

HIGHLANDER WORKSHOP NEWS

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LIKE A MIRROR

Highlander is like a mirror--to reflect the community and group it comes into. It helps us see things about ourselves and our condition that are hard to see by ourselves. Like a mirror, by spreading awareness and information about the way things are--and ways conditions can be changed. People who participate in the group sessions share their experiences, learn how to analyze them and learn from them -- learn ways of making concrete solutions to all sorts of vague, general complaints and injustices they feel. What is so wonderful about Highlander programs is that resource people brought in do not dominate sessions and spread propaganda about general things, they ask, listen, and then make specific comments to help with experiences local people talk about. We sense this and realize that their comments are important. If sessions are going to have any meaning and accomplish anything, then people vitally need to share thoughts and feelings.

By bringing people together, sharing information and concern, the Highlander group serves as a catalyst, to stir things up and get them moving. As a catalyst is used in chemistry to help reactions occur faster, Highlander

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MUSIC FESTIVAL

Guy Carawan and Bernice Reagan directed a music workshop at Highlander, Oct. 1 - 3. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the heritage of southern music and plan for setting up festivals across the south to encourage indigenous performers. Evening sessions were opened to the public.

It was a folk music workshop. As soon as I entered the room and looked around, it was obvious which of us were local citizens. We stuck out like sore thumbs with our stiff backs, strained expressions and conventional dress.

The program came from persons sitting around on chairs and floor who wore on their faces an openness, a relaxation, an honesty of expression like persons who have removed from their lives the energy consuming pretenses of our society. The program that developed was such as I have never seen before--a progression of talented people revealing cultural heritage thru narrative, facial expression, body posture, song, dance, music, rhythm, gaiety, sadness, pride, peace, wisdom--heart wisdom, forgiveness, acceptance, anguish, courage, fearlessness, determination, vitality--such vitality--all of this and honesty always!

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VOTER EDUCATION INTERNSHIP PROJECT

The 1965 Southwide Voter Education Internship Project was held at the Sea Island Progressive Club Center on Johns Island, South Carolina. Two training workshops were the core of the one month project. Esau Jenkins, Project Director, reported 42 students enrolled for the training workshops, and 921 enrolled in 18 "floating workshops" in the counties surrounding Charleston.

Mr. Jenkins listed Benjamin Mack and Bernice Robinson as Workshop Directors and 17 local leaders as resource persons. Highlander Board members Charles Gomillion, B. R. Brazeal, Esau Jenkins, Stewart Meacham, Bernice Robinson, and Conrad Browne worked with the project.

Two significant developments were introduced, Mr. Jenkins said. 1. Internship was redefined. Instead of living in homes of community leaders and observing community activities, students lived at the Sea Island Center and actively engaged in projects such as house to house canvassing, assisting community workshops and acting as observers at the registration office to see if any inequities occurred.

Close co-operating with the local Southern Conference on Political Education was reported. A community canvass, set up by SCOPE, was one of the internship experiences. One student said, "House to house canvassing helped me to see we had to get out and line people up if they was to register. It helped me to get over shyness."

2. Floating Workshops were added to demonstration Citizenship and Voter Education Schools. Interns developed programs out of

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WHAT IS HIGHLANDER

Highlander is a residential adult education Center. Its purpose is to promote adult education without discrimination as to race, color or creed, and to instruct people in the meaning and significance of the democratic process of this country. Highlander is seeking to help adults prepare themselves as responsible leaders and to assume their democratic rights as citizens of this country.

LIKE A MIRROR

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lander staff makes people—like molecules—react and change faster. They set people in movement, and, "like a snowball rolling down a snow-covered hill: (from a popular song in Fitzgerald), the movement "grows and grows." We all know we are still a small "snowball" and there are many others in the community that need to be reached and put in motion! So, we get into specifics again and try to come up with constructive solutions to problems of lack of unity, apathy and fear in Negro communities, no co-operation between whites and Negroes, and lack of information about community issues.

