

# Southern Exposure

WORTH FIGHTING FOR



\$5.00

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# Southern Exposure

THE JOURNAL OF THE PROGRESSIVE SOUTH

This issue features a number of articles drawn from ongoing projects of the Institute for Southern Studies. As you can see from the announcements below, we are recruiting new leadership for the Institute and *Southern Exposure*. The projects and personalities here may change, but the guiding values and central mission will remain the same. In fact, in the midst of our current reorganization, an expanded board of directors recently reaffirmed the three principles in our statement of purpose (see list below). They unanimously decided the survival and the growth of the the Institute and the magazine are worth fighting for.

We hope you agree and will continue your support and interest in the reorganization. We're taking measures to make the magazine more cost efficient, such as using new desktop publishing software and laser printer technologies. We'll be publishing a special Fall/Winter edition featuring the winners from the more than 140 entries to our "Best of the South's Daily Journalism" contest. And we will be continuing a host of projects, from investigating banks to developing a Southern reader on Central America.

With your help, we'll keep improving the Institute's contribution to other goals that we believe are worth fighting for — and that this particular issue addresses in its articles: an enjoyable and well-protected environment, peace in a global community, racial justice and dignity, safe and meaningful work, political self-determination, and an equalitarian distribution of resources. Or, more put simply, a just and decent place we can call home.

## TWO POSITIONS AVAILABLE AT THE INSTITUTE FOR SOUTHERN STUDIES

The Institute, founded in 1970, is a non-profit organization whose programs are designed to encourage critical thinking about the South's problems and potentials, and to support citizen-based organizing for positive social and economic change. At the center of each project is an emphasis on (1) building effective grassroots organizations with strong local leadership and well-informed strategies; (2) providing the information, ideas, and historical understanding of Southern struggles necessary for long-term fundamental change; and (3) nourishing communication and understanding among groups with diverse cultural backgrounds. The Institute offers critical analysis of public policy issues and is a clearinghouse of resources and contacts useful to a wide range of grassroots leaders and educators.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director, who is accountable to the board of directors, will set new directions for the Institute and will manage day-to-day operations. These include supervising the staff, coordinating fundraising plans, overseeing the preparation of budgets and management of finances, and developing and implementing the long-range programs and goals of the Institute in conjunction with the staff and board of directors.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- ▲ dedication to the mission of the Institute and *Southern Exposure*
- ▲ experience at budgeting, managing finances and fundraising
- ▲ knowledge of and commitment to the South
- ▲ ability to work with people with a wide range of backgrounds, skills and perspectives
- ▲ good communication skills, a commitment to social change, and experience or strong interest in various forms of progressive media

### MANAGING EDITOR OF SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

The Managing Editor will coordinate the publication of *Southern Exposure* and explore alternatives for improving its political impact, public visibility, and long-term financial viability. The position involve overseeing the conceptualization, planning, and production of editorial projects, sometimes developing an entire issue in-house but most often shaping, coordinating, and assisting editorial teams that will have prime responsibility for theme issues of the magazine. Other responsibilities include editing articles, working with writers, directing production of *Southern Exposure*, and overseeing occasional research reports, Institute books, and alternative media projects.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- ▲ strong editorial and publishing skills
- ▲ ability to coordinate editorial projects
- ▲ proven writing ability
- ▲ dedication to the mission of the Institute and *Southern Exposure*
- ▲ knowledge of and commitment to the South
- ▲ creativity and a willingness to experiment

### SALARY AND BENEFITS

The Executive Director will receive \$22,000+ and the Managing Editor will receive \$18,000+, depending on qualifications and experience. Benefits include 3 weeks annual vacation, 2 weeks sick leave, health and dental insurance, 12 paid holidays, and maternity/paternity leave.

### TO APPLY FOR EITHER POSITION

Please send a resume, three references, and a cover letter explaining your interest in the position to Search Committee, Institute for Southern Studies, P.O. Box 531, Durham, NC 27702.

The Institute for Southern Studies is an affirmative action employer. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply.

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**FEATURES**


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- 11**    **WHERE THE HAWKS ROOST**    An Institute for Southern Studies analysis of how Southerners in Congress vote on military and foreign policy issues
- 16**    **ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS: LESSONS FROM THE GRASSROOTS**    by Bob Hall
- 29**    **"WOULD YOU LET US STARVE TO DEATH"**  
Letters from textile workers in search of a genuine New Deal
- 33**    **THE SOUTH'S JUMBO BANKS: CROSSING STATE LINES**    A Special Report by Tom Schlesinger
- 37**    **"NEVER TURN BACK": THE MOVEMENT IN GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI**    interview with Sam Block by Joe Sinsheimer
- 51**    **CAN YOU SEE OUR FACES: IMAGES OF ATLANTA'S HOMELESS**  
photographs from the Taskforce on the Homeless
- 56**    **GENTILITY**    A short story by Hartmut
- 58**    **MOVIES THAT WILL MOVE YOU**    A guide to films and videos by Marieke Tax and Richard Ward
- 

**DEPARTMENTS**


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- 2**    **SOUTHERN NEWS ROUNDUP**    Texan refuses military service in Central America, Richmond company and the Dalkon Shield, Mississippi's new Congressman, Baptist moderates suffer another defeat, school funding ruled illegal, a bribe for the host of nuclear waste, and more
- 7**    **MY TURN: VIEWS AND NEWS**    Victor McTeer on Super Tuesday and Jesse Jackson
- 9**    **RESOURCES**    Virginia communities, voter activism, jets in the sky, toxic wastes, boycott guide, progressive polling
- 60**    **BOOKS**    John Egerton experiences the essence of Southern food
- 62**    **NEW BOOKS ON THE SOUTH**
- 64**    **VOICES FROM THE PAST**    Arkansas, 1951: A "New Spirit" for Investing in Education

## Mississippi's Espy Gains Larger Support

A post-election study of voter turnout in Mississippi's Second Congressional District concludes that Mike Espy, the first black elected to Congress from Mississippi since Reconstruction, won because he drew about 5 percent more white votes in the 1986 election than did State Representative Robert Clark, also black, in his narrow losses in 1982 and 1984.

The study by the Atlanta-based Voter Education Project (VEP) found that Espy got 12 percent of the white vote and 95 percent of the black vote, compared to 7 percent of the white vote and 94 percent of the black vote for Clark in 1984. VEP also found very high support for Espy in several predominantly white precincts in his home county of Yazoo, including 47 percent in one precinct and 50 percent in another.

Since his election last November, Espy has been getting rave reviews from some of his white constituents and from the press. One visitor to Espy's Washington office is quoted in *The Conservative*, of Carrollton, Mississippi, as saying, "I'm glad to know we've got somebody who really listens to us." Mayor Emery Grubbs of Vicksburg has also credited Espy with caring about his city and showing a "willingness to fight the system, which is a big plus for us."

Espy, who sought and got a seat on the House Committee on Agriculture, also co-hosted, with Mississippi Democratic Senator John Stennis, a catfish luncheon to persuade the Department of Defense to put catfish on military menus throughout the world. According to *The Conservative*, "Espy has apparently done even more winning-over of his white constituency by his sincerity and devotion to his job of helping his district with its myriad of economic problems. . . . Espy seems to be doing what he does best — working hard, but quietly, and it appears to be paying off."

Some of Espy's key black supporters feel a bit differently, however. One elected official says he has a hard time getting Espy to answer his mail; the freshman

congressman, he says, is confused about the nature of his real support. Yet, most black and white leaders in the state believe that no black will emerge to challenge Espy in 1988 and that he is very likely to be reelected.

—*Joint Center for Political Studies*

## SOCM Turns Fifteen, Celebrates Victory

Save Our Cumberland Mountains, the east Tennessee citizens group, celebrates its fifteenth anniversary this August with a picnic for SOCM ("Sock 'Em") members and friends in Campbell County, near where the group was founded.

Thirteen coalfield residents began the organization in an effort to make mineral companies pay their fair share of local taxes. SOCM quickly gained notoriety as the group in Tennessee fighting stripmining, and it was active in the nationwide campaign to pass a federal stripmine law.

Over the years, SOCM has been responsible for blocking numerous stripmine permits that would have caused severe water contamination and property damage for local residents and surface landowners (often different than mineral owners). The biggest of these victories came in 1977 with the defeat of American Metal Climax's (AMAX) attempt to stripmine 10,000 acres of land on the Cumberland Plateau.

SOCM's focus now extends beyond mining-related issues. Last year it stopped the National Guard from building a 100,000 acre training center that would have dislocated more than 500 families from the Cumberland Plateau. Eight local chapters are now working on such projects as getting water to members' homes whose supplies are contaminated or inadequate, fighting unsafe mines, and running a local recycling center.

The organization won a major victory this year when the Tennessee General Assembly passed a SOCM-sponsored bill to allow landowners to regain ownership of abandoned minerals under their land. The bill requires mineral owners to

register their mineral rights with the county and, in the first provision of its kind in the nation, gives landowners the "first right of refusal" on minerals under their land if those minerals go up for auction or back taxes. The bill also allows landowners to regain the minerals under their land if no one develops, pays taxes, or claims ownership of the minerals for 20 years.

"This is something we have been working on for years," said Connie White, president of SOCM. "And like everything we win, it's the people who made it happen." More than 50 SOCM members traveled to Nashville in small groups and invested over 500 hours in lobbying legislators. In addition, many other SOCM members wrote their legislators or visited them in their home districts.

From its original 13 members, the group has grown to a membership of over 600 families, and while it first existed mainly in the large coal-producing counties in the northern Cumberland Mountains, its greatest growth in recent years has occurred in the southern areas, where a majority of the chapters are now located.

Fifteen more years? "Of course," says Ms. White. "There's a need for rural citizens to work together and SOCM is a way to do that." —*thanks to Bob Becker*

## We've Got A Deal For Your State — It Glows!

No state wants to house the nation's dump for high-level radioactive waste. So two Senators came up with an idea. Bribe 'em. In late March, Senate Energy Committee Chair J. Bennett Johnston (D-LA) and ranking minority member James McClure (R-Idaho) added S-839 to the more than dozen bills that seek to revamp the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 in one way or another.

If this bill is enacted, the state or Indian tribe that volunteers to host the permanent repository will get \$100 million when it signs the binding agreement, \$50 million a year till the dump opens, and \$100 million a year from the time the site opens until it is sealed.

Although any state or Indian tribe could claim the money by volunteering a suitable site within the first year of the bill's passage, the idea is to motivate one of the three states already on the "final candidate" list (Washington, Nevada and Texas) to step forward. This step would cut short the present contentious siting process as well as save \$1 billion in "site characterization" costs for each of the sites that is taken out of the running.

It isn't really a bribe, says Ben Cooper of Sen. Johnston's staff. "Having a repository in your state is a big favor that you're doing the rest of the country, so it's fair to have some compensation."

Chances for S-839 passage, Cooper admits, are slim. Caroline Petti of the Southwest Research and Information Center doesn't think the bill is meant to go anywhere. She claims it is Sen. Johnston's way of keeping the current Department of Energy (DOE) siting process on track. "It affirms the notion that there are no flaws in the DOE process, only in the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) response," says Petti. "It says that there are no real problems with nuclear waste, only political problems."

—Rose Marie Audette, *Environmental Action magazine*

## Holy Inquisition To Aid Fundamentalists

A ten-year campaign to rid the 14.6 million-member Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) of "liberals" neared successful completion last month with the election of its ninth consecutive fundamentalist president and the almost total exclusion from denominational institutions of any persons not adhering to a strict, fundamentalist view of scripture.

This year's gathering, held June 16 to 18 in St. Louis, reflected both the overwhelming dominance of the fundamentalists and the waning resolve of the moderates to secure a place for themselves in the SBC. Some 24,000 "messengers" from the denomination's 37,116 congregations attended the St. Louis meeting, down from 45,419 in 1985 and 40,987 last year.

Rev. Adrian Rogers, a fundamentalist Memphis pastor, was easily reelected as SBC president, thus becoming the first SBC president in 40 years to serve a third term. His first term as SBC president, 1979 to 1980, inaugurated the fundamentalist takeover campaign.

Fundamentalists Paul Pressler, a Hous-

ton judge, and Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, began their highly orchestrated campaign in the late 1970s. Their strategy was to assure fundamentalist dominance of the denomination's presidency and thereby gain control of the entire denomination. The SBC structure calls for the president to appoint the Committee on Committees, which in turn determines the membership and theological and political makeup of the SBC boards that run the denomination's 14 agencies and six seminaries.

After the 1979 election of Rogers, Pressler and Paterson began forming state groups to further their agenda. The fundamentalist faction now controls 19 of the denomination's 20 agencies, as well as the SBC coffers, which took in \$3.7 billion in 1984.

The critical, litmus test issue for the fundamentalists is scriptural "inerrancy," believing that original biblical manuscripts are without error. But moderates point to their own adherence to the authority of the Bible and contend that fundamentalists, who have been active in New Right politics, are just using the ill-defined, theological issue of "inerrancy" to achieve political orthodoxy and control over the large and wealthy denomination.

Messengers at the St. Louis meeting adopted the report of the 22-member Peace Committee, established in 1985 to heal the denominational rift. However, it

appeared likely that the report would further alienate Baptist moderates. Claiming that "most Southern Baptists... believe Adam and Eve were real people," and that the earth was created in seven days, and that biblical miracles were literally true as described, the committee determined that church mission boards, seminaries, and other institutions should "build their professional staffs and facilities from those who clearly reflect such dominant convictions."

When the convention extended the work of the Peace Committee for three years "to encourage compliance" with its recommendations, many moderates were incensed by what they viewed as a mechanism to police theological and political thought within the convention. "It's the Baptist equivalent of the Holy Office of the Inquisition," said moderate Glenn Hinson, professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

Some SBC moderates have responded to the long-term fundamentalist domination of the convention by forming their own organization. Members of the new Southern Baptist Alliance adopted a seven-point covenant, which includes commitments to church-state separation, the ordination of women, ecumenical cooperation, social and economic justice, and "the freedom of the individual, led by God's spirit... to read and interpret the Scriptures, relying on the historical under-



### Where Your Tax Dollars Go

By including Social Security and other Trust Fund-financed programs, the Reagan administration says 42 percent of the federal budget goes to "direct benefit payments for individuals," compared to 29 percent for "national defense." But by looking only at expenses paid by your tax dollars, the War Resisters League calculates that

63 percent of fiscal 1987 outlays — \$492 billion — will go for current and past military costs (including four-fifths of the annual debt service). Only 27 percent goes for education, the environment, housing, energy, agriculture, community development, health care, and other human and physical resources.

standing of the church and on the best methods of biblical study."

When the moderate group was organized in May, its leaders said they had no plans to break away from the Southern Baptist Convention. But with fundamentalists only stronger after the St. Louis meeting, it remains to be seen how long Baptist moderates will try to work and worship within the SBC structure.

- Vicki Kemper, *Sojourner* magazine

## Richmond Firm Delays Dalkon Shield Claims

— by Bonnie Campbell

An advocacy group for women injured by the Dalkon Shield intrauterine device is outraged over recent court action involving the A.H. Robins Company of Richmond, Virginia, which manufactured and distributed over four million Dalkon Shields between 1971 and 1975.

In mid-July the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in Virginia suspended the emergency medical fund created to help victims of the Shield pay for reconstructive surgery or in-vitro fertilization. The motion to hold the emergency fund was made by Robins stockholders apparently fearful of irreparable damage to their assets. Members of the Robins family, including chief executive officer E. Clairborne Robins, Jr., own 41 percent of the company's corporate stock, and they have refused to contribute any of their stock holdings to the fund for Dalkon Shield victims. Robins makes Chap Stick, Robitussin cough medicine, and Sergeant's pet care products.

Responding to the stay on the emergency fund, Karen Hicks—president of the Dalkon Shield Information Network (DSIN)—said, "We are wounded again, we are grieving again; we see nothing but a pattern of injury and insult in such court actions." Hicks, who describes her organization as a group of Dalkon Shield survivors, says the courts have made it as difficult as possible for women injured by the Shield to find each other, first by delaying the release of a mailing list of women who want to make a claim against A.H. Robins, then, after finally deciding to release the list, pricing it at \$2 million.

"We have survived the most horrific physical trauma," Hicks said. "Many of us were close to death. Now, as survivors, we are ready to demand full justice for this

tragedy." DSIN has 10 chapters around the country and is growing rapidly as more women and families damaged by the Dalkon Shield find out about it.

Thousands of women were injured by the Shield, which can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and hamper or destroy a woman's fertility. At least 18 women in the U.S. died from PID caused by the Shield.

The list of other injuries caused by the shield is long, but one of the greatest risks was to women who became pregnant while wearing it. The Shield could lead to miscarriage, spontaneous abortion, infected miscarriage, stillbirth, or birth defects.

Yet Robins continued marketing the Shield even after its many problems were brought to the company's attention. The company's own doctors had warned that the Shield's tailstring (used to check the device's position) was a potential cause of infection: it could act as a wick, drawing bacteria into the uterus.



An article in *Multinational Monitor* (April 1987) reveals a letter written to Robins by a doctor just a few weeks after the Shield went on the market: "I have just inserted my tenth Dalkon Shield and have found the procedure to be the most traumatic manipulation ever perpetrated upon womanhood. . . . I have ordered all Shields out of my office."

As the Shield's hazards became more obvious and lawsuits were filed, Robins finally quit selling the device in 1974, but it waited until 1980 before urging doctors to remove the Shield from women still wearing it.

In August 1985, Robins asked a federal court to allow it to reorganize under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code. Some 7,600 women have received \$244 million in personal injury claims, and another 3,600 court cases are pending. Many Shield users believe the bankruptcy filing is a shield.

On July 21, a hearing was scheduled in Richmond for the company to disclose its reorganization plan, and a group of about 100 DSIN members and supporters rallied at the courthouse to protest Robins' financial maneuvers. The disclosure was postponed, apparently to give Robins time to work out the details of an intended merger with Rorer Group Inc., another non-prescription drug manufacturer.

Hicks says such a merger would not be in the best interest of Dalkon Shield survivors because, under the terms of the merger, Robins could be protected from criminal prosecution. "They are hiding behind bankruptcy laws, and stand to be further enriched by a merger or buyout," she said, adding that Robins "is entirely viable, richer than ever; sales are up and profits are up." Hicks also said merger plans would give all Robins creditors except the Dalkon Shield claimants a chance to receive 100 percent of their claims.

A further insult came on July 21 when the judge barred 110,000 women from their right to make a claim because they failed to meet the deadline or adequately answer a court-ordered questionnaire concerning their Dalkon Shield injuries. The judge has since decided to give those women a chance to rejoin the 222,000 other petitioners, but they must contact the court in Richmond and explain why they did not meet its deadline.

Hicks says many claims are in jeopardy because Robins led some women to believe they do not need a lawyer, when in fact a lawyer is needed to protect a claim. The Dalkon Shield Information Network plans more action at the courthouse in Richmond. "We are planning some very creative approaches to free speech in the near future," says Hicks.

As of this writing, a hearing is scheduled in Richmond on a motion to reimburse Rorer \$2 million for expenses incurred during negotiations with Robins. In principle, the court cannot accept any merger agreement unless it is endorsed by the parties in the Chapter 11 case, including the Dalkon Shield claimants.

For more information about Dalkon Shield claims, contact DSIN, P.O. Box 53, Bethlehem, PA 18016, or call (215) 867-6577.

DAN HELLIG/ARCO

## U.S. Soldier Resists Central American War

— by Todd Ensign,  
Pacific News Service

In an echo of Vietnam's GI resisters, an Air Force sergeant has become the first GI to refuse military duty in Central America. But unlike the Vietnam "grunts" who were the first to opt out of the war, he is a member of an elite reconnaissance flight team charged with monitoring Nicaraguan radio frequencies. Even more worrisome to the Pentagon, he is an Hispanic of Mexican-American origin.

"I felt like I was making war on my own people," says Daniel Cobos, 30, of Laredo, TX, in explaining his decision in May to file for a discharge as a conscientious objector.

Judging from the reactions he has received from his peers, more enlisted personnel may follow his lead because of disagreements with U.S. policy in the region. "Several of the guys I've flown with said they would have done what I did if they didn't have families to worry about," he says. "Others have expressed strong disagreement with my stand, but also told me they respected my integrity."

Raised as an Air Force "brat" in an intensely patriotic Mexican-American home, Daniel, his siblings, and his mother followed Master Sgt. Cobos all over the world. All three Cobos sons followed their father into the Air Force.

Three years ago, Cobos, who received six months of classified training at Goodfellow Air Force base in Waco, TX, was assigned as a cryptologic linguist aboard an Air Force RC-135 jet cargo plane.

Each night the reconnaissance plane, packed with sophisticated electronic gear, would fly from Nebraska's Offhut Air Force base to Central America. Cobos and 11 other technicians, each fluent in Spanish, would plug into various frequencies as the plane slowly flew the length of Nicaragua's borders.

Since almost any message which is electronically transmitted can be monitored, he heard a lot. "Sometimes we'd pick up phone conversations which consisted of nothing more than family gossip," Cobos explained. "Other times we'd pick up traffic between Sandinista military units as they deployed in combat."

Cobos believes that information of value went through government intelligence services to the contras in planning

their attacks on villages as well as Nicaraguan military units.

"When I first completed my training as a crypto-linguist, I felt pride," he remembers. "But over time, it became impossible for me to justify what I was doing."

Cobos first began to question his role in the Air Force after helping to translate for a refugee from El Salvador. "After that," he remembers, "we'd run into each other at various gatherings. He told me of his government killing 14 members of his family, along with his best friend. He described the horror of walking along country roads and finding tortured and mutilated bodies, and the outrage of his government's systematically bombing his people."

Cobos was at once impressed with the refugee's courage and hope, and deeply affected by the stories. "I felt that my job had a hand in causing the dreadful conditions they were fleeing," he recalls.

On his return from temporary duty in Panama, where he admits the poverty and the callous attitude of his fellow soldiers made him feel like a "mercenary," he saw his refugee friend again. "He asked me where I'd been for the past months," says Cobos. "For the first time, I told him that I was in the Air Force and that I'd been in Panama. He looked at me straight in the eye and said, 'So you are the one who's been bombing my country.'"

In order to win a discharge as a conscientious objector, Cobos must convince a military hearing officer that because of his moral beliefs he is sincerely opposed to participating in war in any form. If his claim is not granted, he could face court martial if he refuses to perform further military duties.

Once he filed as a conscientious objector, Cobos was grounded and his security clearance was suspended. Agents from the Office of Special Investigations are delving into his associations at Offhut Air Force Base, where he is currently assigned to clerical duties while his application is being considered, a process which could take months.

One legal issue raised by Sgt. Cobos' case is whether the Pentagon provided the contras with the fruits of these reconnaissance flights and in so doing, violated U.S. criminal statutes. The Boland Amendment, in effect while Sgt. Cobos flew his missions and a focus of the recent Contragate hearings, prohibits direct or indirect assistance to the contras by the Pentagon or "any agency involved in intelligence activities."

"Cobos' testimony suggests that the Pentagon may have provided the contras

with direct aid during a period when it was against the law," says Louis Font, an attorney with the New York-based GI-veterans' advocacy group Citizen Soldier who is handling Cobos' case.

On June 16, Cobos was summoned by his commander and warned that he faced criminal investigation if he disclosed anything about his military activities. Apparently Cobos' allegations are making some officials at the highest levels of the Pentagon uncomfortable.

## Court Says Funding For Schools Illegal

A Texas court has ruled that inequalities in the state's school-finance system amount to illegal discrimination against students in property-poor districts. In a decision that could have grave consequences for the hard-pressed Texas treasury, Judge Harley Clark found the state in violation of its own constitution for failing to eliminate widespread financial disparities among its 1,063 school districts.

"The court does not detect in the evidence or the law a compelling reason or objective that would justify continuation of this discrimination," he wrote in the case known as Edgewood vs. Kirby.

Clark, judge of the state district court in Travis County, ordered the existing finance law "set aside," and asked the plaintiffs to recommend an appropriate remedy in the case. The historic decision came after a long struggle to achieve greater financial equity in the state's public schools.

Dating back to the filing of the Rodriguez case in 1968, school finance reform advocates had argued that Texas' system of financing public schools was inequitable: inequitable for taxpayers in low-wealth school districts, whose higher tax efforts yielded significantly fewer dollars than comparable rates in high-wealth districts; and inequitable for children, whose educational opportunities were dependent on the wealth of their parents, or that of the communities in which they happened to reside.

Many state leaders, educators, and other Texans assumed that the longstanding finance equity issue had been resolved with the 1984 passage of a law (HB 72) changing financing mechanisms for public schools. In addition to using an approach

based more directly on student enrollment, the reform law called for annual studies of the actual cost of providing state-mandated educational programs. The legislation recommended that this data be used in future biennial education funding decisions.

The promise embodied in HB 72 became an empty one as the cost figures were all but ignored by the 1985 and 1987 legislatures. Rather than increasing state funding to reflect actual costs, the legislators tried to cut selected education programs as part of their preoccupation with balancing the state budget. Education advocates abandoned their original plans to push for increases in state revenues and adopted a largely successful fall-back strategy of achieving "no cuts" in school funding.

Frustrated with the legislature's inability and/or unwillingness to confront the funding equity issue, a small number of low-wealth school districts turned to the state courts for relief. Before a packed courtroom in Austin, Judge Clark ruled that the plaintiffs had demonstrated ample evidence of continuing discrimination. "The 200 school districts at the upper end of the wealth spectrum spent over twice as much per student . . . as the 200 districts at the lower end of the wealth spectrum," he wrote.

Judge Clark was especially critical of the state's contention that financial inequalities are largely irrelevant to the quality of education and do not violate the state constitution's guarantee of an "efficient" system of public schools.

"This court . . . does not sit to resolve disputes over educational theory, but to enforce our constitution," he wrote. "The question of discrimination in educational quality . . . looks to what the state provides its children and their school districts, not what the students or the districts are able to do with what they receive."

In its findings of fact, the State Court noted the great differences in property wealth prevalent among the state's 1,063 school systems, observed that the students in property wealthy districts had access to eight times the tax base available to students in the poorest school systems, and proposed that there was a direct correlation between taxable property wealth and educational expenditures per pupil. The court also concluded that unequal opportunities to raise funds were exacerbated by the fact that high-need pupils were heavily concentrated in the state's poorest districts.

— thanks to Albert Cortez of the *Intercultural Development Research Associa-*

*tion in San Antonio and to William Montague of Education Week*

## Majority Black Town Denied Government

— by Marsha M. Cloutier

For black citizens who make up 80 percent of Keysville, Georgia's 300 residents, time remains fixed in the nineteenth century. The town's white minority has stymied their efforts to reactivate the local government and address the need for a water and sewage system, fire and police protection, and job opportunities.

"We have apartheid 25 miles from Augusta," says Turetha Neeley, one of the leaders — mostly black women — of a community association that began investigating incorporating Keysville in order to obtain tax money and grants for needed services. The group soon discovered that Keysville had been incorporated in 1890 but inexplicably stopped holding local elections in 1933.

Following the advice of the state attorney general, Keysville residents held a town meeting and elected one black and one white election superintendent. The white member later refused to sign the election notice, and whites opposed to reactivating the town government disrupted meetings, made threats (including cross burnings), and promised economic reprisal. Owners of a nursing home that provides the most jobs for blacks are adamantly against the new government.

Nonetheless, an election was scheduled for January 6, 1986. Six blacks filed for mayor and five council seats, and when no other candidates filed, the slate was sworn into office, again in accordance with Georgia election law. Hours later, whites obtained an injunction that blocked the new government from operating, because the town's boundaries (and therefore the location of eligible voters) were vaguely established in 1890.

By the spring of 1987, black residents had been rebuffed by Burke County and state authorities but had won support from the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus, national church and civil rights groups, and the Christic Institute-South, a public interest law firm now suing Governor Joe Frank Harris, the state attorney general, and chair of the state board of elections. If Keysville residents win the suit, the governor will be forced to fill local government vacancies. However, a new law passed after the suit was prepared may require

county officials to fill the vacancies. This could shift attention back to Burke County, where blacks now hold a slim majority of the county commission and white resistance remains intense.

Black leaders in Keysville plan a "Southern Tour of Power" this fall and a videotape to educate others about what state representative Tyrone Brooks of Atlanta calls "the most significant political issue at the moment in this state."

## Louisiana Lockout's International Ties

On June 20, over 1,000 people marched through the streets of Gonzales, Louisiana. The march marked the third anniversary of the lockout of 370 members of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 4-620 at the BASF plant in nearby Geismar. In 1984, BASF management demanded far-reaching contract changes, including subcontracting rights that would have cost 100 maintenance jobs. On June 15, 1984, BASF — a West German-owned chemical producer — locked the gates on its workers.

The demonstrators who came to support the locked-out workers represented a cross-section of labor, church, and environmental organizations. Their march followed a June 3 protest in which 350 demonstrators blocked the entrance to BASF's U.S. headquarters in Parsippany, NJ. Eighteen demonstrators were arrested, and OCAW has retained former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark to defend them.

In May, BASF took the first steps toward firing Bernard Doenig, a chemical worker at its plant in Ludwigshafen, West Germany. Doenig had visited the Geismar plant with a delegation from the German Green party in April 1986. More recently, he helped send out a mailing from OCAW to nearly 1,000 BASF managers. The company is taking Doenig to court in September in order to fire him.

In response, OCAW Local 4-620 appointed Doenig a member of its bargaining committee, and it says the NLRB recognizes such international activity as "a perfectly legitimate part of collective bargaining." BASF claims the lockout is a local matter, but Doenig points out, "By this action against me, BASF has transported the conflict from American to German soil. They have given visible recognition to the international character of this dispute." — from *Labor Notes*



# MY TURN: VIEWS AND NEWS

## Will Super Tuesday Be Titanic Tuesday?

by Victor McTeer

On March 8, 14 Southern states will elect 30 percent of the delegates to the national political conventions. At a recent meeting of the Southern Regional Council, Victor McTeer — a Greenville, Mississippi attorney who was pledged to Jesse Jackson in the 1984 Democratic convention — spoke about the significance of Super Tuesday, or "Titanic Tuesday" as he dubbed it.

As a concept, Super Tuesday grew out of white conservative thinking that the South was the key to Democratic electoral success and that a Southwide primary would give the region a heightened impact and more attention. But due to the large percentage of black population here, we know that this election will also give Southern minority voters an uncharacteristic opportunity to affect presidential politics. The prospect of black voters controlling the outcome of a presidential nomination process will force some interesting strategic developments.

Will the solid South (at least as it is perceived by some white candidates) actually become the split South? Will Democratic party candidates attempt to organize both the white and the black communities, or will Rev. Jesse Jackson's venture into the process assure that white candidates will not attempt to organize in the black community?

It is conceivable that white candidates fearful of Jackson's strength in the black belt of Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and Georgia will simply fail to attempt effective organization in those areas. Why? Because despite stringent white opposition, blacks

have made some of their greatest political advancements here — in many instances with the support of Jackson and his friends. The Democratic party here has suffered a massive white disaffection, and Republicans are benefiting from the historical anti-black attitudes of the white community.

Instead of working these areas, as a white presidential candidate one might decide to focus on Florida and Texas. These states do not yet have the strong black organizational activity found in the black belt states; the Chicano vote has not yet crystallized as an ongoing bloc force. Potentially, a white candidate could pick up enough delegates in these two states to counteract the delegates selected by the minority vote in the rest of the South.

