



ROOSEVELT SCOTT FEEDS THE STOVE

A Christmas Eve in Tent City-- 'It's Too Cold To Make a Cake'

BY VIOLA BRADFORD

TENT CITY--You don't have to live in a big brick house, fully decorated with Christmas lights or a fancy tree, in order to enjoy Christmas Eve.

Christmas Eve in a tent with no decorations--just the spirit of Christmas--can be just as much fun.

At least, it was for the Scott family, who spent their first Christmas Eve in Tent City last week. The Scotts and several other families were evicted from their old homes in Lowndes County after the adults registered to vote.

"I like it," said Roosevelt Scott, one of the four little boys who live in Tent City with their mother and father. "It's just like camping."

It is like camping, nearly every day of the year. But at this special time--Christmas Eve--it's also just like home. The things that made it seem like home were the cooking of the turkey and the Christmas tree put up by Roosevelt's brother, Odell.

Passing by on the highway, travelers couldn't see what went on in the tents this Christmas Eve.

But inside one of the tents, Mrs. Annie B. Scott and her husband sat watching a football game on their television set. Every once in a while, they would look into the pan at the turkey that was cooking, or add a piece of firewood to the stove. The turkey was sent to the Scotts for Thanksgiving. But it arrived too late, so they saved it for Christmas.

"We couldn't make any cakes this Christmas," said Mrs. Mandy Glover, a Tent City resident. "It's been too cold outside."

Odell and Roosevelt Scott, a third brother, Cathy Lee; and their cousins, who were visiting them, played with some new toys inside another tent. "I wish I stayed out here," said one of the cousins, as he rolled a truck across the dirt floor.

A small Christmas tree sat on a table in the corner of the tent. "I made it," said Odell with a proud grin. "I did it at home."

The tree was a piece of pine sitting in a lard can filled with dirt. To decorate the tree, Odell had made pink, green, and red bulbs out of construction paper, and tied them to the leaves of the tree. A red ribbon made from a bologna wrapping held his Christmas tree in place.

Scattered on the ground outside the tents were toys that had been given to the children by some Tuskegee residents.

Mrs. Scott said she and her family are



MRS. MANDY GLOVER AND DAUGHTER

planning on moving out of Tent City just as soon as they finish the concrete-block house they're building nearby. So is Mrs. Glover, who is building a house in the same area. "We're going to

move," they both said, "and leave these tents right here." They may leave their tents behind, but they will never forget their Christmas Eve in Tent City.

Tuscaloosa Rights Group Gets OK for Head Start

BY ROBIN REISIG

TUSCALOOSA -- Just a few weeks ago, Tuscaloosa was not going to have a Head Start program next summer, because no one was applying to run one. Then suddenly there were too many Head Start plans, as five groups scrambled to fill out two separate applications.

And surprisingly, an application naming a civil rights group to run Head Start won official approval--over an application naming the city board of education which ran the city's last Head Start program two years ago.

As the year drew to a close last week, the Tuscaloosa Opportunity Program (TOP)--the official anti-poverty agency--was rushing to meet a special extended deadline for work on the application filed by the civil rights group, the Tuscaloosa Citizens for Action Committee (TCAC).

When TOP and the board of education announced last November that they were not applying for Head Start, TCAC made a massive last-minute effort to put together an application. The group made the effort even though TOP Executive Director Jerry Griffin said it was "too late" to prepare the forms for the Dec. 15 deadline.

Three other groups--the all-Negro Community Interest Corps, the Integrated Tuscaloosa Council on Human Relations, and the Student Government Association of the University of Alabama--joined TCAC in preparing and sponsoring the Head Start application. More than 100 workers canvassed high schools throughout the city. And in mid-December, TOP's predominantly-Negro policy advisory committee tentatively approved the application.

Then the city board of education changed its mind about applying. The Rev. T. Y. Rogers, president of TCAC, said the school board was willing to let Tuscaloosa go without Head Start, but it wasn't willing to let anyone else run the program.

"If we got Head Start, the board of education wouldn't be able to run the program. This they couldn't stomach," said Rogers. "They'd rather have anything than have anyone know TCAC is the delegate agency."

