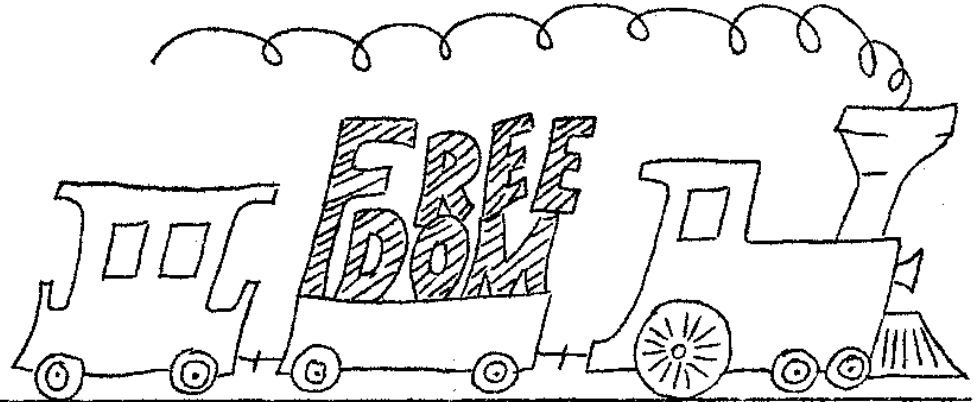


benton  
county



"It's that freedom train a comin'; get on board, bet on board."  
VOLUME III, NUMBER 3 AUGUST 1, 1965  
PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE CITIZENS OF BENTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI



## Report on New Orleans meeting

by Aviva Futorian

I just returned from two days in New Orleans where I represented the Benton County Citizens Club at a conference on cooperatives and credit unions and the anti-poverty program. I would like to tell you about some of the things I learned there.

I have always thought--as did everyone else in Benton--that the movement here was one of the best in the state. Maybe that's because nothing's happening in Marshall county. But after hearing what other counties are doing, I believe we are being left behind.

For instance, the Negro farmers in Panola county were selling their okra at 3 cents a pound. Last January they decided they weren't getting a fair price, and they decided to do something about it. So they formed a cooperative group, and everyone contributed \$2. The first thing they did was to buy their seed together. They found a dealer in Memphis who sold them the seed for half price.

Then they looked around for a market for their okra. After many months of searching, they contracted with a firm in St. Louis and with the farmers' market in Memphis.

Now they are marketing their okra together. Every day, they bring their okra to the loading dock where they ship it in a rented refrigerated truck to St. Louis or they haul it to the farmers market in Memphis where they set up a stall.

And what are they getting paid? THIRTEEN CENTS A POUND! And that is for uncapped okra.

But that's not all--they are expanding the cooperative and are

buying 3 combines and 3 cotton pickers and two trucks. They have applied for a government loan for all of this, but even if the government turns them down, they will take some of the profits from the okra and use it to buy the equipment.

Now their old broker, Mr. Jacobs is offering to buy their okra for 4 cents. They were able to tell him that they'd let it rot in the field before they'd sell it at that price.

There are similar stories in other counties: the freedom labor unions are organizing everywhere in the Delta and even in Tennessee. Negro landowners are letting strikers use their land to plant gardens. In Louisiana, cooperative savings and loan organizations are being formed, so that people don't have to buy from the white man on time or on credit. They can borrow from the cooperative and pay back at very low interest rates. The interest then goes to the people who put their savings in the cooperative.

Negroes in Madison county have set up a sewing firm. In Sunflower they have organized a quilting project; in Louisiana, a fruit cake manufacturing company.

Sometimes there is government money to help these kind of projects--BUT the important thing is that all these people organized their projects without government or other outside help, and without the suggestions of civil rights workers. They simply got together, decided what they needed most, and organized to fulfill these needs.

Why haven't we in Benton done anything like this? I think in some cases, people are waiting on

CIVIL rights workers or the government to do something or suggest something. And that really doesn't make sense, because nobody knows what you need better than you do.

Even more important, the goals of freedom aren't simply more money and a nicer place to live. Self-respect and the right to decide one's own life are essential and the value of material benefits is simply that it helps man more easily attain that dignity and self-respect.

For centuries, the Negro has had things done TO him or FOR him but never BY him. There's really not much difference between being beaten by the white man and being put on welfare or given food and clothing by the white man. In both cases, somebody else is doing things to you or for you. In neither case are you doing something for yourself.

And, in the same sense, maybe there's not much difference between having the boss man tell you to pick his cotton for \$3 a day and having a civil rights worker tell you to register and vote. In both cases, somebody else is telling you what to do.

Most of these "somebody elses" haven't done a very good job of running their own lives and running the government of this country. Negroes throughout the South are deciding they are not going to let these somebody elses run their lives and mess them up as they have messed up this country.

Why don't members of the Citizens Club visit other places and find out what people are doing? Why was I the only one representing Benton county in New Orleans when I don't even live here and I don't really understand your problems as well as you do?

## Car fund started

At the Tuesday night all-county meeting, the Citizens Club donated \$4.32 to the freedom school teachers for transportation to and from school.

The money won't last very long, but it will help us to get to freedom school next week, and after that someone might donate some more.

