

On Nov. 27, between midnight and dawn, another attack was made upon our Roadside Market. This time it was not dynamite, as in the July 23rd bombing. It was buck-shot. One or more cars evidently drove by and pumped repeated charges into the front of the building. The GBI agent counted 55 slugs about the size of a .22 rifle lead. The principal damage was done to the recently installed refrigerated meat case, which was practically ruined. It was a second-hand case and was smaller than the one destroyed by the bombing. It was valued at \$250. Another slug hit the meat-scales, but didn't destroy the mechanism. The bullets splintered some of the wooden frame-work of the front of the building. In all, the damage should not exceed \$300. There was no insurance. It had been cancelled previously. Officers made an investigation, but said they had little hope of finding out who did it.

The market is located on U.S. 19 about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Americus. It is about 5 miles from the main farm, which is located 8 miles southwest of Americus on Ga. 49. In 1955 we purchased the 4 acre location so as to be on a main North-South highway to market our farm products. In the spring of 1955 we erected an attractive building, and began business in July of that year. No one lives on the property, the only building being the market, a 20 ft. by 30 ft. frame structure. Its distance from the main farm makes it a prime target for attack. For several months we have been unable to keep up highway signs advertising the market.

More devastating than either the bombing or the shooting was the announcement last week by the Citizens Bank of Americus that it would not make further loans to Koinonia Farm. This bank has supplied Koinonia with operating capital since the beginning here in 1942. During this time we have borrowed and repaid over \$200,000. Our business for the first nine months of this year was \$28,000. The president of the bank is Mr. Evan Mathis, a prominent leader in the First Methodist Church of Americus. This fall we paid up all our notes, and Mr. Mathis said the board of directors of the bank asked him to tell us not to apply for any more loans. We asked him what the difficulty was and he said he was not free to tell us. We asked if it were any fault of our business dealings and he said we had a perfect record in that respect and that it had nothing to do with that but he could discuss it no further. We said that our long record of faithful dealing with the bank deserved the courtesy of some kind of statement and would he object if we took it up with the board of directors. He said we could but that he strongly advised us please not to do so, that they would not be able to discuss the matter calmly with us.

We then asked who the directors were and he said they were Mr. J. T. Warren, chairman, Wingate Dykes, Samuel Hunter, T. O. Marshall, Jr., Dr. H. A. Smith and himself. (Mr. Marshall recently ran for judge of this judicial circuit, and together with Mr. Dykes, represented the Sumter County farmers who brought an injunction suit against Koinonia's summer camp for allowing children to possibly see "baby pigs being born." Dr. H. A. Smith has been the Jordan's family doctor for many years.) We said we knew all these men, that most of them were leaders in the church and mature men who should be capable of discussing Christian principles with us. He said the action had nothing to do with Christian principles and while he did not agree with us he felt we had every right to our own beliefs. We said the bank evidently was not willing for us to hold to our own beliefs, or it would not subject us to such tremendous pressure by taking away our operating capital without any reason, and that we knew how to do business in Americus but it would involve the selling of our souls and the renunciation of our allegiance to the Christ, and we weren't willing to pay that kind of a price. He said he wasn't free to discuss it further, so we told him to please tell the Board that they had deeply wounded and grieved us, not so much from a material standpoint, although that was considerable, but because it filled us with such great despair for the future of the church and nation--a spiritual standpoint; and that we would be praying that some day they might be free men in a free society, ruled only by the Spirit of God. He said he would tell them that, and we shook hands and left.

A day or two later we received a phone call from Mr. Harold Still, head of the

Still Gas Company in Americus. In apparent anguish of soul he said he would not be able to sell us butane gas any longer. We have two 500 gal. tanks, a 250 gal tank and a number of smaller bottles. Most of our houses are heated with butane gas (there are no flues or chimneys), our hot water for the houses and laundry is heated with gas, and we do our cooking with gas. It does get cold here, the temperature this morning was well below freezing. Not only because the lack of gas would be a hardship on us, but because we felt that he was very unhappy about this action, we asked if we could talk with him privately. He agreed, so we went to his office. We said our major concern was not to get gas for ourselves but the welfare of his own soul. We asked if his action was due to any fault on our part, and he said no, and that was what made it so hard. We asked why he had done it and he said he was afraid of the pressure. We asked how many customers he had lost on account of us--he said, "None!" We asked who was putting the pressure on him--he said, "Nobody . . . yet!" We said we thought he had given up too easily and was not exhibiting much courage, and did he think he had done right. He said it was wrong, terribly wrong, and that he had a splitting headache and was running a fever from it. We asked if he were a follower of Jesus and he said that he belonged to the Methodist Church but was not a very good member. We asked if he thought there was any similarity between his position and that of Judas who sold his Lord for a bit of gain. He said, "Yes, but I feel more like Pilate. I just want to wash my hands and my soul." We said that tradition has it that Pilate is still trying to wash his hands. "I know," he said, "I know, it's all wrong." He said that he would help us to make contact with other sources of supply. We asked if he thought it was morally right for him, our longtime friend, to ask a stranger to do for us what he himself wouldn't do. He said that he thought that it would not be right, so we asked him if it would be right for us, in time of need, to go to strangers with whom we had not traded regularly when our friend with whom we had traded had refused to stand by us. He didn't think this would be right either. So we asked if he didn't want to reconsider his decision. He said, "No", that this was no sudden thing, and that he had been thinking about it several months, and that he guessed it had better stand. We said that we would be praying for him. He said, you are doing what Jesus taught for He said to pray for your enemies and I guess that I am your enemy. Friend or enemy, we said, you are an object of God's love and of our love. We shook hands with him and told him goodbye.

So at this writing, our Market is riddled with bullets, we have no operating capital and we have about 2 - 3 weeks supply of butane gas. Due to the difficulty of selling our eggs and buying feed, we have decided it might be best for us to sell off our flock. It is paradoxical that Koinonia introduced commercial egg production into this section, which has now become one of the chief egg centers of the state, and now finds it impossible to continue its own 4000 hen capacity poultry enterprise. For many years our principle source of income has been from eggs.

Perhaps some of you who are newcomers to our mailing list are wondering what all this bombing, shooting, boycotting, etc. is about. It is because Koinonia is a group of nearly 60 people who are trying to live as the early New Testament church. One of our principles is that God makes no distinctions between people because of their race or color and we do not either. This belief is not too popular in South Georgia at the present. We are struggling to commit ourselves more perfectly to the Way of The Christ. We are expendable. We shall remain here so long as He needs us and gives us the strength to do His Will.

--from all of us at Koinonia