"We'd be responsible for bringing a lot of money into Tuscaloosa--\$60,000 to \$70,000 in two weeks. This is power they don't want us to have, power they don't want poor people to have."

H. D. Nelson, superintendent of city schools, explained the board's switch differently. He said it was due "largely to the fact that some of these groups started asking for permission to use our buildings, school buses, and to rent facilities. We feel the community would hold us responsible for a program in our buildings. We cannot accept responsibility without authority to protect ourselves."

But TCAC's plan offered other choices for the Head Start centers, mostly in churches and on the University of Alabama campus. And when the school board learned that TCAC's application had been approved, it refused to allow

use of its equipment, saying this was "against school policy."

Rogers also said the application filed by TCAC and the other three groups is better, because it is "more broadly based," and because its centers will be located in "fringe areas," where the classes are more likely to be integrated.

Last year, the school board's application for Head Start was rejected largely because it didn't call for enough faculty desegregation. Some parents say the city board didn't apply for Head Start in November because it was still unwilling to follow the federal desegregation guidelines. But Nelson said the board knew what it was getting into when it made its application in December.

Negro Injured After Arrest in Bullock

BY MARY ELLEN GALE

UNION SPRINGS--When Ivey Foster started home from his job on Christmas Eve, he was planning to spend the evening with his family.

Instead, he went to jail--and then to the hospital. He was treated for deep cuts and bruises all over his head.

Foster, a Negro, said Wayne Garrett, a white prisoner acting as a trustee, beat him up with a ring of jail keys. Garrett admitted hitting Foster with the keys. But, Garrett said, Foster hit him first.

Foster, 27, works for Union Springs Mayor Frank H. Anderson, who owns a downtown hardware store. On Christmas Eve, Foster said, Anderson gave his employees some Christmas whiskey before closing up around 6:30 p.m.

Foster said he left the store and walked across the street, past two city police officers sitting in a patrol car. "One of 'em called me over and asked,

was I drunk? I said no." But the officers took him in the car and drove him over to the jail. Foster said Sheriff C. M. Blue and Garrett were there.

"I asked 'em about making a call, but they wouldn't let me," Foster said. "The white guy shoved me, and one of the officers said, 'If he gives you any trouble, knock the hell out of him.'"

Foster said Garrett locked him up, then came back and took him out of the cell. "I was ahead of him, just making the turn to go down the stairs, when he hit me on the back of the head with the keys."

"I fell. I tried to get up, but he hit me three or four more times. He kicked me in the face and chest. I passed out. Then someone was dragging me down the steps."

"I asked the sheriff to take me to a doctor but he said, 'Shut up, you ought to've been killed.' Someone else said, 'Niggers ain't supposed to live long no-how.' I passed out again. Next thing I knew, I saw Mr. Anderson and his son. Then I was in the hospital."

But Garrett, 21, a Dadeville man awaiting trial for burglary, remembered the incident differently. He said Foster "just kept a-cussin' me. . . 'cause he was drunk and mad. He hit me--that's when I hit him. I had the keys in my hand. . . He wanted me to whup him, so I whupped him."

Mayor Anderson said he went to the jail because he heard Foster had been arrested. "He had been beaten," Anderson said. "He was bleeding all over his head." Anderson said he signed Foster's bond, had him taken to the hospital, and "called in the state investigators to see if they could ascertain what happened."

Union Springs Police Chief T. W. Tillery said he had no comment.

Sheriff Blue said he wasn't at the jail when Foster was beaten. "I was in my office--I heard a commotion and went on over."

B'ham Speaker: 'We Did It'

BIRMINGHAM--"California couldn't do it," said Emory Jackson. "Illinois couldn't do it. But we did it. Alabama did it. We muffled the backlash." Jackson, editor of the Birmingham World, was speaking to members of the Alabama Christian Movement last Monday in St. James Baptist Church. He said he was disturbed at some slights being cast at Alabama's black leaders. "Of course we didn't have unity," he said. "We weren't after unity."

What were the leaders after? "Mainstream politics," said Jackson. "We wanted to see Negroes operating as Republicans and Democrats, just as electorates all over the country operate as Republicans and Democrats."

Birmingham Negroes have much to contend with, he said:

"We've got 38% of the population, and no percent of the firemen. And out at Samford University, we've still got a school that no Negro is good enough to attend."

