to keep their land, they inevitably find they must work together, and they break through the fears and suspicions of centuries to do it. Their defeat in the end comes not as a failure of their own will but because the forces arrayed against them are more powerful than what they can build at that time and in that place.

Summarized in this way, the story may sound contrived, a peg on which to hang a message. The authors (a husband-and-wife writing team, Bert and Katya Gilden) do have a message; to this reviewer, it seems to be that

human beings, just plain people, have within them the resources of life to do battle with the forces of death in a decadent society.

But the book is not a tract with a message. It is a good novel, with a host of characters who live and breathe in complexity and contradiction; people like those who have been a part of the recurring conflict in scores of Southern communities. Most of the issues of recent years are here too—the Cold War, the witch hunt as well as rising racist violence—all part of a story that holds the reader from beginning to end.—A. B.

The Southern Patriot

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EVERY DAY, FOR 380 MILES, this group of Mexican-American farm workers marched toward the Texas capital of Austin. The march grew out of a smaller strike in the Rio Grande valley (see June Patriot) and quickly found support among most of Texas' farm workers. The marchers, who are members of the Independent Farm Workers' Association, hope to prod the Texas legislature into passage of a \$1.25 minimum wage law for farm labor. They earn between 40 and 60 cents an hour at present. (Photo by Robert Analavage)

★
 "Something of our own"

Theater of the Ghetto

By ROBERT ANALAVAGE
 (Assistant Editor)

Darkness.
 "Does man help his fellow man?" a loud voice asks.
 "No!" many voices shout back.
 Lights.
 Two clowns appear, bringing with them a mad kind of circus atmosphere as they tumble and cartwheel across the stage. Then a man appears, dressed in black with a pasty white face. His name is Mr. Smith.
 He is unhappy and complains that his foot hurts. Why not cut it off, one of the clowns gleefully suggests. Why not, indeed?
 The man's foot is removed. Then, because it is difficult to stand on only one, the clowns benevolently amputate the other. Mr. Smith crashes to the floor. His arm is weary. A clown shoots it off. Oops! Wrong arm. Well, that is easily corrected when the other one comes off.

What diabolical occurrence has taken place? The Free Southern Theatre has just finished a performance of Bertolt Brecht's one-act play "Does Man Help His Fellow Man?"

The audience consisted mainly of Negroes with a few white people, mainly professors and college students.

The place where all this occurred was Bethel Lutheran Church, which is located in a ghetto section of New Orleans called the Desire Project.

Only one road leads into the Desire Project. The streets are unpaved. The houses dilapidated. Rats roam about freely. In a three square block area 20,000 black people are crowded together. Despair and hopelessness are constant companions in the Desire Project.

But the area is also the headquarters of the Free Southern

Theatre, a group set up "for those who have no theatre."

Nightly the FST puts on plays and the people attend them for free. After the plays end, discussions are held.

Most of the audience attends these discussions and the participation in the debate would make any college English professor envious.

"What was the play about?" a moderator asks.

The question prompts talk of justice and power, of prejudice and Ghettoes, of America and revolution, of Vietnam and LBJ, of the federal government and religion and just about any subject imaginable.

And they talk about themselves, of the laws and conditions under which they live.

The FST has been doing this for about three years now. The actors, who come from all parts

of the country, have several things in common. They have imagination. They believe in creative theatre. They want to use theatre to play a vital and effective role in the black community.

Denise Nicholas, a young black actress and spokesman for the group, says "the FST can serve educational purposes in teaching Afro-American and African history, it can point out and clarify the contradictions in the black community, it can help us rediscover our racial dignity and our dignity as men and women. It can point to the enemy in all his forms—his masks, his words, his direction, his location."

With this as a guide the FST spends half its time in New Orleans, the other half on the road. Bogalusa, Jonesboro, Jackson, Selma, Albany—the towns they play are the breathing centers of the Southern Freedom Movement.

The plays they put on range from Brecht's "Does Man Help his Fellow Man?" to contemporary works by black writers such as Leroi Jones and Gilbert Moses, one of the founders of the theater.

They also seek out and train young people who have the desire to act or direct, thus guaranteeing a continuous stream of talent and creativity.

At the moment the theater is all black, although at one time



"PERHAPS WE SHOULD CUT OFF YOUR HEAD," the clown suggests to Mr. Smith (Joseph Perry).

the troupe was integrated. This is in line with the prevailing idea in the movement that black people must do things for themselves, must develop something they can call their own.

