

The last two weeks have been times of very grave crisis for us. Prior to this time we have seen the destruction of approximately \$13,000 worth of our property by dynamiting, burning and shooting, but there had been no direct attempt at our lives. The first effort in this direction came at 1:15 A.M. on Jan. 29 when a speeding car raked the residence nearest the highway with what seemed to be machine gun fire. A burst was also fired at the car in which Harry Atkinson was sitting as he kept watch that night. One bullet entered the car on a level with Harry's head about a foot and a half to the right. Harry isn't too sure what happened after that, because he thinks he ducked so hard his head got caught between the clutch and brake pedals! Anyway, he ducked, and immediately thereafter there was a burst at the house in which several people were sleeping. One was an over-night visitor from Michigan who was spending a quiet night in the country. Just before retiring, he laid his hat on a table beside his bed. When he woke to the sound of shots, a bullet had come through the window, passed through his hat, across the foot of his bed, splintered through the front door, across the front porch and imbedded itself several inches in a porch post. Next day the gentleman had no inclination to extend his visit, feeling that he'd seen enough of the Old South. He wanted to leave his hat with us as evidence, but we suggested he wear it home, without telling whether or not his head was in it at the time, as evidence of warm Southern hospitality. It was good experience, too, teaching him always to remove his hat before retiring.

Another bullet crashed through the wall about a foot above the head of Ross Anderson who was asleep in the next room. It passed over him, across the room and through an ironing board. The next bullet, a tracer, came through at the foot of his bed and set fire to the curtains, which were quickly extinguished. Seven bullets in all hit the house and others made quite a display as they streaked across the open fields.

Three nights later, on Friday, Feb. 1, about 9:15 P.M., two cars came from the direction of Americus and opened fire with shot-guns. About 10 or 12 blasts were fired into the main cluster of residences. Some of the children, who were playing on the lighted volley-ball court, were sprinkled with shot, but none hurt. One shot, presumed by Sheriff Fred Chappell to be a .22 rifle bullet, came through the window of the Browne house and narrowly missed their oldest daughter, Lora Ruth. Lead from the shots pelted down upon the roof of several houses, but no further damage was done.

All of this, coupled with the recent destruction of the Roadside Market and the burning of one of our houses, has had its effect on the community. It has seemed good to evacuate several families to safer surroundings. By the time you receive this, Gil and Marguerite Butler will be at Macedonia Community and other families will be at still another community. We would like to give more details about this very important step, but do not feel that we can at the moment. Needless to say, this parting of our fellowship hurts more deeply than any physical suffering which might come to us, yet we know it is for the sake of Christ. It was no easy decision to make, and came only after deep searching for the Will of God. In due time He will weave it into His pattern of victory.

While the storms of violence have been shaking us, we have also been witnessing the gathering of the winds of God. The Georgia Council of Churches and the United Church Women have endorsed the resolution of the Americus Ministerial Association condemning violence and lawlessness. A few days ago the Macon (Ga.) Ministerial Association came out with a strong statement affirming the Americus Ministers' stand and calling on the Governor and other state officials to restore law and order and end the violence. Many other church bodies and groups, both within the state and over the nation, are speaking out. We have received copies of many letters which have been sent to the President, Attorney General Brownell and to Congressmen.

Newspapers are beginning to express the aroused indignation of the people over the state. The Atlanta Constitution, largest Georgia daily said on Feb. 2,

VIOLENCE HAS NO PLACE IN SUMTER'S PROBLEM

"Action is long overdue in halting violence aimed at the Koinonia Farm at Americus. The controversial project in recent months has been the scene of two dynamitings

and two shootings. There also have been mysterious fires in the area.

Church leaders and others are duly concerned. The Georgia Council of Churches has passed a resolution approving the Americus and Sumter County Ministerial Assn.'s action in deploring the violence.

If the farm is violating the law it should be closed by legal means. If it is operating in compliance with the law it should have the law's protection.

Violence serves no useful purpose in any event. Such strong-arm tactics merely weaken the state's prestige at a time when it is trying to attract new industries, solve its educational problems and to progress generally.

Hoodlums who perpetrated the lawless deeds in Sumter County should be brought to justice. If the county cannot handle the situation, the state should."

THE MACON (Ga.) NEWS, in a strong editorial entitled "STOP VIOLENCE AT KOINONIA" called upon the state to "put the full resources of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation" into an effort to "catch the hoodlums who have smeared the good name of Sumter County."

Many other papers over the state, particularly the COLUMBUS LEDGER-ENQUIRER and the GAINESVILLE DAILY TIMES, have given good coverage, and seem determined to shed the light on some people who work chiefly in the dark. We believe that this aroused public opinion will make itself felt, and that Georgia, and particularly Sumter County, will rise up and purge itself of its lawless elements, and prove to the world that its citizens are law-abiding people. Our state and county will be stronger for having faced and overcome this problem.

Now just a few words about the economic blockade mentioned in our previous letters. It still continues to spread and become more intense. Last week a wholesale hardware company refused to sell through a distant dealer who has been supplying us. A mechanic, who has a small shop here and has thus far defied the pressure upon him, finally gave in. The Sumter Livestock Barn, which is owned and operated as a public facility by the taxpayers of the county (including Koinonia), requested that we neither buy nor sell livestock there. (But we have not yet been exempt from paying taxes!)

Some problems, however, have been solved. The gasoline boycott has been by-passed by the purchase of underground storage tanks, so that now we can have gasoline brought in by the trailer load. We can now get poultry feed direct from a mill, but we're still having difficulty selling our eggs. Our 4000-hen flock is now down to 1000, and eggs are backing up. We do have butane gas at present, and another source of credit has been arranged to take the place of loans refused by the local bank.

The most difficult, perplexing and plaguing problem facing us at present is that of insurance. In this open letter, we cannot give you details other than to let you know that it is very URGENT AND IMPORTANT. We'll be glad to correspond about it.

Last night, Feb. 9, just before midnight, a wooden cross wrapped with oil-saturated burlap was burned in front of one of our houses. The "Klan" arrived in one battered pick-up truck (of which we have a good description), quickly stood the cross up beside the road and ignited it. Unexpectedly, a passing car with two men in it approached, and the "Klan" unable to stand its ground in the presence of so much light, beat a hasty and speedy retreat.

Last week our joy over the birth of Alma and Mary Jackson's first baby was turned to sorrow when the little boy died the next day. Burial took place here at the farm. Mary is doing well, and will be up soon.

MAIL ORDER NEWS. —

Because of the many difficulties here, we are terribly behind in filling orders, and ask your patience. Due to the destruction of our meat-curing facilities, we have nothing to offer now except pecans and shelled peanuts. Write for price lists.