

With the easing of tensions here, we have been able to resume to some degree our relations with people outside Koinonia. During the height of the violence, both whites and Negroes were afraid to have anything to do with us and we found ourselves "holed in" for the duration. This severing of bonds was perhaps the most painful of all our experiences, and we rejoice exceedingly that it seems to be passing away.

For many years Koinonia has maintained a "cow library," that is, we've kept on hand more milk cows than we could use, so that any needy family could check one out, keep her until she went dry, and return her for a fresh one. A few months ago a neighbor's family cow died, and he checked one out from our "library." When news of this reached the young people of the Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis, they decided to raise funds to buy a replacement cow for the family. How they did it, we don't know, but those kids scraped together \$150, and a certain Negro family now owns a high-producing milk cow.

The Temple Youth of Temple Ohabei Shalom of Brookline, Mass., had what they called "M-Day," during which they washed windows, baby sat, mowed lawns, cleaned attics, repaired furniture, and did other jobs. In this way they raised \$186, to which the National Federation of Temple Youth added \$300. It has not been decided yet how this will be used, but we hope to find some way to use it for the reconciliation and healing of the people of this County. We feel that perhaps we are now emerging from the non-violent phase in which we simply refused to return evil for evil, and are entering the phase of active love in which we must find means to "overcome evil with good."

A few miles from us, in a little shanty, live an aged Negro couple. The husband is paralyzed from his waist down. The wife has a crippled leg, and a few days ago she fell and broke her arm. John Gabor has been to them as a son, and has made three or four trips a day to see that they have food, water, wood, and cover for their beds. Lee Peery has devised an excellent stove which we make in our shop from a 55-gal. oil drum and some angle irons, and one of these has been installed in the cabin, making quite a difference in the comfort of the old people. John has also kept a watchful eye on a widow and her six children, as well as other needy people about us. To be able to work with these people once again without causing them severe reprisals is both a relief and a joy.

But things continue to happen to remind us that the struggle is not over. This fall we needed about 200 tons of ground limestone for the clover which we were planting for winter grazing. Being in an optimistic mood, we thought this might be a good time to offer this business to the local lime dealer who had hitherto supplied us. He at first said he was afraid to deliver it to us because of reprisals, but later offered to sell to us if we would make a public statement that we did not believe in integration. Since our immediate purpose was to buy lime and not sell our souls, we declined his offer.

We then placed an order with a distant company. When the first carload arrived at the tracks the local dealer, whose name is Mr. Harold Austin, was quite angry that we had been able to get it elsewhere, and immediately contacted the company and brought such pressure to bear on them that they would not ship the remaining cars. We ordered from still another company, and the lime was delivered, though we had to unload it amid taunts and threats. When the car was pushed onto the unloading trestle, we found that so much lime, gravel, coal, etc. had accumulated under it that we could not get the truck under the unloading chute. So Paul Goodman and Lee Peery took their picks and shovels and cleared away enough of the accumulated debris to allow the truck to pass under the chute. Mr. Austin saw them, and soon appeared with the sheriff, accusing them of stealing about two tons of his lime. Paul and Lee explained that what they had removed could hardly be called lime, but since ground limestone costs only four dollars a ton and in order to avoid an argument, they offered to restore any amount he might specify. He said he wasn't interested in the lime, but felt that it was his Christian duty to arrest anyone he caught stealing. So he swore out a warrant for them and the sheriff put them in the County jail. Their bond was set at \$300 each.

Under Georgia law, a sheriff may refuse to accept cash or the property of a corporation as bond, but may require real estate of a private individual. This he did, which meant that Koinonia was unable to get the men released. While they were still in jail, we phoned Mr. Austin in an effort to get him to withdraw the charges. He adamantly refused on the ground that he wouldn't be doing his Christian duty if he failed to prosecute. We explained that Christians should not go to court to settle their differences, but he said he was sure Jesus wouldn't have anything to do with thieves. Then he reminded us that he was just as good a Christian as we were. "That," we said, "is for God to judge." He said he had read in the Bible that God was going to judge and would separate the sheep from the goats, but he didn't think that "all of you characters at Koinonia would even be goats." We then asked if he would please pray for us, that we might at least be elevated to the goat-herd. He said he would think about it. Paul and Lee remained in jail.

Next day a white farmer who lives about five miles from us heard about the situation and signed the bond and the men were freed. But a few weeks later he asked to be released from the bond because he was applying for a loan on his farm. So Lee and Paul reported to the sheriff, were put back in jail. We could find no one else in the County who had property and who was willing to go their bond, but did finally succeed in getting a professional bondsman and the sheriff of another county to certify bond to the local sheriff, and once again Lee and Paul went free. Their trial, on charges of larceny, will be held the second Monday in January. The maximum penalty under such charges is one year or \$1000 or both.

Because of such difficulties in securing lime, fertilizer, fuel for our tractors and other necessary supplies, we have decided to suspend practically all of our crop production and set our land out in trees. This will leave us with cattle and hogs, which together with the pecan shelling plant, will probably support us. Actually this won't be such a drastic change for us, for we had already given up production of everything except corn and peanuts and small grains. We feel that in the long run, planting trees will prove to be a good venture. Perhaps we should have done it long ago.

Some of us here are not satisfied with our newsletter and feel that it should contain more than just news, that more space should be given to ideas, beliefs, etc. What do you think? Perhaps part of it could be used for answering your questions about Koinonia or community life in general or about any other aspect of the Christian faith. Tell us what you would like to hear from us.

--from all of us at Koinonia

Koinonia Community

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