Also, and perhaps most important, is the knowledge that has come from the three years the group has been in existence that in order to truly be a community theater the spirit and the people must come from the community itself.

In addition, many members of the FST believe that in the future the drama must come from the black community itself, from the drama that already exists there.

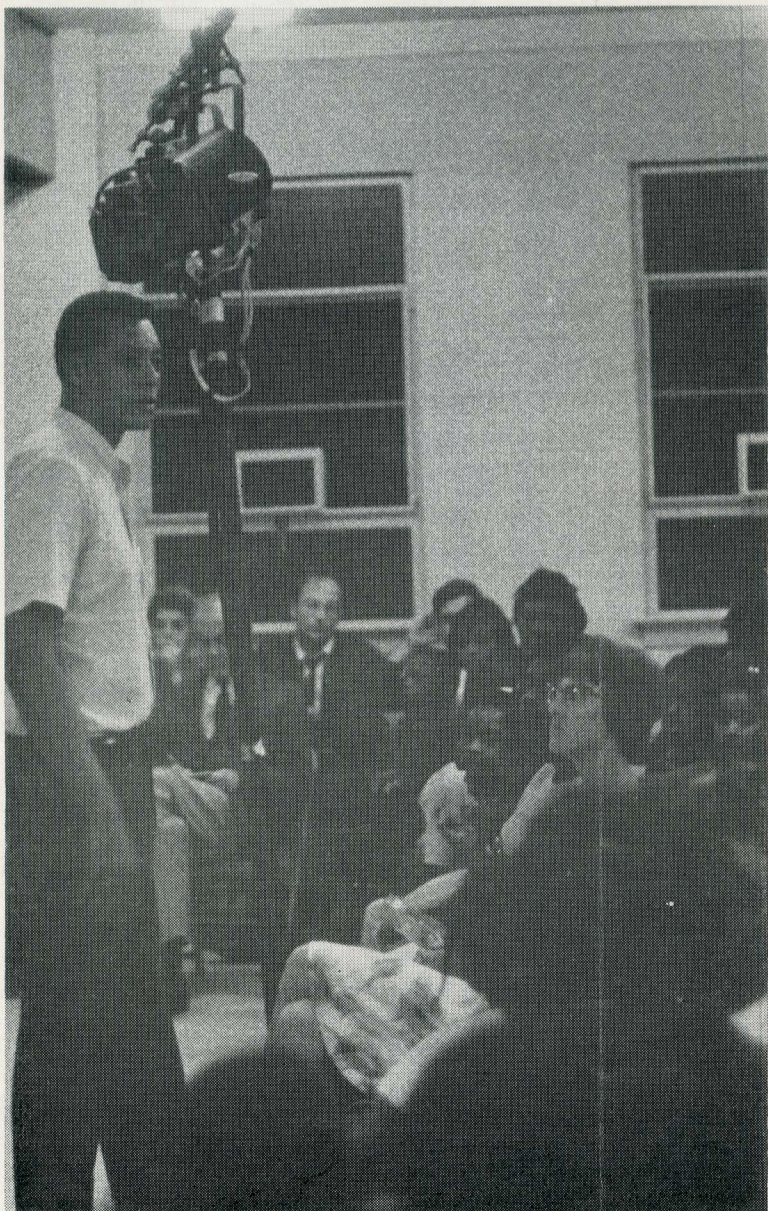
Miss Nicholas says that the theater must deal with questions like "Why is there only one road into and out of the Desire Project in New Orleans? Why aren't the streets paved in the ninth ward? Why does the white man own that store on the corner and not one of us?—we shop there every day.

Why is my hair conked and why does my wife have to have her head fried every week or so? Why am I always giving my money to the white man as soon as I get it?"