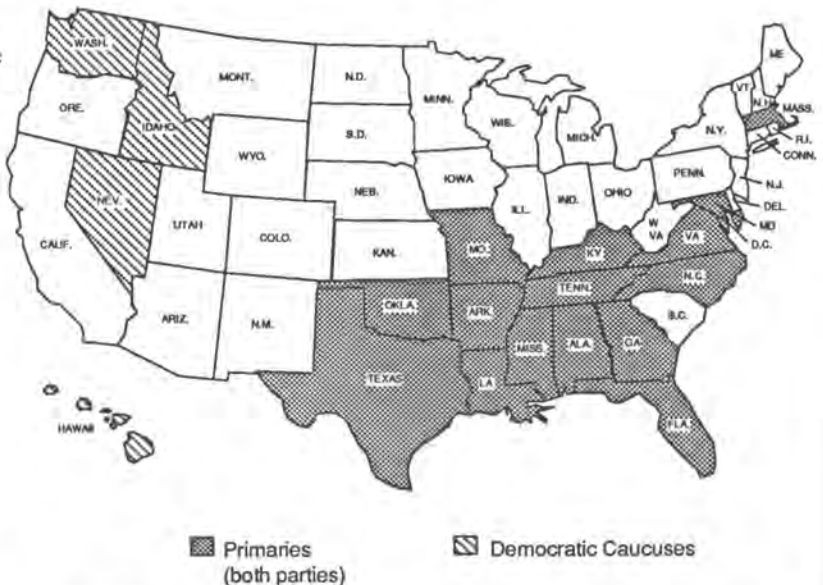
It is possible that as a result of Super Tuesday we will see a redefinition of the term "South." There will probably be a little South and a big South. The little South will be everything that Jesse wins; the big South will be everything that everybody else wins.

This is not a concocted fantasy. There are serious rumors afoot that many of the potential candidates will simply give Jesse the little South and will not engage in significant solicitation of black voters or mount a get-out-the-vote effort, believing that there are two aspects to this campaign — "pre-" convention and "post-" convention. Pre-convention, they will downplay issues important to the black community in an effort not to upset the white community. Post-convention, they will judge that black folk will have nowhere to go except to the Democratic nominee. As a consequence, there will be no discussion about patronage, appointments, restructuring of priorities.

Now I suggest that this scenario can be thwarted if a Jackson victory turns Super Tuesday into Titanic Tuesday for conservative Democratic strategists. Do you remember the term "brokered convention," where there is no clear winner and there must be negotiation? It is not inconceivable that a Jackson campaign controlling a third of the delegates to the

## SUPER TUESDAY STATES

State	# of Democratic Delegates
Alabama	61
Arkansas	43
Florida	146
Georgia	85
Kentucky	60
Louisiana	70
Maryland	78
Mississippi	45
Missouri	83
North Carolina	89
Oklahoma	50
Tennessee	77
Texas	196
Virginia	(85)
U.S. Total	3933



In addition to 14 Southern and border states, Massachusetts will hold its primary on March 8 and Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Washington, and American Samoa will hold Democratic caucuses. Before Super Tuesday, less than 10 percent of the delegates will be chosen to the Democratic and Republican conventions. After that day, about 40 percent will be selected.

Democratic National Convention could force such brokering in the absence of a clear leader among the numerous white candidates. I believe that we must anticipate the prospect of a brokered convention and make demands now for specific benefits, guarantees, appointments, and patronage in order to effectively play the game of presidential politics in 1988.

If Jackson is to have a vital candidacy, he must do well on Titanic Tuesday. It

is interesting to note that while the Manatts and Bert Lances created this evident monster in order to benefit a Southern candidacy, it has in a sense become a linchpin for Rev. Jackson. If he does not do well on Titanic Tuesday, his candidacy will lose its vitality. On the other hand, because of the likelihood that he will do well, it seems evident that many Democratic party leaders will attempt to downplay the importance of Titanic Tuesday.

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University of Massachusetts at Amherst

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William  Morrow

Super Tuesday, in all likelihood, will be an event that we may never see again. I earnestly believe that we will see a heightening of black participation despite the predicted refusal of Democratic party officials to help Jackson get out the black vote on Super Tuesday. It will be very difficult for most black people to walk into a polling place, see the name of Jesse Jackson or his representative on a ballot, and not vote for the Jackson mystique. We will probably see more black candidates running than ever before. We also will see black candidates and black leaders in the South defining issues of geographic consequence. One of the most interesting aspects of Mike Espy's race for Congress was the affirmation of issues in a Mississippi campaign; the fact that the white farm issue would become significant for the candidacy of a black man for Congress was indeed unique.

Blacks should, and will continue to, demand their fair share of the leadership in the Democratic party. The important question for white Southerners is whether they will join in the redefinition of issues as opposed to promoting the constituency of race. White disaffection from the Democratic party has resulted in the startling move towards two-party politics in the South. However, the continued use of racist tactics will only further this process of segregation on the basis of race and party. Now that we have moved from the outhouse to the White House, from the slave ship to championships, we must ask ourselves, when will the white folk get out of the ditch?

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Be sure to let us know your new address so you don't miss a single issue of *Southern Exposure*. Write us at P.O. Box 531, Durham, North Carolina 27702.

# RESOURCES

## Community Plans

A decade ago, dozens of counties published community development plans with the help of federal funds. The money has largely dried up, and the plans rarely became practical guides for zoning ordinances (most Southern counties still lack this basic tool for self-determination) or blueprints for self-conscious economic development.

Despite their dubious impact on policy, the reports offered a handy overview of an area's economy, demographics, and social institutions. The Appalachian Regional Commission still occasionally funds studies of this type, including a new one prepared by the Tayloe Murphy Institute called **The People and Economy of Southwest Virginia**.

It's aimed at county development officials, and while it recognizes the allure of rural values and natural beauty for local residents, it essentially adopts the framework of a business executive evaluating the pros and cons of making an investment in a 17-county region that includes coal, farming, and textile sub-regions.

"Economic developers should be careful not to overestimate the value of natural resources in an economic sense. . . . Searching for large industrial plants, however, may not be the best way to develop an economy. . . . Developing a good business climate with moderate taxes, minimal regulations, and good roads may pay off in the long run . . . . If the region cannot employ all the population, it can at least give its residents competitive skills that can be used in or out of the region."

Regardless of its mixed messages, the 120-page report brims with well-footnoted data on the region's leading industries, labor conditions, population changes, education, and housing patterns. It's a good example of what community researchers should search for and absorb from chambers of commerce, universities, and regional development agencies. For a copy, contact the Tayloe Murphy Institute, School of Business, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22904.

JOINT CENTER FOR POLITICAL STUDIES

## Strategies for Mobilizing Black Voters

Four Case Studies

Edited by  
Thomas F. Cavanagh

## Victories for Voters

The 1988 elections promise another test for voter registration and mobilization groups, especially those targeting people of color in districts where the maximum participation of "minorities" can swing an election's outcome. As described in the article on environmental politics (page 25ff), many techniques used by black and Hispanic voter leagues can be effectively adapted by issue-oriented groups targeting white voters.

A new book from the Joint Center for Political Studies analyzes the political strategies, organizational framework, precinct-level data, and outreach programs of four centers of emerging black electoral power. In addition to overview chapters, **Strategies for Mobilizing Black Voters** focuses on successful mayoral elections in Birmingham, Chicago, and Philadelphia, and on a narrow loss in North Carolina's Second Congressional District.

The chapter on Birmingham profiles Richard Arrington's campaigns; Jefferson County's unique application of Alabama election law; various voter registration groups in the city; the role of neighborhood associations; the impact of election eve sermons, phone banks, and 1,600 block leaders; the significance of key political contests between, before, and after Arrington's two successful mayoral races; and the changing turnout and registration levels for whites and blacks in selected precincts.

Order a copy for \$8.95 from the Joint Center at 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004.

## Operation Grabital

The infusion of billions of excess dollars into Pentagon budgets has not only produced record deficits; it has fueled the military's appetite for more land, more weapons, more power. In several states, citizens are resisting the Defense Department's plans for acquiring large tracts for counter-insurgency training and more airspace for bombing maneuvers.

**Save Our Skies**, a nine-part packet produced by the Rural Coalition's Military Issues Task Force, is a useful guide for people contesting military advances on airspace, including jets streaking as low as 100 feet over beaches. The Pentagon already controls the use of more than half the airspace in the U.S., and it accepts few procedures for public participation when extending its jurisdiction.

The *Save Our Skies* kit outlines existing environmental and other regulations, suggestions for strategy and legislation, and an analysis of the health hazards from low-flying jets. The 54-page packet costs \$5; write the Rural Coalition, 2001 S Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington DC 20009.

To keep up with peace organizing focusing on military facilities from Cape Canaveral, Florida to the Hanover Nuclear Reservation in Richland, Washington, we recommend a \$10 subscription to the quarterly **Weapons Facilities Network Bulletin**. Each issue features case studies, news briefs, analysis of everything from weapons to military waste, discussions of organizing tactics, and practical resources. Contact Mobilization for Survival, 853 Broadway, Suite 418, New York, NY 10003.

## In Whose Backyard?

Ten thousand tons of toxic waste arrive each week at Emelle, Alabama's 2,400-acre dump — the largest facility of the largest waste disposal company in

the world (Chemical Waste Management). Meanwhile, the Defense Department has selected a site 15 miles from Loving, New Mexico for its proposed "pilot plant" to handle nuclear waste.

What these two locations have in common is a demographic profile deemed ideal for the deposit of poisons. One third of the people in Emelle's Sumter County are poor and 70 percent are black; in Loving, four out of five are poor and Latino. A new report by the United Church of Christ (UCC) entitled **Toxic Waste and Race** identifies "an insidious form of racism" in the siting of hazardous waste facilities throughout the nation.

One of its many lists reveals ten large cities (including Memphis, Chattanooga, and Ft. Lauderdale) where 90 percent or more of the black population live in zip-code areas with abandoned toxic waste sites. By correlating the location of waste dumps and facilities nationwide with census data, the report shows that "race was a stronger predictor of the level of commercial toxic waste activity in a community than household income, the value of homes, or the amount of hazardous waste generated by industry in the area."

For the analysis and several recommendations, write the Commission for Racial Justice, UCC, 105 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

## What Not To Buy

The easiest way to demonstrate your progressive sympathies is through joining others in a boycott of selected companies or products. Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW) have resumed their **boycott of table grapes**, largely because the 1975 California Agricultural Labor Relations Act (won with the help of the first grape boycott) has been gutted by the state's Republican administration. Provisions in the law, from pesticide regulation to fair bargaining, are no longer enforced, so the UFW is again seeking help from consumers to pressure large growers to negotiate labor conditions. For information on boycott activities in your area, contact UFW, P.O. Box 62, La Paz, CA 93570.

A wide range of international labor unions continue boycotts of **Shell Oil** because of its extensive South Africa operations; **Coors Beer** for its right-wing politics and union-busting activi-

ties; and **Food Lion** (now owned by the Belgian-based Delhaize Corporation), **R.J. Reynolds** cigarettes (Winston, Salem, etc.), **BASF** discs (see "News Roundup"), **Faberge**, and **Armour Meats** for their vigorous anti-labor policies. Several other firms are also on the list of evil doers; for details, write the AFL-CIO's Union Label Department, 815 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

Peace groups have fingered **General Electric** and **Morton Thiokol** for consumer boycotts. Best known for its Morton salt until the Challenger disaster, Thiokol has been repeatedly cited for faulty rocket boosters as well as for failure to clean up its Superfund site. Nuclear Free America (325 E. 25th



Street, Baltimore, MD 21218) is coordinating the Morton salt boycott. INFACT, successful organizers of the international boycott of Nestle for its infant formula, now leads a host of churches and peace groups in an attack on General Electric, the second largest defense contractor, maker of parts for virtually every first-strike nuclear weapon system in the U.S. arsenal, and producer of numerous consumer products (including lights, appliances, electronic gadgets, and building materials). For more on the campaign, write INFACT, 256 Hanover Street, Boston, MA 02113.

## Question the Answers

Public opinion polls are used for every purpose these days, from marketing politicians and soda pop to measuring the popularity of handguns and TV evangelists. Last year, pollster David

Yankelovich found that 51 percent of U.S. citizens thought Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (or Star Wars) program was a good idea, but when a Lou Harris poll included mention of "spending billions" for it, 56 percent said they opposed Star Wars. How the questions are worded clearly influences their answers, so it's useful to learn what polls sponsored by progressive groups conclude as well as how they are designed.

Three recent surveys are worth study. One by **Planned Parenthood of Greater Charlotte** polled 600 registered voters in North Carolina on abortion and sex education. By asking people "Do you favor or oppose a constitutional amendment to ban all abortions regardless of the circumstances," the survey effectively isolated hard-core pro-lifers and concluded that 79 percent of the state voters (71 percent of "born again" Christians) "oppose a constitutional amendment to ban all abortions."

The survey took on special importance because several questions demonstrated broad support for an endangered state fund to pay for abortions for poor women under certain circumstances. Its attractive format and effective media distribution make it a model for other groups, regardless of the issue. For a copy, write Planned Parenthood, 700 E. Stonewall Street, Suite 430, Charlotte, NC 28202.

Two surveys of people's attitudes toward capital punishment dramatize its inherent contradictions. A poll of Georgians showed that 75 percent favor the death penalty but 47 percent agree that it is not applied fairly. In a survey sponsored by **Amnesty International**, 84 percent of Florida voters said they support the death penalty while 74 percent agree it is "too arbitrary" and 47 percent believe it is "racially and economically discriminatory." In both surveys, 49 to 52 percent favor replacing executions with long-term incarceration without parole and with restitution for the victims.

Other questions covered a variety of topics, from the treatment of minors and the mentally retarded to the purpose of jails. The Georgia poll is available for \$10 from the **Southern Coalition on Jails and Prisons**, P.O. Box 120044, Nashville, TN 37212. Write Amnesty International, 322 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10001 for details about the Florida poll.

# Where the Hawks Roost

*A Southern Exposure analysis  
of how Southerners influence  
Central American and  
military spending policy,  
prepared by Bob Hall  
and Will Coviello*

When Ronald Reagan next asks Congress for money for the Nicaraguan contras — possibly as early as this September — Southerners will play a decisive role in whether he gets what he wants. Without a solid bloc of about 80 pro-interventionist Southerners in the U.S. House, he wouldn't have a fighting chance for a dime. And without another, smaller group of Southerners — Democratic "swing voters" from states like Tennessee, Texas, Florida, and Georgia — he wouldn't now have a realistic shot at getting everything he asks for.

It's not that the Southerners in Congress are *all* such knee-jerk anti-communists that they make easy marks for Reagan's so-called "freedom fighters." Take Henry Gonzales, for instance. The stubborn patriot from San Antonio, Texas, stood on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives on May 4, 1987 and chided Ronald Reagan for never giving "a hoot for human rights and freedom and democracy" when Nicaragua was "under the yoke of the worst kind of tyrant." A 21-year veteran House Democrat who once defended Nixon's Vietnam policy, Gonzales called the contras "gangsters" and the defeat of Somoza by the Sandinistas "a glorious revolution." Condemning Reagan's Central American policy, he concluded, "Either we get on the side of the people or we continue as the aides and allies of those in close brotherhood with the despots and tyrants of this part of the world."

The voice of Southern progressivism can certainly be heard in Washington — but more often than not it is simply

drown out by the deafening roar of the region's overwhelmingly conservative representation. Time after time, Southern conservatives have provided the lopsided margins needed to keep the contras in cash — not to mention keeping the rest of the Pentagon's pet projects in business.

Two years ago, for example, the House first rejected and then approved Reagan's request for "humanitarian" assistance to the contras. In the first vote, an overwhelming majority of Southerners supported the request — but it still lacked the necessary majority for passage. After two months of lobbying, 31 House members changed sides and decided to give Reagan his money. Seventeen of the 31 were Southern Democrats — part of a group known as "Boll Weevils" because they frequently erode the Democratic party's unified stance against the White House.

In 1986, a similar scenario occurred. The House rejected and then approved \$100 million in military aid for the contras. Six of the 11 switch voters were Southern Democrats. While the House Democratic leadership opposed the \$100 million request, half of the Southern Democrats finally voted for it. In contrast, only nine of the 166 non-Southern Democrats deserted their leadership; overall, non-Southern House members opposed the aid by a margin of

168 (157D, 11R) to 135 (9D, 126R). But Southerners approved the measure 86 (41D, 45R) to 41 (41D, 0R) — a wide enough margin to ensure that the contras would get the money.

"The main reason why, even with an overwhelming majority in the House, the Democrats can't get alternative policy passed is because of the Southern Democrats," says Bill Harrison, a lobbyist for the Washington Office on Latin America. "They are huge numerically — and they don't vote with the party leadership. They frequently line up with Republicans against Democratic leadership. They are key to how the House has changed on Central America votes."

A *Southern Exposure* analysis of how Southerners in the House voted so far in 1987 reveals that they continue to play a pivotal role in foreign policy and military issues. Earlier this year, while Henry Gonzales became the first House member to call for Reagan's impeachment following the revelations of Contragate, his colleagues from the 13-state South voted by a 78 to 48 margin to keep U.S. tax money flowing to the contras. The March vote (number 10 on the *Southern Exposure* chart on pages 14-15) came on a resolution sponsored by the Democratic leadership to demand an accounting of the funds already sent to the contras before releasing more money.

"We are facing the prospect of subversion and revolution in Latin America," cried Florida Republican Micheal Bilirakis during the debate on the resolution. "It is shameful to recog-

nize the illegitimate and forceful seizure of a popular uprising by a core of Marxists who engage in deception to further their goals, and if we cut the contras off, [it] will be an endorsement of this process."

Boll Weevil Democrat W.C. (Dan) Daniel of Virginia told fellow House members, "We must discipline ourselves to follow through to victory." And even the venerable liberal Claude Pepper (whose Miami district is half Hispanic, i.e., mostly conservative Cuban-Americans) opposed the resolution because "we must not allow another communist state in addition to Cuba to be set up in the Western Hemisphere."

In the end, the Democratic leadership had to muster the support of 17 Republicans (none from the South) to pass the resolution. Of course, the resolution itself was fairly worthless since Reagan could veto it. But peace groups and liberals in Congress saw the vote as a test of anti-contra strength in the House and a trial run for the showdown expected this fall when the President makes his expected request for additional contra aid. When the vote comes, keep your eye on the number of Southern Democrats who side with Ronald Reagan. If he can pull 45 of their 85 potential votes, he will likely win. If he makes a deal with House Speaker Jim Wright of Texas for interim aid while the current peace initiatives are played out, he'll have no trouble getting half the majority of votes he needs from the South alone.

▲  
The hawkish bias of Southerners influences the outcome of more than just the nation's policy in Central America. In May, the House approved a Defense Department budget worth over \$289 billion. (The Senate has yet to debate the bill, so this article focuses on the House.) According to the *Southern Exposure* analysis of several key votes (see pages 14-15), Southern hawks provided the margin of votes needed to block liberal measures that would have cut funding for the MX (vote 3), required more tests before developing the MK-48 torpedo (vote 4), prevented development of

chemical and poison gas weapons (vote 5), banned U.S. troops in Honduras from getting within 20 miles of the Nicaraguan border (vote 7), and barred tests of Star War's kinetic-kill anti-missile weapon (vote 2).

Were it not for the South, these restrictions and more would be in the overall defense authorization bill. Were it not for the South, the Democrat's decidedly liberal majority would outvote the smaller number of Republicans and produce a less extravagant defense budget and a less adventuresome foreign policy. The chart on page 13 dramatizes the gap between the voting records of the House members from the South and non-South. While Southern Democrats score in the 40s on a pro-peace index, Demo-

Services Committee, the clearinghouse for military hardware and Pentagon priorities.

The South, with 29 percent of the members in the House as a whole, holds 22 of the 52 seats on the Armed Services Committee, or 43 percent of the votes. While the region's representatives no longer include the chair (Les Aspin of Wisconsin), they do count three of the next six ranking Democrats and (coincidentally) three of the seven subcommittee chairs among their ranks. Fifteen of the 31 Democrats on the committee are Southerners, as well as the top two ranking Republicans (Bill Dickinson of Alabama and Floyd Spence of South Carolina).

Southern Democrats on the House Armed Services Committee are particularly influential because they combine quantity with seniority and ideology to give the conservative forces a majority voice. They became early leaders among the Boll Weevils, taking up Reagan's cause inside the Democratic caucus and pushing the entire debate over the defense budget to the right.

According to the *Southern Exposure* scores, the Southern Democrats on Armed Services are, as a group, not just conservative on foreign policy and military spending issues; they act like rightwing Republicans and frequently follow the vocal lead of ranking minority members Bill Dickinson, the Reagan administration's mouth-

piece on the committee. They include the most conservative Democrats from nearly every Southern state: Alabama (Nichols), Arkansas (Robinson), Florida (Hutto), Georgia (Darden), Mississippi (Montgomery), Tennessee (Lloyd), and Virginia (Daniel).

Only two Southern committee members — Charles Bennett of Jacksonville and Albert Bustamante of San Antonio — agreed with the peace position on at least half of the 10 votes in our index. Like most of the other members, both men's districts include sizeable military bases and plenty of military retirees. Bennett, chair of the

#### THE BEST AND WORST IN THE HOUSE WITH 1987 SOUTHERN EXPOSURE SCORES

##### The Best

Mike Espy (D-MS)	100	Larry Combest (R-TX)	0
Harold Ford (D-TN)	100	Dan Daniels (D-VA)	0
Henry Gonzalez (D-TX)	100	Bill Dickinson (R-AL)	0
William Lehman (D-FL)	100	John Duncan (R-TN)	0
Mickey Leland (D-TX)	100	Jack Fields (R-TX)	0
John Lewis (D-GA)	100	Newt Gingrich (R-GA)	0
Kenneth MacKay (D-FL)	100	R.M. Hall (D-TX)	0
Jim Olin (D-VA)	100	Clyde Holloway (R-LA)	0
Nick Joe Rahall (D-WV)	100	Andy Ireland (R-FL)	0
Harley Staggers (D-WV)	100	Tom Lewis (R-FL)	0
Bob Wise (D-WV)	100	Bob Livingston (R-LA)	0

##### The Worst

Dick Armey (R-TX)	0	Trent Lott (R-MS)	0
Bill Archer (R-TX)	0	Bill McCollum (R-FL)	0
Cass Ballenger (R-NC)	0	Jimmy Quillan (R-TN)	0
Steve Bartlett (R-TX)	0	Arthur Ravenel (R-SC)	0
Joe Barton (R-TX)	0	Richard Ray (D-GA)	0
Michael Bilirakis (R-FL)	0	Tommy Robinson (D-AR)	0
Beau Boulter (R-TX)	0	E. Clay Shaw (R-FL)	0
Jim Bunning (R-KY)	0	Lamar Smith (R-TX)	0
"Sonny" Callahan (R-AL)	0	Pat Swindall (R-GA)	0
		Billy Tauzin (D-LA)	0

crats outside the region vote right over 80 percent of the time.

Southern Republicans, the most hawkish on everybody's regional and party breakdown, including those compiled by the *National Journal* and American Security Council, make Dixie Democrats look good by comparison. But a review of key Congressional committees shows that the region's Democratic hawks are especially important because they exercise enormous influence over the Defense Department's budget. Their control is most direct through their continuing predominance on the House Armed

Seapower Subcommittee and generally a champion for the Navy, sometimes bucks the Pentagon and offers the kind of "responsible" dissent that attracts centrist Democrats. He authored the nearly successful amendment against funding the MX missile in 1983, has been a consistent supporter of chemical weapons, and sponsored the Democratic leadership's proposal this May to "limit" Star Wars funding to \$3.1 billion. After opposing aid to the contras from 1983 to 1985, he sided with Reagan on votes in 1986 and 1987.

Bustamante, who entered the House in 1985 from a district that is 51 percent Hispanic, has waffled even more on contra aid; he opposed it, then provided one of the 11 switched votes to authorize the \$100 million in 1986, then voted with the House leadership in March 1987 against releasing more money until receiving an accounting of how the earlier funds were spent. With these two men as the South's leftwing on Armed Services, it's not hard to see how the hawks continue their dominance.

Southerners also protect the Pentagon's pork barrel — the payoff for seniority and loyal voting records — through their control of half of the 12 seats on the Defense Subcommittee of the House Appropriation Committee. The subcommittee chair, Bill Chappell, comes from a district that includes part of Charles Bennett's Jacksonville Naval Base and continues south to the edge of Cape Canaveral. Another Boll Weevil Democrat, Chappell has been a chief sponsor of the B-1 bomber and nuclear aircraft carriers.

By contrast, Mississippi's aging Jamie Whitten, who chairs the entire Appropriations Committee and sits on its Defense Subcommittee, is more concerned with soybeans than submarines. He has long used his powerful position to control the Department of Agriculture's budget. He maintains good relations with the more liberal House leadership by following their lead when he votes on peace issues, and satisfies conservatives by allowing the more hawkish committee members — like Chappell, John Murtha of Pennsylvania,

and Charles Wilson of Texas — to monitor Defense Department outlays.

The third center of importance for peace issues is the House Foreign Relations Committee, which shepherds legislation related to Central America. It lacks the pork barrel and Southern tilt of the defense committees, and is decidedly more liberal. Of the 45 committee members, only five are from Southern states (four from Florida and Jamie Clark of North Carolina); and three of these have scores of 80 or better on the *Southern Exposure* index.

Even though the committee seems liberal and the South appears underrepresented, the region still plays a leading role (particularly on Central American policy) through its chair, Dante Fascell of South Florida. Fascell's district is

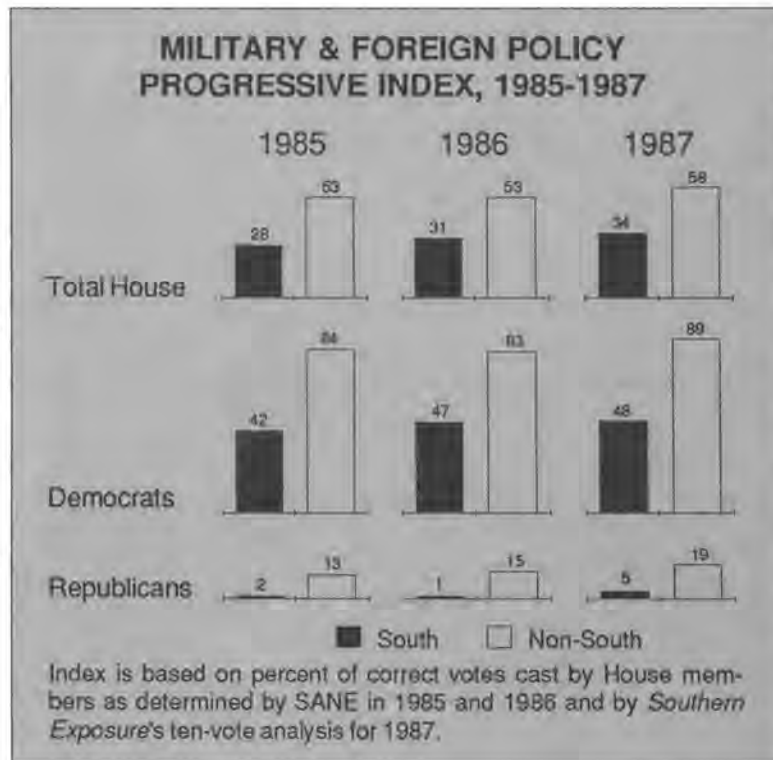
Wright, the shy but assertive Texan who is quickly making his presence felt as Tip O'Neill's replacement. Wright likes to pick his fights carefully, and he may feel ill-prepared to take on Reagan over contra aid after Ollie North's well-orchestrated performance. The Speaker's surprise agreement with a White House peace proposal for Nicaragua, then his retreat from it in favor of the Central American-initiated plan, may indicate uncertainty about the votes to block the next bid for funding the "freedom fighters," or a desire to recast the issue into a diplomatic rather than a military showdown.

As a regular House member, Wright consistently opposed money for the contras — and consistently favored developing chemical weapons. He has equivocated on the MX and generally supported such weapon systems as the B-1, Cruise, and Trident. He was by no means the most liberal member of the Texas delegation — but now he is the most powerful, and his centrist policies, joined with the liberal majority of non-Southern Democrats, gives him room to flex his muscles as far to the left as he is willing to go.

Battles will continue on Central America aid, deployment and funding for Star Wars and other weapon systems, treaty negotiations, and U.S. foreign policy in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere. In future reports we'll look in more detail at some of these controversies, as well as the larger patterns

of voting behavior broken down by party and region. Meanwhile, a few comments are in order about the Southern delegation's performance in 1987:

▲ Republicans on the list are far more cohesive than Democrats. The highest individual grade among the 41 Republicans was the 20 received by Howard Coble of North Carolina and Mac Sweeney of Texas. Twenty-five Republicans received 0's and 14 others would not have fared any better had it not been for the far-fetched Davis (R-IL) amendment to grant official U.S. recognition of the contras as the legitimate government of Nicaragua (vote 9



heavily Cuban-American, and although he supported the Nuclear Freeze and has taken the lead in opposing chemical weapons and the MX, he has consistently voted for military aid to the contras and, before that, to El Salvador. However, unlike his South Florida colleague, Claude Pepper, Fascell did support several less noticed bills to limit the use of U.S. funds or personnel in Central America (votes 7, 8, and 9).

The remaining position from which Southerners exercise influence over peace-related legislation is not in a committee; it's behind the House Speaker's podium in the person of Jim

— the only vote where a majority of Southerners took a pro-peace position).

▲ Among the regions, the South contains the largest percent of blacks and the second largest percent of Spanish-speaking voters. It also hosts the nation's five poorest states, led by Mississippi. Progressive reformers should thrive on the needs of these constituents, but they seem only able to get elected in districts where minorities are not just strongly represented but numerically dominant — in Atlanta, Houston, New Orleans, the Mississippi Delta, Memphis, central San Antonio, and northern Miami. None of these districts have combined minority voting populations of less than 46 percent, and all of their representatives — except Lindy Boggs (the lone WASP among the group) — received grades of 100.

▲ Among the House members with the most disappointing voting records are several who come from districts where blacks and/or Hispanics make up more than a third of the voting age population. Wayne Dowdy, elected in a special election in 1981 after announcing his support for extension of the Voting Rights Act, has proven especially hawkish on peace issues. Democrats Tim Valentine (NC), Robin Tallon (SC), Norman Sisisky (VA), and Bill Grant (FL) should all be doing a better job of representing the most heavily black districts in their respective states.

▲ West Virginia fielded the most progressive delegation; three of its four representatives (all Democrats) received 100's. West Virginia has traditionally stood apart from the Old South. Its coal mining economy and labor union battles have made the state one of the most unionized in the nation, as well as one of the most liberal and anti-interventionist politically. Kentucky's most liberal member, Carl C. "Chris" Perkins, also represents a coal mining district. He replaced his father, Carl D. Perkins, a New Dealer, who had represented the District from 1948 until he passed away recently.

