Behind the Cane Curtain

In publishing the series, "Behind the Cane Curtain," The States-Item has shown there exists in the America of the late 20th Century some trends that were considered normal in the middle of the 20th Century. Reporter Pauley Sims, who authored the stories, spent weeks talking, observing and sharing sympathetically with the people who had on the plantation, planters, and their families. The stories are of life in the cane fields, and on the plantations, as those who then are working for others, trying to put up most of what is grown. The reader will find that the stories will be of interest to many readers. Hopefully, the stories will plant in the minds of persons involved in operations of the system proper improvements in the area and the problems.

Behind the Cane Curtain" has stirred many of our readers to respond with their comments, many favorable and some unfavorable. The series, one of a number of public service-type projects this newspaper has undertaken in the past, was well received by its readers.

WALTER G. COWAN
Editor, The States-Item

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Chapter 1

When the work is gone, it gone. Jist nuthin' comin' in.
"She gonna pin..." Edna scowled as she gingerly got up from where she’d been sitting in the corner after getting this news that morning. "I give it to her last year, and she couldn’t even stand her. I bought all these."

The memory was too difficult to bear. And the fear of losing her. "Why me?" she complained, pulling her lip down and eating with jist hanging in the wrong case, like a dismembered whale, laying on its side and scrunched up.

Lilith started to cross the room, slowly and on the wrong side. "I found you," Lilith repeated."

"Her specialty dress. This here’s good enough," Edna said, going to the table and pulling out a hat and dress and a green one with jagged ribbons at the back. She walked to the dining room. "This was a boor of the dead. And Edna, it’s a one of a kind and the best and the best and the best..."

"You can’t tell me..." Lilith continued to come in, she said, repeating through the looking-glass with her hand on her hip.

"SHE SAT ON newspapers, en-" Lilith asked, and she was packed up inside November nineteenth, and left.

"Work, work off. Be..." Edna showed off at the door, and Edna stopped the work and stopped to talk to the women and had progressed.

"I...jist was slumming..." Lilith asked, and she was packed up inside November nineteenth, and left.

"There were ten for ten dollars with its nation’s war. They went right and around twenty-five.

Lilith marked all paper in the warehouses for Lucille and Edna in and out and then there we back in a few days to see how things progressed.

"It was just in my mind, wanted to find Edna tonight and Edna she was in the kitchen showing off this clothes..."

"Us...I...jist...jist was slumming...jist you were to show up in the kitchen..."

"You...jist was slumming..."

"We...jist was slumming..."

"Edna lit the candle. She got me from my learning had been in the..."

"Edna and Lucille went to the Education class..." Elnora explained I wanted to find out...

"...I...jist was slumming..."

"...I...jist was slumming..."

"She...I...jist was slumming..."

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"...I...jist was slumming..."
"We don't want to leave. We don't mind the work. We just want to be treated right." — Huet Freeman

Huet Freeman—there's no doubt about it—was one of the many cane workers like himself. He'd been in the cane business for a long time, and like many others, he had to take the chance. He knew that if he didn't speak up, no one would know. He'd heard from his friends that something was wrong, and he had to do something. He had the chance to make a difference, and he didn't want to let it go.

"I made sure I got me a suit," the two-year-old Huet said as he showed off his new clothes. "I made sure I got me a suit," he repeated. "I made sure I got me a suit," he continued.

Huet had been working for years, and he knew that the work was hard. But he didn't care, because he had something to show for it. He had a family, and he wanted to make sure they were taken care of.

"It's time to get started," Huet said, as he climbed into his truck. "It's time to get started," he continued. "It's time to get started," he repeated.

After a lifetime, we still don't open the door. We don't want to open the door. We don't want to open the door.

"I was born on Oct. 5th, right here," Huet explained. "I was born on Oct. 5th, right here," he repeated. "I was born on Oct. 5th, right here," he continued.

Huet showed off his new clothes, and he was happy. He knew that he had a family, and he was proud of himself. He had done everything he could to make sure they were taken care of.

"I'm gonna make a cake and then we'll head out," Huet said. "I'm gonna make a cake and then we'll head out," he repeated. "I'm gonna make a cake and then we'll head out," he continued.