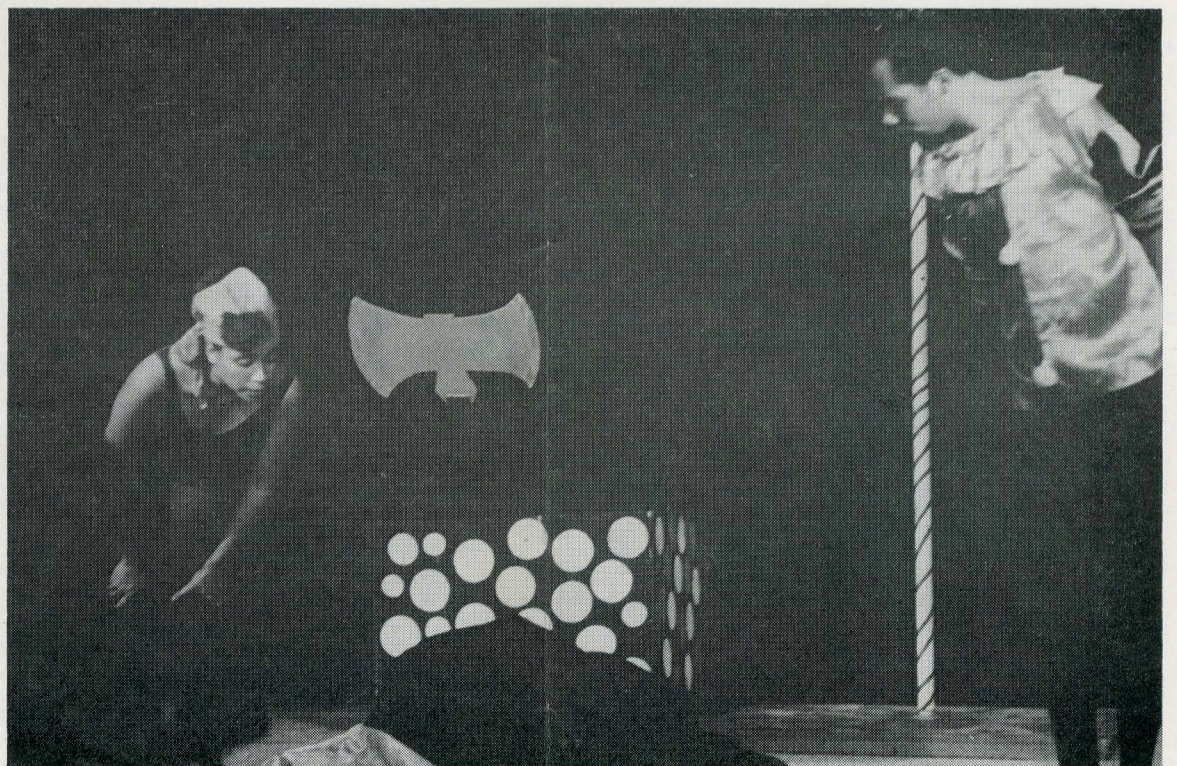
If the FST can speak to these questions then the vital and effective role it wishes to play in the black community will be fulfilled and will bring closer the end of the Afro-Americans' long night's journey into day.

Support Free Theater

The FST is in desperate need of funds in order to continue its work. Since they charge no admission for their programs, they rely completely on the contributions sent them. Donations should be addressed to The Free Southern Theatre, P.O. Box 2374, New Orleans, La.



AFTER ALL FST PERFORMANCES, discussions are held which prompt the audience to examine their own lives and the laws and conditions under which they live.



CLOWNS DENISE NICHOLAS AND ROSCOE ORMAN stand over the decapitated body of Mr. Smith, during rehearsal of Bertolt Brecht's "Does Man Help His Fellow Man?" (Photos by Les Jordan)

SCLC Replies to NVDA Critics

(By Staff Correspondent)

JACKSON, Miss.—The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) grew out of nonviolent direct action (NVDA) that started over a decade ago in Montgomery, Ala. In August, SCLC held its 1966 convention here—at a time when the principle of NVDA is under the sharpest attack yet within the civil rights movement.

As the organization that has most personified the nonviolent direct action movement, SCLC addressed itself to this criticism with a day-long workshop on the subject.

Workshops on NVDA have been a routine part of SCLC conventions each year in the past; this year the discussion was sharper and more specific, the probing deeper.

For this reason it was probably the most important part of the convention that brought together 650 delegates from South and North, and also dealt with other important issues facing the movement: what to do about jobs, education, housing, about the war in Vietnam, and how to balance the needs for movement work in both North and South.

The convention came very soon after a meeting in Chicago where key movement leaders committed to NVDA had discussed for two days the present situation and the way the movement should go.

That meeting had been called by the Urban Training Center along with several church groups. Several people who attended came to Jackson later to take part in the discussions here.

SCLC's president, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., dealt with the criticisms of NVDA in his annual report and the all-day workshop started with a panel led by four speakers: the Rev. C. T. Vivian, long a leading spokesman for radical nonviolent direct action (and a SCLC board member); the Rev. Andrew Young, SCLC executive director; Mrs. Rachale DuBois, who had worked in the "Dialogue" program of SCLC; and Carl Farris of the SCLC staff in Georgia.