▲ Alabama's two Republicans and five Democrats easily make up the most conservative voting delegation. They managed only seven liberal votes out of their total of 70 votes. Republican Bill Dickinson, the ranking minority member of the Armed Services Committee, led the conservatives in the three-week-long debate on the Defense Department's appropriation bill this May. He managed to keep the House members from Alabama in line, as well

## SOUTHERN EXPOSURE GRADES

	SCORE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	%Black
<b>ALABAMA</b>												
1. Callahan (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	28%
2. Dickinson (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	27%
3. Nichols (D)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	25%
4. Beville (D)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	6%
5. Flippo (D)	20	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	13%
6. Erdreich (D)	20	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	31%
7. Harris (D)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	30%
<b>ARKANSAS</b>												
1. Alexander (D)	67	R	W	W	?	W	R	R	R	R	R	16%
2. Robinson (D)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	15%
3. Hammerschmidt (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	2%
4. Anthony (D)	78	W	R	R	?	W	R	R	R	R	R	25%
<b>FLORIDA</b>												
1. Hutto (D)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	12%
2. Grant (D)	44	R	R	R	R	W	W	W	W	R	?	44%
3. Bennett (D)	70	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	W	W	25%
4. Chappell (D)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	9%
5. McColium (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	14%
6. MacKay (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	12%
7. Gibbons (D)	60	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	W	R	W	13%
8. Young (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	7%
9. Billakis (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	3%
10. Ireland (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	11%
11. Nelson (D)	20	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	6%
12. Lewis (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	16%
13. Mack (R)	10	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	4%
14. Mica (D)	40	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	R	3%
15. Shaw (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	13%
16. Smith (D)	80	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	4%*
17. Lehman (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	22%*
18. Pepper (D)	50	R	R	W	R	R	R	W	W	W	W	13%*
19. Fascell (D)	80	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	10%*
<b>GEORGIA</b>												
1. Thomas (D)	30	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	30%
2. Hatcher (D)	30	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	32%
3. Ray (D)	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	W	31%
4. Swindall (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	11%
5. Lewis (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	60%
6. Gingrich (R)	0	W	W	W	?	W	W	W	W	W	W	14%
7. Darden (D)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	5%
8. Rowland (D)	20	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	32%
9. Jenkins (D)	30	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	5%
10. Barnard (D)	11	W	W	W	?	W	W	W	W	R	W	23%
<b>KENTUCKY</b>												
1. Hubbard (D)	22	W	W	W	?	W	W	W	W	R	R	8%
2. Natcher (D)	50	R	W	W	R	R	W	W	W	R	R	6%
3. Mazzoli (D)	40	W	W	W	W	R	R	W	W	R	R	18%
4. Bunning (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	2%
5. Rogers (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	2%
6. Hopkins (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	9%
7. Perkins (D)	90	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	1%
<b>LOUISIANA</b>												
1. Livingston (R)	0	?	?	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	9%
2. Boggs (D)	78	R	R	W	W	R	?	R	R	R	R	52%
3. Tauzin (D)	0	?	?	?	?	W	W	W	W	W	W	18%
4. Roemer (D)	11	W	W	W	?	W	R	W	W	W	W	29%
5. Huckaby (D)	20	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	28%
6. Baker (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	23%
7. Hayes (D)	40	W	R	W	R	W	R	W	W	W	R	18%
8. Holloway (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	36%
<b>MISSISSIPPI</b>												
1. Whitten (D)	40	R	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	R	R	21%
2. Espy (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	53%
3. Montgomery (D)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	28%
4. Dowdy (D)	30	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	37%
5. Lott (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	17%

\* % Black = Percent of district's voting age population that was black in 1980  
\* Population of the legislator's district is 25% or more Hispanic.

### KEY 1987 VOTES

- 1 STAR WARS.** Amendment to provide \$3.1 billion for SDI research in fiscal 1988. Adopted 219-199, May 12, 1987. Sponsored by Florida's Charles Bennett with backing of Democratic leadership. The Reagan administration wanted \$5.8 billion. A YES vote is R.
- 2 STAR WARS.** Amendment to bar tests of the space-based kinetic-kill vehicle, an anti-missile weapon being tested as one element of SDI. Rejected 203-216, May 12. A YES vote is R.
- 3 NUCLEAR WEAPONS.** Amendment to delete \$674 million earmarked to purchase 12 MX missiles. Rejected 163-258, May 13. A YES vote is R.
- 4 CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.** Amendment to require more tests before allowing production of Mark-48 torpedoes. Rejected 191-206, May 18. A YES vote is R.
- 5 CHEMICAL WEAPONS.** Amendment by Dante Fascell of Florida to bar final assembly during fiscal 1988 of binary chemical munitions (or poison gas weapons). Rejected 191-230, May 19. A YES vote is R.
- 6 NUCLEAR TESTING.** Amendment to bar nuclear test explosions larger than one kiloton.



# THE SOUTH IN CONGRESS, 1987

	SCORE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	%Black
<b>NORTH CAROLINA</b>												
1. Jones (D)	50	?	?	W	?	?	?	?	?	?	R	32%
2. Valentine (D)	40	R	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	R	R	36%
3. Lancaster (D)	30	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	R	R	25%
4. Price (D)	80	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	18%
5. Neal (D)	70	R	R	W	R	W	R	R	W	R	R	15%
6. Coble (R)	20	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	R	W	19%
7. Rose (D)	70	R	R	W	W	R	R	R	W	R	R	25%
8. Hefner (D)	70	R	R	W	R	W	R	R	W	R	R	18%
9. McMillan (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	21%
10. Ballenger (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	9%
11. Clarke (D)	90	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	W	5%
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b>												
1. Ravenel (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	29%
2. Spence (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	32%
3. Derrick (D)	89	R	R	W	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	20%
4. Patterson (D)	50	R	R	W	W	R	W	W	W	R	R	17%
5. Spratt (D)	44	W	R	W	?	W	R	W	W	R	R	29%
6. Tallon (D)	20	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	37%
<b>TENNESSEE</b>												
1. Quillen (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	2%
2. Duncan (R)	0	W	W	W	?	?	?	?	?	?	W	6%
3. Lloyd (D)	15	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	?	11%
4. Cooper (D)	35	R	R	W	W	R	R	?	?	?	R	4%
5. Boner (D)	50	W	W	W	?	?	R	R	W	R	R	20%
6. Gordon (D)	80	R	R	W	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	7%
7. Sundquist (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	11%
8. Jones (D)	50	R	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	R	R	18%
9. Ford (D)	100	?	?	?	R	R	?	R	R	R	R	51%
<b>TEXAS</b>												
1. Chapman (D)	50	R	W	W	R	W	R	W	W	R	R	17%
2. Wilson (D)	20	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	14%
3. Bartlett (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	3%
4. R.M. Hall (D)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	13%
5. Bryant (D)	80	R	R	W	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	18%
6. Barton (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	10%
7. Archer (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	3%
8. Fields (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	15%
9. Brooks (D)	90	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	20%
10. Pickle (D)	50	W	R	W	W	R	R	W	W	R	R	9%
11. Leath (D)	30	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	R	W	13%
12. Wright (D)	(House Speaker)											15%
13. Boulter (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	5%
14. Sweeney (R)	20	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	11%
15. de la Garza (D)	40	R	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	R	1%
16. Coleman (D)	70	W	R	W	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	4%
17. Stenholm (D)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	3%
18. Leland (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	39%*
19. Cornbest (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	20%
20. Gonzalez (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	9%*
21. Smith (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	3%
22. Delay (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	9%
23. Bustamante (D)	50	R	R	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	R	4%*
24. Frost (D)	50	R	W	W	W	R	R	W	W	R	R	29%
25. Andrews (D)	30	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	R	23%
26. Armey (R)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	4%
27. Ortiz (D)	30	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	4%*
<b>VIRGINIA</b>												
1. Bateman (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	29%
2. Pickett (D)	40	R	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	R	21%
3. Billey (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	26%
4. Slitsky (D)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	37%
5. Daniel (D)	0	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	22%
6. Olin (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	10%
7. Slaughter (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	11%
8. Parris (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	10%
9. Boucher (D)	90	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	2%
10. Wolf (R)	10	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	8%
<b>WEST VIRGINIA</b>												
1. Mollohan (D)	20	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	R	2%
2. Staggers (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	3%
3. Wise (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	3%
4. Rahall (D)	100	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	6%

as many other Democrats, with such arguments as, "If you vote for these crippling, hobbling, inhibiting amendments, you are really voting to promote communism in Central America."

▲ Arkansas' more progressive delegation voted unanimously in favor of developing chemical weapons, making no bones about the influence of having its production facility located in Pine Bluff. Marilyn Lloyd attempted similar protection for her Tennessee district that included Oak Ridge, but she failed to win support for the Clinch River Breeder Reactor and recently announced plans to retire.

▲ Florida and Texas have much in common. The region's fastest growing states owe much of their prosperity to the military-industrial complex. Both have thriving Republican parties and delegations in Congress that are highly polarized by party, philosophy, seniority, and ethnic background. Both states take a keen interest in Latin American issues, and Hispanics play an increasingly important role in their political life. Indeed, how the two states change politically may well be determined by the differing orientations and directions of Texas' Mexican-Americans and Florida's more hawkish Cuban-Americans.

▲ The power of peace lobbying can be seen by comparing Bill Hefner's voting record in 1987 with his performance on the 1984 *Southern Exposure* analysis (SE, Jan./Feb. 1984). As a senior member of the House Budget Committee, Hefner helped push Democratic budgets to the right during Reagan's early years in office — including massive increases in defense spending. He supported the MX but followed the Democratic leadership in favoring the Nuclear Freeze in 1983. Lobbying from grassroots peace groups in the past couple of years has shored up his opposition to contra funding and increased his skepticism of Reagan's Star Wars. Peace groups helped win another, more even reliable supporter in North Carolina by returning Jamie Clark to the seat he lost in 1984 to Bill Hendon, a rightwing ally of Jesse Helms.

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provided the Soviet Union observe the same limitation. Adopted 234-187, May 19. A YES vote is R.  
**7 TROOPS IN HONDURAS.** Amendment to bar US troops in Honduras from approaching within 20 miles of the Nicaraguan border. Rejected 197-225, May 20. A YES vote is R.  
**8 CONTRA SUPPORT.** Amendment to bar the use of any facility constructed with Defense Department funds to aid the contras directly or indirectly. Rejected 165-257, May 20. A YES vote is R.  
**9 CONTRA RECOGNITION.** Amendment by Davis of Illinois to propose U.S. recognition of the contras as the legitimate government of Nicaragua. Rejected 74-347, May 20. A NO vote is R.  
**10 CONTRA AID.** Passage of the joint resolution to place a six month moratorium on \$40 million in aid to the contras during which time the President must account for funds previously provided to the rebels. Passed 230-196, March 11. A YES vote is R.

KEY: Legislator's grade is the percent of right (R) votes of those cast. Wrong (W) votes opposed the position of peace groups. (?) means the legislator was absent or otherwise failed to vote on the issue.

# Environmental Politics: Lessons from the Grassroots

by Bob Hall

*What can you do when state officials announce plans for a highway through your neighborhood, or when an out-of-state corporation says it wants to put a hazardous waste treatment facility a few miles from your home? Where can you turn for help if real estate developers with close ties to local politicians decide to build a condominium and shopping complex in a sensitive watershed area? How much energy should you devote to door-to-door organizing, or soliciting help from the media, or researching your opposition, or getting involved in electoral politics?*

*For the past two years, the Institute for Southern Studies has been conducting an investigation of environmental and land-related issues in one state, North Carolina. In a remarkable number of cases, local citizens groups — even those in relatively isolated rural areas — have won significant victories against impressive odds. They have forced state policy makers to change regulations, enact new laws, and enforce existing environmental standards. They have built ad hoc coalitions and enduring organizations, occasionally across race lines, more often across class and cultural divisions within the white community. And they have moved from crisis-oriented, hit-and-miss organizing to sophisticated political lobbying and effective electoral activism.*

*Many of the key ingredients identified in these successful campaigns are discussed in the following essay, which is adapted from the introduction of a new book being published by the Institute. The*

*book, entitled Environmental Politics: Lessons from the Grassroots, features 10 case studies highlighting the experiences of citizens involved in conservation struggles all across the state. It is available for \$7 from the Institute at Box 531, Durham, NC 27702. And as this article by project coordinator Bob Hall illustrates, the location may be North Carolina, but the lessons are useful to people throughout the South and beyond.*

**NORTH CAROLINIANS VIEW THEIR ENVIRONMENT WITH A SPECIAL PRIDE. "IF THIS ISN'T THE SOUTHERN PART OF HEAVEN,"** GOES A POPULAR saying in Chapel Hill, "then why is the sky Tar Heel blue?" In the western mountains (one-fifth of the state's counties) and in the eastern coastal plain (one-third of the state), a majority of people depend on an economy directly linked to the quality, productivity, and attractiveness of the environment — to family farming, timbering, and fishing, and increasingly to the tourist industry. In the remaining part of the state — the central piedmont — an economy built around low-wage textile and furniture factories in dozens of mill villages has meant many North Carolinians supplement their income from "public" jobs with gardening, hunting, fishing, and part-time farming. Although the state is the tenth most populous in the nation, nearly one-half of its 6,200,000 people still live in communities of under 2,500 residents; in 1984, only one in five lived in a city with a population of over 40,000.

Demographics and economics conspire with North Carolina's alluring physical charms to reinforce its citizens' appreciation of its natural uniqueness and vulnerability. Fully one-half of North Carolina adults say they regularly enjoy outdoor recreational activities. In the same survey, commissioned in 1983 by Friends of the Earth, 70 percent of the respondents say the state's natural environment was equal to or better than any other in the United States. A poll conducted the next year by the state's Office of Budget and Management found that 75 percent of North Carolinians rate their environment as "good" or "excellent" and half want the state to take stronger measures to protect it.

**LARGE NUMBERS OF TRANSPLANTED YANKEES — IN THE PIEDMONT, MOUNTAINS, AND SEVERAL COASTAL COUNTIES — ARE WORKING** with natives to make control of growth a major issue in local politics. The state ranks in the top five nationally in the growth of in-migrating retirees, people who place a high premium on the natural and built environment. But it is important to recognize that the population's overall strong feelings on the environment flow less from a romantic love of nature or an intellectual understanding of ecosystems than from the state's peculiar history and its people's everyday lifestyles. To a remarkable extent, the political economy and social traditions of North Carolina remain closely tied to the land. The Farm Bureau is one of the most potent lobbies in a General Assembly still dominated by rural legislators. Hunters and fishers make the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, with over 40,000 members, the largest "environmental" organization in the state. And politicians, preachers, editorialists, and songwriters routinely extol the virtues of North Carolina's countryside, along with a plea for the preservation of traditional rural values.

Strategically, this living legacy means issues related to land use and the environment can be explosive, generating intense public reaction for better or worse. For example, more than 1,700 letters flooded the U.S. Forest Service in the five months following the revelation that its "50 Year Plan" called for increased clear-cutting and reduced hunting on the government forests that cover 42 percent of western North Carolina. And more than 3,000 people turned out for a public hearing in tiny Pembroke to protest the siting of a hazardous waste facility in the Sandhills area.

On the other hand, a majority of North Carolina counties still lack land-use plans or

zoning, and proposals for such plans frequently meet vigorous opposition from the same people who oppose toxic dumps but who cherish the outdated belief that "nobody should be able to tell me what I can or can't do with my land." Like many Southerners, North Carolinians are protective of their environment — and defensive of their rights to use it in time-honored ways. Jim Hunt, considered a "pro-environment governor" by the Sierra Club and other such groups, was still unwilling to pursue a statewide land-use planning effort begun by his predecessor for fear it would alienate the agricultural community. It was this predecessor, a Republican governor with relatively few ties to the rural establishment, who pushed through the Coastal Area Management Act that has become one of the strongest weapons in the evolution of environmental policy in the state.

Tactically, this rural-oriented political culture means that anyone organizing around an environmental (or any other) issue must take into consideration the best ways to reach, educate, and

**Like many Southerners, North Carolinians are protective of their environment — and defensive of their rights to use it in time-honored ways.**

*photo by Arty Schronce*



The central lesson in all the successful organizing campaigns we studied is the importance of connecting the "environmental" issue to its broader (1) public health, (2) economic, and/or (3) recreational consequences for a specific community or constituency.

motivate people. A pig-picking rather than a rally or march may be the best way to get a crowd together to hear speeches. A gospel "sing" can be an effective fundraiser, a place to recruit volunteers for a voter registration drive, and an event that can, with the right choice of choirs/groups, integrate an otherwise segregated "constituency" for an organizing campaign. Outsiders are not so much mistrusted as they are scrutinized for their sincerity, humility, credibility, and genuine helpfulness. The church is still a central place for sharing information and giving leadership on a wide range of issues. And one's choice of words is often crucial — "conservation" groups are popular, building on a tradition that includes the Soil Conservation Service, but the word "environmental" is less acceptable in a group name or slogan because it conveys images of intellectuals concerned about snail darters and the redwoods rather than people's everyday lives.

Indeed, the central lesson in all the successful organizing campaigns we studied is the importance of connecting the "environmental" issue to its broader (1) public health, (2) economic, and/or (3) recreational consequences for a specific community or constituency. The battle around peat mining, or a nuclear waste site, or an offshore island development in Onslow County, or a toxic treatment facility in a Durham neighborhood may still be described in the mainstream press as an environmental controversy. But to build mass support for stopping these activities, each campaign had to educate thousands of local citizens

about the destructive effects of such projects on their immediate lives. When residents heard the words "environmental damage," they knew that their livelihood, their traditional lifestyle, and/or their family's health was in jeopardy.

## VALUES AND LEADERSHIP

IN VIRTUALLY EVERY SITUATION WE STUDIED, THE ORIGINAL ACTIVISTS WERE MADE TO FEEL HOPELESS AND ISOLATED BY THE POWERS-that-be (elected officials, the media, regulatory agencies, etc.) to whom they first took their problems. They were put on the defensive, ignored, or called troublemakers; sometimes they were called liars or "a fringe element" or irrational, or were otherwise personally attacked and had their motives questioned. They were frequently told nothing could be done to change the problem they wanted corrected (stopping an expressway from coming through a Durham neighborhood, blocking the siting of a radioactive waste incinerator in Bladen County) or that everything possible was already being done to ensure that the problem was solved (the development on Permuda Island would not pollute the surrounding shellfish waters, the evacuation plan for the Shearon Harris Nuclear Plant was totally adequate).

Only the right mix of patience and persistence allowed the early "troublemakers" in these struggles to demonstrate that what some considered to be a private grievance was in reality a matter of grave public concern. Ultimately, they impressed the politicians with enough people, the bureaucrats with enough paper, and the media with enough drama to transform themselves from isolated victims into well-connected protectors of the American dream.

This positive posture of protecting the public's health or the values of our forebears is a key ingredient in each success story we observed. A moral undercurrent in each of these struggles was both sustaining to its inner core of activists as well as compelling to a larger body of supporters and the public at large. It is also a crucial factor in building a positive momentum for those engaged in any struggle; it reinforces their sense of "rightness," the urgency of their fight and, perhaps most important, a contagious conviction that they will ultimately prevail. People are attracted to a campaign that projects an upbeat attitude about its mission and its ultimate success. They are less inclined to help a group of beleaguered naysayers who seem overwhelmed by their own despair.

The peat mining and Permuda Island struggles were especially successful in presenting environmental issues as crusades to protect the subsistence fisherman's way of life against outside corporate interests. A low-income East Durham neighborhood gained the "moral" high ground and the public's sympathy for its campaign against the continued operation of a toxic-waste recycling plant by pointing out that the plant would never have been allowed to exist in the wealthy sections

photo by Bill Ray



Cleared and drained wetlands, converted to a superfarm by First Colony Farms

## Protest against Shearon Harris Nuclear Plant



photo by Arty Schronce

of town. They protested their treatment as “second-class citizens” while defining themselves as protectors of the city’s public health. Inspiring individuals to believe that they can make a difference through collective action is critical to building the momentum and gaining the mass support needed to prove that change can in fact happen. Middle-class and upper-income whites are generally confident and indignant, convinced that they can get attention for an injustice done to them; too often, that self-confidence tricks them into thinking they can change anything on their own, without an organization. Alternatively, they may become cynical about the prospect of “fighting city hall,” but that cynicism is often just the flipside of a negative attitude or blissful ignorance about the fruits of engaging in organized struggle. Blacks are generally less tied into the system and more willing to fight for their rights, but they get weary of being asked to follow other people’s initiative without reciprocal support.

Lower-income, working-class whites are often the hardest to get involved. They are more pessimistic about change coming from the bottom up, having witnessed the favoritism and retaliation of the economic and political “bossmen” inside and outside the workplace. They may join the top-down Reagan revolution, but they need lots of support to take risks, especially against local authorities they may know casually. They are more likely to take such risks on environmental or other issues that threaten their family, their income, or their self-respect. To keep involved, they — like everyone else — need (1) positive reinforcement from their peers and, through the media, the larger community; (2) fun events that keep their spirits up and nurture solidarity; and (3) small victories that prove change can occur. Beyond all the talk about models and methods of organizing (including what follows below), the successful campaigns we

observed hinged on the positive personalities and values of individuals who project a winning attitude toward small and large challenges and who inspire others to take on tasks they may not at first believe themselves capable of doing. Gloria McRae of Citizens for a Safer East Durham, Anne Hooper of Carteret Crossroads, Steve Schewel of the People’s Alliance, and Lena Ritter of the Stump Sound Fishermen represent a spectrum of such personalities; it is noteworthy that many of these sustaining, energizing leaders — especially at the local level — are women. While men often get preoccupied with the power dynamics in a controversy and dominate the strategy discussions, women are frequently more in touch with the vision and deeper emotions that pull masses of people into action.

## VISIBILITY AND EDUCATION

MAKING THE CONTROVERSIES HIGHLY VISIBLE AND A MATTER OF PUBLIC DEBATE WAS ANOTHER KEY PART OF THE VICTORIES WE STUDIED. Issues in the campaigns were popularized and politicized; they demanded attention from people by being injected into as many public arenas as possible. Each arena had to then be persuaded with whatever special language it understood — politicians listen to voter power, the church to moral language and to its members, the courts to legal arguments; the media need drama, action, and authority figures; a group of hunters, blacks, or farmers wants to hear how the issue affects its members.

The mainstream press was used in a variety of ways to (1) publicize the issue and (2) pressure decision makers to address its solution. In a state like North Carolina — where a majority of adults in 63 of 100 counties have not finished high school — television, followed by radio, are the most persuasive forms of media. In general, reporters are overworked, competitive, ignorant of the issues, cautious about covering new or complicated topics, and in need of human drama and conflict that is news. Groups used a variety of methods to overcome these limitations and satisfy the press’s needs. The Stump Sounders gave boat tours for reporters (as well as for politicians and the regulatory agency staff) so they could witness the fragile nature of the environment around Permuda Island — and taste the oysters from the Sound.

By convincing a reporter with the *New York Times* to write an article about their struggle, the opponents of the Shearon Harris Nuclear Plant gained legitimacy in the eyes of the local media and forced them to cover their actions even more closely. The “hook” for the national media was how the fears over Chernobyl were affecting local reaction to power plants. In the peat-mining controversy, the press couldn’t resist the drama of a multibillion-dollar federal agency and Washington cronies like William Casey going up against a bunch of fishermen with loads of “character” —

A moral undercurrent in each of these struggles was both sustaining to its inner core of activists as well as compelling to a larger body of supporters and the public at large.

Making the controversies highly visible and a matter of public debate was another key part of the victories we studied.

**Public education programs were directly aimed at the group's primary constituencies and did not rely on the biased filter of the mass media.**

**The "public hearing" became the most valuable educational and organizing tool for these campaigns.**

and the N.C. Coastal Federation played the story for every ounce of attention they could get. The opponents of the two proposed sites for high-level radioactive waste drew attention to the human side of their battle by staging a caravan expedition between the western and eastern sites, with press conferences all along the way.

While all these groups made effective use of the media, they paid even more attention to a public education program that went directly to the constituencies they wanted to mobilize or change, without the biased filter of the media. The fishermen used the two-way radios on their boats. Fact sheets were distributed to stores and churches. Barbeques, oyster roasts, picnics, auctions, and concerts became fundraising events as well as rallies to update and motivate people. Letter-writing campaigns to local newspapers and call-in shows for radio and television got the message out more generally. Two groups used videotape to record personal stories, expert testimony, and events that could not be easily duplicated but which could be rebroadcast to other gatherings.

The "public hearing" became the most important educational tool in the particular campaigns we surveyed. Whether they were called by government officials or by the citizens leading the opposition, these forums provided (1) a focus for organizing mass turnout, (2) a convenient format for the press to cover the issues in the controversy, (3) an almost mandatory platform for

politicians, (4) an arena that easily puts the sponsor of environmentally risky business on the defensive, (5) an educational event on neutral turf (school auditorium or city hall) that attracts interested but undecided people, and (6) a chance for the environmental group to develop its outreach, public education, media, speaking, planning, and research skills.

With good organizing, these events gave conservationists an excellent opportunity to (1) put themselves on an equal footing to challenge the company and/or regulators, (2) impress politicians with the mass opposition to the project, (3) demonstrate to the uncommitted who came to the event the contradictions of the proposals, and (4) renew the commitment of the already convinced and allow them to enjoy the power of their collective voices.

## POLITICAL PERSUASION

THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS A USEFUL FORMAT TO MASTER BECAUSE THE FOCUS FOR CITIZEN PROTEST GENERALLY INVOLVED POLITICAL BODIES at the local level (city council, county commission) as well as agencies that were vulnerable to the demand for local "fact finding" hearings. Most citizens demonstrated a remarkable capacity to analyze the procedural or legislative powers of each agency and choose a strategy that took advantage of the group's strengths and the

### Major Environmental Controversies, 1982-87

1984-87: U.S. Forest Service's "50 Year Plan" for expanding clearcutting and reducing hunting draws continuous protest and improved but still contested redrafts.

1985-86: Citizens convince state authorities to close down Mitchell Systems' incinerator despite owners close ties to the governor.

1986: Chernobyl explosion reverberates in massive opposition to licensing of Shearon Harris nuclear power plant 15 miles from Raleigh.

1983-85: Fire at Armageddon Recycling Co. triggers neighborhood organizing, passage of Durham's "right-to-know" law, and more electoral victories for progressive biracial coalition.

1982: State buries 7,223 truckloads of PCB-laced dirt in a new landfill. Mass marches and 523 arrests make toxic waste disposal a hot issue statewide.

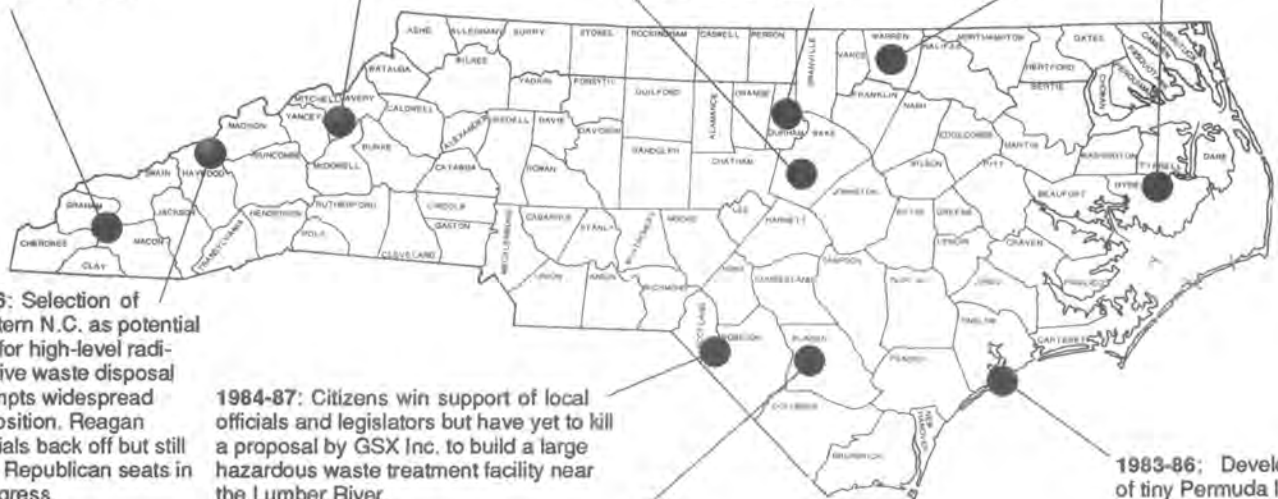
1982-84: A new coalition of fishermen and environmentalists defeats First Colony Farms' plan to stripmine peat from 15,000 acres of wetlands.

1986: Selection of western N.C. as potential site for high-level radioactive waste disposal prompts widespread opposition. Reagan officials back off but still lose Republican seats in Congress.

1984-87: Citizens win support of local officials and legislators but have yet to kill a proposal by GSX Inc. to build a large hazardous waste treatment facility near the Lumber River.

1984-86: An alliance of three poor but determined counties pressures state officials into denying U.S. Ecology's permit request to operate a low-level radioactive waste incinerator.

1983-86: Developers of tiny Permuda Island lose a precedent-setting fight with Stump Sound farmers and fishermen.



Citizens against GSX deliver bottles of water from the Lumber River to state officials, 1986



agency's weaknesses. (They often had friends within the agencies feeding them valuable information for such decisions.) Because these were popular citizen revolts that had mass appeal in local areas, the groups invariably chose to focus major attention on local political leaders who could in turn put pressure on the state or federal agencies. Once the local political leaders got on the bandwagon, it became easier for other politicians, as well as other citizens, to join the campaign.

The East Durham group decided early on that even though permitting plants to handle hazardous chemicals fell within the state's jurisdiction, their best chance of action lay with the Durham city council. They chose a strategy that focused on the irrational (though technically legal) city zoning which allowed the plant to be in the neighborhood in the first place. And they chose the city council as their target because it was (1) most accessible to their members, (2) most vulnerable to publicity about the neighborhood's problems, and (3) most easily pressured by other groups the neighborhood could rally to their side. Eventually, a defensive city council was forced to prove its commitment to East Durham by taking the neighborhood's side in aggressive bargaining with the state over the permitting process, including the choice of location for the state's public hearing. The council also rezoned the area, limiting the plant's capacity to the point that it became uneconomical to operate.

In most cases, the environmental activists had ample amounts of sound research to bolster their side of any argument. Fact sheets used in door-to-door canvassing, a pivotal community survey and policy report on the expressway's impact in Durham, and the technical evaluation of GSX's proposed hazardous waste facility in Scotland County, illustrate how action-oriented research can help in organizing. All the campaigns demonstrated in numerous instances the importance of

thoroughly investigating the economic, political, corporate, legal, public health, and environmental sides to an issue as well as the personalities involved.

Understandable, well-documented technical information is obviously another key to success, but many groups fail to recognize that information alone will not win their fight. It rarely even persuades the bureaucratic agencies which supposedly monitor and enforce existing laws based on an evaluation of technical data. In reality, the agencies exist within a "policy-making framework" which is ultimately guided by political actors who respond to public opinion. Often these elected or appointed officials need technical data to support whatever policy decision they make, especially when that decision can be challenged in court by the losing side. But it is difficult to overestimate how flexible they can become in interpreting or reforming existing procedures or laws when they are pressed by a massive and sustained public outcry.

In the controversy over a proposed low-level radioactive waste incinerator, state officials first told residents of Bladen, Cumberland, and Robeson counties that there was little they could do to stop the facility from locating in the area. But after several months of organizing, the plant's opponents gained so much local support, including from their county and statehouse elected officials, that the state environmental regulators were forced to hold a series of "fact finding" public hearings in the area.

Before the meetings, state officials were still saying that emotional arguments against the incinerator would carry no weight; however, after more than 5,000 people turned out for two hearings, the state's secretary of human resources admitted he was impressed by the intensity of local opposition. "The laws, the rules, the regulations give no way to consider numbers of people," he said, "but obviously numbers impress people in public life. They have some effect, but not as much as the information does."