Hospital, U.S. In CR Fight

BY GLORIA GERMAN

MOBILE--In Mobile Infirmary, the largest hospital in the city, a new 100-bed wing is not being used. It was built for the old people who were expected to take advantage of Medicare.

But six months after Medicare began, Mobile Infirmary is still not certified for the program. The federal government says the hospital is not complying with the desegregation requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Spokesmen for the hospital and the federal government this week blamed each other for the situation.

Morton Lebow of the U. S. Office of Equal Health Opportunity (in Washington) said that many doctors on the hospital staff are sending their white patients to Mobile Infirmary, while referring their Negro patients to other hospitals.

But, said the hospital's assistant administrator, John Tucker, "we haven't heard of any specific number of Negroes that have to be admitted in order for us to get on the Medicare program." Tucker said Negroes have been coming into the hospital at a rate of about 14 a day.

But according to Lebow, the government has explained the desegregation requirements to the hospital board--most recently, in a meeting last November. He said the federal agency is willing to explain its desegregation guidelines again, if they are still not clear.

Lebow said a government survey taken from Sept. 25 to Oct. 26 found that of 1,721 patients admitted to Mobile Infirmary, 1,701 were white and 20 were Negro. He claimed that the average number of Negroes coming in daily is much less than 14.

Tucker said the dispute over Medicare has started talk in the community about Mobile Infirmary. "The people are saying that something is wrong with our facilities in the hospital," but this is not so, he said.

But a Giant from Dothan Steals the Show

BTW of Montgomery Takes First In Holiday Basketball Tourney

BY ARLAM CARR JR.

MONTGOMERY--High school teams came from all over South Alabama last Wednesday to take part in the ninth annual Holiday Basketball Tournament at Carver High School.

But in the end, there were two local squads--Carver and Booker T. Washington--fighting it out for the championship. BTW won, 59 to 53, in a wild and woolly contest that, at times, looked more like football than basketball.

The championship game was the

eighth played during the marathon one-day tournament, which began at 9:30 a.m. and ended at 10 p.m.

For most spectators, the top attraction was Artis Gilmer, the 7'1 1/2" center who led Carver of Dothan to third place in the tournament. In three games, Gilmer scored 39, 17, and 23 points. And he showed a fantastic shooting touch for such a big man--even sinking 63% of his foul shots.

Dothan coach James Hall said Gilmer, a senior, has been scouted by

at least 20 colleges who want him to play for them.

In first-round games, Carver of Montgomery beat Alabama State High (Montgomery), 67 to 49; South Girard (Phenix City) got by St. Jude (Montgomery), 57 to 51; Carver of Dothan topped Hudson (Selma), 73 to 63; and BTW walloped Tuskegee Institute High, 96 to 77.

That narrowed the field to four teams. Led by Allen Belser with 20 points and John Oliver with 18, Carver of Montgomery beat South Girard, 69 to 61.

Then, in the closest game of the tournament, Booker T. edged Carver of Dothan, 74 to 70. Gilmer had four fouls before the first quarter was over, and couldn't play much after that. Arthur Roberts led the BTW scorers with 23 points.

But Carver of Dothan came back Wednesday evening to take the third-place trophy, by defeating South Girard, 79 to 72. South Girard pulled within four points, 74 to 70, late in the game, but Gilmer sank one basket and then passed to Richard Daniels all alone under the bucket to make it 78 to 70.

Two heads-up guards, Douglas Ramsey and Orlando Brown, made Dothan move even when Gilmer was on the bench. Ramsey led Dothan with 24 points, while Otis Ray, with 32, was high for South Girard.

The all-Montgomery final was not as close as the six-point margin made it look. BTW was always in control, sometimes leading by as much as 15 points. Near the end of the game, Carver of Montgomery closed the gap to 55 to 47, and appeared to be gaining. But Willie James of BTW hit two straight baskets to decide the issue.

Herbert Carter scored 17 points for BTW, and Oliver had 14 for Carver. Booker T.'s Roberts--who tallied 53 points in three games--was named most valuable player.

SORRY ABOUT THAT

As our loyal readers may notice, The Southern Courier is a little thin this week--only four pages. Because of the holidays, news was hard to find this week. Next week's paper, however, will be back to normal.