Before now we have been getting to our school the best way we could and catching a ride back. We were determined to get there.

If anyone has a donation you would like to give for transportation, send it to the Freedom Train, Rt. 2, Box 100, Holly Springs.

## Nobody writes

BY Bobie L. Harris

We now have a paper of our own. At one time we would have had to go to the Southern Advocate to publish an article on the Negro race. And they would turn us down anyway.

Now we have a paper of our own which we desired long before we had the opportunity. And now that we have that opportunity, we won't recognize it. It's good to know that we have something to go down in history.

I just can't understand our people. When we could use the white people's paper, somebody would always have something in the bottom of the Southern Advocate. And now that they can put something in the front page of the Freedom Train, they won't write a line.

# Striker reports on early strike

by James Green,  
Tribett, Miss.

This is a report of the 12 strikers on C.L. Andrews plantation. The problem arose because of the fact that these men who had families ranging from 7 to 13 were not being paid enough to support them and pay off the bills they owed. They asked for a raise about four weeks ago and were refused. About two weeks after that they asked for another and was told that their wages would be lowered before they would be raised. The third time they asked for a raise on Monday morning and Mr. Andrews gave them two choices, go on working for the same wages or leave.

The men gave him his key and watch and walked away. Andrews then went to the wives of the 12 men and told them to get out of his house. The women were taken in by families in Greenville.

The men pitched a tent near the plantation. On Tuesday morning they started picketing the plantation where they remained the entire day. There were four tractor drivers working when they arrived and one bus load of cotton choppers. The strikers asked the cotton choppers to leave. But the four men on tractors would not leave. Later one of the tractor drivers joined the strikers.

The next day the strikers were ordered to move all their things out of the house. While the men went to get the keys, the houses were broken into and all their things were thrown on the side of the road. A lot of the furniture was broken up and some was repossessed by the furniture companies.

Friday morning a truckload of

choppers were turned around from Greenville but another truck from Indianola would not leave. Three of the strikers were given jobs and turned their wages over to the union so they could be used to help the rest of the strikers and to help these that will be going on strike in the future.

## train puffs:

\*The Brotherhood Association gave a donation to students entering college and students who are already enrolled. The students will receive money 4 times a year.

\*Office hours at the new Citizens Club office are from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.

\*Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Gorder came here from Pennsylvania for a visit and visited one of the cafes in Ashland, it was reported by Mrs. Pearly Bostick. They were treated well.

\*The Samuels freedom school has been transferred to Palestine beginning tomorrow. Teachers will be Clay Batts, Jim Bates, Frances Baird, Marvin Baird, Laura Batts, Grady Williams, and Calburda Tipler

\*A 5th freedom school for young people and adults will begin tomorrow at Harris chapel. Alberta Tipler will supervise the freedom school and Mrs. Nelma Tipler will teach literacy.

\*District meetings will discuss cooperatives and the anti-poverty program: Mon. at Royston, Tues. at Sims, Wed. at Mt. Zion, Thursday at Hardaway.

## \*NEWLY REGISTERED VOTERS\*

Annie Bell Williams	J.C. Batts
Lucile Williams	Vera Murdock
Dorothy Jones	Flora Murdock
Bernice Burns	Richard Murdock
Mae W. Walls	Sherman Walls Jr.

## Moderator Speaks For Rights

by Earnestyne Evans

From the clapping and singing and marching around the church came a still silence, a silence with respect behind it. A small man stepped forward and in his own still like way spoke with meaningful vigor.

On Thursday afternoon Dr. Willie J. Gray Moderator and founder of the Brotherhood Baptist Association delivered his Eleventh Annual Address.

Dr. Gray said it would only be a half hour long, but he and his listeners became so involved he spoke for an hour.

In his speech Dr. Gray gave the definition of a leader. A leader he said was a man who knows the road knows the problems of the travelers and has an answer to it. There are many people who are leaders and are sitting back doing nothing to improve his condition. Instead he is saying that the white man is my friend, he said he was and I ain't going to get in that mess (meaning the movement); there are not many of these people but there are enough people who really know the White in Mississippi to try to do something about changing the white mans attitude.

Dr. Gray said Negroes should not be like flies because when you make a motion toward the fly they fly off in all directions, not as a group. But instead they should be like the hornets when approached, will stay together and leave a very severe sting on a person.

I dare you he said to throw at a hornest or a bee. You would not do this because you know that they are organize and fight back. If the negro would organize and stick together like hornests and bees and not like the flies we would move even greater moutians than we are moving.

Some of the people think that since Dr. Gray made it clear where the Negro should stand more citizen in the county will take an active part in the movement.

On Friday Dr. Gray read the following:

We four committeemen on the State of the Country and current Events submit the following report:

1. We recommend that this Assocation go on record as endorsing the civil rights movement that is carried on in Benton County under the oreers of the Federal Government.
2. We recommend that this Association endorse the Benton County Citizen Club, and the Benton County Freedom Train in their stand for civil rights.

This was signed by the Moderator and Founder, First Vice-Moderator and members of the commêtee. And enorsed by the entire Association. The Brotherhood Baptist Association is one of the most powerful organizations in Benton County.