Several weeks later two agencies denied U.S. Ecology's requests for the air pollution and radiation permits necessary to open the incinerator. The state used the poor environmental record of the company in other locations as a basis for denying the permits. U.S. Ecology said it would challenge the denials in court, arguing that the state has no set of specific standards for such rulings and that they were "politically motivated." The company is right about the political motives behind the state's action, but the bureaucrats were smart enough to build a well-documented basis for their decisions so that they could hold up in court.

The anti-incinerator leaders, who had first investigated and publicized the poor environmental record of U.S. Ecology in other states, had learned the lesson of combining useful technical information with aggressive grassroots organizing.

**Understandable, well-documented technical information is obviously another key to success.**

**There is no substitute for direct organizing, door-to-door, person-to-person.**

## ORGANIZING

The primary or potential "victims" become the center of a media, public education, legal, and lobbying strategy.

**DIRECT ORGANIZING, DOOR-TO-DOOR, PERSON-TO-PERSON, IS ANOTHER KEY INGREDIENT IN THESE SUCCESS STORIES. THERE IS NO substitute for going directly to the people who are affected by an environmental problem and educating/mobilizing them. That was the way new leaders in the peat mining and East Durham toxics campaign were identified — from direct, one-on-one contact, canvassing the area or constituency most affected by the problem, using a fact-sheet and spending a lot of time with the individuals who later became the backbones of these movements.**

Very often environmental groups tend to identify a problem, research it thoroughly, attempt to publicize it through the media, and seek remedies through the appropriate governmental channels. They miss the most important ingredient — the human beings who can articulate how they are directly abused in a way that arouses others to sympathy and/or action. These primary or potential "victims" become the center of a media, public education, legal, and lobbying strategy because they can best explain in human terms how a complicated environmental issue connects to the welfare of real people. Thus the fishermen and their families, rather than the environmental experts, invariably took center stage in any strategy designed by the peat-mining opponents.

At the other end of the state, long-time residents of the coves in Haywood and surrounding counties became the backbone of the movement against siting a high-level radioactive waste facility in the mountains. The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense Fund and Western N.C. Alliance had

begun working on the issue before a specific site was selected and before opposition mushroomed to include even real estate developers worried about the proposed facility's impact on tourism and the second-home market. But without the broad support of average citizens, environmentalists — like realtors — can be isolated as "special interest groups" not in touch with the welfare of the general population. Spending the time to cultivate relations with native mountaineers, not just the retirees and newcomers, paid off for conservationists.

In each successful case studied, more than one "constituency" was intimately involved in the campaign; in fact, the constituencies were often quite diverse, and they ultimately gained strength through their ability to mobilize different parts of the larger community. The East Durham residents or Stump Sound oystermen may have been most visible in their respective struggles, but they understood the importance of maintaining working relations throughout their campaigns with other organizers and leaders working with other constituencies. Traditional environmental organizations, to the extent they were involved in the mass efforts at all, also understood that they were only part of a movement working for change.

In the East Durham case, a formal coalition emerged to tackle passage of a "Right-to-Know" bill in the city, using the explosion at the East Durham toxic facility as an example of its need. The components of this coalition (ranging from the Sierra Club to People's Alliance to the local AFL-CIO) were also important in getting the existing facility closed down. They could turn out people for public hearings and use their clout with the city council in favor of the East Durham neighborhood. In a similar way, other groups in Onslow County and along the coast helped the Stump Sounders with lobbying support, press contacts, access to needed resources and information, connections with helpful state agency personnel, and a broader forum for public education.

In the fight over the U.S. Forest Service's 50 Year Plan, an unprecedented alliance between local and statewide sportsmen clubs, national environmental organizations, and a network of activists concerned about different land-use issues (the Western N.C. Alliance) totally surprised the government with the amount of grassroots opposition and technical expertise they could throw against the Plan. When the nuclear waste site was announced for the same area of North Carolina, an even larger coalition proved too much for the federal government. With nearly universal opposition to the site in the mountains and another near Raleigh, the Republicans stood to lose two very close 1986 Congressional races (11th and 4th Districts) and the Broyhill-Sanford race for John East's seat in the U.S. Senate. Similar political problems in other states apparently led Reagan's Energy Department to come up with a technical excuse for suspension of their search for a waste site in the eastern U.S. (The Republicans still lost

photo by Jenny Labalme



Warren County residents march against PCB landfill in 1982





the Senate and two House seats in North Carolina.)

In all these fights, environmentalists were greatly strengthened by the involvement of other constituencies who could expand the issue beyond ecology to include jobs, the quality of life, and public health. These other groups also added the financial and people power necessary to go up against a well-endowed corporation or intransigent government agency. The converse of this is also true: When traditional environmentalists tried to confront Texasgulf over its pollution of the Pamlico River, the giant phosphate mining company ignored them at first; when fishermen began speaking out, Texasgulf defended itself aggressively and mobilized support from county officials, the local media, and its own workers who uniformly praised the jobs and tax revenues it brought to the economically depressed area. The broad base the company enjoys in Beaufort County means its local opponents will need a sharp focus for their reform demands and will likely need allies outside the region to exert pressure on state and federal regulators who are lax in their enforcement of existing regulations governing Texasgulf's operation.

The successful stories in North Carolina demonstrated a variety of models for how public interest researchers, foundations, national resource groups and professional organizers can help local issue-oriented or political campaigns. In most cases, the key to success involved (1) strong local leadership that had its own base in the community or constituency and a sense of what tactics, language, goals — if not overall strategy — would

best suit the people they worked with; (2) clarity on the part of outside groups as to what they could reasonably provide and what their own motives for joining in the fight really were; and (3) enough time and personal trust for the various actors to work out their respective roles, to get and give appropriate recognition, and to deal with each other as peers.

The point here is not that outside groups need to stand back and “let the people decide” in a vacuum. Rather they must listen intently to learn the peculiar dynamics of the local situation, and then forthrightly throw in their two cents, based on their experience. The process is much closer to a dialogue among equals than someone manipulating things from behind the scenes or passively waiting to be asked for advice on a specific detail. Todd Miller of the N.C. Coastal Federation, Lindsay Jones of the Western N.C. Alliance, Kenneth Johnson of the Rural Advancement Fund, and Len Stanley, formerly of the N.C. Occupational Safety and Health Project (NCOSH), all have very different personalities and organizing styles. But their successes in the campaigns we observed had a lot to do with their capacity to spend considerable time listening to local citizens, connecting that information with what they knew about regulatory agencies or organizing techniques, and offering a response or question that could carry forward the strategizing/organizing process.

Lawyers, researchers, foundations, and Washington-based national groups can, and sometimes do, follow a similar pattern. The

**Environmentalists were strengthened by the involvement of other constituencies who could expand the issue beyond ecology to include jobs, the quality of life, and public health.**



A crisis or explosive incident can become for the public a dramatic symbol of what the controversy is all about.

organizers mentioned above demonstrated how to be sensitive to local people without being patronizing. They acted as facilitators not in the mechanical sense of "training" others in the technology of organizing; rather, they became deeply immersed in the substance of the issue and the people affected, and they consciously sought to involve them in activities that drew on their individual or collective interests, insights, talents, and resources to carry the campaign forward.

Despite all our attention to human capacities, accidents can sometimes also play a key role. Several of the campaigns we studied were immeasurably boosted by a crisis or explosive incident that became for the public a dramatic symbol of what the controversy was all about. The biggest was the Chernobyl meltdown in the Soviet Union which coincided perfectly with a renewed effort to keep the Shearon Harris Nuclear Plant from starting up; the plant received its final NRC staff recommendation for licensing and a shipment of fuel in the days just before and just after Chernobyl. A coalition that already had its fact sheets and basic strategy designed before the accident capitalized on the public fear from Chernobyl to launch a surprisingly successful multi-county campaign that forced the commissioners in one county to pull out of the official evacuation plan (the commissioners later reversed their vote), and caused a six-month delay in the opening of the Shearon Harris plant.

In another case, just before a major public hearing on the peat-mining controversy, heavy rains caused a rush of freshwater intrusion into the shellfish waters and forced officials to impose North Carolina's first statewide ban on shellfishing. This temporary closing dramatically illustrated the impact on the fishing industry of the increased runoff that would result from the peat miner's ditches. And with the fishing waters closed, more local people could attend the hearing.

The explosion at the Armageddon toxic waste recycling plant in East Durham riveted the attention of a neighborhood and the city on the hazards under their noses. In various ways, that explosion became the organizing symbol for the "Right-to-Know" campaign led by NCOSH, for the neighborhood battle against the plant's continuing operation, and for the next city election.

In all the cases, as well as in the "not in my backyard" anti-toxic-dump fights, mass fear became an important ingredient in the success of negative campaigns which relied on mass pressure to stop something from happening. In some cases, a positive symbol or incident can also sustain a major campaign. The Durham-based Congressional campaign of Mickey Michaux gained notoriety, attracted dozens of conservation-minded volunteers, and took on the spirit of a movement because it featured a concerted biracial effort to put the first black North Carolinian in Congress since 1901. However, racially motivated fear among large numbers of whites outweighed Michaux's positive campaign.

## RACIAL DIVISIONS AND UNITY

THE DURHAM EXPERIENCES PROVIDED FRUITFUL LESSONS FOR WHITES AND BLACKS WORKING TOGETHER IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS and neighborhood issues. In reality, the entire state is far more segregated than most whites and many blacks care to admit; personal or political relationships across race lines are quite exceptional. Racist comments and jokes are on the increase, and interracial collaboration is suspect among many blacks as well as whites. Even in Durham, the working alliance between the Durham Committee for the Affairs of Black People and the two white progressive political organizations is fragile.

Race plays a larger factor in environmental politics than many people suspect. Poor and minority communities are disproportionately selected for everything from landfills to hazardous and radioactive waste sites. On the other hand, many leaders in these communities are attracted by developments that promise jobs and money for the area, and they can seem uncaring about the environmental consequences of such enterprises. Sophisticated developers are smart enough to line up support for their projects from established black, brown, or Indian leaders, while casting environmentalists as selfish and uninterested in people of color. White conservationists, concerned primarily about recreational and quality-of-life issues, play right into this racial split by ignoring the call for help from minority communities faced with environmental problems (from energy bills to poor water and sewage systems to toxic dumps) and, on the other hand, by ignoring the deeper economic and political disadvantages people of color keep struggling to overcome. When established black leaders in Durham County sided with the developers of the 5,100-acre Treyburn mini-

Fear and prejudice play a larger role in environmental politics than most people suspect.

city, conservationists lost an indispensable ally. With little support from rural residents in the project area, their pleas for protecting the fragile watershed became an isolated cry, without political foundation. All across the South, such defeats could be reversed with stronger coalitions across race lines.

To make a multi-racial alliance work takes (1) constant energy, negotiation, education, and commitment; (2) a self-consciousness among the leaders of their limitations without, and strengths with, a coalition; (3) consistent delivery on promises made and holding up one's end of the bargain; (4) a recognition of differences, including sometimes conflicting agendas; (5) a recognition of the power of racism in the history and contemporary life of the community and beyond; (6) education of the membership about the need for biracial partnership; and (7) lots of practical steps that aim to solidify personal and political relationships.

The East Durham neighborhood succeeded in involving both black and white members of its working-class community. The leadership that emerged from the door-knocking and early meetings consciously chose a biracial group of officers. While the president was black, the meetings were consistently held in a white church to keep whites comfortable about their "place" or "ownership" within the organization. (The church actually experienced a revival of membership because of its renewed identification with the community.) Blacks and whites made sure both races were represented when the group spoke at large public meetings. But they also recognized the racial divisions within Durham and assigned themselves by race to educate, lobby and convert leading politicians, political groups, civic clubs,

etc. to their side. Under the pressure and daily experience of trying to save their neighborhood, awkwardness and prejudice gave way to humor and comradeship.

The key to breaking down racism seems to be to get whites involved in concrete working relationships with many (not one or two) blacks, and to recognize racism not so much as a moral issue but as the product of historical forces that have practical consequences for today. It works to limit the lives of blacks and, to a lesser extent, whites — including the possibilities that could be achieved by building on common economic and political interests. Racism is so entrenched, however, that it is unrealistic to expect too much change from one campaign where blacks and whites collaborate. Whites still make so many assumptions about their prerogatives of leadership and about the correctness of their priorities that it takes a concerted effort to deprogram them. The fruits of years of anti-racism work by Robeson County's Clergy & Laity Concerned emerged in its capacity to mount a mass-based interracial effort against the hazardous waste facilities cited for the Sandhills area. In contrast, the group nearby in Scotland County remained largely white, middle class, and preoccupied with legal and legislative remedies rather than grassroots organizing.

Getting whites to vote for black political candidates who are right on the issues is an important next step in reinforcing their anti-racist behavior and consciousness. The political process seems like remote terrain to the average citizen as well as to many dedicated environmentalists. But, inevitably, the activists in issue campaigns confront the fact that they can't win without getting better public officials elected, and they

**Breaking down racism requires developing concrete working relationships over time.**

*photo by Jenny Labalme*



**Activists in issue campaigns confront the fact that they need better public officials and need to learn how to elect them.**

**There are at least five keys to successful voter contact**

can't get them elected unless they understand how to use their strengths at the grassroots to register new voters, target key races and precincts, and turnout supporters on election day.

Non-partisan voter registration (VR) and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts, regardless of race, are most successful where there are strong issues that motivate people. Of course the momentum of such work is either strengthened or undercut by the positions and leadership of the candidates in the election, but to some extent issue-oriented VR/GOTV work built around an issue rather than a candidate can succeed. It is even more successful where an organization or education program has a continued presence and can (1) analyze precinct results over several years for improved targeting, etc.; (2) recruit an ongoing base of volunteers; (3) develop a communications program to educate targeted voters about the role of elected officials in their lives, including their role on key issues identified as of major concern to the targeted group; (4) refine a work plan, timetable, and logistical system adapted to the peculiar demography, institutions, leadership, and culture of the area; and (5) develop stronger relations with a broader number of leaders in the community who can be supportive of the VR/GOTV work.

These ingredients for success apply to efforts targeting whites (such as the League of Conservation Voters' work) or those aimed at blacks. Many blacks and whites we interviewed said it doesn't work for whites to try to register blacks, and that the real place for whites is in the white community.

With great difficulty at first, the SANE group in Charlotte proved that white volunteers can register and get blacks to vote in targeted precincts. But their success pointed out the need to carefully coordinate strategies with existing voter leagues, as well as the continuing frustrations and disagreements that result from whites working in black areas. In larger areas, there may be several groups that traditionally work on registration and turnout in the black community. So the involvement of white-majority coalitions, like NCEC (North Carolinians for Effective Citizenship), or white volunteers from groups such as SANE can be quite complicated and confusing.

As in the cases where several different groups are involved in an organizing project, it frequently helps if the recognized leaders of the overall campaign set the tone and parameters for the participation of different groups. In political campaigns, this means that the candidate and his/her campaign manager can exert considerable influence in setting the stage for outside or new actors to participate in voter registration or voter turnout efforts. In both the Mickey Michaux race, where the League of Conservation Voters took an active role, and in the mayoral election of Harvey Gantt in Charlotte, where NCEC cut its teeth alongside several white-led neighborhood groups, it was crucial that the candidates themselves made the involvement of diverse groups a positive step in the higher goal of electing the "first" black to a major office. In a way, they preempted the role of the established black voter leagues to place their election and their evaluation of registration/turnout needs above the control of these groups.

*photo by Jenny Labalme*



**523 people were arrested during protests in Warren County, 1982**

## VOTER CONTACT TECHNIQUES

PHONE BANKS, CANVASSING, AND TARGETING OF PRECINCTS ARE NOT ONLY A KEY PART OF BLACK POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT; THEY ARE essential ingredients for environmentalists to use in identifying and mobilizing sympathetic white voters. In Durham, white progressives successfully sued for the computer tape of the elections board, allowing them to sort names of registered voters not only by precinct or race, but by age, date the person registered, or date they last voted. In one race, the People's Alliance of Durham targeted areas that had a large number of newly registered whites (probably in-migrants) to canvas for progressive-minded voters who might be unfamiliar with local political issues. In another, they produced lists of those whites who registered as Democrats in 1984 — when it took a higher measure of liberal commitment to identify with the party of Walter Mondale — and used that list in canvassing for the 1985 mayor's election.

Here's what they did in another case involving a liberal white woman against a conservative white man in a 1986 primary race that was expected to have a low turnout. They generated a print-out, by precinct and address, of households with women between 18 and 60 who had voted in the 1985 municipal election, another low-turnout race. These

Democrats were considered habitual voters and potential supporters of a woman candidate. (Women over 60 were targeted for special mailings.) The print-out had each woman's name in bold print and the names of the other registered Democrats in the household listed under hers. One set of volunteers looked up the phone numbers using a city directory; another set made calls from multiple-phone offices, where they could compare notes about what approaches worked best and generally get support for a tedious, sometimes difficult task. The candidate was introduced along with her key issues, and the voter was asked if she (or he, if a registered male voter answered the phone) thought the candidate seemed like someone worthy of support. The response was ranked from 1-5, depending on the strength of the voter's opinion for or against the candidate, and in the final two days of the campaign many of those with a 1 (strongly for) or 2 were called again to make sure they went to the polls or had a ride if they needed one. The candidate, Sharon Thompson, beat her opponent by 55 percent to 45 percent.

### FROM ISSUES TO POLITICS

TO SUCCEED, THIS KIND OF PRECINCT-LEVEL ORGANIZING MAKES EXTENSIVE USE OF MANY VOLUNTEERS WORKING A FEW HOURS A WEEK OVER A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. In many ways, such partisan political activity is a natural place for the energies of people who have become involved in crisis-prone organizing around back-yard conservation

issues. Most of the participants in these community battles do not consider themselves activists. Their lives are filled with family, work, recreation, volunteer work with a club, the 4-H, or church. Electoral politics is not a priority. But if they see that a few hours of their help for a specific candidate will make a difference on issues directly affecting them, and if they are directly asked to help, many of them will make the transition from participants in an issue fight to periodic volunteers in electoral politics.

In many cases, the leaders in the fights we surveyed became very active in politics as a result of witnessing the power elected officials have over the issues affecting their lives. Gloria McRae became active in the East Durham Democratic precinct and eventually its chairman. Lena Ritter coordinated several events in the Stump Sound area to promote the candidacy of two county commissioners (who won) and a state senator (who lost by 700 votes). In May 1986, Jacquelyn Scarboro, a leader in the effort to get Chatham County's commissioners to withdraw from the nuclear power plant's evacuation plan, invited U.S. Senate candidate Terry Sanford to a political rally in the county, prompting him to make increased local control over the siting and safety of nuclear power plants an issue in his campaign. The fishermen and environmentalists fighting the peat-mining plant represent other examples of how issue-oriented controversies have led people to become involved in county, state and national politics.

Phone banks, canvassing, and precinct targeting are essential skills environmental groups can train members to use with effective results.

photo by Jenny Labalme





**It takes sustained organizations to maximize the link between environmental activism and electoral successes.**

Our study of environmental controversies shows that most people (1) are motivated by local problems, and (2) do not readily transfer their activism from one issue to another, nor from issues to electoral politics generally. However, they do make the connection between their special issue and the fact that elected politicians have control over its fate. Hence there is great potential for linking environmental activists to specific electoral campaigns and then to broader political work. But the issue-oriented coalitions are frequently not able to help make this transition. As ad hoc efforts, they dissipate without conscious work to build on the collective experiences and range of talents of the people involved.

It takes sustained organizations — following most of the points listed above for effective non-partisan groups — to recruit a steady stream of members and/or volunteers into political activity. Political parties attract a limited number of people with different personalities and experiences from

those of people motivated by specific issues and grievances, the life blood of groups like the National Abortion Rights Action League, NAACP, People's Alliance, and the Onslow County Conservation Group.

Carteret Crossroads, a nonpartisan conservation group in coastal Carteret County, represents an example of the minimal level of organization required to keep a network of members and volunteers informed of issues and local politics. The group cut its teeth several years ago in a campaign to stop an oil refinery from being located on an island next to the state port at Morehead City. With each new plan for developing the island (coal port, liquified natural gas facility, ammonium hydroxide storage tanks), the group had to remobilize its supporters and mount enough public pressure to change votes approving the projects by both Democratic- and Republican-majority county commissions.

In the course of these battles, Carteret Crossroads built up a membership, credibility in the larger community, press contacts, and political sophistication. Although it now rarely calls general membership meetings (outside the context of a specific issue fight), it has an active steering committee, a few task forces, and a newsletter that keeps a large list of supporters and members informed of land-use and conservation issues. It issues periodic "alerts" or special bulletins, such as the one urging members to write letters and attend a public hearing in the area on the regulations of storm water runoff. Its leadership is also consciously reaching out to other constituencies in the county, such as the agricultural community, and is moving beyond crisis-response organizing to tackle larger policies, such as county guidelines for the protection of groundwater.

Like many of the other groups we observed, Carteret Crossroads has succeeded in (1) politicizing conservation and development issues through specific public controversies and ongoing public education, (2) cultivating a core of sophisticated leaders whose views are sought by the media and elected officials, and (3) creating mechanisms to keep a network of supporters and members informed on issues and ready for action. While the group is nonpartisan, it has learned how to use the political arena to win on specific issues. And its members and leaders take an active role as individuals in political campaigns, drawing on the network of contacts and on expertise gained through the organization.

New groups like Carteret Crossroads are cropping up all the time. Nearly all remain fragile entities, dependent on shaky finances and strong personalities. But they offer some of the best promise for involving otherwise politically inactive white North Carolinians in a process that increases their commitment to social change, organizational skills, and exposure to working with diverse groups. From these many struggles and groups comes the foundation for greater change in local power structures and in the state as a whole. □

# Would You Let Us Starve To Death

**T**he New Deal brought hope to thousands of textile workers weary of laboring 12 hours a day for less than 25 cents an hour. The National Industrial Recovery Act, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on June 16, 1933 (the 99th of his famous First 100 Days), promised a 40-hour work week at no less than \$12 pay (\$13 in the North) and an end to child labor.

Unfortunately, the driving force behind the Textile Code authorized by the Act came more from the textile industry than from an organized workforce. The United Textile Workers of America represented less than three percent of the nation's textile workers; it praised the new law's recognition of collective bargaining and adroitly used Roosevelt's encouragement of labor organizing to its advantage. But the Cotton Textile Institute, an association of the largest employers, literally wrote the Textile Code's wage and hour standards in a vain effort to reduce production at smaller mills and

thereby drive up the price of textile goods.

The poorly enforced law wound up encouraging the infamous stretch-out system everywhere — the same system of forcing fewer workers to produce more cloth that had spawned a series of rank-and-file walkouts in the late 1920s and thereafter. Workers took to heart Roosevelt's appeals for cooperation with the Blue Eagle recovery plan, and they responded to "Code

chiselers" with an outpouring of letters to him and to Hugh S. Johnson, head of the National Recovery Administration. "You ask us over the Radio to write to you if we see where the N.R.A. do not help us Textile workers," began a typical letter detailing instances of overwork and underpay.

Membership in the United Textile Workers (UTW) also soared — from 15,000 in early 1933 to 270,000 by August 1934 — and when the national union failed to confront the lawbreakers, workers took action themselves. In July 1934, 40 Alabama locals walked off the job. A majority of the 600 new locals voted to join them, and a reluctant UTW leadership finally called a general strike for September 1, 1934 (Labor Day). At the peak of its three-week duration, over 400,000 workers from New England to the Deep South had left their mills, making it the largest strike in the nation's history.

"Flying squadrons" — caravans of itinerant picketers — peacefully closed down dozens of mills until the industry and its allies responded with brute force. The governors of South and North Carolina mobilized the National Guard. On September 15, three days after winning a landslide primary election, Governor Eugene Talmadge ordered Georgia's Guard to roundup "vagrant" workers and place them in virtual concentration camps. At least 13 Southerners were killed and many more wounded. Martial law reigned from Rhode Island to Pennsylvania to Georgia, and Roosevelt formed a special commission to negotiate a settlement.

Beaten by "force and hunger," the union accepted the commission's vague recommendations for Code enforcement and government study of the stretch-out system, and the strike ended. Inside the mills, virtually nothing changed. In some communities, the strikers' solidarity created the basis for further organizing, but in most parts of the region, the UTW's false claim of victory left a deep skepticism of labor unions.

Much of the workers' struggle for a genuine new deal is recorded in a remarkable collection of letters now found in

*Textile  
Workers  
in Search  
of a New  
Deal*

the National Recovery Administration's papers at the National Archives in Washington. A moving book, with a lengthy chapter drawing on these letters written to government officials, will be published by the University of North Carolina Press this winter. Entitled *Like A Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*, it is the product of several years of research by UNC's Southern Oral History Program and is authored by Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James Leloudis, Bob Korstad, Mary Murphy, LuAnn Jones, and Christopher Daly. We thank them and Larry Boyette for bringing these letters to our attention.

The "Research Consortium on the 1934 General Textile Strike" would appreciate obtaining other letters, photographs, interviews and similar materials related to this historic event. Contact Vera Rony, Labor Studies, Room 4310, State University of New York, Stony Brook, NY 11794; phone: (516) 246-6785.

#### THE LETTERS

7/19/33  
Columbia, South Carolina

Mr. President:

Would you let the people in the Pacific Mills starve to death? That's exactly what is going to happen if something is not done about it. They are being cut off big droves. They say if you aren't equal to \$12.00 per week they will not work you. They cut off the people and stretched out the work so they can do \$12.00 worth a week. I had a regular job in the spinning room running 9 sides — that's not a full set but it's all that I could run. I haven't been working in the mill long enough to run 16 sides. They taken my 9 and put them on the other spinners, put me on a cleanup job and I don't know anything about it. I have got to learn, and they told me they couldn't pay me a penny for learning.

It's just several more in my fix too and others depending on us for support. It's terrible. We can't live to save our life under such conditions. I don't mind working — I love to work — but I think the Mill Company should at least consider us as being human.

We hope that you will consider what I have said and do something for the good of the people. Mr. President, they could at least take the stretch-out system off and let us run as many sides as we can and pay us according to the sides we run.

When we was working 10 hours a day, I ran 9 sides in the spinning room and worked the whole week, which was 50 hours, and made \$4.65 and now I don't make anything. It was a poor do at that, but I did get by some how.

I'm glad that you have got the hours down and the pay raised, and please do something to put us back on the pay roll. I'm just a girl of 19 years old and have a long time I hope before me to work. Please hold my name and do not publish it.

—Miss Veannah Timmons

8/26/33?  
Gastonia, North Carolina

Mr. Hugh S. Johnson

Dear Sir:

I am writing you this letter to let you know just how we poor Negroes are being treated here at Manville Jenckes Co. Loray Mill. There are some who work 8 hours, some 10, 11, or 12 hours a day, and all [who work] from 8 to 12 hours make only 20 cents per hour. Our boss man, T.A. Graham tell us the new Code law don't cover us Negroes for \$12 dollars a week— it is just for white peoples. Will you please, Sir, look after this and do something for us poor Negroes?

A white man told me to write you about it. He is a man [who] works in the timekeeping office who said we Negroes were all rated in the main office at 8 hours a day and 30 cents per hour and 12

dollars a week. And when a N.R.A. inspector come, they just show him a fake time sheet and go on. And he said the way you catch them, you send a man here on Friday — that is pay day — and let him go with the pay man and see every Negro paycheck.

Please Sir, Mr. Johnson, do something for me. I work 8 hours. Only make 8 dollars a week. I have 5 in family and I can't buy food enough to last me from one pay day to another. At the price of food, I can't have dry bread. Please do something for us or we will starve. Please Sir, come to our aid for we poor Negroes can't help ourselves. Please put this letter in the newspaper. I am a Negro and work at Manville Jenckes Corp., Loray Mills, Gastonia, N.C.

—Name withheld

2/14/34  
Greenville, South Carolina

Dear Mr. Roosevelt,

The American Spinning Co. went on strike Monday, February 11, 1934. The weavers walked out and then stopped all others from their work. They are all for the right thing and are only asking for the right things. This mill still has the stretch-out system. Instead of putting more people to work they are laying them off and are working the people to death. This mill has got a minute man that has caused the stretch-out and the supt has got the whole mill speeded up until they are working the people to death and are not making anything.

Textile workers and friends march against the stretch-out system in Gastonia, NC in 1934.





They are not going by your code at all.

This mill is running 9 hours a day instead of 8 hours. Your rule were 8 hours and if you don't believe it, you send a man here to investigate and he will learn a plenty. . . . and the hands are doing as much work in 8 hours as they used to do in 12 hours. The supt has got the whole mill tore up and in a mess and are treating the people worse than convicts.

They used to have three stairways to get out of the mill and he has tore some of them away and in case of fire it is dangerous, and have got a fence all around the mill and keep the gates lock. And when you are sick and want out, you have got to walk nearly a mile to hunt the gate man. Got ten gates and one man to watch them all. They could put two more men to work there.

The people ain't struck for higher wages, but they want a new supt and to get rid of the minute man and to be treated like human beings and not like slaves and they want the stretch-out taken off of them. In the cloth room the superintendent won't let the hands speak to each other. Mr. Roosevelt, ever one know you have done a great part by the people and we are asking you help. There are men here on starvation that has family and can't get work any where. May God's richest blessing rest upon you and that we may all be happier thru the coming future.

Yours truly,  
—Miss Dorothy Taylor

Please don't mention my name. They won't never work me any more and will make me move.

1/14/35  
Hogansville, Georgia

Mr. Eugene Talmadge  
Atlanta, Georgia

As I see it Dishonorable Governor:  
I wish I could conscientiously say as I once thought as you as Honorable Eugene Talmadge but you have proved to my mind a Tyrant in every sense of the word and an enemy to the poor working people. . . . Your method and plan when people organize to better their conditions and try to get fair treatment and to protect themselves against the extortionate hoggish Mill Officers who own the controlling interest in these mills, is to send out National Guards and



Workers regroup in Trion, GA after confrontation that left a deputy sheriff and union loyalist dead.



Striking workers near Charlotte are fed by a United Textile Workers relief station.

photos from UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos



National Guard in Belmont, NC prepare for showdown. Two workers were bayoneted soon after photo taken.

put the workers in prison, herd them up in a pen like a bunch of cattle.

It seems to me that your plans are to herd the men and women that are trying to better their conditions up in a barn or Detention Camp and let someone else who is almost ready to starve take their jobs at starvation wages because they are made to believe they must do this. And you sending out guards tends to create violence and I believe that you know your only motive as I see it is to mislead the workers.

I was not in favor of violence in my life until you sent the guards to Newnan, Georgia and I was arrested and carried to Atlanta, where we were herded in a pen like cows, not because we had committed any violence but because as I see it you wished to break the strike and help the mill owners to keep the workers in slavery and such tactics as you are using will eventually bring about a Revolution. I am not an educated expert but you are using damn poor judgment.

... remember what you said before you were elected Governor, that you were the best friend that labor had ever had and was in favor of organized labor. You said this was why the Big Four Railway Union was supporting you. You said, as long as we, the strikers, committed no violence we had a friend in the Governor's chair and I believed then that you meant it and I supported you, using all the influence I could among my friends to vote for you for Governor.

I spent my own money and used my own car to help elect you to your office

and for my trouble and expense you had my daughter and myself herded into a barn and penned up like cows, not because we had committed any crime or any violence but because you wished to keep us in slavery. My daughter and I helped to close several mills and had no trouble. Not even a lick was passed between the strikers and scabs. We did not go out to make trouble, we went to help the workers close the mills until the owners of the mills decided to give us better working conditions and cut out the Damnable Stretch-out System but you want us to work for just as little as can be paid. Isn't that true?