After the panel the convention broke down into smaller workshops.

Speakers sought both to answer the critics of NVDA and to explain the meaning of it as a force in the modern world. Among the main points they made:

1. NVDA is the most radical possible approach to social problems because it goes to the very roots of man's problems. It takes as its starting point the belief that each person is a sacred being; it organizes the oppressed around this basic belief and confronts the society.

In the process of this confrontation the evils of society are brought to the surface; in our society these are violence and racism. In the confrontation between the evil in man and the basic humanity of man, there comes the possibility of coping with the evil and raising life to a new level.

2. It is not true as critics of NVDA have said, the speakers declared, that it offers no program. Rather just the opposite. It offers *the* program based on the humanity of man, which gives smaller programs meaning.

For example, C. T. Vivian said, the current poverty program in the U.S. came mainly as a result of the challenge to conscience posed by NVDA as generated by the civil rights movement. But the poverty program in itself is not enough; a real NVDA movement constantly stands outside the structure, raising the challenge, asking more, asking new values.

"Without this perspective of a total new life for mankind, you get programmed into the programs and the surface may change a little but nothing really changes," he said. "We stand as the constant challenge, asking the basic question—not just how do we solve this part of the problem, or that part of the problem, but how do we get rid of racism and violence in our culture."

3. NVDA in Chicago has disproved the predictions of its critics that its ideas and methods would not work in northern urban areas.

Again it was Vivian speaking: "They said that city was too slick, too sophisticated, its policies too

organized. But the nonviolent direct action movement went in there and in one year did what no other effort had been able to do—pulled away the facade and uncovered the racism and the violence there that were as bad as or worse than any we had found in the South. So now the whole world, for the first time, has to look at this evil—and it has to deal with it."

The speakers also pointed to specific experiences in Chicago—how critics had claimed NVDA would not be effective in northern ghettos because of the violent "gangs" of young people there, but how members of these gangs in Chicago had become the marshals in recent demonstrations and caught the bricks that were thrown and laid them on the ground.

4. NVDA offers the only framework in which people who seek to end oppression can deal with international problems and put their struggle on an international level.

"Racism and violence are not only at the center of our American culture," Vivian said. "They are the basic problems in the world. How are we going to move 50 nations at once to change these things?"

"The answers to the world's problems have so far been 'Beat, Baby, Beat,' in Selma, and 'Bomb, Baby, Bomb' in Saigon, and 'Burn, Baby, Burn,' in our ghettos. We believe that ours is the approach that says instead 'Build, Baby, Build' everywhere and offers hope for mankind."

One discussion was not enough to answer all the critics of NVDA, and many of them weren't even here at the convention. But new discussions were started, new questions posed—questions that will continue to stir thought throughout the movement North and South.

In other actions, the convention called again for a widened poverty program, asked a guaranteed annual income, condemned the weakening of the housing section of the 1966 civil rights bill as a "surrender" to the "racist pressures" of the real estate lobby—and again called for an end to the war in Vietnam.

A major speech of the convention was made by Sen. Edward Kennedy. The greatest applause during his speech came when he declared that if the U.S. could spend billions of dollars on war in Vietnam it should be spending billions to combat poverty and oppression at home.

Southwest Georgia Movement

(Continued from Page 1)

"Until something happens, the movement here is unpredictable," says the Rev. J. R. Campbell, a Negro leader in Americus. "But I wouldn't say Americus is dead. I know these folks will rally."

"Albany in a sense is like Americus," says Isaac Simpkins, who is coordinating SNCC's work in Southwest Georgia. "There have been some gains, the movement still exists, and the potential is still there. They seem to be in a relaxation stage—but if something happens they're ready to spring to action."

For local people, action is synonymous with marching. "That's the way they were taught a movement runs back in '63. That's the way they think," says Bobby Lee Matthews, a SNCC worker in Americus.

As a result, different methods of organizing are meeting with very little success. In Americus, for example, plans to consolidate the gains of last summer by organizing a union for domestic

workers have made little headway.

And even where a 'marching' movement is most successful, its limitations are recognized. "Demonstrations at Cordele are useless at this point," says Ramona Batiste, a SNCC field secretary there since 1964.

"We have to start organizing at the grassroots around real problems," she said. The "real problems," she indicated, are schools, unemployment, living conditions—not desegregation or even, in her opinion, voter registration.