But, how do we learn to approach and solve problems? First, we are brought into the circle for discussion. Each says what he feels the answers are. No one is left out, because all are needed, young and old, men and women—needed to be vital links to keep the circle whole and united. With one person out, isolated, there is no circle, just a segment. Highlander not only aids people in discovering that everyone must participate in the circle of motion, but that their problems are not isolated, but linked together like a circle. Linking better education to better training to better jobs to better homes and back again to better education—and to better voters to better citizens to better representatives to better conditions.

We have discovered good circles—a circle

VOTER WORKSHOP

Reverend Franklin D. Rowe and Mr. Arthur Haynes, both former students of the Highlander Southwide Voter Education Internship Project directed a Voter Education Workshop in Fitzgerald, Ga. The Workshop, which enrolled 29 students, was held during the week of August 9-14. The directors reported lively discussion and close co-operation with the Ben Hill and Irwin County SCOPE Project.

Rev. Rowe reports that as a result of a demonstration registration canvass, 67 people were brought to register in one morning. Mr. Haynes reports that students attended revival meetings emphasizing that good citizenship means participating in the democratic process.

Highlander Board members, Lucy Montgomery and Conrad Browne were joined by several southwest Georgia Civil Rights leaders to make up the list of resource persons.

Rev. Rowe writes, "This is a changed community, thanks to Highlander, if we had not had the workshop here in August, we would have had a blow up.

"We registered over 500. The books are open for registration every day from 9 AM to 5 PM. We registered more people after Bill Randall (Macon, Ga. attorney) told in the workshop

of people and a circle of progressive movement. We have learned some circles are bad and should be broken; they are merely vicious cycles. How is the cycle of white power structures broken? By voting together, establishing co-operation among the Negro community, by involving churches and workers in problems that can only be solved thru unity and group strength.

What do we get from Highlander? Each person would have a different answer. One might say, "Self-introspection and community introspection." Another only, "We gotta move—I learned we gotta push people and wake up the sleepy ones." But no matter what words the spirit is the same, and that's what is important.

In my own words, I feel the Highlander Project is the most wonderful workshop I have participated in. I have never been with people and come up with so many constructive ideas during so short a time. But what's going to happen after Highlander leaves? All of us will be a little stronger, more concerned and more willing to implement ideas we come up with. And in the process, some have learned a lot about themselves—learned to open up more, share with others of themselves, and have felt more use and purpose in their lives. Highlander is a mirror that shows people the dignity that is theirs—which none can take away. What is this thing called Highlander? It's the "real nitty gritty" people themselves. -Judy Karas

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about how to get many who come to town on Saturday. So we stood on the street on Saturday and got over 100 to register.

". . . because we filed a complain the Ben Hill Hospital is now integrated. We desegregated eight grades in the formerly all white school. Didn't get but 12 to transfer. We are moving, maybe slow, but moving . . ."

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FREEDOM UNION

The Freedom Union Workshop was held at Highlander Center Oct. 14-20. Thirty-eight participants discussed possible ways and means by which people in the civil rights movement could bring fresh life into labor organizations in the South. Directors, Mendy Samstein and Walt Tillow, stated that most participants had little familiarity with unions and how they worked.

The workshop helped correct impressions that unions were monolithic—top dominated structures. Mr. Samstein reported concern about whether one could work effectively within labor without compromising what they stood for. The workshop closed with a discussion of what participants planned to do after the workshop. It was agreed that people needed more experience and understanding of unions and working people.

EXCERPTS WORKCAMP DIARY

- 4 -

SSOC WORKSHOP

8/6 - Our daily schedule is set—work from 7:30 to 10 when we have breakfast, work from 11 - 1. At this point swimming, shopping, etc., while two stay to guard camp and have lunch ready. Work again from 4:30 - 7. This way we work during the most agreeable times of the day.