I wish you had to work for 50 [cents] a day until you learned how to treat working people.

If you can answer this letter and explain your position, I would be pleased to receive an answer but if you cannot do this, I don't care to hear from you. My address is, International Street, Hogansville, Georgia.

— J. M. Zimmerman

10/19/34  
Greenville, South Carolina

Dear Mr. President:

I don't know what the textile strike is all about. But I do know all about the life of the cotton mill worker. I have been employed in the mill since I was twelve years old. I was born and raised in a mill village. My parents were mill employees.

The life of the average textile worker is a Tragic thing. I wish you would come

down south to Greenville, and just stand at the gates and watch the Hungry depressed desperate faces of the employees. They are underfed, ragged and unkept. I have heard people say that there was no necessity for cotton mill workers to be dirty and unkept. My friends, let me tell you the work is stretched and heaped on our workers until where they do get off, they fall in the nearest chair, bed or any place at all to rest their aching bones.

I am not speaking as a union sympathizer. I do not belong to any union. I am supposed to be a free white American citizen, but am I? No, I don't dare call my soul my own. I don't dare speak my opinion in this strike situation.

I have gone through sleet and snow winter after winter without shoes or half enough clothing to keep me warm. My children are doing the same thing. My own pathetic childhood is being repeated in my own children. . . . It was the dream of my childhood that I could some day attend school like other children. But my father was a cotton mill worker and the father of a large family and he was never able to let us go to school. So each child was brought up in the mill instead, going to work at ten or twelve years of age. . . . I want my children to have some kind of chance. I like thousands of others did not strike with the union because we knew we would lose our jobs like thousands of others have done before us. . . .

I am speaking facts from my heart that can be proven to you. I am speaking for the human lives around me.

It is true that every textile worker in the South would walk out of the mill today if they were not afraid of starvation. I don't believe that God intended people to suffer as we have suffered and shall go on suffering until some terrible things happens to release us from our balls and chains. . . .

I do wish you could don a false mustache and view the situation for yourself. Oh yes, you would have to come unannounced other wise it would be fixed so that the work would be running smoothly. And one would think we were only a pack of ungrateful selfish human beings. . . .

Just a laborer begging for justice for my fellow citizens. For my children and for my invalid husband, for the free? White people around me.

— Name withheld



National Guard in Newnan, GA take workers to prison camp.

# Special Report

by Tom Schlesinger, Southern Finance Project

## CROSSING STATE LINES: THE SOUTH'S JUMBO BANKS

Since the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of interstate banking laws in June 1985, the Southeast's biggest bank holding companies have gone on a merger and acquisition rampage. The accompanying tables show how that rampage has shifted control over commercial bank assets and deposits in the region. Among the highlights:

- Between June 1985 and May 1987, \$55.7 billion in commercial bank assets were involved in interstate mergers and acquisitions conducted by bank holding companies headquartered in the District of Columbia and the eight Southeastern states with active interstate banking laws. The \$55.7 billion represents nearly 15 percent of all commercial bank assets in the eight-state and DC area.

- Deposit data, in many ways a more precise indicator of banking's geographic trends, underscores the massive shift underway in regional finance. More than a fifth of the \$62.8 billion of deposits in the eight states allowing interstate banking is held by companies headquartered in other Southeastern states. That means one out of every five dollars

deposited in the Southeast is controlled by a bank in another state.

- Firms headquartered in three states — North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia — dominated the merger and acquisition sweepstakes during the past two years. Deposits gathered from outside the state by North Carolina banks now equal two-thirds of those collected within the Tar Heel state. Interstate bank deposits held by Virginia banks exceed one fifth of the state's total bank deposits. To date there is no outside control of commercial banks in North Carolina and very little in Virginia.

By contrast, holding companies based elsewhere in the Southeast control 40 percent of all bank deposits in Washington, DC, 31 percent of all bank deposits in Florida, 29 percent of all bank deposits in Georgia, 21 percent of all bank deposits in Maryland, 49 percent of all bank deposits in South Carolina and 31 percent of all bank deposits in Tennessee.

- A handful of bank holding companies accounted for most of the asset acquisitions; altogether First Union, C & S, Sovran and First Wachovia took control

of \$32.8 billion in assets or 59 percent of the total involved in interstate transfers.

- Stockholders of acquired institutions received a king's ransom in payment for their holdings. In the 57 interstate deals where data were available, acquirors paid a total of \$7.4 billion. On average, these payments equalled 2.6 times the book value of each acquired bank or bank holding company. By contrast, *American Banker* reported that the average multiple to book value for 302 major acquisitions by U.S. banks in 1986 was 1.7. (Book value is the market price of a share of stock times the number of outstanding shares at the time of the acquisition.)

Thus interstate banking has apparently produced much of what its proponents in the banking community wanted: the opportunity to get bought out at hugely lucrative premiums; protection from takeovers by the money center banks of New York and California; shortcuts to portfolio diversification; and, most important (despite billowing clouds of sectional rhetoric), access to retail deposits as a relatively cheap, stable substitute for the hot money that increasingly funded big banks' assets.

Interstate banking has also made good its proponents' vision of jumbo Southeastern countinghouses with expanded loan limits and heightened prestige. Between 1977 and 1987, the combined assets of the largest five Southern banks grew six times faster than the combined assets of the five biggest U.S. banks. In 1977, 15 Southeastern banks accounted for slightly more than five percent of the total assets belonging to America's 100 biggest banks. By year-end 1986, Southeastern banks claimed nearly a quarter of the top 100 club's membership and an eighth of its combined assets.

# INTERSTATE CONTROL OF BANK ASSETS AND DEPOSITS

WHAT THEY OWN

	AL	DC	FL	GA	MD	NC	SC	TN	VA	TOTAL**	
WHO OWNS THEM	AL		A .30% D .33%							A .08% D .10%	
	DC			A3.42% D3.07%	A .09% D2.19%			A— D1.07%	A .61% D7.38%	A .46% D1.72%	
	FL			A1.10% D1.04%						A .19% D .18%	
	GA			A 5.76% D17.75%			A15.64% D22.06%	A15.22% D15.93%		A4.07% D8.59%	
	MD		A26.59% D24.74%						A.05% D.05%	A1.26% D .97%	
	NC			A 7.92% D13.10%	A22.41% D24.39%	A.62% D.78%		A22.99% D26.54%	A.04% D.05%	A6.91% D8.92%	
	SC									A none D none	
	TN									A none D none	
	VA		A10.48% D15.29%			A15.65% D17.72%		A14.39% D14.19%		A3.84% D4.28%	
	TOTAL*	A none D none	A37.07% D40.03%	A13.98% D31.18%	A26.93% D28.50%	A16.36% D20.69%	A none D none	A38.63% D48.60%	A29.60% D31.20%	A .70% D7.48%	A14.7%*** D21.8%****

Read left to right for interstate assets (A) acquired and deposits (D) held by banks at left. Read up and down for assets and deposits located in states at top but controlled by banks in other states.

\* Portion of total commercial bank assets in state (calculated at 9/30/86) acquired by Southeastern interstate firms between June 1985 and May 1987; portion of total commercial bank deposits in state (calculated at 6/30/86) held by Southeastern interstate firms.

\*\* Share of combined 8-state and DC assets and deposits above and beyond those assets and deposits within the state's own borders.

\*\*\* Portion of total assets in 8-state and DC area involved in interstate mergers and acquisitions between June 1985 and May 1987 (calculated by adding value of assets at time of acquisition and dividing by total regional assets at 9/30/86. If assets of remaining Fifth and Sixth Federal Reserve District states (LA, MS and WV) were added, the portion would be 12.5%.

\*\*\*\*Portion of total deposits in 8-state and DC area held by out-of-state Southeastern firms at 6/30/86. If deposits of remaining Fifth and Sixth Federal Reserve District states (LA, MS and WV) were added, the portion would be 18.2%.

Whether interstate banking has delivered on its more important promises — expanded employment, more efficient capital allocation, lower-cost and higher-quality financial services — will be the subject of future reports.

## NOTES ON THE DATA AND TABLES

### **GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES:**

The Southeast reviewed in this analysis consists of Washington D.C. and eight of the 11 states that lie in whole or in part in the Fifth (Richmond) and Sixth (Atlanta) Federal Reserve Districts: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Interstate banking laws in Alabama and Louisiana did not take effect until July 1, 1987 (al-

though some Alabama bank holding companies made interstate acquisitions in early 1987 so they are included here). West Virginia's interstate banking law takes effect January 1, 1988; in Mississippi, the trigger date is July, 1988.

Our survey includes only mergers and acquisitions involving firms in Southeastern states and DC. It does not include those effected through other reciprocal interstate agreements or other means, such as Tennessee firms acquiring Kentucky banks or New York banks entering the Florida market. The survey also excludes all intrastate mergers and acquisitions except those involving an interstate parent company (e.g. SunTrust/Third National's acquisition of People's Bancshares in Lebanon, TN).

### **TIME BOUNDARIES:**

The survey of assets includes only those involved in interstate mergers and acquisitions between June 1985, when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of regional interstate

banking agreements, and May 30, 1987. Mergers consummated prior to June 1985 — chiefly the marriage of Sun Banks with the Trust Company of Georgia — are not included nor is the considerable amount of assets accumulated by NCNB in Florida prior to June 1985.

Where data were available, we calculated assets by their value at the time of bank consolidation. Aggregated assets were compared to state and regional asset totals as of Sept. 30, 1986 because that date presented a mid-point between June 1985 and May 1987.

While asset transfers were reviewed over a two-year period, deposit transfers were reviewed over a longer duration. That is, when calculating interstate control of a particular state's bank deposits we included deposit-gathering facilities acquired prior to June 1985, like NCNB's and SunTrust's in Florida. (June 30, 1986 is the most recent date for which deposit data is available).

As a result, the asset and deposit analyses tend to mirror two different but related patterns.

# WHO OWNS WHOM

The table below gives information only on acquisitions occurring across Southern state boundaries since interstate banking compacts were ruled legal by the Supreme Court.

Acquiror	Acquiree	Date of Deal	Assets of Acquiree	Acquisition Price	Price as % of Book Value	Acquiror	Acquiree	Date of Deal	Assets of Acquiree	Acquisition Price	Price as % of Book Value
<b>ALABAMA</b>											
1st Alabama Bancshares	Golden Summit Corp., Milton, FL	5/87	54m	n.a.	n.a.	First Union (cont.)	Bank of Waynesboro Georgia	7/86	45m	6.1m	1.5
SouthTrust	Central Bank of Volusia Co., FL	3/87	59m	n.a.	n.a.	Collier Bank, Naples, FL	8/86	39m	6.1m	2.3	
	Bank of Pensacola, Pensacola, FL	3/87	64m	n.a.	n.a.	Island Bank, Holmes Beach, FL	mid-86	66m	n.a.	n.a.	
	Vista Banks, DeLeon Springs, FL	3/87	100m	n.a.	n.a.	Edison Banks, Ft. Myers, FL	8/86	54m	7.1m	2.9	
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>											
Riggs Ntl.	Guaranty B & T, Fairfax, VA	6/86	128m	37.8m	3.3	Commerce National Bank, Naples, FL	10/86	43m	8.5m	2.6	
Washington Bancorp	Enterprise Bank, Reston, VA	6/86	44m	9m	2.8	City Commercial Bank, Naples, FL	10/86	44m	8.5m	1.7	
1st American Bankshares	National Bank of Georgia, Atlanta	3/87	1,700m	n.a.	n.a.	North Port Bank, North Port, FL	10/86	71m	n.a.	n.a.	
James Madison Ltd.	McLean Bank, VA	9/86	122m	n.a.	n.a.	Roswell Bank GA	10/86	136m	38.5m	3.8	
	First Continental Bank, Silver Springs, MD	mid-86	33m	n.a.	n.a.	Sarasota B & T FL	1/87	21m	24.5m	2.4	
<b>FLORIDA</b>											
FNB Banking Corp.	Pavo State Bank, Pavo, GA	10/86	6m	n.a.	n.a.	1st State Bank-shares, Pensacola, FL	3/87	104m	12.5m	2.0	
Barnett	First City Bancorp, Marietta, GA	10/86	541m	81m	3.4	<b>NCNB</b>					
<b>GEORGIA</b>											
C & S	C & S, Charleston, South Carolina	9/85	2,300m	400m	2.8	Bankers Trust SC	7/85	1,900m	306m	2.4	
	C & S FL (Landmark Banking Corp)	8/85	5,000m	400m	n.a.	Pan American Banks FL	7/85	1,900m	219m	2.2	
	Independent Community Banks, Winter Park, FL	6/86	390m	69m	3.3	Southern Ntl. Bancshares, Atlanta, GA	7/85	93m	11m	2.2	
	Andrews B & T, Georgetown, SC	6/86	85m	20.5m	2.7	Prince William Bank, Dumfries, VA	7/86	20m	4m	3.7	
	Farmers & Merchants Bank, Walterboro, SC	5/86	72m	11m	1.8	Hartsville Bancshares SC	6/86	66m	4m	n.a.	
SunTrust	Mid-South Bancorp, Murfreesboro, TN	7/85	368m	n.a.	n.a.	Centrabank, Baltimore, MD	4/86	226m	8.7m	n.a.	
	Peoples Bancshares, Lebanon, TN	9/86	65m	n.a.	n.a.	Branch Bank & Trust, Greenville, SC	12/86	248m	56m	3.5	
	Third National Corp., Nashville	10/86	5,000m	757.5m	2.3	Southern National	Horry Co. Ntl. Bank, Loris, SC	9/85	40m	10m	3.4
	Loudon Co. Bancshares, Lenoir City, TN	2/87	70m	16m	2.6	Capital Bank & Trust, Belton, SC	6/86	63m	9.7m	2.1	
	Hamilton Bank of Morristown TN	12/86	120m	n.a.	n.a.	First Palmetto Bancshares SC	6/86	74m	5m	1.8	
<b>MARYLAND</b>											
Maryland National	American Security Bank DC	7/86	4,300m	438m	1.7	Liberty National, Charleston, SC	11/86	82m	13m	2.3	
Mercantile Bankshares	Eastville Bank VA	1/87	22m	7.1m	2.1	United Carolina Bank	Bank of Greer SC	2/86	138m	28.4m	2.3
<b>NORTH CAROLINA</b>						<b>VIRGINIA</b>					
Wachovia	First Atlanta GA	6/85	7,000m	700m	2.0	Sovran	DC National Bank	7/85	348m	70.3m	3.6
	Forsyth Bancshares, Cummings, GA	7/86	95.3m	n.a.	n.a.	Suburban Bancorp Bethesda, MD	9/85	3,100m	405m	2.2	
	First American Bank of Walton GA	12/86	74m	n.a.	n.a.	Commerce Union, Nashville, TN	4/87	3,900m	654m	2.2	
First Union	Atlantic Bancorp FL	6/85	3,700m	400m	2.3	Signet	Union Trust Bancorp, Baltimore, MD	7/85	2,000m	303.6m	2.3
	Central Florida Bank Corp. FL	7/85	180m	25m	2.3	Security National DC	12/85	277m	62.8m	2.7	
	Southern Bancorp SC	9/85	1,000m	216m	2.9	United Virginia	N S & T Bankshares DC	mid-85	984m	120.8m	n.a.
	Citizens DeKalb Bank, Cummings, GA	10/85	40m	10.4m	4.2	Bethesda Bancorp MD	8/85	147m	44.5m	2.2	
	First Bankers Corp. FL	11/85	1,200m	218m	2.8	Dominion Bancshares	State Natl. Bank, Rockville, MD	11/85	178m	36m	3.3
	Georgia State Bancshares, Mableton, GA	4/86	171m	30.8m	3.0	National Bank of Commerce, DC	1/86	85m	15.3m	2.4	
	First Railroad & Banking, Augusta, GA	6/86	3,500m	779m	2.4	Nashville City B&T TN	5/86	599m	102.9m	2.6	
						1st National Bank of Sparta TN	8/86	90m	18.4m	1.8	
						1st Dickson Corp. TN	10/86	93m	17m	2.1	
						Mid-Tenn. Bancorp, Ashland City, TN	10/86	51m	7m	2.4	
						1st Natl. Financial, Clarksville, TN	11/86	205m	39.3m	2.5	
						1st Springfield National TN	4/87	78m	n.a.	n.a.	
						UNB of Fayetteville Corp. TN	4/87	100m	n.a.	n.a.	
						1st Virginia	Commercial Bank, Bel Air, MD	1/86	121m	21.8m	2.5
						Tri-City Bancorp, Blountville, TN	12/86	200m	41.4m	3.6	
						United Bancorp, Upper Marlboro, MD	2/87	151m	36m	3.1	

## LEADING ACQUIRORS

June 1985-May 1987

Bank/ Home State	Number of BHCs/Banks Acquired*	Total Assets Acquired**	Location of Interstate Offices***
First Union, NC	16	10,369,000,000	FL, GA, SC
C & S, GA	5	7,847,000,000	FL, SC
Sovran, VA	3	7,348,000,000	DC, MD, TN
First Wachovia, NC	3	7,169,300,000	GA
SunTrust, GA	4	5,623,000,000	FL, TN
Maryland Ntl., MD	1	4,300,000,000	DC
NCNB, NC	6	4,205,000,000	FL, GA, MD, VA
Signet, VA	2	2,277,000,000	DC, MD
First American, DC	1	1,700,000,000	GA, MD, TN, VA
Dominion, VA	9	1,477,000,000	DC, MD, TN
United Virginia, VA	2	1,131,000,000	DC, MD
Barnett, FL	1	541,000,000	GA

\* Includes bank-holding companies (BHC). Multi-bank holding companies (BHC), such as Florida's Independent Community Banks, are counted as one acquisition.

\*\* Value of assets at time of acquisition (if available).

\*\*\* Commercial bank offices in Fifth and Sixth Reserve Districts. Does not include non-bank facilities such as loan production offices, consumer finance affiliates, etc.

Asset transfers show the extent of Southeastern merger and acquisition activity during the first two years of interstate banking. Deposit transfers show how that activity has helped change the region's banking structure. Southeastern assets are a geographically nebulous quantity; they include loans to borrowers in Seattle, Mexico and Japan as well as in Baltimore and Boca Raton. Southeastern deposits reveal much more tangibly the geography of control; they show the degree to which the savings of citizens in Baltimore and Boca Raton are now collected and intermediated by firms located hundreds of miles and several state borders away.

Finally, several mergers and acquisitions listed in the survey are pending approval by shareholders and/or regulators.

### INSTITUTIONAL BOUNDARIES:

The survey includes only mergers and acquisitions involving commercial banks. Bank acquisitions and conversions of thrifts (e.g. AmSouth's January 1987 takeover of Florida's First Mutual Savings) are excluded.

Where the names of bank holding companies and their lead bank are similar, we use the more identifiable name. In the case of multi-bank holding companies, we use the holding company name for the sake of brevity.

### CAVEATS:

"Interstate control" of bank resources is neither so new nor so clearcut a notion as perhaps suggested by our analysis. Its lack of newness is reflected in C & S's longtime presence in the South Carolina market, a piece of de facto interstate banking that long preceded the legislative initiatives of the early- and mid-1980s. Consequently C & S's major South Carolina "acquisition" shows up in our analysis as freshly hatched as Dominion Bankshares' foray into middle Tennessee.

The lack of clarity surrounding "interstate control" shows up in many instances. For example, even if rumors did not persist that First Wachovia will move its headquarters from Winston-Salem to Atlanta it would still be a highly tenuous proposition to statistically award North Carolina's banks custodianship of that holding company's First Atlanta resources. That we have done so — and made comparable awards in other cases — does not reflect a belief in statistical legerdemain. It is simply a product of definitional judgement calls in a field where the changing of old rules has blurred or eliminated old and comfortable definitions.

### SOURCES:

Merger decision summaries from Federal Reserve System, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, "Uniform Bank Performance Report: State Averages, 9/30/86." *Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Data Book*, Vols. 5-9. 6/30/86, *American Banker*. Selected annual reports of bank holding companies and state bank supervisors. *Business Week*, 4/6/87 and Corporate Data Exchange *Banking & Finance: The Hidden Cost*, 1980 (comparative data on top 100 BHCs 1977-1987).

*The Southern Finance Project, sponsored by the Institute for Southern Studies, is a multi-year investigation of the impact of financial institutions on the South's people and economy. Its director, Tom Schlesinger, may be reached at 517 E. Kingston Ave., Charlotte, NC 28203.*

## NET GAIN/LOSS OF ASSETS & DEPOSITS RESULTING FROM ACQUISITIONS BY SOUTHEASTERN BANKS

STATE	+ ASSETS + DEPOSITS	- ASSETS - DEPOSITS	NET ± ASSETS* NET ± DEPOSITS**	NET GAIN/LOSS AS % STATE'S ASTS/DEPS***
ALABAMA	277,000,000 252,944,000	none none	+ 277,000,000 + 252,944,000	.99% 1.17%
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	2,027,000,000 4,796,173,000	5,994,200,000 4,030,318,000	- 3,967,200,000 + 765,855,000	(24.53%) 7.61
FLORIDA	547,000,000 378,779,000	13,089,000,000 24,514,414,000	- 12,542,000,000 - 24,135,335,000	(13.40%) (31.25%)
GEORGIA	13,390,000,000 21,587,957,000	13,401,000,000 10,349,276,000	- 11,000,000 + 11,238,681,000	(.02%) 30.95%
MARYLAND	4,322,000,000 2,509,352,000	5,954,000,000 5,759,630,000	- 1,632,000,000 - 3,250,278,000	( 4.48%) (11.68%)
NORTH CAROLINA	22,433,000,000 22,560,618,000	none none	+ 22,433,000,000 + 22,560,618,000	41.68% 64.91%
SOUTH CAROLINA	none none	6,064,000,000 6,140,516,000	- 6,064,000,000 - 6,140,516,000	(38.63%) (48.60%)
TENNESSEE	none in SE none in SE	10,934,000,000 9,336,583,000	- 10,934,000,000 - 9,336,583,000	(29.60%) (31.20%)
VIRGINIA	12,705,200,000 10,719,603,000	336,000,000 2,787,525,000	+ 12,369,200,000 + 7,932,054,000	25.64% 21.28%

\* Total assets acquired by commercial banks in Fifth and Sixth Federal Reserve District states between June 1985 and May 1987.

\*\* Commercial bank deposits held by banks or bank holding companies affiliated with out-of-state firms at June 30, 1986. In some cases interstate acquisition of bank deposits occurred prior to the June 1985 Supreme Court decision upholding regional interstate banking laws: (1) Includes First American Bankshares deposits in MD, TN, and VA. (2) Includes SunTrust and all NCNB deposits. (3) Includes SunTrust deposits in FL. (4) Includes First American Bankshares deposits. (5) Includes NCNB-Florida deposits. (6) Includes Valley Fidelity/First American Bankshares deposits. (7) Includes First American Bankshares deposits.

\*\*\* % of state's total bank assets at 9/30/86 and total deposits at 6/30/86, adjusted to reflect acquisitions through May 1987.

# Never Turn Back

An Interview with Sam Block  
By Joe Sinsheimer



UPI/BETTMANN NEWSPHOTOS: GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI 1963

When Sam Block entered Greenwood, Mississippi in June of 1962, he launched one of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's (SNCC or "Snick") most important and most violent voter registration campaigns. For six weeks, Block struggled alone to gain the respect and support of Greenwood's black community until reinforcements arrived. During that time the city's White Citizen's Council — the "Gentleman's Klan" — did their best to "encourage" Sam Block to leave town. Block and fellow workers Willie Peacock and Lawrence Guyot were harassed, arrested, and beaten as they spread their freedom message from Greenwood to the surrounding plantations.

The immediate response from most of the black community was fear and suspicion. Block recalls how the young people would "walk on the other side of the street" when they saw him coming and that he was "no longer welcome" in the town's poolhalls after people discovered who he was. One black resident recalls that the older women in the community would sit on their porches at dusk and talk about how "ugly" Sam Block was. It was their way of hiding their fear and their excitement about having a civil-rights worker in their Delta town.

The black community's fear was not unjustified. Eight years earlier, Emmett Till had been brutally beaten and drowned just for whistling at a white woman. He was not the first nor the last black lynched in the area. Whites controlled Greenwood's entire legal,

political, and economic structure. Self-described as the "Cotton Capital of the World," Greenwood was built, sustained, and surrounded by cotton. Because of its proximity to the Yazoo River, the city became a center for cotton growing, ginning, and compressing in the late nineteenth century. By 1963, the Greenwood Cotton Exchange, representing 42 different local firms, handled more than 800,000 bales of cotton annually, second in sales only to the Memphis market, three hours to the north. These labor-intensive operations demanded the submission of the Delta's blacks, who in 1960 still comprised the majority of Greenwood's population and almost two-thirds of Leflore County's 46,000 inhabitants.

In October 1962, the Leflore County Board of Supervisors, worried about the threat of SNCC's fledgling voter registration campaign in Greenwood, voted to stop distributing surplus food to 22,000 county residents, claiming that the county could no longer afford the storage and distribution costs of the food program. Sam Block and other SNCC workers charged that the board's decision to terminate the surplus food program was an "intimidation tactic," a "retaliatory action" against the voter

registration campaign. "Commodities are the only way that many Negroes make it from cotton season to cotton season," one SNCC worker explained. "If this is taken away from them, they have nothing at all."

By mid-winter conditions were desperate and the SNCC staff organized a national food and clothing drive for the poor. Dick Gregory and Harry Belafonte helped the campaign with publicity and fundraising, and within a matter of weeks SNCC workers were handing out thousands of pounds of food in Greenwood. The food drive turned out to be a major catalyst for the Greenwood voter registration drive. Hundreds of plantation workers came into Greenwood to receive the free food and continued on to the county courthouse to attempt to register to vote.

The success of the food drive led directly to increased Citizen Council intimidation. On the night of February 20, arsonists destroyed four black-owned businesses and unsuccessfully tried to burn down the SNCC office. Ten days later, white hoodlums attacked a car carrying three civil-rights workers. Thirteen .45 calibre bullets ripped through the car, seriously injuring Jimmy Travis.

The Travis shooting opened the third phase of the Greenwood campaign. In less than two weeks, over 25 fulltime civil-rights workers moved into Greenwood in a display of support for the city's black community. Local blacks began daily marches to the county courthouse, demanding their right to vote. For two weeks, beginning in late March, Greenwood's black community was afire, as city officials tried desperately to find some way to quell the disturbances. A national television audience watched as Greenwood police employed dogs and clubs against the demonstrators.

Two weeks later, the country's attention shifted to Bull Connor's Birmingham, Alabama, and federal officials were able to maintain a temporary truce in Greenwood. But the Delta town continued to occupy a central place in the development of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and the Freedom Summer Project of 1964 which SNCC coordinated with other civil-rights groups through the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO).

What follows is an interview with Sam Block, one of SNCC's most successful organizers. Block now lives in Wilmington, California and thinks often of returning to Mississippi. Although Block's story is unique, it is one of dozens of similar accounts that provided the foundation for the civil-rights movement in Mississippi and across the Deep South. A new generation of black Americans had come of age, a generation that had simply had enough; like Sam Block, they resolved to "never turn back" in their fight for freedom. This interview is one of more than 30 conducted by Joe Sinsheimer for a book he is preparing on the Mississippi Freedom Movement with the support of a fellowship from the Lyndhurst Foundation.

I was born and reared in Cleveland, Mississippi — 110 miles south of Memphis, Tennessee and 110 north of Jackson, Mississippi. I was born in 1939. It's quite a history as to how I got involved in the civil-rights movement. It goes back to when I was approaching my teens, probably nine or ten years old.

My mother worked for a federal district judge in the state of Mississippi. She reared his kids. She cooked, she did everything for the family. And this was our livelihood. My father was unemployed because of injuries he had

THE GREENWOOD MOVEMENT INITIATED BY SAM BLOCK MET BITTER OPPOSITION FROM POLICE AND THE WHITE CITIZENS COUNCIL.

UPI/BETTMANN NEWSPHOTOS





sustained at the cotton compress where he used to work. And I used to mow the lawn of this particular judge every weekend. It looked to me like five or ten acres, and it would take me all day to mow. Well, one Saturday it had rained, and I was unable to mow the lawn. But I needed some money to go to this basketball game — it was a tournament at the high school. I walked to the judge's house, perhaps four or five miles from our house, which my mother walked every day to and from work.

I didn't think about what I was doing, I just walked to the house and knocked on the front door. The judge himself came to the door and he said, "Sam, what in the hell do you want." And I said, "Judge, I wanted to know. ..." He said, "Wait a minute, first thing you know that you don't come to my front door of my house for any goddamn thing. Now you get your little snotty-nosed black ass away from this front door and go on around to the back and knock and I will come and you will tell me what you want."

Now my mother had always taught me that here is a man that loved me. He and his family gave us their leftover clothes and food, and a large amount of what we had came from him. So he really hurt me — but I didn't know how to deal with it psychologically. I did go on around to the back door and knocked on the door. Judge came to the door and said, "Yeah, now what do you want?" I said, "Well Judge Green, I wanted to know if I could borrow the \$2 I would have made mowing the lawn to go to a basketball tournament at the high school."

He said, "Well, Sam, right now I am busy. You go back home and call me back in about two hours." This was in the early morning, say around 8:00 that morning.

So I went home. We didn't have a telephone at our home but across from our house, about 500 feet away, was a seed company that had a warehouse on one side of the street and an office on the other side of the street. So I slipped in this warehouse — this is how we would make our phone calls — and I called the judge. I told him who I was. He said, "Well, Sam, I am still busy. Give me the number where you are and I will call you back in perhaps another 30 minutes." I gave him the number and sure enough he did call back in perhaps 15 or 20 minutes.

But there was a person who was in the office of this particular seed com-

pany that I didn't know about. They had adjoining phones so when the phone rang in the warehouse, it also rang in the office. So he picked up the phone at the same time that I did, and he answered by saying Pace Seed Company before I could say anything. So the judge said, "Oh hell, I think I have got the wrong goddamn number." And the man in the office said, "Well, who are you calling? Who is this?" "Oh, this is Judge Ed Green."

So everybody in Mississippi in small towns like that knew each other. "Oh, Judge, this is Glen Otis down here at Noble Pace Seed Company." He said, "Oh, how are you doing." He asked about Mr. Pace and so on and so on. He said, "Judge, who are you calling for?" He said, "Oh, I was calling for a little snotty-nosed black nigger boy. His goddamn old Mammy has been working for me all her goddamn life. And you know how niggers are. They want to know if you can give them something or they can borrow something." He said, "Oh, who are you talking about?" He said, "Sam." He said, "Oh, I can run down there and get him, Judge." He said, "No, no, no."

And by that time tears had begun to

come in my eyes. I was really hurt emotionally then. It just seemed like my whole attitude changed immediately. It was so hurtening because my mother was still with the feeling and belief that this man loved us. And for him to have said just what he said about her was what hurt me most.

I got behind those sacks of seeds and I cried like a baby. I really didn't know how to handle my emotions then. And I made up in my mind over a period of time, from that first incident there, that if I ever got a chance to do anything to help people, especially black people, that I was going to do it.

