

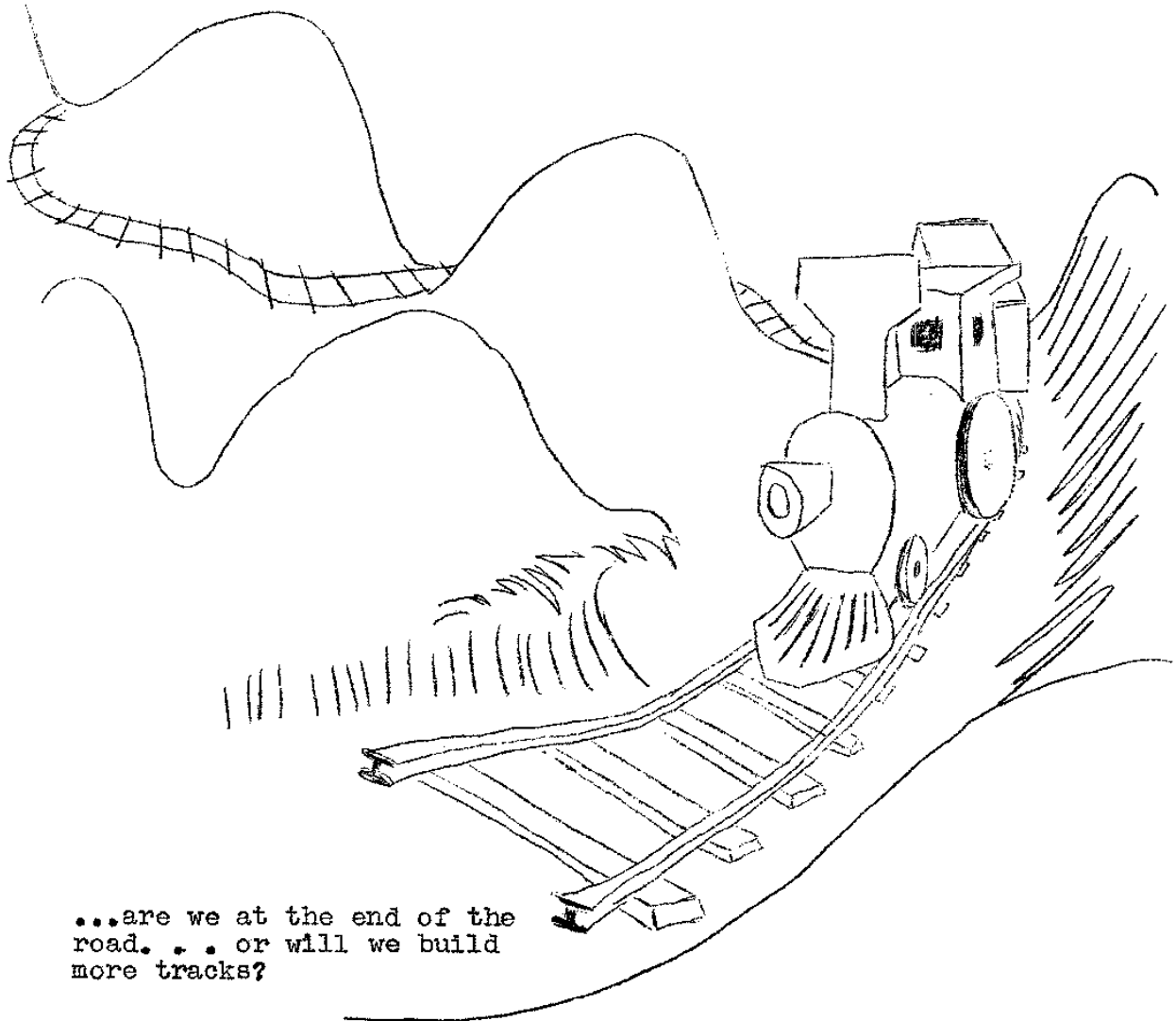
Benton  
County



"It's that freedom train a comin'; get on board, get on board."

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BENTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

APRIL 4, 1965  
BEULAH MAE AYERS,  
EDITOR



...are we at the end of the  
road. . . or will we build  
more tracks?

## Will We Win or Lose?

Tomorrow, April 5, the School Committee will see the Board of Education in order to find out finally and officially if the Board has fulfilled the demands of the Citizens Club.

The next night, Tuesday, there will be a meeting of the Citizens Club at Hebron Chapel where the committee will report to the citizens on its meeting with the Board of Education, and where further action will be taken if the demands have not been fulfilled.

Last Tuesday, Mr. Lloyd Peterson spoke to the members of the Citizens Club at Sims Chapel. He said he would cooperate with the parents if he were appointed principal, but he went on to say that nobody had told him that he was to be principal and that he believed that he would not be appointed principal.

During the past few days, there have been many rumors that Mr. Foster has been rehired for another year as principal. Many citizens don't believe the rumor, saying that we were promised our demands if we put our children back in school, and that the Board would not be so dishonest as to break a promise.