DOTHAN'S ARTIS GILMER (32) REACHES SKYWARD

A Child



More on Page Three

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Editorial Opinion

Good Riddance

The year 1966 was a terrible one for Southern Negroes. Samuel Younge Jr., David Colson, Vernon Dahmer, and James Earl Motley were killed, and their assailants all remained free at year's end. No new civil rights laws were passed by the U. S. Congress, but the Alabama legislature cooked up an anti-school-guidelines measure, and Mississippi threatened to do the same. Despite an increase in Negro voter registration, Mrs. George C. Wallace was elected governor of Alabama, and Lester Maddox seemed sure to win in Georgia.

(By the way, a recent poll ranked Mrs. Wallace fifth among the world's most admired women--ahead of Princess Margaret and Marian Anderson.)

But this thought might comfort people as the new year arrives: Whatever happens in 1967, it can't possibly be any worse.

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

You and your staff of writers are getting out an excellent newspaper. The photographs by Jim Peppier are usually great and sometimes truly beautiful. The stories that are presented reflect an honesty and freshness that is a rarity in newspaper writing. I hope you don't change the style of the Southern Courier by trying to become sophisticated or condensing news stories under the guise of complete news coverage.

I have only one criticism of the Southern Courier. This is your failure to take a strong stand against the Viet Nam War. I realize that the Southern Courier is basically concerned with civil rights issues. Yet, the Viet Nam War is related directly to civil rights. Blacks represent almost 25% of America's fighting force in Viet Nam, which is a significantly larger percentage than Negroes represent in the overall population. Why don't you write an editorial about this discrimination? I am sure you would agree that Negroes are being terribly exploited when they are sent to their deaths to fight a most dishonorable war, a war that is built on FALSE causes.

Instead of lauding the winners of medals--black men who have killed their brothers and are being killed themselves to earn infamous pieces of metal and ribbon--you should be lauding the conscientious objectors and pacifists, men who have had the courage to say "NO" to the war-mongers. The Fort Hood Three are truly brave men as were Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner. You extol the virtue of these civil rights workers; why not extol the courage shown by anti-Viet Nam War demonstrators as well?

Stokely Carmichael and Julian Bond have had this courage and taken a strong stand against the Viet Nam War because they believe the U.S. Government is wrong in its aggression. I find it hard to believe that the Southern Courier lacks the kind of integrity and courage it takes to oppose the Viet Nam War.

Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights

The weekly meeting will be at 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 2, in the First Baptist Church, Kingston, the Rev. G. W. Dickerson, pastor. Pep speaker will be the Rev. A. L. Woods Jr., pastor of the First Metropolitan Baptist Church.

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REV. ROOSEVELT FRANKLIN
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In Alabama all our yesterdays are marred by hate, discrimination, injustice, and violence. Among the organizations working for a better tomorrow on the principle of human brotherhood is the Alabama Council on Human Relations. Membership in the Council is open to all who wish to work for a better tomorrow on this principle. For further information, write the Alabama Council, P.O. Box 1310, Auburn, Alabama.



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9:00-9:30 The Gospel Hour (Religion) Rev. Green
9:30-10:00 Dorothy Jo's Pantry Shelf (Women's News) Dorothy Jo Stanley
10:00-12 Noon Gospel Train (Gospel) Dorothy Jo Stanley
12:00-3:00 PM Ruben Hughes Show (R&B) Ruben Hughes
3:00-Sign Off Jordan Ray Show (R&B) Jordan Ray

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NEWSCASTS--5 Minutes Before the Hour

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7:00-9:00 Jordan Ray Show (R&B) Jordan Ray
9:00-9:30 The Gospel Hour (Gospel) Rev. Greene
9:30-12 Noon Gospel Train (Gospel) Dorothy Jo Stanley
12:00-3:00 PM Ruben Hughes Show (R&B) Ruben Hughes
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11-1 PM Rick Upshaw
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8-10 PM Trumon Puckett
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LATE DATE
10-12 Midnight Johnny Jive