Another time, after I mowed the judge's lawn on Saturday, I went back around the town way, through Main Street, and I saw white kids sitting on the stools in the Rexall drugstore eating ice cream and everything. And I just decided that I wanted some ice cream, so I went into the drugstore myself and sat on the stool. The next thing I knew a man and a woman came and grabbed me by the collar and pulled me to the backdoor and said, "You know damn well that you don't come here and order any ice cream. If you want anything you get your ice cream back here."

THE VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE IN GREENWOOD CULMINATED IN A SERIES OF 1963 MARCHES, COURTHOUSE DEMONSTRATIONS, AND ARRESTS.

UPI/BERTMANN NEWSPHOTOS



I left and I went home. But when I got home, they had already driven down to my house and had told my mother what happened. So my mother made me pull off my clothes and she took an ironing cord and almost killed me because she said she would rather do it than have them do it.

These lessons, and there were many more, reassured me that there was a very distinct difference between races and people. And it made me take another look at my own surroundings. I began to notice that the railroad tracks separated

the black community from the white community in our little town. Our house was perhaps 200 feet from the railroad track. I was out of school a lot because of my asthmatic condition, and I would see black prisoners in stripes from the Mississippi State Penitentiary up there unloading the gravel and asphalt for the tracks, and I saw white prisoners standing there on the ground guarding them with shotguns.

So I grew up wanting to do something. What made me realize that I had to do something was when Emmett Till was killed. And it happened right there by Leflore County. I was a teenager then.

After I graduated from high school, I went to Harris Teacher's College in St. Louis, and then I went into the air force. I didn't stay very long because of my asthma. I was trying to get out anyway because what I had dreamed about being involved in all my life was happening. Students were being beaten for riding the front of the buses and other Freedom Riders were thrown in jail. And I just wanted to be a part of a movement that was doing something to eradicate the conditions that I had been forced to live in all my life.

So I came back to Cleveland, Mississippi. I wanted to find a way to get

## GUIDE MY FEET WHILE I RUN THIS RACE

(adapted from traditional song by members of SNCC)

The musical score is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. The first staff has the lyrics 'Nev - er turn back while I run this'. The second staff has 'race (Oh) — Nev - er turn - back while I run this race,'. The third staff has 'Nev - er turn - back while I run this race, cause I'. The fourth staff has 'don't want to run this race in vain (race in vain)'. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: G, G7, C, G D7, G, B7, Em, G, (C), (G), (D7).

*“I received a call from an individual who identified himself as speaking for the White Citizens Council. He told me, ‘If you take anybody else up to register, you’ll never leave Greenwood alive.’ I get such calls with some frequency.”*

— Sam Block in a routine report to the SNCC office.

Never turn back, while I run this race (3 times)  
'Cause I don't want to run this race in vain.

Guide my feet while I run this race (3 times)  
'Cause I don't want to run this race in vain.

Guide my heart.....

Guide my tongue.....

Guide my vote.....

Guide my mind.....

*“I had found people who were confronting a system of oppression and racism and I didn't want to leave that. They were confronting the segregation that I had been forced to live under all my life and that I had longed to do something about.”*—Sam Block, 1987



DANNY LYONS/MAGNUM

involved in the civil-rights movement, but about that time most of the Freedom Riders were in prison and everything had quieted down a little. This was around October of 1961. So I worked for my uncle. My uncle and Amzie Moore owned the only two black service stations in that little town.

I also began commuting to and from Mississippi Vocational College [now Mississippi Valley State College] in Itta Bena, seven miles from Greenwood. I met a lot of people from Greenwood and one of the things that I would always question them about was Emmett Till — what people thought, what did they think about the death, and what would they have done. And many of the kids were just as angry as I was but knew not what to do.

I always liked to go and talk with Amzie Moore about various things that were happening. He lived a block or so away from our house and was a very good friend of our family, and I had expressed the feeling to him that I wanted to do something. He was a man that I really respected because he was the only person in Cleveland who was really addressing any issues. He was a man who sacrificed a good job at the post office, who they busted down to a janitor and gave only a few hours a day of work because of his civil-rights activity. He had spoken out very heavily about what had happened in Emmett Till's case. Very, very heavily. He was basically one of the few people in the Delta who was willing to take a stand in the '50s.

Now when Bob Moses came to Mississippi to begin SNCC's work, he developed a very, very special relationship with Amzie. They understood each other. Their ideologies were the same. I think that Amzie served as a teacher to Bob, not just about Cleveland, but about the whole state. He was well traveled throughout the state of Mississippi because of his activities with the NAACP. He knew people in areas and could get Bob into doors that Bob could not have gotten into himself. Anytime he had a question that he couldn't deal with, he would call Amzie. Amzie Moore was really the father of the movement.

So I spent a lot of time talking to Amzie when I came back to Cleveland. And he knew what I thought and how I wanted to do something. Well, I lost my job at my uncle's service station because of an argument with a white customer, and after that, in the spring 1962, I was approached by Reverend James Bevel of SCLC, Bob Moses of SNCC and Amzie.

They asked me to come around to Amzie's house which I did. They told me that I should be involved in the movement, and it started from there. We decided that I would work with SCLC — which was Dr. King's organization at the time — setting up citizenship classes, teaching people the duties and responsibilities of citizenship under an alleged constitutional form of government. So I got involved and set up citizenship schools all over Cleveland.

Bob Moses had been spending a lot of time down in McComb, Mississippi, and he felt that there was a need for a change in what SNCC was doing and that we needed to spread the movement out. So he asked me where would I like to work. And I said, "Greenwood, Mississippi." I wanted to do something in Leflore County where Emmett Till was killed. We went to Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, spent a week or two up there training, and came back. It was Bob Moses, Hollis Watkins, Curtis Hayes, someone else, and myself.

We had Amzie's old '49 Packard car. En route it seemed like the happiest part of my life. There was just a new enlightenment, a new part of my life. And I was so impressed with the songs that Bob taught us as we were driving. One of the songs that stuck with me most was the song by Woody Guthrie, "This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land." We began to make up songs and we sang as we traveled in this old '49 Packard.

We put Hollis and Curtis Hayes off

in Hattiesburg. And came on up to Jackson and put the other person off — I can't remember his name. And then we went to Greenwood. Bob told me, "Now, Sam do you know that the possibility is that you could be killed?" And I said, "Yes." He said, "Okay, but I want you to be sure that you really want to go into Greenwood." And at that time it looked like tears starting coming out of my eyes and I told Bob, "Yes."

So Bob dropped me off in Greenwood. This was June of 1962. I had no car, no money, no clothes, no food, just me. The first thing I had to do was find a place to stay. I knew some students that attended Mississippi Vocational College with me who lived there, and they helped me find a place to stay with Mrs. McNease, the principal of the elementary school. She really didn't know then why I was there. As she would go to school in the morning, I would go canvassing, just talking to people in the community about voter education and registration, sort of testing the pulse of people. Hanging out in the pool halls, wherever people were, the laundromat, run around the grocery stores, meeting people. I was always introduced as a student at Mississippi Vocational College.

I found that there were a lot of angry people in Greenwood. And I learned that there were a lot of frightened people in Greenwood, too. They knew local blacks were being killed in Leflore County and around there and nothing was being done about it. Emmett Till's death was just



**SAM BLOCK, 1987:**  
"MUSIC SERVED AS A  
DRAWING CARD AND THE  
ORGANIZATIONAL GLUE  
THAT SEEMED TO MAKE  
PEOPLE WANT TO COME  
BACK."

## THE EMMETT TILL GENERATION

Joyce Ladner, a SNCC worker who grew up near Hattiesburg, Mississippi, says she and Sam Block belong to "the Emmett Till generation" which came of age in the late 1950s. Sam was 16 and she was 12 in August 1955 when the 14-year-old Till was taken from his uncle's house outside Greenwood, beaten with a tire iron, shot, tied to a piece of cotton gin machinery, and dumped into the Tallahatchie River. His confessed abductors, relatives of the woman Till allegedly whistled at, denied they killed him and a local jury acquitted them of murder after deliberating for 68 minutes.

For Ladner and Block, as for thousands of other black youths, Emmett Till's gruesome murder and the photograph of his water-swollen body left an indelible impression on their minds. "I can name you ten SNCC workers who saw that picture in Jet magazine, who remember it as the key thing about their youth that was emblazoned in their minds," recalls Ladner. "One of them told me how they saw it and thought that one day they would avenge his death.

"I had a scrapbook and I used to clip these articles from the local paper and from magazines. And I had a friend, a teenage girl I called my play Mama, and I used to go up to her house and talk to her about Emmett Till. We would lie on the floor and look at these

DORIE (LEFT) AND JOYCE LADNER, 1963



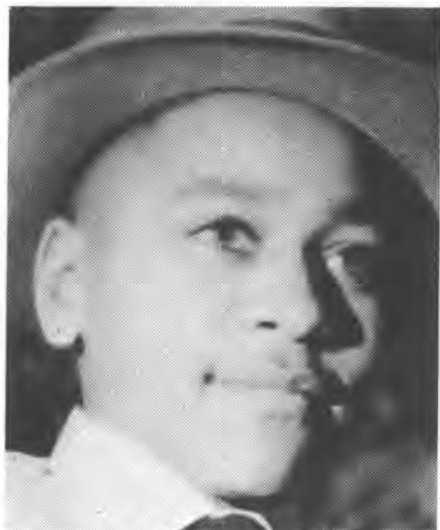
pictures and cry. I would feel absolutely powerless and I would sit and dream about what might happen one day. It's interesting that my goals were projected around having these four sons," Ladner told Sinsheimer in a 1986 interview.

"One son was going to be the first black senator of Mississippi, one was going to be the first governor, and I think one was going to be a lawyer and another a doctor. Back then little girls didn't dream of being doctors or lawyers or senators. I was going to have these kids, and my four sons were going to right all these wrongs."

Several members of the Emmett Till generation, as well as whites involved in the Mississippi movement, have written eloquent books about their experiences. These books also offer eyewitness accounts and analysis of the most turbulent years of the civil rights

movement. They include: *Freedom Summer* by Sally Belfrage (NY: Viking Books, 1965); *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* by James Forman (NY: Macmillan, 1972); *Sammy Younge, Jr.: The First Black College Student to Die in the Black Liberation Movement* by James Forman (Washington: Open Hand Pub. new edition, 1986); *Freedom Song* by Mary King (NY: William Morrow & Co., 1987); *Coming of Age in Mississippi* by Anne Moody (NY: Dial Press, 1968); *Jackson, Mississippi* by John R. Salter, Jr. (Melbourne, FL: Krieger Publishing, revised edition 1987); *The River of No Return* by Cleveland Sellers and Robert Terrell (NY: William Morrow & Co., 1973); and *Letters from Mississippi* by Elizabeth Sutherland (NY: McGraw-Hill, 1965); *Duties, Pleasures, and Conflicts: Essays in Struggle* by Michael Thelwell (Amherst: Univ. of Mass, 1987).

For further reading about Greenwood and the Mississippi movement, see: *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* by Clayborne Carson (Cambridge: Harvard, 1981); *Eyes on the Prize: A Reader and Guide* edited by Clayborne Carson et al (NY: Penguin Books, 1987); *My Soul is Rested* by Howell Raines (NY: Putnam, 1977); *Mississippi: The Closed Society* by James Silver (NY: Harcourt Brace, 1966); *Climbing Jacob's Ladder* by Pat Watters and Reese Cleghorn (NY: Harcourt Brace, 1967); and *SNCC: The New Abolitionists* by Howard Zinn (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).



THE PHOTO OF EMMETT TILL'S MUTILATED BODY BECAME EMBLAZONED IN THE MINDS OF A NEW GENERATION.

one of those that got publicity, but there were many Emmett Tills in Leflore County.

I found that the people who were most receptive to me were the older people. Mr. Cleveland Jordan sat me down and gave me a whole history of what had been going on in Leflore County. He told me about how he had decided to start a voter education movement in the early '50s. He gave me the names of those persons who were involved in that and the names of those who he felt also were still interested in getting a voter education movement started.

Finally, we were able to get our first meeting of about 15 or 20 people together and we met at the Elks Hall. Mr. Jordan was an Elk. And we began to set up some sort of an organizational structure, gave people responsibilities, let them know what I would be doing, to sort of watch out for me — they knew the history of Greenwood — and I asked them for suggestions of things that they felt I should do, places that they thought I should go to, and people whom they thought I should talk to.

The movement in Greenwood was built with older people who were angry, who were looking for somebody who could give form and expression to ideas and thoughts that they had had in mind for years, that they wanted to do and just couldn't bring together. It was not built by young people, other than myself, in the genesis. As a matter of fact, after word got around about what I was doing, students and other younger people would automatically get on the other side of the street when they saw me coming. They divorced themselves from me, period. I was no longer welcome in the pool hall. It was the older people who made up the movement in Greenwood in the genesis.

Our second meeting was held again at the Elks Hall and I began teaching people Freedom Songs that Bob Moses had taught me. But because we were singing Freedom Songs, we were kicked out of the Elks Hall. And when Mrs. McNease found out why I was really in Greenwood and what I was doing, I was kicked out of her house. I slept in a car junk yard for a week.

I found a place with a gentleman who was employed in a janitorial position at the post office there in Greenwood. His name was Mr. Burns. He had been to the war and saw where black men lost their lives, and yet when he returned to the country, they were still

called "nigger" and "boy." And he wanted to do something. He was angry, he knew there was a need for change.

He had a brick two-story building, a photography studio he used, and my room was right above his photography studio overlooking the street. I wrote Jim Forman and Ruby Doris in the SNCC office in Atlanta and told them where I was and that I needed some money. I was tired of eating out of garbage cans, but if it took that to survive and get the job done I was going to do it. Bob later told me that there was just no money anywhere.

I told Bob that I needed some help in Greenwood because we were going to take our first group of people down to the courthouse to attempt to register to vote. I didn't know what was going to happen, and I needed some kind of back up help. He said, "Okay, I will bring Lawrence Guyot and Luvaughn Brown in the next few days to help."

Before they arrived, we had our first mass meeting, publicized by word of mouth, in Reverend Aaron Johnson's First Christian Church. He was the first minister to open up his church to us. He too had gone to the army, and many members in his church were very supportive. Nationally, his religious denomination was also a liberal faith.

We had a good time at the meeting. I taught them Freedom Songs and Mr. Jordan spoke and told the people, "Well, we got somebody now that is going to help us do something. We have been wanting somebody, now here he is. I want you all to give him all the support that you can. Don't be scared of him. Treat him just like he is one of us because he is. We have been living in fear, afraid to do something. It is time to do something. The time is now."

The next day as I walked the streets I met a lot of people, and the thing that they remembered most about that meeting was the songs we were singing. And they asked me when we were going to have another meeting and sing those songs. And I began to see the music itself as a important organizing tool to really bring people together — not only to bring them together but also as the organizational glue to hold them together.

I started to give people the responsibility of thinking about a song that they would want to sing that night and of changing that song, you know, from a gospel song. Think about freedom,

interjecting your own feelings and your own words into that song. And out of that grew a lot of good Freedom Songs that we would sing in those meetings and across Mississippi later on.

After our second mass meeting, we decided that we would go down to the courthouse. We had about 21 people willing to go down and attempt to register to vote. The ages of those persons ran anywhere from 40-some years old up to 70 or 80 years old. Mr. Ledbetter, he was almost 70, he came up to me and said, "Mr. Block, I want you to put my name on that roll." I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "You know why?" I said, "No, I don't Reverend Ledbetter." He said, "Because I am tired of being a second-class citizen. All my life I have wanted to vote and I ain't been able to. I am glad you are here. I am going to register to vote."

So I took the first group of people down to the courthouse and we went into the front of the courthouse and we met Mrs. Martha Lamb, the county registrar. Mr. Ledbetter was first in line, and he looked at Mrs. Lamb and said, "Mrs. Lamb, now I have been knowing you all your life. I am down here and I want to register to vote." She said, "Now Ledbetter, you know that you can't read and write."

He said, "I know I can't read and write, Mrs. Lamb, but I get a check every month." She said, "Yes, you do, I know that." He said, "Now in order for me to get that check from the government cashed I have to sign my name, don't I?" She said, "Yes, you do." He said, "Well, what do I do." She said, "You sign an X on your check."

He said, "Well, that is what I am going to do on this voting role. I am going to sign a X. Now whatever question you want to ask me since I can't read or write you go and ask me the question, and I will answer it and just sign my X and you will know it's me."

Well, she got so mad she told Reverend Ledbetter, "I don't know many questions that I could ask you that you could answer, but how many bubbles are there in a bar of soap?" So old man Ledbetter stood back and looked at her and scratched his head and said, "Mrs. Lamb, you know what, I don't really know but I don't want to go through life being an ignorant man all my life. I have heard that question asked before. If I don't answer this question I am going to flunk this test ain't I?" She said, "Yes, that is your question." He said, "Well, to

keep me from being ignorant the rest of my life, Mrs. Lamb, now tell me how many bubbles there are in a bar of soap and when somebody asks me again I can let them know."

Mrs. Lamb was so angry she called Sheriff Smith in again. She had already called him in when she first saw all of us coming in the courthouse. So now he came up to me. We were outside; we had gone outside because we had seen all these whites coming and we knew they were moving in on us. We were standing in front of the courthouse, and Sheriff Smith came and he spit in my face. He said, "Nigger," and took his pistol out, and he shook his pistol in my face. He said, "Let me tell you one goddamn thing. I don't want to see you 'round here the next day, the next hour, the next minute, or the next second." And the spit was still there on my face, and I stood there listening to him. He said, "I want you to pack your goddamn bags and I want you to leave Greenwood, Mississippi."

All of the people were standing around wondering what I was going to do or say. I said, "Sheriff, if you don't want to see me around here the next day, the next hour, the next minute, or the next second, the best thing for you to do is to pack your bags and leave because I am going to be here." Big Smitty just dropped his hand and his gun in amazement. And it seemed as if that alone gave

the people who were with me all of the courage that they needed to get out into the community themselves and round up people for mass meetings and become involved in their movement.

As we went back to our respective homes, the Sheriff and the highway patrol drove behind our cars, and as we would stop and let someone out to go in the house, they would take his name and address down. Just as a form of intimidation. And some of the people actually shouted back to them and said, "You don't scare me no more. You don't scare me no more."

I called Bob that evening and told him what had happened. Bob got Luvaughn Brown and Lawrence Guyot to come up immediately. They arrived about 12:30 a.m. that night. I had one of the black taxi cab drivers pick them up at the bus station and bring them to the office where I was living, Mr. Burns' building. It was about 1:30 a.m. and we were sitting and talking and mapping out strategy for the next day. And about 15 minutes later, we heard a dispatch radio downstairs. We peeked out of a window and there was a policeman sitting talking to somebody, telling them yes the light is on, so on and so on.

We called Bob and Bob said, "Well look, the thing that you should do right now is call John Doar of the Justice Department." By that time cars were converging upon this office — tires screech-

ing, men jumping out of cars with ropes and chains and shotguns and everything else. They didn't know how to get upstairs.

I called John Doar and John Doar said, "Well Sam, ain't nothing I can really tell you to do. I will call the local FBI agent who was stationed there, his name is George E. Everette. He has been there since the death of Emmett Till. He is a good man. We put him there to investigate Emmett Till's death and he found out things for us and you can call him at home. I am sorry, Sam, the Justice Department cannot really act until a crime has actually been committed."

So I hung up. By that time it looked like people were trying to break into Mr. Burns' front door. Apparently somebody discovered that the way to get to us was through the back stairs. I called George E. Everette and he said, "Oh, I will come down there. They ain't going to do nothing to you, they are probably just trying to scare you or something."

We went out the bathroom window, crawled down on top of the cafe, crawled to the back of the building and went down the TV antennae — about the size of my arm — and we went to David Jordan's house, Cleveland Jordan's son. But he put us out of his house because of his fear. So we went over to Amzie's house in Cleveland and called Bob and told him that we had escaped a lynch mob. Bob said, "I will come right over. I have got a person with me who has just finished Rust College. I want you all to meet, he wants something to do." It was Willie Peacock.

We came back to the office early the next morning and all the records had been destroyed and thrown all over the place. The windows and the door were open. And Bob and Willie were in the front office asleep.

So we continued to work. Bob stayed for awhile and left Willie Peacock there. Guyot and Luvaughn Brown stayed, they came in and out. Later on, the Greenwood police arrested Mr. Burns and charged him with bigamy. They wanted us out of the building. And that was a way of putting pressure on Mr. Burns to make sure we were thrown out of his building.

A lady by the name of Mrs. Hattie Mae Smith who owned a beauty salon sent word for me to come over right away. Mrs. Smith said, "Look, I know what you young men are doing. I have heard about you and I am a part of it. Oh

**BOB MOSES COORDINATED SNCC'S EARLY ORGANIZING IN MISSISSIPPI. "HE INSPIRED GREAT RESPECT AND TRUST FROM ALL OF US," RECALLS BLOCK.**



STEVE SHAPIRO/BLACK STAR

I am so glad to see you. Now all of you can stay at my house." So that is how we got our first Freedom House.

Bob decided then that there was a need to intensify the movement in Greenwood because we did have an organization and people were ready to do something. So we decided that we should spend all of our efforts, all of us, in the streets talking to people everyday, trying to get people back down to the courthouse again to attempt to register to vote. And we did and people then began to turn out in masses.

Willie and I began to go into the backwoods of the plantations and we organized a food drive. We were bringing food from Clarksdale, Mississippi back to Greenwood and we were feeding people. We would slip onto the plantations late in the evenings or early, early in the mornings, taking a chance. We had been told that if we go there we were going to get killed because everybody knew that this man who owned this plantation was known for killing blacks. But we said this is a chance we had to take. Some of the people who we worked with in Greenwood had family members on the plantations, and they too begged us to go out there to help them.

The first black family that we met were the Vassels. We went into their house — Willie and I — and it was cold, I mean cold. You would be in the house and look through the holes in the floor and see the ground. What really hurt me the most was there was a newborn baby lying in the bed, and there were some springs, but no mattress. There was a coat on top of these springs and this baby was lying there covered with raggedy clothes. There was no food.

Willie and I worked very closely with this family, and finally they began to talk to other people on the plantation there, and they began to come out in droves from the plantations, began to talk about voter registration and come to the mass meetings. We brought Bob Moses in several times to speak. We brought in Fannie Lou Hamer from Sunflower County; other SNCC workers had found her by then. We would talk with them, we would sing.

It always seemed that the music served as a drawing card and the organizational glue that seemed to make people want to come back and be a part of whatever we were doing. Besides that they saw the sincerity demonstrated by me in the genesis and by the others as well.

Finally we found an office on East

MacLaurin. It was owned by Mr. Campbell, an old, old man whose father was white. He was black and he owned quite a bit of property there in Greenwood. He also owned several cleaners in the black community. He was an old man who feared nothing. He said he couldn't march, but he wanted to help us because what we were doing would help his grandkids. So he gave us an office, rent free. It was a three-room building on the first floor and by that time the movement had grown, so the office was badly needed and was always busy.

People were very, very involved, and not only older people but the younger people also. We would spend time at the little restaurants where they hung out and go around the school campus, Broad Street High School, talking to others to get them involved.

We got five students involved first, got them to go to Clarksdale, to a mass meeting where we were going to begin organizing COFO [Council of Federated Organizations]. And we wanted to get them involved, to get their feet wet and to introduce them to Bob and other people around other areas who were doing things so that they could see that we weren't the only students involved.

After the meeting we were headed back to our respective areas, coming

back to Greenwood and some people were going to Cleveland, Greenville and other places. And just as we were leaving Clarksdale we were all stopped and arrested and thrown in jail for violating a curfew. I think we paid a fine or something later on and got out. But those students saw for themselves what had illegally taken place in their lives. They knew that there was no curfew. The first charge they put on us was speeding, and there was no speeding. The arrests really stirred them to want to do something and they began to talk to other students. People began to hear about what was happening in Greenwood and students began to organize all across the country in support of Greenwood. One group of people out of Chicago sent a train load of food down. People really began to build a movement themselves.

One particular night, in February '63, we were at the church, and I told Peacock, "Look I have to have my medicine." I am asthmatic. So we got in the car with his girlfriend and my girlfriend and drove to the office. And my girlfriend said, "Sam, don't get out of the car, please don't get out of this car." I asked, "Why?" She said, "I just feel that something is going to happen." I said,



GREENWOOD WAS ONE OF SEVERAL CENTERS OF THE FREEDOM SUMMER PROJECT SPOTLIGHTED ON THIS JULY 13, 1964 NEWSWEEK MAP.

## GET ON BOARD, LITTLE CHILDREN

(adapted from traditional song by Sam Block and Willie Peacock)

The musical score is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of five staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "Get on board, chil - dren, chil - dren, Get on board, chil - dren, chil - dren, Get on board, chil - dren, chil - dren, Let's fight for hu - man rights. I hear those mobs a - howl - ing and com - ing round the square, — Hol - ler - in', catch those freedom fight - ers, But we're gon - na meet them there." The score includes chord markings (G, C, D7) and a section labeled "VERSE".

As fighters we're not running  
for we are here to stay  
Forget about Ross Barnett  
the Lord will make a way.

As fighters we're aware of the fact  
that we may go to jail  
But if you fight for freedom, then  
there's no such thing as bail.

As fighters we go hungry, sometimes  
don't sleep or eat  
We're gonna keep on fighting for  
freedom, in the end we will be  
free.

Can't you see that mob a' comin',  
comin' round the bend,  
If you fight for freedom, they sure  
will do you in.

*"We were hungry one day and didn't have anything to eat and didn't even have a pair of shoes hardly, and we went down and started hustling and a fellow gave me a pair of shoes. Then we had to ride a mule up there in Holly Springs to get people to register. Didn't even have transportation. But we're not complaining. We just go on and raise hell all the time. If we don't have a ride, we can walk. We don't care."*

*Governor Ross Barnett talk all that stuff about we ain't gonna do anything in Mississippi, but he don't know. The sheriff told Sam, 'I don't want to see you down here no more.' Sam looked at him and said, 'Well, Sheriff, if you don't want to see me, you better leave town.'"*

— Willie Peacock



"Look, I have got to have my medication."

I went to open the door of the car, and six white men drove up in a station-wagon and fired into the car, shooting deer slugs at close range directly through the front window. The bullet went into a house and there was a lady and a baby lying in bed there and it went directly into the mattress. Peacock hit the floor, and I hit the floor and said I had been hurt, been shot. I just had glass and stuff in my face.

We called the police and the first policeman to arrive was Captain Usser. He told Peacock's girlfriend, "Essie, don't you know these two niggers right here are going to get you killed?" She said, "Well, yes sir, I see now." And he said, "You had better stop hanging around these two niggers right here. If you don't, you are going to end up dead."

Instead of taking us to the hospital, the police wanted to take us to jail because they accused me of plotting the shooting to receive cheap publicity. The FBI instead let us go to the hospital and the glass was removed from my face. We came back and continued to work. We began to give out the food and people were going down to the courthouse then in mass drives.

People began to come out of the woodwork and tell us their problems. Like one lady, Mrs. Laura McGee, she had all kind of land in Greenwood — much of it had been taken away from her by the white power structure. One of the reasons she was having so many problems was because her brother, Gus Coats, had attempted to register to vote (I think it was in Belzoni, Mississippi) and he was shot in the head. Gus had to be hidden in a casket and shipped to Chicago. Mrs. McGee had offered us her farm, but the Federal Land Grant Bank

was trying to take it from her. Amzie and Bob Moses then got involved in that special project, saving her land. And we raised the money to stop the Federal Land Grant Bank from taking it away. Her sons became very involved and were the first two students to go down to desegregate the local theater.

The movement then entered a different phase. Instead of us trying to do everything, people themselves had taken over and local leaders



were sort of directing it themselves. This was one of our intentions from the genesis. My intention going in was to go in to organize the people and eventually move myself out, work myself out of a job and move on to another area. But it didn't happen that way because I became ill.

So many people had gone to register and we had had such great success that Randall Blackwell of the Voter Education Project wanted to see what we were doing. He and Wiley Branton of SCLC had come over from Atlanta in late February to get a first hand look at what was happening in Mississippi. Greenwood had become really the focus of attention, and Randall wanted to see it for himself. So he, Bob Moses, and Jimmy Travis drove over, and later that night they decided that they would leave and go back to Greenville.

Prior to leaving, Bob had noticed this car circling the block but he didn't tell us. So they left and stopped at the 82 Grill to get something to eat and the car trailed them. Bob called Willie and I back to tell us that we should close up the office and go on home immediately because he had noticed this white car with four men in it wearing dark shades circling the office quite frequently and he didn't know what they were up to.

They left and took a back road. Just as they approached Itta Bena, the car pulled up beside them, went by at a high speed, and turned around and came back and fired at the car with a submachine gun. Bob called us from the hospital and said, "You need to get to the Leflore County Hospital immediately. Jimmy has been shot. Somebody passed by us with a submachine gun and sprayed bullets into the car. We don't know whether he is going to live or die."

By the time Willie and I got to the hospital, Jimmy was lying on the table and I understand they refused to treat him because they said they didn't have proper facilities. But one of the persons there said that they really didn't want him there anyway. We took him to Jackson and that's where Jimmy was operated on. He was shot in the neck, paralyzed, and stayed in the hospital for months, but he eventually recovered.

After Jimmy was shot, people sure enough poured into Greenwood by the droves. We began a series of marches. And people were singing in the streets. We had a folk festival in Greenwood on Mrs. McGee's farm. Pete Seeger,

Theodore Bickel, Bob Dylan, Jackie Washington, and others came. From there, I think, Bob Dylan was inspired to go back and write the song, "Blowing in the Wind."

And after the shooting, the mass marches really began to take place then. That was March, 1963. One of the things that finally brought people closer to the movement during that time was when they saw the police sick the dogs on Reverend Tucker, a local minister. Cleveland Jordan told the community, "Here is a man who grows up in the cloth, as a child of God, and they sick the dog on him. Here is a man who teaches right and you got a wrong that is attacking a right. Let's move. The time is now!"

The churches started opening up after that, too. We had a lot of trouble with them in the genesis, not letting us hold meetings in the church. It wasn't that they felt threatened by me or Moses. They felt threatened more by the white power structure itself. It was all about economics. Most of the ministers who ran small churches were also employed by some whites there in the town. Or their wives worked across the river for someone who was in local government there. It threatened that economic survival for the ministers to have us in their churches. Many of the ministers, I learned later on, had been told that if we

were let into the churches that the church would be burned. And there were attempts to bomb many of the churches, to burn them down, and everything else.

The churches changed not because the ministers themselves threw their arms open. It was the people in the community saying, "Hey, this is our church. Now whether you want us to have a meeting in it or not we are going to have it." And it was because of that pressure from the community itself that forced them to open up whether they wanted to or not. It was the people.

People were then willing to do other things, too, to go into other areas. I went into Belzoni with some other people and got them off the ground. The other area was Tchula, Mississippi, in Holmes County. Most of the people in Holmes County were farmers themselves and they owned their own land. Economically, they were much more stable and they owned their own churches. So they didn't have to adhere to anyone. They welcomed me right away, but for some reason I had a lot more fear in me in going in those areas than when I was in Greenwood. For some reason, I just never felt comfortable in Holmes County.

