

GAG  
Gitta Perl

Carl G. Gann  
Communication impressions  
8 July  
evaluation

My first week in Holly Springs brought out two points most strongly: From the moment of my arrival here - June 28 - I became totally relaxed, a condition I would not have thought possible in my wildest dreams during Orientation week.

Secondly, the fact that I am older by far than all of my coworkers and that this gap makes for a great deal of loneliness.

The first disappointment was that we would not board with Negro-families but would stay at the College dorm. Naturally this made for a great deal of security but did not bring us so close to the community as we had hoped, - or as I had hoped. We began with a visit to the church, which, though I am not a churchgoing person, I had fully expected to be one of my duties here. It was pleasant, the Reverend a seemingly alert man and the congregation polite and gracious. We newcomers introduced ourselves and established with that firmly that the Summer Project Workers had arrived!

The "Freedom House" I found, was well known (if somewhat overwhelming to me with its uncountable residents!) - and going up to meet with our roommates at the College, I thought them most friendly and helpful, all due to the Movement they identified us with rather than our own merit at this time.

The conditions of the Dorm struck me as appalling but I was told that to many students they represent an improvement over those in their own homes.

Making contact with the students during mealtime and free moments of the day came easy to me which does not mean that we became intimate beyond what can be expected.

The first three days in regard to our duties and work here meant to me mostly to observe and get to know my co-workers and superiors better. I came to divide them in various groups: those "emotionally" dedicated, those purposefully dedicated and those having personal problems which are helped to some extent by being a part of a group which is at present in the public eye and whose members, especially male, enjoy the admiration of the younger set somewhat like TV stars.

As is natural with a project as this, much talk, much well meant but irrelevant, impractical suggestions, much disorganization, many different viewpoints came to the fore, but one could not but respect the allover tolerance of one's fellow men and the willingness to submit to the rules & final decisions of the Project leaders. The latter group in which I would class, in this area, about four men, are amazingly young but command my sincere respect for their maturity and for what they have made of themselves against the heaviest odds. Being a n almost compulsively orderly and organized person I was kind of glad to settle from the beginning of "school" with two middle aged ladies who want to work on their English. I enjoy teaching because I think I am fairly good at explaining things without sounding condescending. Being absorbed with my little group I am sorry to say I have no chance to see how the younger students react to us and some subjects we are introducing. I feel all of us should have this chance.

I also enjoy our canvassing trips for the same reason as stated above in regard to teaching. I talk to the people easily and think I am doing fairly well.

I will stay altogether too short to get a more reliable impression on how the educational phase, the "seed planting" will take hold. I feel there is much to say to this. Is the choice too wide? Is too little system? Do we confuse "freedom" with a lack of discipline? Is there a good possibility of bringing up leadership from the community to assure some continuity? And if not why even touch on such long-range programs as literacy? Yet only time, and not necessarily the next three months only, can tell!

1-anxiety allayed 2-loneliness 3-disappointment-not w/ families 4-church 5-living conditions  
6-local reactions to us 7-1st 3 days 8-types of workers 9-observations of staff problems  
& characteristics of this type of movement 10 personal enjoyment of teaching & canvassing  
11-evaluation a-too broad b-no plan c-discipline & freedom d-continuity  
e-later too optimistic  
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