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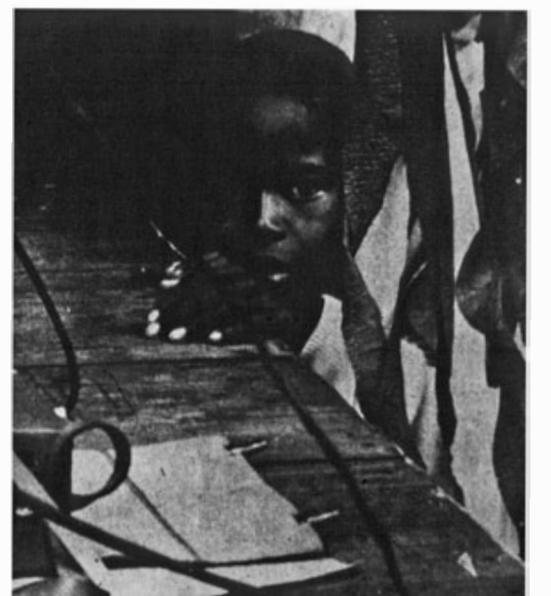
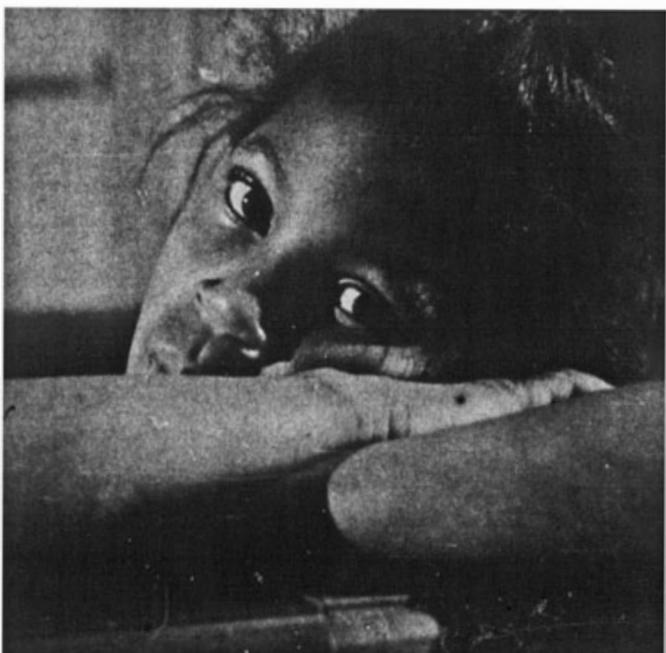
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GOD BLESS THE CHILD



Photographs by Jim Pepler





Weekend Visitors Learn What Life Is Like *INSIDE GEES BEND*

BY VIOLA BRADFORD

GEES BEND--Have you ever walked 15 miles to use a telephone, or worked acres and acres of cotton for less than \$100 a year, or gone coon hunting after sundown with a flashlight in one hand and a shotgun in the other?

There are many people in Dallas and Wilcox counties that have, and still do. Among them are the residents of an all-Negro rural community called Gees Bend.

People who had never chopped cotton or hunted coons had a chance last month to find out what a farmer's life is like. The Rev. Francis X. Walter, director of the Selma Interreligious Project, and the Rev. G. G. Pettway, pastor of the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Gees

Bend, sponsored a "Rural Life Workshop." It could have been called a school for white people.

Walter said the weekend workshop was meant to teach people, especially Southern liberal whites, about "Negro life and problems."

And there were people who wanted to listen, learn, and live in the rural area for a couple of days. Despite the rainy, cold weather and muddy roads, 32 out-of-town visitors came.

They came to the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, which sits back in a wooded area away from a dirt road. The doors were open and a large coal stove in the center of the floor warmed the guests.

There are no street lights in Gees Bend, and that made it pretty dark around the church because the lights in the church were off. The only lights visible at first were beams from the men's flashlights and the glow from the stove's fire.

"Is it the power line or the power structure doing this?" asked a voice in the dark. But after a few minutes of waiting, the lights came on.

By then the lights didn't make too much difference, because the visitors and residents had divided themselves into groups scattered throughout the church, talking and getting acquainted in the dark.

Here were black and white people giving their opinions and asking and answering questions about local problems and living conditions.

"I live on a dark road," said an eight-year-old girl who joined in on a conversation. "The man said that he was going to put gravel down, but he didn't."