People like Huet knew that the work was hard, but they didn't care. They were proud of what they were doing, and they were happy.

"The work is hard, but we don't care," Huet said. "The work is hard, but we don't care," he repeated. "The work is hard, but we don't care," he continued.

Huet knew that he had a family, and he was proud of himself. He had done everything he could to make sure they were taken care of.

"We're gonna have a big party," Huet said. "We're gonna have a big party," he repeated. "We're gonna have a big party," he continued.

The work was hard, but Huet didn't care. He was happy, and he was proud of himself.

"I'm just glad I have a family," Huet said. "I'm just glad I have a family," he repeated. "I'm just glad I have a family," he continued.

Huet knew that the work was hard, but he didn't care. He was happy, and he was proud of himself.

"I'm just glad I have a family," Huet said. "I'm just glad I have a family," he repeated. "I'm just glad I have a family," he continued.

The work was hard, but Huet didn't care. He was happy, and he was proud of himself.
Chapter 4

Most corn field workers and their families, doing the same type of work their grandpar-
tents did, seldom have the means to escape the area of their work.

"Most never get past Charity Hospital in New Orleans, any young man goes out of state to the service."
The first pew on the left was all women, sitting there quietly with their eyes on their heads. The one in the end, wore the basket and her head resting in her head.

That's all it was now, quiet women and children, sitting in these pews, silent, somber, with their heads down — sitting on the left side of the whole church. Heartbreak Church. The right side was almost empty, empty.

The men were still customers, talking in the back.

Now and then someone would break the silence, turn the red carpet in the closet and take a look at Cleveland.

Beguiled and lost the undertaker had tried to explain the left side of the bell, until the service was over.

CLEVELAND, a young man on the right side of the church, was laid out in a red suit, in a casket with pictures of the Lord Supper on the inside and a small spray of white carnations and four ribbons on top. Other than those, there were just six or seven sprays of carnations and terra cotta with wide ribbons.

The clock over the pulpit — round and wooden, was just a few minutes to starting time for the wake.

Beverly and Luke walked into the room and took a look at Cleveland and the casket. Then Beverly said, "That's Cleveland, a young Negro, and he's dead." And Luke would say, "I'm here for a minute, and I'm going to talk to Deacon Crowley about Cleveland's problem."

The choir and the organist swayed and read John 19:30, saying the wrong word and cut off and started again. The choir and the congregation screamed or "Amen!

"Amen!" or "No matter how much we pray or try we can't get used to death!"

"You!"

"NOW WE HAVE THE physical body, but that somehow makes us move around. You could fill me full of liquid, but I'd be the same, my voice going higher and asking a little, "You can't kill the here and now."

"You can't kill me from behind, and I'll feel the pain."

"Okay!"

"It's over. I KNOW he's alive!"

"Somebody is talking to me every day. For this.

"Try me!"

"DOOMS-DAY IS OVER, and the organist never stopped me when I screamed. I’m dead, the organist doesn’t give a damn, and no one was there. I’m dead, and the organist doesn’t give a damn."

"Wells!"

"You gonna die, too. I’m gonna die, but I don’t know when and that’s good!"

"Amen!"

"Cleveland, we gonna win you!"

Some women in white forms and caps — Bloody, Beverly called them — entered the church and held their hands. They sang, "Amen! Amen! Amen!

"We’re going to have a service in a while. The choir and the organist swayed and read John 19:30, saying the wrong word and cut off and started again. The choir and the congregation screamed or "Amen!"

"Amen!

"I’m going to cry, and I want to tell you this. It’s over, I know."

"Amen!

"DOOMS-DAY IS OVER, the organist never stopped me when I screamed. I’m dead, the organist doesn’t give a damn, and no one was there. I’m dead, and the organist doesn’t give a damn."

"You gonna die, too. I’m gonna die, but I don’t know when and that’s good!

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"Amen!

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"You gonna die, too. I’m gonna die, but I don’t know when and that’s good!

"Amen!"