There are other citizens who feel that the rumor is true. They believe that the white community is going to show the Negroes that they have no business protesting about anything. They believe that the Board will rehire Foster, even though he doesn't have to teach their own children, just to show the Negroes that anytime they speak out for something, they will be "punished."

For this reason, it is felt that Tuesday night's meeting will be

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one of the most important for the Citizens Club, for if Foster is rehired and the Negro citizens do nothing, it will be worse than if we hadn't asked for his removal in the first place.

Meanwhile, letters have been coming in from the North from readers of the Freedom Train asking why the boycott was stopped. These readers don't believe the Board is sincere. Could it be that they know our white folks better than we do?

Boycotts throughout the state are still continuing--in Issaqueena and Sharkey Counties, the boycott has been going on for two months. People all over the North have been sending down books and other school supplies for the freedom schools:

### *Editor in Tennessee*

Beulah Mae Ayers is presently attending a workshop in Knoxville, Tennessee on freedom schools. The following letter was received from her:

"I made the trip just fine. We are now having a discussion meeting, talking about different counties and their problems. Of course, Benton is the best.

"We are having Negro poetry, read to us by Mr. Sterling Brown. It is being taped, and I may be able to bring some home with me. Tell everyone to write our a list of things we need for our freedom schools. I may get a typewriter, tape recorders, and Negro history books.

"How are the meetings going? Fine, I hope. Be sure to tell the people of Benton County hello."

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Any supplies you think the freedom schools need--send a list today to Beulah Mae at 1625 Riverside Dr., Knoxville, Tennessee.

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# What Are We Doing?

by Mary Frances Harris

What are the people doing now? Why are they sending their children back to school? The whites are not going to do what they said --I don't believe it. Why didn't they go on with the boycott?

We know all the whites don't like what the Negro people are doing, but can they stop it? No. I am going to stand up with my head up and my eyes open. We can get what we are working for--I know it. Don't you?

Now why can't we all stick together like the Negroes in Selma? Why can't we move like they do? Can't you see that the white people are trying to fool you to get your children back into school? Then they can say, "See, we fooled those dumb niggers."

Why don't we all hold up our heads and open our eyes and see what's happening? You don't want to get put out of a home, but I don't care what happens to me, just as long as I get my rights. You don't want your children and grandchildren to live as you have had to live, do you? Well, then, why don't you do something?

## Back to Mr. Foster

by Early C. McKinnie

Mr. Foster is a very bad man. He will not leave the school when they voted for him to leave. His wife is telling him not to leave. I don't know why he won't leave. He should leave.

Why doesn't Mr. Foster agree with freedom? Mr. Foster is a very rude man.

## Back to Old Salem

by Rosie Ella Murden

We have some teachers at Old Salem who don't even like children, and they will do you any kind of way. I don't think those kind of teachers need to be up there.

If you don't speak for yourself now, who will? Some of the teachers helped to get Mrs. Reaves fired.

I cannot understand our teachers being scared of losing their jobs. I think if you lose one job, get another. There's more than one place to teach.

## Memories of Freedom School

by Walter Lee Poplar

I liked freedom school because I want to stand up for my rights. I want to have the opportunity to do what the white boys do.

Believe me, when you went the first day to freedom school, you wanted to go the next day. I could learn better at freedom school than I can at Old Salem.

## Error

In last week's issue, we reported that a landlord had threatened one of his sharecroppers to send his children back to school. We also reported that this landlord had taken away the grocery supplies of the sharecropper for a week. We mistakenly reported this landlord to be Turner Carpenter--actually it was J.H. (Billy) Carpenter, owner of the Cotton Patch cafe, which refused service to four Negroes last Sunday. Our apologies to Mr. Turner Carpenter.

## Letter From a Friend

To all my friends in Benton County:

I have heard about your courageous and outstanding actions in the county. The news about the school boycott was so exciting that I want to wish you all more victories in your future boycotts. Even L.B.J. wants to "overcome" now; it's about time. I guess he doesn't want to be left out of the movement because he knows how powerful it is. But more important, he knows how determined you all are in Benton County and everywhere in the South and North. Everytime you demand your rights as citizens, we all grow a little taller and hold our heads straighter.

Those who fight you will become more confused and guilty each day. Let's hope that your righteousness will reach at least some of them.

As for me, I am now working on the anti-poverty program here in Massachusetts. Also I've started a youth group. Last week we demonstrated, protesting the killings and brutality in Selma. Some of the people in the youth group want to come to Mississippi in the summer. I hope to see you all then.

In love and freedom,  
Gloria Kifaras  
441 W. Clinton Street  
New Bedford, Massachusetts

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## NEGRO POETRY: *I Dream a World* by Langston Hughes

I dream a world where man  
No other will scorn,  
Where love will bless the earth  
And peace its paths adorn.  
I dream a world where all  
Will know sweet freedom's way,  
Where greed no longer saps the soul  
Nor avarice blights our day.  
A world I dream where black or white,  
Whatever race you be,  
Will share the bounties of the earth  
And every man is free,  
Where wretchedness will hang its head,  
And joy, like a pearl,  
Attend the needs of all mankind.  
Of such I dream--  
Our world!