

P O O R P E O P L E S F U N D

Post Office Box 1001
Greenville, Mississippi

WHY WE ARE SENDING YOU THIS BROCHURE

A three-day planning session at Mount Beulah on January 28th gave birth to the Poor Peoples Fund. We are people who need food, land and jobs right now. We took action by going to live at the abandoned Greenville Air Force Base. After we were evicted from the base, we decided we needed land of our own.

Ten families are now living at Mount Beulah, a former school campus in Edwards, Mississippi which is leased by the Delta Ministry. We are buying land -- land for all the poor people who want to join us. Until we move onto our own land, the Delta Ministry has opened its facilities at Mount Beulah, free of charge, to house and feed those who want to come and permanently join the Poor Peoples Fund.

The group divided into committees. Most of the men are on the land committee. The women share various housekeeping jobs. There are classes for the children, a sewing center and a woodworking shop. Additional programs are being planned, for example, a ceramics workshop. Every adult is expected to work in one of the programs.

When new families are recruited, they will come to Mount Beulah. The men will work on our land to make it livable. Until that is done, the women and children will continue to learn and work at Mount Beulah in the various programs.

We need money desperately -- and we need it right now. Please read the brochure which tells more about us and what we are trying to do. Can you help us so we can help ourselves? Thank you.

February 25, 1966



“If we could get some money we could buy lands so we can grow some vegetables for the children. When they gets fresh vegetables believe me, it's a treat.”

— A Negro day laborer, Leflore County

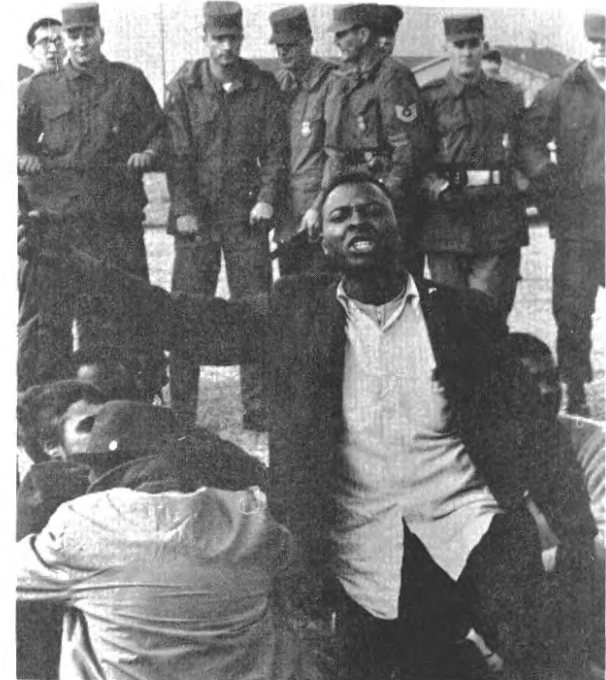


- Because of 1965 cotton acreage reduction law and increased farm mechanization, MORE THAN 20,000 MISSISSIPPI NEGRO COTTON FIELD WORKERS WILL NOT BE NEEDED THIS YEAR
- Where will these people go? Probably, most will head for Northern ghettos. But many want to start a new life and build new communities right here in Mississippi.
- Over 1,000 of us from the delta came together at Edwards, Miss. last Jan. 28. We discussed these problems of land, jobs and food.
- On Jan. 31, 40 of us acting on behalf of other hungry poor people, moved into an abandoned building at the Air Force Base in Greenville.
- The next day we were thrown off the base under orders from President Johnson. The same day, people from Tent City, Tribbett, Miss. offered their land to us as a temporary refuge.
- We left Tent City and moved to Issaquenna county where we lived in tents again. We finally came to our present location at Edwards, Miss.
- More poor people are arriving every day. They tell us they want to join us. The government has rejected them too. Our only hope is to get land of our own. For that we need money--today.
- \$125 will buy a fourth acre of good delta land.
\$500 will buy a whole acre.
\$5,000 will buy materials for one good house.
\$15,000 will buy materials for one good community center or small factory building.
- Will you help us so we can help ourselves? Please send money or pledges to:

THE POOR PEOPLES' FUND
BOX 1001, GREENVILLE, MISSISSIPPI

THE POOR PEOPLES' FUND

“We're Beginning A New Future”



“You know, we ain't dumb, even if we are poor. We need jobs, we need food. We need houses. But even with the poverty program we ain't got nothing but needs. That's why we was pulled off that building (the Air Force Base at Greenville) that wasn't being used for nothing. We is ignored by the government. The thing about poverty upsets them, but the thing about poor people don't. So there's no way out but to begin your own beginning whatever way you want. So far as I'm concerned, that's all I got to say about the past. We're beginning a new future.”

— Mrs. Ida Mae Lawrence, Rosedale



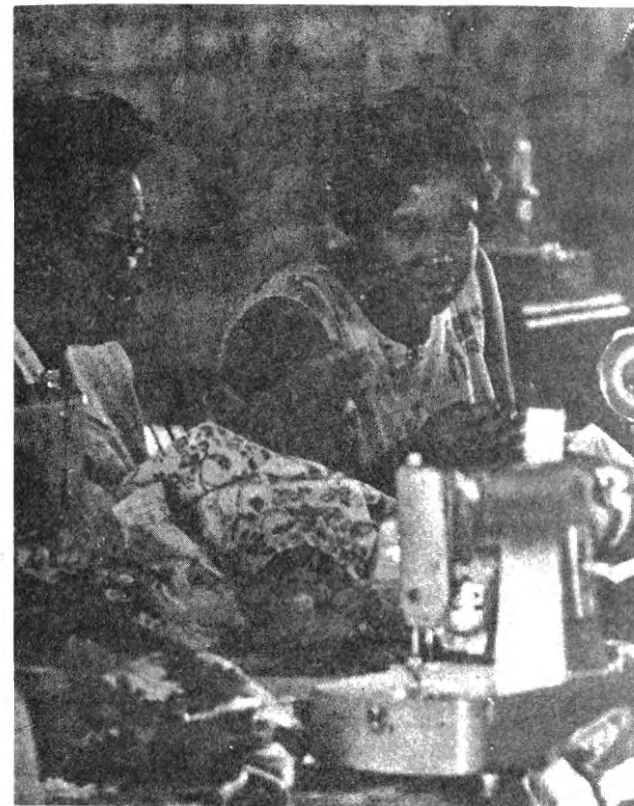
"I got seven children including four small ones. We are helples peoples. The government won't help us. The president won't help us.

"We wants land of our own--not just for my own family but for all the poor peoples that needs it.

"We wants to build us a shop so we can make things. The womens can sew real good. We want to build us a place where the teen-agers can go.

"Most of all we wants to build our homes. We're staying here now but what we wants is a regular home for our childrens."

—A Negro mother, Yalobusha County



"I came here because I was poor and I didn't have nothing. I have ten children and I can't make enough to get shoes for 'em to go to school like they should.

"I made 28 bales of cotton last year 'choppin' and I ended up owing the boss man \$1,740.

"I wouldn't go back even if I could rent. There ain't nothin' in cotton.

"I believe we should share what we have with those people who don't have nothin'. If people join us who don't have a piece of bread, I think we should share with them what we have. This here's for the poor."

—A Negro sharecropper, Holmes County



"I have five kids and a wife in Itta Bena. I left after I got involved in the civil rights movement. Every job I got I was kicked out of. I didn't have no house of my own. Didn't have nothing to do but live off the peoples.

"We could build a cooperative factory owned by poor peoples. We could divide the profits according to what we make. If some peoples can't work and don't have nothing we're going to help them too... We shouldn't turn nobody down. This here's for poor peoples.....