"What man?" asked a woman. "The white man," answered the little girl as if the woman should have known.

It was time for the first session to begin. There was a prayer meeting led by the Rev. Pettway. A song, a prayer, and then another song. This time, "Give me that old-time religion... it's good for a healing nation."

Now it was time for the history of the Wilcox County movement. "They had guns, sticks. They just had it," started Little Pettway, the first panelist. "But Boykin people kept walkin'. We just didn't give up. We just wouldn't give up... until the federal government made it possible for the Negro to vote down here in Wilcox County."

As the audience listened attentively, Roman Pettway took up where Little Pettway left off. "We didn't want to take the town. We just wanted the privilege (to vote), that's all. We didn't want Camden," he continued.

He told about trying to register. "Every Thursday a group of us would go down, and when we received our forms back, they'd all say 'rejected.'"

"There weren't any Negroes around to vouch for me," said Eddie Pettway, the last panelist. "So I asked a white man I knew standing there. He said, 'I'm not interested' and he would tell the other white people, 'You got some blackbirds out there.'"

"I knew I was black, but I didn't know I had cut wings."

"The way they were registering us, a



GEES BEND RESIDENTS SHOWED THE VISITORS AROUND

generation could have died before they got to all of us," Pettway concluded.

This marked the beginning of the question and answer period. "What's the toughest thing that you're up against now?" asked one white man.

"We're trying to get some telephones," was the reply. (The nearest phone is about 15 miles away.) "Every time we ask they'd say that 'there weren't enough wanting them' or 'you're on the list, but you're too far down.'"

After hearing about the problems, and the attitudes of the whites toward the people of Gees Bend, a white woman sitting in one of the corners in front of the church sprang up and asked, "Why don't you bring the Deacons of Defense in here? There're all kinds of ways to handle a crook!"

The first session ended and the visitors were put up for the night with local residents--to sleep, to learn of that individual's home life, and to wake the next morning to learn more about the rural life of a Negro.

Everyone gathered at the church the next morning to start the second session of "school." The rain had stopped, but it was still cold.

Mrs. Pearl Moorer of Dallas County warmed up the group with a fiery lecture on tenant farming, credit, and other current problems in farming.

"Cotton ain't nothing but hard trouble...," she exclaimed. She told the people of Wilcox that they should "start a farm co-op, grow okra, peas, or corn--don't mess with cotton."

In her uninterrupted 50-minute talk, she presented to the audience, especially the whites, the many problems that exist. She told of Negroes evicted from their homes on plantations, and of her own problems with the law and with white people.

"The white man can't do anything but beat me or kill me and if he kill me, he can't eat me and if he eat me, I'll make him sick on his stomach," she added.

"White people aren't concerned about the Negro's education," said Lonnie Brown, a Gees Bend resident who ran for state senator from the four surrounding counties. "A white man will have his son in school while a Negro boy of the same age as his son would be out in his field plowing."

The question after the talks and discussion was, "Did anybody learn anything?"

"Well," one white woman said, "it was difficult to learn something because I don't know about the programs that (Mrs. Moorer is) talking about and farming situations. Some of it was over my head."

A woman said, "Yes, I lived on a farm when I was a little girl, but it wasn't like the ones here."

After the session ended, integrated groups stood around in the church, laughing, drinking coffee, debating, and just expressing themselves without being afraid to speak what they really

thought. There was a field trip in the afternoon. People passing by, who were not with the workshop, could see black and white people walking alongside the country roads, examining the soil, talking about the land, or shaking because it was cold.

Members of the group saw sights they don't see often--such as a man chopping firewood, or occasionally a cow or mule lying in the road.

Everyone didn't go on the field trip. Some went to see the beautifully decorated quilts made by women of the Freedom Quilting Bee co-op. There were plaid quilts, striped ones, some of many colors and some of few.

One of the most impressive was a large black and white quilt with squares and star-like figures. "This is called the black power quilt," said one man jokingly. "No," replied a woman, and she started singing, "Black and white to-gether."



THE VISITORS LOOKED AT FREEDOM QUILTS...



...LISTENED TO A TALK ON TENANT FARMING...



...AND WALKED AND TALKED WITH THE PEOPLE OF GEES BEND