"I wouldn't endorse demonstrations right now with the way people are feeling," she added. "It's no longer non-violent, and you just know what's going to happen."

Is Baker County, where at this point the movement seems more sustained, different from the other Southwest Georgia counties where older movements have been unable to achieve many tangible results?

In some ways Baker is unique. A high percentage of the Negroes own their own land; this gives them some immunity from economic reprisals, makes them more willing to risk registering.

In a sense, the racists' power over these people is limited to the power to terrorize. And although the white community has by no means relinquished this, the excesses of the past have shocked and sickened many white people.

One man has been central to the reign of terror in the past in Baker, and his power is being steadily whittled down. Sheriff Johnson has now been given a fixed annual salary, rather than continuing to receive the proceeds of a speed trap which was said to have netted him up to \$60,000 a year in the past.

His two sons are no longer permitted to serve as his deputies. He has been forced to remove the 'we welcome white customers' sign from his gas station.

Because of their ownership of the land and because of the terror, there has always been a strong sense of community among Negroes in Baker County. This

provided a solid base for the growth of a unified, powerful movement.

Yet, although these factors are unique to Baker, its majority Negro population is not unique. This all-important fact of life, which makes it possible for Negroes to take over power at the county level, is a condition that exists in most counties in Southwest Georgia.

Another thing many of these counties have in common is that they form part of one congressional district.

For these reasons, civil rights organizers in this part of the South have decided to organize around the November elections for the next few months. This will take place on several levels.

Albany Attorney C. B. King, long-time movement leader, will run for Congress—as an independent, rather than in the Democratic primary. Candidates for local offices are being fielded in counties throughout Southwest Georgia. And in the three counties which form the 78th Georgia Assembly District—Clay, Calhoun, and Baker—attempts to organize a third independent party are underway.

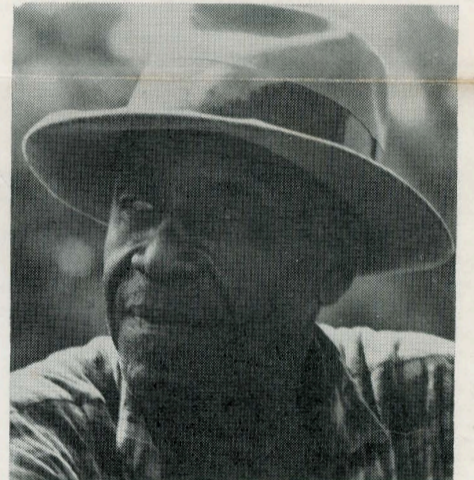
"Our short-range goals are to elect people to office and to increase registration," says Charles Sherrod, who has worked in the area since 1961.

"A long-range goal is to make the people understand where the power is in politics, how the decision-making works, who is making the decisions behind the scene. The best way to learn is by getting into it."

Sherrod also talks about coalition politics for the long range.

"We assume," he says, "that there are some good guys in the Establishment who want out but are insecure, enslaved by the system the same way we are. Alone, they can't see any way out but we can show them the way, and they can work with the movement."

Will the current concentration on electoral politics succeed in building the steady lasting movements that demonstrations alone have not? No one can say for sure right now. It is a long road ahead, and victories will not come all at once.



WALTER M. SINGLETARY planned to run in a by-election for Justice of the Peace in Baker County. He was sure he could win. So was the local power structure; they abolished the riding a week before the election was slated to take place. (Photos by John Spragens, Jr.)

The voter registration process has really just started in some of these areas. For example, although Negroes outnumber whites 60-to-40 in the three counties where the new independent party is being started, their total registration in these counties was less than 1,000 at the end of July and more than 600 of these were in the one county of Baker. Much of the work in the immediate future must still concentrate on registration.

But the new political thrust is part of the creative searching that is now going on among movement people in this area—a searching that says loud and clear the movement is not dead.

Few people would view the question of demonstrations and electoral politics as an "either-or" situation; few would say that the demonstrations of the past that so dramatized this area and others to the nation were a mistake. It is more likely that some combination of these tactics will emerge at some point—and that the movement in Southwest Georgia, now building quietly beneath the surface, will be in the news again.



RAMONA BATISTE has been active in the Cordele Movement since SNCC entered the area in 1964. Last month she became a deputy registrar for the area. She is also editor of *The People's Press*, an eight-page mimeographed weekly with a circulation of 400 in Crisp and Worth counties.