

News from Fayette County Workcamps
Virgie Hortenstine, Coordinator
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Cincinnati 39, Ohio
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SOMERVILLE, TENN. - "Workcamps are the biggest blow to racial segregation that ever hit Haywood County," George Graves, President of the Haywood County Civic and Welfare League, told workcampers as he visited their building project in neighboring Fayette County. He climbed to the top of the Community Center which they are building, amid the ring of twenty-odd hammers, as northern white college students and local Negroes pounded nails into the roof decking. Grabbing a hammer and a handful of nails, he pounded some more blows to segregation in Fayette County as he visited.

Mr. Graves commended the Original Fayette County Civic and Welfare League, the Negro organization that promotes voter registration and aids Negroes who are evicted when they register, on the service it was doing to the county in building the Community Center. He expressed hope that Haywood County could have a similar Center. The Center will provide space for a doctor's and a dentist's offices in a county where, as in his own Haywood County, Negroes active in the civil rights movement often cannot get care from local doctors. The Community Center will provide a meeting place for the League and for integrated gatherings and a place for adult education and recreation.

Sixteen white workcampers arrived the day before Thanksgiving to help the

local Negroes put the roof on the building. They eat and sleep in hopes of local Negroes. They came from Oberlin College, Ohio, Wooster College, Ohio, Western College, Ohio, the University of Michigan, Swarthmore College, Pa., Earlham College, Indiana, The University of Illinois, Shimer College Illinois, and Mary Holmes Junior College, Mississippi. Student workcampers have come on college vacations to Fayette County five times and to Haywood County twice since a year ago when the Fayette County Workcamps Project was begun and the foundation was built for the Fayette County Center. The project also raises money for building materials. Three-fifths of the roof on the 40' x 70' wing has been completed to date. Projects in Haywood County included working on farms and building a ball park where both races are welcome.

Two northern white men, David Brown of Philadelphia, Pa., and Robert Barber, formerly of Kalamazoo, Michigan, were summoned to trial in Somerville on November 27 for charges of "conspiracy to obstruct and interfere with local trade", incurred during a sit-in in a drug store in Somerville July 20. For this charge they had already spent 15 days in jail. Upon their arrival they were told that the trial was postponed.

The Fayette County Workcamps Project has brought 95 workcampers from 19 colleges to Fayette and Haywood Counties. It is sponsored by the Baptist Ministers Conference of Cincinnati, the Race Relations Committee of Philadelphia Friends Yearly Meeting, Cincinnati Chapter of Operation Freedom, International Voluntary Service, Miami (Ohio) Quarterly Meeting of Friends, and the A.M.E. Preachers Meeting of Philadelphia Annual Conference. It is coordinated by Virgie Hortenstine at 5541 Hanley Road, Cincinnati 39, Ohio.