I guess I had gotten to the point where I was battle fatigued. So much had



DANNY LYONS/MAGNUM

**SNCC WORKER CORDELL REAGON TRAINS RESIDENTS OF DANVILLE, VA — ANOTHER CENTER OF ACTION IN 1963 — IN NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE.**

happened that I felt like I might be killed at any minute and I just wasn't ready to die. I was beaten real bad when I first arrived in Greenwood. They pushed me under the cars and thought I was going to bleed to death. They didn't kill me then, and they didn't kill me with the Jimmy Travis thing. You see, the shooting of Jimmy Travis wasn't meant for him. According to what the Klan and White Citizen's Council were saying, it was meant for me. And they didn't kill me that night when they fired into the car with Willie and our girlfriends. And they didn't kill me with that speeding truck; I had to jump behind a telephone poll to escape death. And I realized that I am not a cat, and that my chances of surviving were running out. Fear of death began to come over me.

Medgar Evers [Mississippi NAACP field secretary] had also been shot by then. Killed. He had just left us the same night that he was shot. He stopped by to let us know that he was 200 percent behind everything that was going on in Greenwood, and that if there was anything he could do to just let him know and he would be there. It was a short speech, very touching, and he bid us farewell and went into Jackson. Later that same night, when he had just gotten home, he was shot by Byron de la Beckwith.

Now Beckwith, well, I didn't know that he was from Greenwood at that time, but all the things that I was hearing from people afterwards, from the maids and the cooks and cab drivers, and from the white mailman, Mr. Walls — who I got to know very close and who helped the movement a lot — they all were telling me, "Look, Sam, the Ku Klux Klan is meeting. The only thing that they talk about is the death of you."

Quite naturally that is going to instill more fear in your heart. I am human. And quite naturally I began to get a lot more frightened and I thought a lot more then about my life.

Right after Jimmy's shooting, I got on the road and began to raise money. I spent a lot of time speaking in Chicago and New York and California to raise money for the movement and to get more people involved. The Atlanta office of SNCC would set those places up. We might raise two thousand, sometimes three or four thousand dollars a night. But that was still small compared to what we really needed.

I did that fundraising because it was necessary. People felt that if anyone could tell the story about what was going on in Greenwood, it was me because it was my project. I wanted to stay in Greenwood. But the doctors felt that I had become battle fatigued. I didn't want

to die, yet I still was committed to staying in Greenwood. People there, who had begged me to stay and help, were now telling me that I should leave to protect my own life. They were that concerned about my life, and I guess I didn't want to leave that love either. I became confused.

I had found people who were confronting a system of oppression and racism and I didn't want to leave that. They were confronting the segregation that I had been forced to live under all of my life and that I had longed to do something about. There are a lot of stories, you know, true stories yet to be told of what people in Greenwood did and what they were going through.

One thing that has never been brought out is that the young lady in the car who Captain Usser had told would be killed if she kept hanging around us, well she got pregnant by Peacock. And she went to register to vote and passed. They ordered her to come back down and withdraw her name from the voter rolls, and she wouldn't. They put a fraudulent food stamp charge on her and sent her to the Mississippi State Penitentiary for a year. She had the baby there. She had a choice. They told her to withdraw and she wouldn't. Essie Broom was committed to change.

**WHEN POLICE DOGS ATTACKED REV. TUCKER (LEADING THIS MARCH), IT SPURRED A NEW WAVE OF LOCAL SUPPORT FOR THE MOVEMENT.**



The movement began to intensify, but people were not as politically advanced as they should have been to deal with the changes that came about. And that was because of a lack of leadership, a lack of ourselves being at the level of political sophistication that we perhaps should have been. We hadn't done our homework politically, and really there was no sustaining organizational analysis to move us forward politically and economically. We made a big mistake by failing to develop that analysis. Many of us felt that the March On Washington, in August '63, was itself the beginning of the end of the movement. We didn't know what the movement should do after that.

Everyone wanted to go to Washington, of course. Busses went from all over Mississippi to Washington. People in Greenwood saw it as being a very historical event, too. And many felt that it would end the problems that we had been confronted with. In many ways, it hurt more than it helped because people thought their problems were going to be solved right after that by Dr. King, or the

Kennedys, or someone else. It fooled a lot of people. And then all the poverty programs came in.

I was really against the poverty programs. Bob had been talking about reparations, and he felt that the government owed something to people. And we began asking for some kind of program where we could get subsistence for people who were in severe need throughout the Delta and throughout the state of Mississippi. And this information was taken to Kennedy and what happened is the Kennedys summoned a socialist, Paul Jacobs, who wrote the anti-poverty program.

Bob, Amzie, Jim Forman, and a lot of us in SNCC met with him and laid out what we were asking for. And he went back to Kennedy and came up with the anti-poverty program. But it was blown completely out of context as to what we had envisioned it being in the beginning.

My reason for not wanting it to come into Mississippi at that time was simply because I thought it would do exactly what it did do — help to destroy the movement itself. Because once you get people like myself out of the streets and in behind a desk and around the conference tables and into a nice car, nice house, and nice family, our commitment will automatically and immediately diminish. And it did. And then if you were still committed to being an activist, they developed the Hatch Act. As a federal employee, you can't just get out and demonstrate because you're subject to the Hatch Act.

It destroyed the movement. People who really began to benefit from the poverty programs were persons who really didn't need it. And I think the government reached its objective. It set people back ten years almost by itself. People who were out there in the community and got jobs said to themselves, "We have made it." But when those things were snatched out from under them, they found themselves head over heels in debt. They couldn't feed their families. It destroyed families. And I saw that.

I'm sort of glad I stood out as a sore thumb in the latter years of SNCC and the movement. I was adamantly against the '64 Freedom Summer campaign, bringing all those students into the state of Mississippi, be they black, blue, white, or green — but especially whites — because I didn't think that the timing was right. People were not politically advanced enough to deal with what

could happen, and what did happen.

One of the main reasons that I felt that we shouldn't have brought the white students in — and Amzie agreed with this — was that they would sabotage the movement. The movement would be infested and infiltrated with CIA men and FBI men and everybody else, and it would be taken over and destroyed. I am not saying that all of the whites who were there that summer were there to destroy the movement. A lot of them tried to do a lot of good. You could tell who they were, it was obvious. But when that report came out later — was it the McComb Report? — that said the civil-right movement had been infiltrated with CIA and FBI agents and their daughters and sons, then I sort of got some relief because I could say, "I told you so."

I just knew it wouldn't work. I was dependant and out of it for much of that time, too. Several of us who had left Mississippi to go to the training for the students in Ohio were severely beaten on the way. This was just before the project began. We were stopped on the highway by troopers and taken to a jail in Columbus, Mississippi, and beaten severely. Roy Elders — I will never forget him — he and another patrolman took me to the back of the jail. They pulled their pistols out and ordered me to run. I said, "No

sir, I am not going to run." He said, "Yes, nigger, you are going to run." And I wouldn't run. The next thing I knew, I was hit with a butt of a pistol and it sort of dislodged this eye. I can't see out of this eye at all now.

So I was really out of it during the summer project. Willie and I had argued against the summer project from the beginning. We said it wouldn't work, that it would turn out to destroy the movement. That was one of reasons why Peacock and I sort of became sore thumbs in the movement, and were sort of pushed to the side. Stokely Carmichael had come in by then also, and Stokely really wanted to take control over what was happening in Greenwood because of the magnitude of the movement there, the activities. It was exciting, not only exciting but exciting in a way where we could see progress being made.

There was a lot of personal friction that we didn't know how to deal with — people getting on each other's nerves, and not knowing how to channel it off. If we were together again, I would definitely recommend that we look at meditation first because if we were students of yoga or transcendental meditation or the art of positive thinking, I think that many of the problems we had within ourselves, that came out in hostile

**BLACK AND WHITE SUMMER PROJECT VOLUNTEERS TALKED TO THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ABOUT BECOMING VOTERS AND FIRST-CLASS CITIZENS.**



ways toward each other, a lot of those problems would not have existed or would have been minimized.

Of course, there were major differences over the direction of the movement, what it would focus on. I wanted to see us deal with economic issues and economic programs even back then. See the problem all along has been economics. Some of us were hollering that at the time but the timing wasn't right to move to that level. We weren't politicized to the point where we were ready to move from step 1, 2, 3, 4. After voter registration, we could have moved to political and economic issues, getting people into self-help programs and things that would have some longevity and that would give them some support financially. In other words help them become self-sufficient.

But it didn't happen that way. Our own political education was totally lacking. And unless you have a leader politicized to the point where he knows exactly what is going on and what he wants to do, then how in the world can you move people? How can you move them into doing things that you don't really understand yourself? We were not prepared to sustain things from one level to the next. And personally, we weren't prepared to sustain ourselves, to keep from burning out.

People first of all should not be made to spend the kind of ongoing time in a movement that they did, you know, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. That intensity is going to burn you out. It

should be divided up in periods of time, in quarters — you work three months, you go to a retreat for two weeks or three weeks, then you come back.

Second, don't let the movement be built around you. Get community people more involved in rolling and handling the ball in the genesis so they won't have to depend on you. And number three is have a viable program where people are going to benefit from it economically as well as humanistically.

Much of that has been missing. You can't sustain, you just can't expect the same person to continue to go on and on without being forced at some point to become battle fatigued. I don't mind them giving out, but I do mind them giving up. You see, giving out you can always get away and regroup; but people were forced to the point in the movement where they had to give up instead of giving out. That hurts!

There was no kind of built-in organizational glue that we could use to sustain ourselves. There was nothing. And where there is nothing, a lot of people get hurt. It takes its toll. It destroys you. I am still paying the price. So are a lot of others.

You know, I often think about going back to Mississippi and working — because I think that the problems are still just as alive now as they were in the '60s. As a matter of fact, I think that in the past five years we have lost much

more than what we had gained. It shows me that there is an immediate need for some kind of political organization there dealing with human rights and serious political issues. And if there isn't a move to address these issues soon, we will be back where we were in the '30s instead of in the '50s.

I know a number of people in Mississippi have gravitated to the Rainbow Coalition because there is not another organization or any other viable means for dealing with issues. You don't have a SNCC or a CORE, and the NAACP is not as strong in Mississippi as it used to be. Right now I think that Jesse Jackson has too much influence over the Rainbow Coalition for it to be a viable means for dealing with political issues, for it to be the type of organization I am talking about. It could be doing more in Mississippi. I hope I am wrong, and that the Rainbow Coalition can be about more than boosting political egos. But I still think that it is needed because you don't have any organizations out there that are really doing anything.

What I see is that people are just going to have to recommit themselves. I think that there are many people who feel like me. And even though we do have families and kids now, I think there are some people who are really committed to going back to the early stages of SNCC, to those techniques and making some sacrifices. That is what I am talking about. I think there are a lot of people who are still committed to that ideology.

The political timing hasn't been right, but it is getting right. In the past five or six years, you've also had a lot of black leaders being picked off and thrown into prison for one reason or another, all across the country. Black politicians, black organizers, men and women, civil-rights activists of all races. People have sort of gone underground, but I think there is going to be a volcanic eruption sometime in the near future. People are again going to just put themselves out there, and you will find them at the Rainbow Coalition. It will become the viable arm because it is already there and they identify with it. But people themselves will explode, and take leadership. They are tired of being underground, of being ignored and taken for granted. □

**RESISTANCE — AND SUCCESS — IN THE VOTER RIGHTS STRUGGLE LED TO THE CREATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY.**



# Can You See Me: Images of Atlanta's Homeless



*I can remember feeling real uncomfortable about being there. I can remember feeling sad — and scared. Yeah, I was scared. That was my very first experience with the homeless. Since then, I've gotten to know more of them, and there's not that feeling of a big difference between them and me any more. A lot of them are very angry, and I can appreciate their anger.*

— Marilyn Futterman

Photographers' words accompany their pictures.

Excerpted by permission from *Can You See Me?*, published by Art Works, a project of the Task Force for the Homeless, 970 Jefferson St., NW, Atlanta GA 30318

He was standing as still as a wooden Indian and his face was lined like a giant piece of walnut that had cracked open from too much exposure to rain and wind and sun. Suddenly he began to weave and seemed to melt.

He fell into the street right in front of me. He was lying there, shaking, and it was obvious he would be struck by a passing car if we did not move him. Another man and I dragged him back onto the sidewalk and I asked a passerby to go inside a nearby building to call for help. The security guard inside the lobby said the sidewalk was not in his jurisdiction.

Finally an ambulance was called. I asked

if the man needed anything. His eyes had the distant stare of someone gazing hard into some vaguely remembered past. He said, "I want to go home."

There was no home, except dormant thoughts that sometimes caught on the wind and blew like scrap paper down the back alleys of his mind. Merely in the struggle to remember, he was as close to a home as he had been in a long time.

He was one of Atlanta's 3,000 to 6,000 homeless men and women.

City government proposes laws to keep them out of sight of sensitive tourists and the affluent suburbanites, lest those with money in their pockets get the impression that downtown is not perfect. The homeless are called "a perception problem." The proposals answer everything except where they are to go.

There is always supposed to be somewhere to go home to. Street people are for New York and Chicago and Newark — cities of great transitions and rootlessness. Southerners are supposed to have some place to go home to.

Stripped of the essence of their heritage, Atlanta street people just wander. Some manage to spend their days in shelters. Others materialize on the avenues like scruffy apparitions. A woman layered in ragged clothing pushes at the refuse of an alley trash can with slow patient prospecting. A man in a found trucker's cap tries to keep his hand still long enough to light the inch-long butt of a cigarette.

A businessman hurrying to an early meeting passes without really being aware of them. At times they must feel invisible. Not because they are not there, but because no one wants to see.

There is an undeniable weakness of character about the street people. Most drink too much, eat too little, and cannot care for themselves in a conventional manner. But in ways, they are stronger than most of us. Like ironweed they live in the toughest of circumstances and they hang on when hanging on would seem foolish to the supposedly rational among us. There is a primeval instinct to live that supersedes a modern tendency to give in.

— Lee Walburn

One day I walked by, and I saw this picture, and the image I had immediately is, one is a leader and the rest are disciples. They posed themselves. This one just exemplifies leadership on the streets.

— Oraien Catledge



When the last cars have gone from the parking garage, James Hall and a dozen or more other street people take over, bringing in their bags, cardboard boxes, and newspapers. "You're scared to go to sleep 'cause you don't know who's going to sneak up on you," Hall said. "It's a half sleep. That's why you see so many people sleeping during the day." Hall is an articulate, soft-spoken man. He was working on a construction job when the whole crew got fired. "I lost my apartment because I couldn't pay the rent. I put my furniture in storage, but I lost that because I couldn't pay the storage," he said.

— Barbara McKenzie

## POEM

The truth is: there are no  
such things as Real homes  
On this earth.  
The dens we call pleasure domes  
will blend with the sand  
and be placed in the shaker  
Of time and scattered  
across the universe.  
We must meet and come to terms  
with the Maker

Or else perpetually struggle  
with that which is the reverse  
Of life of love of bliss:  
stark homelessness.

- by Billy Hands Robinson

(Billy Hands Robinson is a poet from the Empty Spoon, a collective of homeless writers.)





The first time I went down there — under a bridge at Montgomery Ferry next to the Ansley Golf Club — was on a Thursday. There was a Tom, Lloyd and Norton. Just hanging out. They said they'd just stopped by but you could tell they'd been there for a while. That Sunday I went back and Norton was sleeping so I woke him up. I mistakenly called him Tom, and he said, "Tom's dead. He died Saturday." I asked him what happened, but he said he didn't know. I called the Fulton County medical examiner's office, and they told me his name was Tom Vaughn and that he had died of drinking Lysol. They tried to find next of kin but he had no known address and no one claimed him. He was buried in a pauper's grave. Even though they knew his name, there's no marker.

— William Berry



People when they think of the homeless think of street winos, and that isn't really it. I think like 40 percent of the homeless are women. You don't think of children as homeless but there are a lot of them out there. To have children and have to sleep somewhere and get up by 6 a.m. and get them together and have to go out on the streets, that's some doing. I think it's really a sad thing in America in a day that we have a president who looks around and says he sees no signs of poverty.

— Laura Sikes

What surprised me most about Frank was, when I found him out just sleeping in this area with trees and kudzu, there were books all around. I found the guy was really well read. He had been to college and worked at a lot of jobs, but he's had some bad breaks in his life. He was not someone to be afraid of. He was just a real kind, gentle person. One of his favorite authors is John Updike, and one of the books he was reading was about the early American Federalists. Now he makes some money as a powder monkey. He sets dynamite kegs for construction companies.

— Wayne Martin



I was driving down a rural Georgia road close to Atlanta and saw this lady sitting by the side of the road hitchhiking with all her belongings. She was reading the Bible. She said she was a preacher. She was going nowhere, and, if she did get a ride, it didn't matter where.

— Rich Addicks





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*I felt really sorry for her. She was standing out on the sidewalk at the Fox. She was really sad, and she kept asking people for money. I bought a cupcake at a bakery for her, but she said, "I don't want that cupcake. You're going to poison me." I left it there, and I know she took it.*

— Margaret Barrett



*There was just this one old man who sat in the corner and seemed very upset. I noticed his hands shaking. He didn't know what to do with them. He seemed very lost. It sort of summed up for me his hopelessness.*

— Neil McGahee



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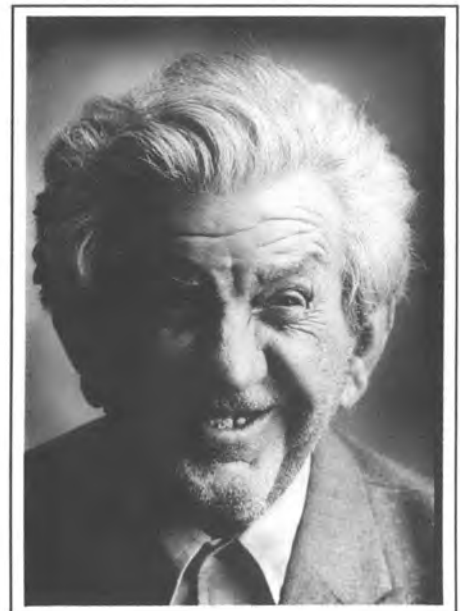
*He didn't have much to say. He was just in Atlanta until the peach crop got better and then he was going to go pick fruit. He wasn't feeling sorry for himself. He was just doing the best he could do. He was trying to find work while he was here.*

— Joey Ivansco

*"I've been living under this bridge four years now. Every year when it starts getting cold, y'all come around with your cameras. You take lots of pictures. And nothing ever changes."*

— Man with dog

(photograph by Louie Favorite)



# Gentility

By Hartmut

On Camp Weed Sundays in the old days, after the service and a swim and a sandwich, there was always a big softball game between the 224s and the 385s. Tallahassee had only two telephone exchanges then, and manpower-wise it was about even, but the 385s usually won. Either they had more talent or they psyched us. The 385s lived in the newer subdivisions, such as Piedmont or Betton Hills. The minister was a 385, and so were some of the more successful business wheels and professional types.

It bothered my dad. He'd grown up in Quincy and his mother was a full-blooded Yankee. That's a family secret, but the old networks are gone and you don't know me, so what the hell.

Quincy, for the uninitiated, was at one time the richest municipality per capita in the United States. The town banker in the 1920s owned half a company that was on the rocks. He unloaded his near-worthless stock on loan applicants. It was Coca-Cola stock. A few years went by and Quincy attained grace; the banker was acknowledged as a philanthropist, and the one-time loan applicants all became 385s. That was before any of us arrived. When my kin moved in and my grandmother called her neighbor to introduce herself (I already told you she was a Yankee. You can't expect her to have known better), Mrs. Snoot said, "Who?"

My grandmother repeated her name. "Yes," said Mrs. Snoot, "but who is that?"

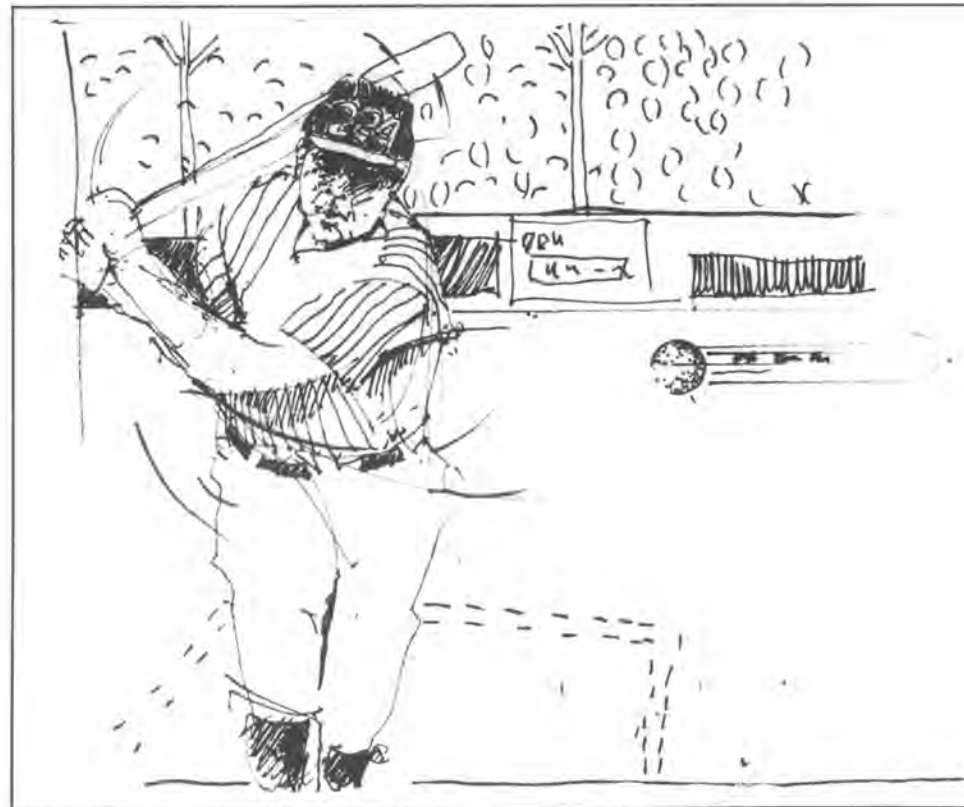
So Daddy was sensitive to 385ism. He was alternately resentful and eager to belong. He might have become a revolutionary if he hadn't married a blueblood.

I'm only half carpetbagger. The other half was almost as broke, but discreetly proud of it. After all, this was only 95 years after the war and if you had anything left but a trunk full of Confederate war bonds and Uncle Jimmy's spare leg you were a scalawag. By the time I came around, even the war bonds were gone, but we did run across Uncle Jimmy's leg where it had been stored under Ammie's house.

Ammie was a part-time 385. A displaced 385. She was my great-grandmother, and she had a mansion on

Calhoun Street and was the daughter of the governor of Virginiasniff. At least that's what we called him. Ammie always gave a slight sniff after referring to "my father, the governor of Virginia," as if to demonstrate an offhand familiarity with such titles. Or maybe she was embarrassed at her own indiscretion in bringing up the subject. She thought people from Virginia were a little nicer than people from anywhere else.

But it isn't blood that makes a 385. The sharecropper's boy who made good and now lives where Ammie used to live is as much a 385 as she was. He may be a nouveau 385, but that's no blemish nowadays. Nowadays Virginians are rather ordinary and people from Tal-



*lahassee* are a little nicer than people from anywhere else. Not that Tallahassee has any monopoly on the type.

I've run into 385s all over. The men gravitate to the image-conscious vocations. They have degrees, from their fraternities, I think. The women concern themselves with questions of culture, acquaintance, and price. They're all conformists, but they don't all conform to the same standard.

When Jean, a desperately-would-be 385 from out of town, married one of my uncle-cousins and he brought her to meet the family, she decided to establish her credentials by conversing in French. It did not go over well. Jean wasn't familiar with the local shibboleths. Oh,

I'm sure her poetry anthology fell open to "Dover Beach," and her year-old vermouth bottle was still half full, and she pronounced "trespassing" with a mute "a," and didn't make pecan rhyme with "pea can," and her men folk didn't chew tobacco except when making hay. But fluency in French was mere affectation. Worse. It was tacky.

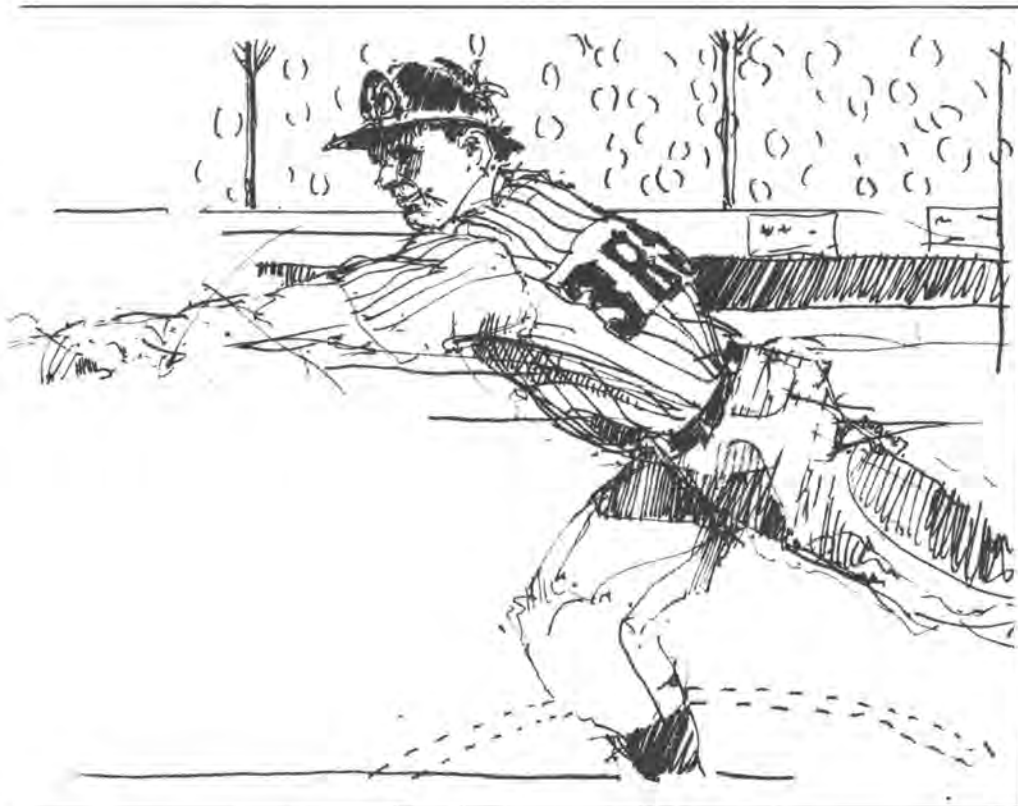
My mother was the authority on culture. And what a burden it was. She would have lunch at Goodwood or afternoon tea at the Grove and then that evening we'd sup on fish sticks. Mama was in the Junior League, but we couldn't quite swing the dues, so we gave old clothes to the Bargain Box. Understand, we also *bought* clothes from the Bargain

Box, and a couple of times we accidentally bought back our own clothes. It wasn't her fault. None of us saw any irony in the situation. We all aspired to be 385s back then, Daddy more than any of us. Even after he moved away, Daddy subscribed to the *Gadsden County Times* and would read it to us aloud, laughing too hard at the pretensions of the 385s back home. And yet he joined their clubs, when he was able to, and adopted their conventions. He smirked at them privately. He never mentioned the Sphinx Club without curling his hands paw-like at shoulder level and grinning a horrible grin, but in the presence of another 385 he closed ranks fast.

I've always had a thing about 385s, inventing shibboleths to exclude the 224s, apotheosizing the shibboleths to virtues that justify their position, such as saying, "forgive us our trespasses," and the Junior League, and wildlife lithographs. It isn't as simple as haves and have-nots. It has more to do with the maintenance and glorification of caste.

I only know one story about my great-great-grandmother, the wife of the governor of Virginiasniff. Her name was Lou. Lou hosted a formal dinner party one evening and after dinner fingerbowls were brought. One of the ladies present had never seen a fingerbowl. It was cup-shaped, so she picked it up and took a sip. Without hesitating, Lou picked up her own fingerbowl and drank from it, to remove any possibility that the lady might be embarrassed.

I think Lou must have been a 224. □

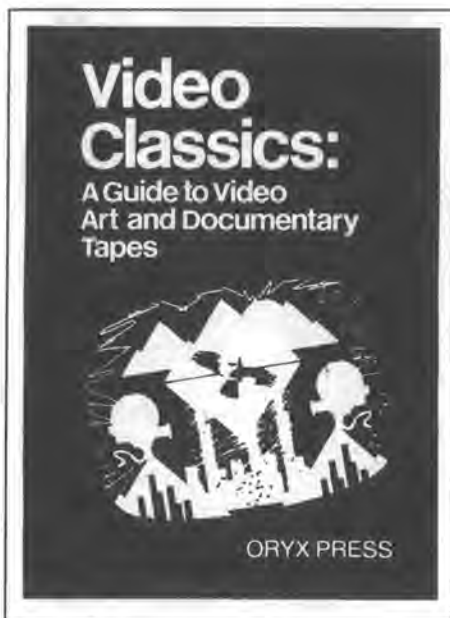


## Movies That Will Move You

By Marieke Tax and Richard Ward

In the commercial sector of film-making and viewing, summer means "hot" new box-office sensations and full-to-overflowing theaters. In the less publicized arena of independent film and video, choice collections of informative, useful, and entertaining media also exist. To acquaint you with a sampling of the newest and the best, as well as some popular "oldies," we offer the following guide to several independent media catalogs and distributors.

Possibly the most comprehensive and best annotated catalog of independent productions is Deirdre Boyle's **Video Classics: A Guide to Video Art and Documentary Tapes** (published



by Oryx Press in Phoenix, Arizona and available through your neighborhood bookstore). Boyle claims that her book is designed as a manageable, beginning acquisitions tool for media librarians, archivists, and programmers. Certainly it is much more. *Video Classics* contains short (200-500 words), descriptive reviews of award-winning tapes and includes photos and distribution sources on each. An alphabetical listing of titles, an artists/producers index, and a subject

index all contribute to the book's usefulness as a premier guide.

The eclectic collection attests to the startling regional and artistic diversity of the United States as well as to Boyle's personal expertise. Documentaries include those about New Orleans's music, Minnesota's writers, Hmong immigrants in Rhode Island, and Eskimo athletes in Alaska. In addition, Boyle's catalog includes the works of such classic "greats" as William Wegman and John Alpert (of DC-TV fame). There is something here to suit every palate, whether you're in the mood for comedy, a documentary, or drama.

What *Video Classics* and *The Highlander Collection II: Audiovisuals* have in common is an emphasis on people. However, in the Highlander collection, this emphasis is revealed in a personal, compassionate way by the people most affected by the issues. Examples of films include "No Promise for Tomorrow: Southern Communities Respond to the Bhopal Tragedy," which looks at Union Carbide's treatment of workers and communities in the Third World and in the United States; and "Bernice Robinson on Citizenship Schools," a rough-cut videotape portraying the rise of Citizenship Schools in the South Carolina Sea Islands in the 1950s, their impact on black enfranchisement, and the role of music in this struggle. Highlander films are aimed at documenting the activities of communities engaged in understanding and improving their lives in Appalachia and the South. For information, write Highlander Research Education Center, Route 3, Box 370, New Market, Tennessee 37820.

The documentaries produced by *Appalshop Films* offer another view of Appalachian life. As in the Highlander series, the richness of mountain life and culture is presented through the voices and insights of the region's inhabitants. Stereotypes of hillbillies collapse as the camera pans and probes an abundant spread of people and everyday events in the Appalachian region. The *Appalshop* catalog of films and videos includes

"Sourwood Mountain Dulcimers," "Quilting Women," "The Ramsey Trade Fair," "The Struggle of Coon Branch Mountain," and "Mountain Farmer." *Appalshop* sponsors other projects, including *Appal Recordings*, Mountain



Review Magazine, Roadside Theater, and the Mountain Photography Workshop. For information on the films or other projects, write *Appalshop*, Box 743 N, Whitesburg, Kentucky 41858.