8/9 - Peter got interviewed by a reporter of the Maryville-Alcoa Daily Times.

8/11 - Joel, Peter and Ray went to a Gospel Sing in a church over the other side of the valley. The singing was ecstatic (literally). We socialized afterward. . . A car fell off the mountain just where we went swimming. The crash was spectacular.

8/15 - Began peacefully. Went swimming at noon. Klan visited in afternoon. Joel talked to them about 20 minutes and seemed to be getting on quite well (we were in the cabin and didn't yet know they were KKK). We decided Joel probably knew someone they knew (Joel seems to know most people south of the Mason Dixon line). The group was noisy and had been drinking. They threatened to blow up the camp. They left but parked further down the road and hiked up the camp where they stole our sleeping bags. Meanwhile, Peter was walking to the camp oblivious that 4 Kluckers were stealing the bags. So we bombed up the mountain about 50 to catch him. A neighbor, armed with a couple of six-shooters which he has had for about 40 years and look like new camp up, but by the time we arrived the Kluckers were gone. Later we found the sleeping bags strewn in the woods. Peter and Ray kept watch, Val stayed at the cabin, Joel telephoned the law. We didn't need the sleeping bags that night and besides, Joel found a copperhead on his bed.

8/16 - Worked rather desultorily on the road. Slept a little better Monday nite though we took turns keeping watch.

8/17 - Slept at camp with our shoes on. Our reactions so good we could be awake and out of bed in 2 seconds flat. All it needed was a strange noise, etc.

Thanks for arranging our most satisfactory and instructional stay. A visit to Highlander is like returning to one's home and being surrounded by so many good people—an exceptional state in this country and in the south in particular. - Todd

Highlander students whose names are associated with the development of responsible citizenship across the South include Rosa Parks and Bennie Luchion, Alabama; Esau Jenkins, South Carolina; Charles Sherrod, F.R. Rowe, John Pendue, Georgia; Robert Parrisa and Stokley Carmichael, Mississippi; Jerome Smith, Virginia Collins, Louisiana; and Bill Cunningham and James Jones, Arkansas. In almost every community in the South, students of Highlander can be found in the forefront of civil rights activities.

Highlander Center depends on individual contributions to support its educational programs for people engaged in the ordinary business of life. Your support is needed to open opportunities for creative participation in a true democratic process. Contributions to Highlander Center are tax exempt. A return envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Two workshops were directed by Ed Hamlett at Highlander Center for the Southern Student Organizing Committee. The purpose of the workshop, the director reported, was to review factors which created SSOC, to plan for the coming year and to work out policies and organizational problems. Approximately 65 persons were enrolled in these workshops.

PROGRAM

Friday - HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT
EVALUATION OF SSOC

Saturday - CIVIL RIGHTS
VOTING RIGHTS
ROTC AND THE DRAFT

Sunday - THE SOUTH AND SOUTH AFRICA -
A Comparison
POVERTY - ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMS
VIOLENCE AND NON VIOLENCE

Monday - EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND PROBLEMS
UNIVERSITY REFORM

Tuesday - REPORTS
EVALUATION

WORKSHOP RECAPITULATION

Southwide Voter Education Internship Project
July 12 - August 6 (two periods)

White Communities Project Workshop
July 26 - 30

International Voluntary Service Workcamp
August 2 - 31

Fitzgerald Voter Education Workshop
August 9 - 14

Southern Student Organizing Committee
August 27 - Sept. 7 (two periods)

Music Festival Workshop
October 1 - 3

Freedom Union Workshop
October 14 - 20

PROPOSED WORKSHOPS -

Nov. 14-20 Friends World College Appalachia and Civil Rights Seminars

Dec. 13-17 Mississippi Voter Education Project

Jan. 13-16 Union Workshop

Jan. 17-22 Voter Education and Community Leadership Workshop, Charleston

Jan. 24 - New Orleans, La. Voter Education Project
