

WEST TENNESSEE VOTERS PROJECT Tim Hall/Barbara Brandt

Within past weeks there has been conflict between the leaders of the Original Fayette Co. Civic and Welfare League and the West Tennessee Voters Project. The League was the organization which led the struggle back in 1959, when many Negroes attempted to register, were thrown off their land, and set up a tent city. The WTVP is a continuation of the COFO-like project which was run last summer, staffed mainly by students from Cornell University. In recent weeks, leaders of the League have been talking against the WTVP, charging that they are Communist, that they are a bunch of white people trying to take over, that are there only for sex.

Last night the League called a mass meeting to discuss the WTVP. It was described as a panel discussion on the WTVP and the "so-called freedom schools", but all the speakers, except for Danny Beagle of the WTVP, were leaders of the League. About 300 people were at the meeting, which is far more than usual. The smaller clique of League leaders dominated the meeting. They refused to let people from the audience speak. They gave speeches against the white civil rights workers. Finally a white minister who used to work with the League, and Hardy Frye from Holly Springs COFO were allowed to speak. The minister spoke against the anti-white stuff, and Hardy Frye gave a speech in which he said that the important issues were the people in the audience, who were poor and hungry. Finally the League closed the meeting, and the leaders ^{left} but the majority of the people stayed. Everyone was anxious to speak. People from other parts ~~from~~ of the county, and even people from out of the county (including one girl from Benton Co., Miss.) said that if the cr workers were thrown out of Somerville, they would be welcome in their areas. People got up and talked about low wages. They didn't like the fact that the League leaders hadn't let the people speak, and that they were making charges without naming people. In Tim's words, "it was a revolution of the people."

Tim feels that the League leaders are tired. They have been working very hard for many years, and have received much harrassment, lost business, gone into debt. They're tired of fighting. Also, they are slightly well-off, while most of the people at the meeting were laborers whomade wages of \$2 a day.

On Saturday, two members of the WTVP and three local guys took a trip to the Mississippi Delta to visit MFLU's. Now they are having meetings in Tenn. to discuss forming a Union.

MONTGOMERY, ALA. Randy Glenn/Bab PROJECT REPORT

Workers have been circulating petitions addressed to "Federal, State, and Local Govts," asking that the right-to-work law be repealed, and that minimum wage laws be passed to cover those occupations that employ large numbers of Negroes. Right now the US Congress is considering abolishing the right-to-work law. They will send the petitions to Congress.

They are also beginning to work on organizing a statewide Freedom Democratic Party and a statewide Freedom Labor Union. Fred Meely is in Mississippi, now doing research on these projects.

DC FDP Mike Thelwell/Margaret Lauren

An article in the Evening Star said that the Clerk had ordered the printing of the depositions. Thelwell is checking.

CORDELE, Ga. via Albany, Jim Parry/Bab

A group of civil rights workers from Cordele went to nearby Dooly Co. They were met at the edge of Vienna by local police and the high sheriff, who told them they better not show their faces there again. They were followed out of the county.

MONTGOMERY, ALA. Doug McCann/Jeanne Breaker

Today Judge Frank Johnson of the Middle District Court of Alabama heard testimony from some of the students from Alabama State College who had been charged with trespassing by the school administration during demonstrations in Montgomery in the early spring of this year. Two lawyers from New York, Martin Berger and Ruth Moskowitz, appeared as counsel for the students. The case before the judge was to decide whether the trespassing case would remain in the federal court or be remanded back to the state court. The judge said that he would rule on the case later.

LOWNDES COUNTY, ALA.

The Lowndes County Board of Registrars has reached agreement with the US Attorney of the Justice Department, Carl Gabel, to omit that portion of the registration form which acts both as a literacy and an interpretation test. It will retain parts 1 and 2, which contain general questions about persons attempting to register--that is, name, address, citizenship, educational status, employment, etc.

The Registrar's office is to be opened from Tuesday, ~~Thursday~~ July 6, until Friday, July 9, after which it will return to the old system--first and third Mondays.

John Lewis is expected to speak in Lowndes Co, Friday night as part of the registration drive.

MCCOMB, MISS. Rev. Harry Bowie/Bab

A "Speakout" was held here in the Sweet Home Baptist Church on Sunday, June 27 (See WATS # 107). The purpose was to bring together white and Negro citizens to discuss their problems. It was organized by the Whitestown Precinct FDP, and letters of invitation were sent out to over 600 white citizens, including a telegram to Congressman John Bell Williams. However, there was a total news blackout on the Speakout, and none of the white people came.

Rev. Bowie feels that this showed the meaning of all the recent talk about "moderation" and "improved race relations" in the state. The people saw that the white community will only deal with Negroes leaders they pick out. The people are now discussing other ways to present their grievances to the white community--for example, by having a march.

SHAW, MISS. James Crawford/Bab

Two truckloads of food were driven to Shaw from the people in Winston Co. today. The people from Winston Co. said they would like to start a Union.

CHICAGO--RESIDENTIAL FREEDOM SCHOOL Fannie Rushing/Bab

There are about 35 kids here: 4 from Mississippi, 4 from Alabama, 5 from Georgia, 3 from Tennessee, 3 from Arkansas, 2 from Newark NJ, 3 from Philadelphia, Penn., and 7 from Chicago. They are still expecting 7 from New York City. They range in age from 14 to 24. There are about equal number boys and girls. They are having organizing workshops in the morning and Negro history in the afternoon.

INDIANOLA, MISS. Ed Jackson/Bab

Several people went to the Courthouse today. They need money and food. Cotton picking has started here, and about 50 people are on strike.