"Culturally rich, economically deprived" — this phrase characterizes the mountain region for both *Appalshop* and *The New Time Films Library*. While *Appalshop* celebrates the cultural strength of Appalachia, *New Time Films'* "Appalachia: Rich Land, Poor People" examines the tragic desperation of an east Kentucky family trying to make ends meet in a mineral-rich area. Similar plights are explored in "Hard Times in the Country," an award-winning film *New Time* calls, "A revealing and prophetic look at monopoly control of the food industry and its effect on small farmers and consumers," and in "Lay My Burden Down," a film evaluating the progress of blacks in the rural South one year after the Selma march. "Streets of Greenwood" depicts the mobilization of blacks for the right to vote in Mississippi in 1963. These four films represent only a fraction of what the *New Time Films Library* has to offer. For a complete listing, write Center for Documentary Media, c/o *New Time Film Library*, P.O. Box 315, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417.

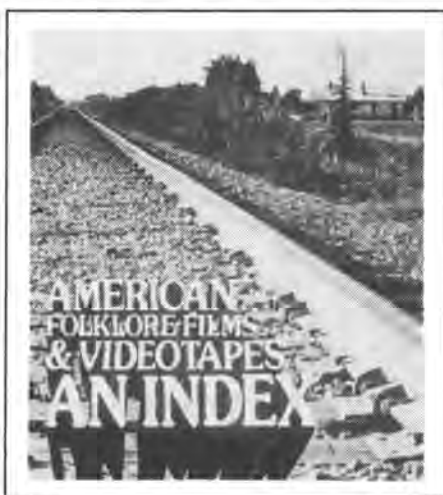
Variety is the key to **North State Public Video's Catalog of Video Selections**. The productions in this collection speak to a wide range of issues, from group homes for the mentally-retarded to community economic development policy. Examples include "Plantation Legislature," a chilling examination of farmworker slavery in eastern North Carolina and the battle to win reforms in the state legislature, and "The Rose Brothers Boatworks" which follows the construction of a hand-crafted, wooden fishing boat on the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

North State's most recent releases are part of a special series entitled "New Perspectives." They examine some of the ways African art and traditions have affected Western culture. Titles include: "Honoring the Ancestors," a look at the African roots of handmade grave decorations in rural Southern cemeteries; "Handmade," a series of portraits of African-American artists; and "Image of the Black in Western Art," an examination of the images of black people made by Mediterranean and European artists. For more information, write or call North State Public Video, P.O. Box 3398, Durham, NC 27702; phone: (919) 682-7153.

In addition to appearing on NBC TV's *Today Show* and winning numerous awards, **Downtown Community Television Center (DC-TV)** has gained an international reputation for creating some of the most powerful documentaries on television. Their "American Survival" series contains exposes on such topics of domestic concern as the homeless in New York, hunger in the suburbs, and housing in America. Other investigative films, such as those that comprise "The Southeast

Asia Report," reveal the impact of US intervention in foreign wars. Dynamic, intense, and confrontational — that's the hallmark of these films and videotapes. Contact Downtown Community T.V. Center, 87 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10013.

Think of any category within American folklore, and there's one place to find it explored through film or videotape. From high school prom etiquette to Fannie Lou Hamer, the two-volume guide **American Folklore Films and Videotapes: An Index** runs the gamut of subjects, drawing on an equally broad spectrum of film and video distributors. Selections range from student films, to Hollywood features, to a 60-second, black-and-white clip of



Indian buck dancers made in 1898 by Thomas Edison. Volume one of this amazing reference work was published in 1976 and is available from the Center for Southern Folklore, P.O. Box 40105, Memphis, TN 38174. Volume two, an updated but now out-of-print index, was published in 1980, and can be found in larger libraries.

What the Center does for Southern folklife, the New York-based **Media Network** does for political topics of all kinds. The Network publishes an assortment of individual catalogs with annotated listings and complete ordering information on: energy, the environment, farming and land-use issues ("Green Gems"); Central America; civil rights, workplace and community struggles, and cultural explorations by and for people of color ("Images of Color"); disarmament and peace; reproductive rights; and apartheid and Southern Africa. Its most comprehensive catalog, *Reel Change*, is being updated for release later this year.

There's no other single source with in-

formation on as large and diverse a variety of accessible videos and films on political subjects as the Media Network. It publishes a quarterly newsletter, *Media Active*, on recent releases and trends in alternative media, and it also boasts a computerized index to approximately 3,500 items with complete price and ordering information. You can request films by key words, from "adoption" to "gentrification" to "Zambia." An annual fee of \$25 entitles Network "members" to the newsletter, the computerized information service, and news of upcoming catalogs. Contact Media Network, 121 Fulton Street, Fifth Floor, New York, NY 10038; phone (212) 619-3455.

**Changing Perspectives** is a guide



to media projects funded by the humanities councils in 12 Southern states. Both dramatic and documentary productions focus on aspects of the region's religion, literature, politics, land, music, and more. The films and tapes range from predictable cultural boosterism to truly unique presentations that grapple with complex and engaging subjects. Louisiana's Committee for the Humanities features a film on voting rights and black politics ("Hands That Pick Cotton") and another on maids ("Yes Ma'am"); West Virginia has one titled "Company Town"; Georgia sponsored a documentary on the Koinonia Christian community ("Enough to Share"); Tennessee features Lucy Phenix's film on education at the Highlander Center ("You Got to Move"); and South Carolina looks at the religious practices of "People Who Take Up Serpents." Rental fees for these productions are generally free or under \$10. For more information, write to your state humanities council; check the reference desk at your local library for their address and phone number. □

NORTH  
STATE  
PUBLIC  
VIDEO  
*Catalog*  
OF VIDEO SELECTIONS

## The Essence of Southern Food

by John Egerton

Pigs and corn. Hog meat and hominy. Pork and pone. Separately, the meat of the hog and the grain of the cornstalk have enriched the diet of people around the world for at least eight thousand years. In combination, they have meant the difference between life and death for individuals, families, even entire communities. In the American South, no other edible substances have meant more to the populace in nearly four centuries of history than pork and corn.

The meeting of English and Indian people at Jamestown and the subsequent intermingling of their foods marked the beginning of American cookery, and more specifically, the regional cookery of the South — although there may be more symbolic mythology than historical accuracy in the suggestion that pork and corn came together for the first time in Virginia. Corn was cultivated in the Americas at least 2,500 years before the arrival of Europeans in the fifteenth century; as for pigs, the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto is said to have had 13 of them aboard ship when he and a party of men landed near present-day Tampa on the west coast of Florida in 1539, and Hernando Cortez and the conquistadors reportedly took pigs with them when they invaded Mexico earlier in the sixteenth century. But unprecedented or not, the Jamestown union seems a good and proper beginning for our story. The foods of the Algonquians and the British, more than those of the Spanish, were the bases upon which American and Southern cookery was built. And in any case, pork and corn have always been supremely important to the diet of all Americans — and absolutely essential to the diet of Southerners. . . .

### FAMILY STYLE

In some family-style restaurants, diners choose from a selection of entrees and everything else is served automatically; in others, all of the food, including the main dishes, is brought to the table and passed around for everyone to share. A third option is the buffet (originally a French side-

board), or what the Scandinavians call a smorgasbord: long tables of displayed foods from which diners make their own selections. By whatever name, these all-you-can-eat banquets are very popular in the South. . . .

The Jarrett House and several other inns in the mountains of North Carolina continue to prosper. At Bellhaven, in the coastal region of North Carolina, the River Forest Manor is a classic example of the buffet style of Southern dining. For three decades, the late Axson Smith, his wife, Melba, and their two sons have taken turns as hosts at a lavish evening repast in an ornate Victorian mansion. More than five dozen dishes regularly fill the tables. "Eat, drink, and be merry," a revised proverb on the menu reads, "for tomorrow you may diet."

Diners come every day from the local area, and a few travelers stay overnight in the mansion's guest rooms, but most of the River Forest Manor trade arrives by boat on the Intracoastal Waterway, docking within a stone's throw of the big house. When they arrive for dinner, they are apt to find such Southern delicacies as fresh yellow baby squash with onions, corn pudding "by our own Southern cook," speckled butter beans, sweet potato fluff, collard greens with ham and cornmeal dumplings, creamed rutabagas, oyster fritters, crab meat casserole, biscuits and hush puppies, and a half-dozen homemade pies and cakes.

The River Forest shuts down for three months in the winter, and it happened to be closed when I stopped by. But Melba Smith and two other women were there, busy with some off-season re-decorating, and when I told her my reason for visiting, she graciously invited me to join them for an informal mid-day meal — "just a little lunch of leftovers," she called it.

A garrulous mynah bird chattered away while we dined on field peas and cornmeal dumplings, string beans and ham, stewed potatoes, chicken salad, iced tea, and chocolate cream pie. They asked me all about my travels, and Mrs. Smith told me the history of River Forest Manor and its dining tradition. I felt more like a friend who had dropped in than a stranger. It was a quintessentially Southern experience.

Two Mississippi restaurants offer an interesting variation on the theme of family-style dining. The Dinner Bell in

McComb and the Mendenhall Hotel in Mendenhall feature round-table or revolving-table service. As many as 18 guests sit at circular tables and rotate enormous center-section lazy susans loaded with about 25 different main dishes, vegetables, fruit dishes, salads, hot breads, and desserts. . . .

There is another Dinner Bell, a "smorgasbord of home-style cooking," near Aurora, Kentucky, and the 4 a.m. to 9 p.m. service makes it a fisherman's haven in a region of lakes and rivers. There is menu service until the evening smorgasbord is set out on antique wood-burning cookstoves, but at all hours the food is typically Southern, from the turnip greens and hog jowl and cornbread to the homemade desserts.

Another Kentucky family-style place is the Lone Oak restaurant near Bowling Green. Since the mid-1960s it has been serving dinner in an old service station on a narrow country road, but pleased patrons have kept returning, and their trade has kept the light burning in the Lone Oak kitchen. Mrs. Forest Stice and one or two helpers do all the work, from cooking and waiting tables to cleaning up — no small task on a busy night, when a hundred or more people may come to dinner.

"We like for people to call and make reservations," said Mrs. Stice. "That way, we can fix for a set number, just as we would do if they were coming to our house to eat." The chocolate and pecan and "meal" pies — the last a local name for chess pie made with cornmeal — are definitely of home-kitchen caliber. . . .

### BARBECUE CIRCUIT

Atlanta is a pretty good barbecue town, with more than two dozen thriving pits to choose from. In the heart of the city, ribs of a somewhat different style — but just as impressive — are the main attraction at the Auburn Rib Shack on Auburn Avenue, not far from the Ebenezer Baptist Church where the Reverends Martin Luther King, father and son, used to preach. Dorothy Clements, the owner and manager of the Rib Shack, is a soft-spoken master practitioner of the fine art of rib cooking. The tiny shop has a thriving carry-out trade, but there are a few counter-stools and booths to accommodate those who want to sit and eat ribs or plate lunches. The vegetables and other meats represent a high class of soul food, but nothing can beat the ribs, which

are neither wet nor dry but middle-of-the-road: tender, meaty, moist, and enhanced by just the right amount of tangy red hot sauce with a faint hint of chili powder in it. A rib sandwich — three long ribs, two slices of light bread, and as much sauce as you want, served on a paper plate — makes a perfect light lunch. When a pit makes ribs as good as those at the Auburn Rib Shack, there's no need for shoulders. However you prefer your pork, though, Georgia has some fine pits.

In South Carolina, the most popular side dish with barbecue is hash, called liver hash by some and pork hash by others but served by all as a sort of thick meat gravy spooned over rice. The dish apparently was created to utilize liver and other organ meats not included in chopped whole-hog barbecue.

Hash is one of the few subjects about which South Carolina barbecue people seem to agree, that and the use of pork as the meat of choice; just about everything else related to the pits is subject to loud and sometimes angry argument and dispute. Some places swear by whole-hog cookery, others go for shoulder, still others lean to ribs. An interminable intrastate battle rages over the right way to make sauce (there are three basic camps — tomato, vinegar, and mustard). And many traditionalists consider it an unthinkable travesty that some establishments have abandoned wood fires for gas or electricity. In South Carolina, they do not take their barbecue lightly.

## RECIPES

### JAMBALAYA

There are countless versions of jambalaya, all of them hearty one-dish meals in the manner of gumbo and shrimp creole and many of the pilaus. Though it could be categorized in several places — with soups and stews, rice dishes, seafood — we have chosen to put it here with pork primarily because of its name, the first two syllables of which trace to both the French and the Spanish words for ham. Cajun and Creole cooks have thrown just about everything into jambalaya for at least one hundred years, but ham has always been a prime ingredient. In Gonzales, Louisiana, the self-styled Jambalaya Capital of the World, you can find about as many recipes for this dish as there are households. In the spirit of that diversity, our recipe is an eclectic dish that draws inspiration from many others. Made with chopped morsels of country ham, it's a wonderfully rich and flavorful dish.

Chop 1 cup of lean ham into small pieces (country ham if possible, some other kind if

necessary) and set aside. In a large saucepan, bring 1 1/2 quarts of salted water to a boil, put in 1 pound of fresh shrimp, and boil uncovered for 3 to 5 minutes. Empty the firm, pink shrimp into a colander to cool, then peel and set them aside. In a large heavy pot, heat 4 or 5 tablespoons of bacon grease or vegetable oil.

Prepare 1 cup of minced onions, 1/2 cup of minced green bell pepper, 1/2 cup of minced celery, and 2 minced garlic cloves and saute in the pot until soft. Add the drained contents of a 1-pound can of tomatoes (cored and chopped), saving the juice. Stir in 1 tablespoon of chopped fresh parsley, 1/2 teaspoon of black pepper, and 1/8 teaspoon of cayenne pepper. Mix well together and simmer uncovered until the combination is thick and thoroughly blended.

Combine the left-over tomato juice with 1 tablespoon of Worcestershire sauce and enough chicken broth or hot water to make 2 cups of liquid, and add it to the pot. Then put in 1 cup of uncooked rice and, without stirring, cover the pot and cook at the lowest heat for 20 minutes. Remove the cover, stir well, and add the ham and shrimp, blending them in. Cover again and let the flavors mingle for 10 minutes or so. Adjust seasonings if necessary and serve the jambalaya hot with bread and salad. The recipe provides generously for 4 people.

### PECAN BOURBON CAKE

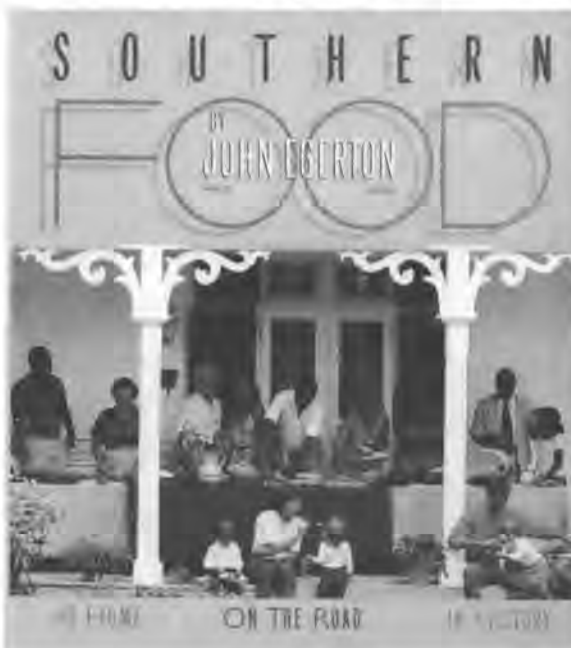
The combination of nuts, raisins, spices,

and whiskey can be found in many a Southern cake recipe, going back a half-century or more. The nuts are usually pecans, but they may be walnuts or hickory nuts (hickernuts, in the vernacular); the most common spice is nutmeg, and the preferred whiskey is bourbon. Baked in a tube pan, this cake comes out rich and heavy, somewhat reminiscent of a fruitcake. Marion Flexner, in *Out of Kentucky Kitchens* (1949), credited her favorite recipe for the confection to Peggy Gaines, who, she said, had made the cake professionally for years. Whatever its origin, it is popular in Kentucky and elsewhere, especially in the Christmas holiday season. Our version has Kentucky roots — and branches from Tennessee and Georgia.

Coarsely chop 3 cups of pecan halves (or break them by hand) and combine with 1 cup of raisins. Mix with 1/2 cup of sifted all-purpose flour and set aside. Combine 1 cup sifted all-purpose flour with 1 teaspoon of baking powder and sift twice more. Dissolve 2 teaspoons of nutmeg (freshly grated is more flavorful, but prepared is fine) in 1/2 cup of bourbon and let stand several minutes. Cream 1 stick of butter with 1 1/4 cups of sugar, beating well. Separate 3 eggs and add the yolks one at a time to the butter and sugar, blending to a smooth, lemon-light finish. Alternately add the whiskey and the flour to this mixture a little at a time, stirring well. Fold in the floured nuts and raisins, then add 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract, and finally beat the

3 egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff and fold them into the batter.

Grease a 10-inch tube cake pan with shortening, cut out a piece of brown paper to line the bottom (grease the paper on both sides), and pour the batter into the pan, letting it sit a few minutes to settle. Decorate the top with pecan halves and (optionally) candied cherries. Bake in a preheated 325 degree oven for 1 hour and 10 minutes and then test for doneness with a toothpick or straw. (Overbaking will make the cake dry and crumbly.) Set pan to cool on a rack for 30 minutes or so, and then carefully turn it out onto a plate and turn it right side up back onto the rack. When cool, store in a cake tin, draped with a bourbon-soaked cloth. The first slice, topped with whipped cream, is delicious — and it improves with age.



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# NEW BOOKS ON THE SOUTH

## Books on the South

This list consists of books noted in the Subject Guide to Forthcoming Books in Print, May 1987 and not previously listed in Southern Exposure. Dissertations appeared in Dissertation Abstracts International from March through June 1987. All books were published in 1987 and all dissertations in 1986 unless otherwise noted.

Copies of the dissertations are available from University Microfilms International, Dissertation Copies, P.O. Box 1764, Ann Arbor, MI 48106; phone: (800) 521-3042.

### AFRO-AMERICANS

**Black Folk Here and There: An Essay in History and Anthropology**, by St. Clair Drake. UCLA Center for Afro-American Studies. Price not set.

**Black Indians: A Hidden Heritage**, by William Loren Katz. Atheneum, 1986. \$15.95.

**Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl**, Written by Herself, by Harriet A. Jacobs. Harvard Univ. Press. \$37.50/\$9.95 paper.

**From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans**, by John H. Franklin and Alfred Moss. Knopf. \$15.

**O Freedom! African-American Emancipation Celebrations**, by William H. Wiggins Jr. Univ. of Tennessee Press. \$24.95.

**The Struggle for Black Empowerment in Three Georgia Counties**, by Lawrence J. Hanks. Univ. of Tennessee Press. \$22.95.

**To Redeem the Soul of America: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King Jr.**, by Adam Fairclough. Univ. of Georgia Press. \$35/\$17.95 paper.

**The Ties That Bind: African American Consciousness of Africa**, by Bernard Magubane. Africa World Press. \$25/\$8.95 paper.

### BIOGRAPHY

**This Awful Drama: General Edwin Gray Lee, CSA, & His Family**, by Alexandra L. Lavin. Vantage. \$14.95.

**"Finley Bartow Edge: A Search for Authenticity"**, by Deena Williams Newman. Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**General A.P. Hill: The Story of a Confederate Warrior**, by James I. Robertson Jr. \$24.95.

**"Howard E. Spell of Mississippi College"**, by Daniel Walter Kellum. Univ. of Miss.

**Josiah Nott of Mobile: Southerner, Physician & Racial Theorist**, by Reginald Horsman. LSU Press. \$35.00.

**"The Life of Paul J. Hallinan, Archbishop of Atlanta, 1911-1968"**, by Thomas Joseph Shellic. Catholic Univ. of America, 1987.

**Major Butler's Legacy: Five Generations of a Slaveholding Family**, by Malcolm Bell Jr. Univ. of Georgia Press. \$29.95.

**In Pursuit of Reason: The Life of Thomas Jefferson**, by Noble E. Cunningham Jr. LSU Press. \$24.95.

### CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

**Apples on the Flood: The Southern Mountain Experience**, by Rodger Cunningham. Univ. of Tennessee Press. \$21.50.

**Austin City Limits**, by Clifford Endres. Univ. of Texas Press. \$24.95/\$15.95 paper.

**Birds and Birding on the Mississippi Coast**, by Judith A. Toups and Jerome A. Jackson. Univ. Press of Mississippi. \$17.95.

**By Southern Hands**, by Jan Arnow. Oxmoor House. \$35.00.

**Deep South: A Social Anthropological Study of Caste & Class**, by Allison Davis et al. UCLA Center for African-American Studies. Price not set.

**Florida's Vanishing Architecture**, by Beth Dunlop. Pineapple Press. \$10.95.

**"Music and Dance at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, North Carolina, 1925-1985"**, by Anne E. Culbertson. Indiana Univ., 1985.

**Southern Folk Ballads**, by W.K. McNeil. August House. Two volumes, each \$24.95/\$10.95 paper.

**"Southern Ragtime and Its Transition to Published Blues"**, by David Lee Joyner. Memphis State Univ.

**Stormy Monday: The T-Bone Walker Story**, by Helen O. Dance. LSU Press. \$24.95.

**"Together We Work, Together We Grow Old: Life, Work and Community in a Coal Mining Town"**, by Patricia Sachs. City Univ. of New York.

**"The Traditional Quilting of North Louisiana Women: Form, Function and Meaning"**, by Margaret Susan Roach. Univ. of Texas-Austin.

**"The Work of Overstreet and Town: The Coming of Modern Architecture to Mississippi"**, by David Helburn Sachs. Univ. of Michigan.

**A World Unsuspected: Portraits of Southern Childhood**, ed. by Alex Harris. Univ. of North Carolina Press. \$14.95.

**The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas**, by the Federal Writers Project. Univ. Press of Kansas. \$12.95.

**"Zydeco and Mardi Gras: Creole Identity and Performance Genres in Rural French Louisiana"**, by Nicholas Randolph Spitzer. Univ. of Texas-Austin.

### EDUCATION

**"Foxfire Reconsidered: A Critical Ethnohistory of a 25-Year Experiment in Progressive Education"**, by John Lawrence Pickett. Univ. of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

**"International Education at the University of South Carolina"**, by Jerman Disasa. Univ. of South Carolina.

**"Presidents' and Trustee Chairmen's Perspective of Trustee Selection and Tenure in the North Carolina Community College System"**, by Michael Ray Taylor. Univ. of North Carolina-Greensboro, 1985.

**"Public Secondary Education in Columbia, South Carolina, 1895-1950"**, by Nancy Mayer Dunbar. Univ. of South Carolina.

**"The Racial Composition of Faculty and Student Populations and Student Achievement in Reading & Mathematics in Georgia's Public Schools"**, by John H. Bembry. Univ. of Georgia.

**"Southern White Schooling, 1880-1940"**, by James Bryan Gerber. Univ. of California, Davis.

### HISTORY, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS BEFORE 1865

**"An Anxious Pursuit: Innovation in Commercial Agriculture in South Carolina, Georgia & British East Florida"**, by J.E. Chaplin. Johns Hopkins Univ.

**"Henry Clay and the Harvest of Bitter Fruit: The Struggle with John Tyler, 1841-1842"**, by Richard Alan Gantz. Indiana Univ.

**"Land of Their Own: Land Grants to Women in the Lower Colonial South"**, by Lee Ann Caldwell Swain. Univ. of Georgia.

**Morality and Utility in American Antislavery Reform**, by Louis S. Gerteis. Univ. of North Carolina Press. \$27.50.

**"Mutual Convenience-Mutual Dependence: The Creeks, Augusta and the Deerskin Trade, 1733-1783"**, by Kathryn E. Holland Braund. Florida State Univ.

**"The News from Harper's Ferry: The Press as Lens and Prism for John Brown's Raid"**, by John Edward Byrne. George Washington Univ., 1987.

**"Political Culture and Social Conflict in the Upper Valley of Virginia, 1740-1789"**, by Albert Holmes Tillson Jr. Univ. of Texas-Austin.

**"Slave Agriculture and Staple Crops in the Virginia Piedmont"**, by James Reid Irwin. Univ. of Rochester.

**"The Slavery Controversy in Kentucky, 1829-1859"**, by Harold Donald Tallant. Duke Univ.

**"White Slavery, Myth, Ideology and American Law"**, by Frederick Karl Grittnner. Univ. of Minnesota.



## HISTORY, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS SINCE 1865

**Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986**, by David Man-  
tejano. Univ. of Texas Press. \$29.95/\$12.95  
paper.

"Billy Graham and the Race Problem,  
1949-1969," by Jerry Berl Hopkins. Univ. of  
Kentucky.

"The Determinants of Capital Sentencing  
in Louisiana, 1979-1984," by Margaret Faye  
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"Drawing the Line: Dissent and Disloyalty  
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tin. Univ. of Texas-Austin.

**Duties, Pleasures and Conflicts: Es-  
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Univ. of Massachusetts Press. \$10.95.

**Federal Law and Southern Order: Ra-  
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Conflict in the Post-Brown South**, by  
Michael R. Belknap. Univ. of Georgia Press.  
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"Federal Tribal Policy and Tribal Develop-  
ment in Louisiana: The Jena Band of  
Choctaw," by Marilyn J. Watt. Pennsylvania  
State Univ.

**From Civil War to Civil Rights,  
Alabama, 1860-1960: An Anthology  
of the Alabama Review**, compiled by  
Sara W. Wiggins. Univ. of Alabama Press.  
\$25.95.

**From Slave South to New South: Ra-  
cial Policy in 19th Century Geor-  
gia**, by Peter Wallenstein. Univ. of North  
Carolina Press. \$27.50.

**The Historic Indian Tribes of Lou-  
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"A History of the Children's Medical Ser-  
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20th Century South**, by Edward H.  
Beardsley. Univ. of Tennessee Press. \$34.95.

**The Invisible Empire: Impact of the  
Ku Klux Klan on History**, by William  
Loren Katz. Open Hand Publishing. \$17.95/  
\$9.95 paper.

**Let There Be Light: A History of  
Louisiana Freemasonry**, by H. Glenn  
Jordan. Windsor Pubns. \$29.95.

**Mine, Mill and Microchip: A Chron-  
icle of Alabama Enterprise**, by Wayne  
Flint. Windsor Pubns. Inc. \$29.95.

**Old South-New South: Revolutions  
in the Southern Economy Since the  
Civil War**, by Gavin Wright. Basic Books.  
\$9.95.

"Preference For and Utilization of Health  
Care Services by Mexican Americans in  
South Texas," by Julian Castillo. Univ. of  
Houston.

"The Telephone in the South: A Compar-  
ative Analysis, 1877-1920," by Kenneth James  
Lipartito. Johns Hopkins Univ.

## LITERATURE

"An Annotated Bibliography of Critical  
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"A Circle of Sisters," by Michael Awk-  
ward. Univ. of Pennsylvania.

"The Early 30s Novels of Erskine  
Caldwell," by William Leland Howard. Univ.  
of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

**Essays on Faulkner**, ed. by Dan Ford &  
Robert E. Lowrey. Univ. of Central Arkansas  
Press. \$19.95.

"Faulkner's Marginal Couple and the Com-  
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Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

"The Modern Black Novelist and the  
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Montgomery. Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-  
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"The Motions of Grace: Flannery  
O'Connor's Typology," by Brian Abel Ragin.  
Princeton Univ., 1987.

**The New Writers of the South: A  
Fiction Anthology**, ed. by Charles East.  
Univ. of Georgia Press. \$12.95.

"The Ordinary World of Horton Foote," by  
George Terry Barr. Univ. of Tennessee.

**Reading Faulknerian Tragedy**, by  
Warwick Wadlington. Cornell Univ. Press.  
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**The Southern Vision of Andrew  
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**William Faulkner: Letters & Fic-  
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Press. \$22.50.

**William Faulkner: Storyteller of the  
Heart**, by Stephen B. Oates. Harper & Row,  
\$22.00.

"Women, Silence and Sexuality in the  
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Crabtree. Wayne State Univ.

## RELIGION

"A Catalog of Source Readings in Southern  
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Theological Seminary.

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# 1951

## A "New Spirit" for Investing in Education

*We don't mean to pick on Arkansas. All the Southern states have bemoaned their poor showing on national educational rankings, and all have long postured on the need for investing more funds in local schools. The document below shows that even the current fad of linking educational quality with economic development is nothing new. Neither is setting up blue-ribbon commissions on the crisis in public schools. Unfortunately, the money to pay for good schools is still woefully lacking — in Arkansas as elsewhere in the region. So despite the hand wringing and hopeful conclusion below, Arkansas today ranks pretty much where it did more than four decades ago: 46th among the 50 states in percent of adults graduating from high school; 48th in percent completing one to three years of college; 49th in percent graduating from college; 48th in teachers' average pay; and 46th in current per pupil school expenditures.*

In past years Arkansas has not compared favorably with its neighbors in the number of years of formal education possessed by its people. The Census figures for 1940 disclose that 8.7 percent of the persons 25 years of age and over had completed four years of high school. Among the states in that section of the country only Mississippi had a lower percentage of high school graduates. The percentage for the United States as a whole was 14.1. The 1940 Census data also show that the percentage of persons 25 and over who had completed one to three years of college was lower in Arkansas than in any other South-central state. Similarly, Arkansas was the lowest of the South-central states in the

percentage of persons in that age group who had completed four or more years of college.

... In 1939-40 [Arkansas] ranked 46th among the 48 states in the number of residents of the state per 10,000 population who were enrolled in institutions of higher education. By 1949-50 the number of Arkansas students in higher institutions in relation to the population was very much larger than it had been ten years earlier but, because large gains had also been made in other states, Arkansas continued to rank 46th among the states. The most important single reason for this situation is to be found in the relatively low level of income of the people of the state. Obviously, this means for one thing that, in general, the share of the cost of this education that the students themselves can bear is relatively low; it also means that the monies available for state support of education are relatively limited.

However, conditions in Arkansas have, in recent years, been changing rapidly. There is a new spirit abroad in the state — a recognition of the fact that Arkansas is rich in human and material resources awaiting development. There is strongly in evidence a determination to do those things that will contribute to the physical, moral, and aesthetic well-being of the people of the state.

Economically, notable progress is being made. The trend toward crop diversification is strengthening the agricultural economy. Poultry and livestock production are assuming a place of growing importance. The rich mineral resources of the state — bauxite, barite, cement, clay products, coal, natural gas, petroleum — are being developed. Arkansas' forest, among the finest in the nation, will, under good management and with continued growth of wood using and processing industries, play a part of increasing importance in the economy of the state. There has been and will doubtless continue to be significant growth in such fields as manufacturing, construction, wholesale and retail trade, transportation, and the service occupations. As the wealth of the state increases through the development of its material resources it will be possible to make more and better provisions for education. Development of the state's human resources through better education will provide more effective workers and citizens and will thus contribute in turn to the more effective utilization of the material resources.

*Excerpted from "Report of the Arkansas Commission on Higher Education to the Governor and General Assembly," January 1951 as found in A Documentary History of Arkansas, edited by C. Fred Williams et al (1984: Univ. of Arkansas Press).*

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