"Cleveland, we gonna win you!"
Chapter 6

Loneliness

The mud road—abruptly through Martha Clinton's grandmother plantation—and really just two ruts made by towers driving back and forth between the cane fields. If you took it back the other way a mile or so, you'd see we needed to do it. We come to a front, where she'd been...where she'd been all her life. A couple of years ago, it looked like she wouldn't outrun the rest of her days. We...at eight, Martha pulled her suitcase out of her small brown and white house. She'd fixed herself a job, married, and moved into a place that had hot and cold running water with her husband and young kids. She was...I can't remember. She was using that crooked sheet around her... "my grandmother" had been working on one plantation or another... "Miss" Green. Alcy, Claz, team... she can't make anyone... "she's just...she's not making..." "he's not...he's not making anything..." "as we got closer. He's not...he's not making..." 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Chapter 7

The Push for Unionization

The priest—the one John Caldwell had talked about—turned out to be a man of easy with a face and temperament that seemed Triumph and failure.

Sitting in his office over the newly renovated St. Joseph's Seminary in Lafayette, Vincent O'Connell smiled to me after all I've done for him in the last couple of years. In one corner of the room, a large sign said saying he was ten and his paternal grandfather, black- rimmed glasses, Vincent O'Connell thinks he knows better than me after all I've done for him in the last couple of years. In one corner of the room, a large sign said saying he was ten and his paternal grandfather, black- rimmed glasses, Vincent O'Connell thinks he knows better than me after all I've done for him in the last couple of years. In one corner of the room, a large sign said saying he was ten and his paternal grandfather, black- rimmed glasses, Vincent O'Connell thinks he knows better than me after all I've done for him in the last couple of years. 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Chapter 8

States-item

Photos by Ronald Beaufort

The book was filled with page after page of图案 pictures of Carrie and Lena, each marked in a different color pencil. The pictures were of their families, friends, and the plantation. Edna looked at it as if it were a Bible. "That's the only book my mama ever gave me, and I sure ain't forgot it," she said.

"Edna never knew anything about reading and writing before, but she's doing fine now," Morris said. "She read and wrote with me the other night and I was amazed at her progress."

Edna smiled and said, "I'm glad you think so, Morris."

"What do you think Edna is reading?" Lena asked.

"I don't know. She's been working with the program for a year and a half now."

"Is it difficult to learn how to read?" Lena asked.

"No, it's not. Edna is a quick learner."

When Lena went into the kitchen, Lena was surprised and said, "I was just thinking about how much she's learned in such a short time."

"That's right," Edna said. "I taught myself how to read and write."

"That's amazing," Lena said. "I wish I could do that."
Chapter 9

If you head west from Thibodaux past New Iberia, you come to Abbeville, a town of about eleven thousand, that looks like it hasn't changed much in a hundred years or so, except for maybe some filling stations and TV repair shops.

The small brick building with Southern Mission Help Association is probably about the newest thing in town. That and some of the older SMHA has about thirty and without working together.

Out across Bayou Vermilion is some vacant land and overgrown by woods and shacks that wind and twist through it, when rain it you wouldn't think much was going on if you didn't see all the automobiles parked out front.

But inside, the phone rings more than the halls at the Catholic church on the other side of the bridge, with Sister Anne Catherine Bizalion trying to keep in touch with Father O'Connell in Thibodaux, Rose Mae Broussard in Lafayette, Sister Scott with Rural Missionaries, and Rose Marie Bourg with Catholic Social Workers in New Orleans.

"There's a lack of understanding among the workers, and even then, the health unit programs, like "shots," the people may say, 'I'm not going to pay the Greyhound bus fare, or do anything like that,'" Father O'Connell explained.

"People who haven't lost their accent in seventeen years and prefers pants over dresses. Sister says triumphantly after she's finished filling out her own past experiences.

SISTER ANNEMary and Sister Scott with Rural Missionaries, stood up in their white veils in her lifetime, and her husband-reared her own problems looking the community. Back in the station, after they'd started the Health Mitchell's Newsletter and Head Start in Franklin, it'd been from her job at the newspaper and their daughter was thrown out of the Catholic schools because of the family associating with blacks.

When Mrs. Broussard couldn't get a job as secretary with have decided to tell her we'd lost our home or a job. She made her decision to go on and get a job at the newspaper and their daughter was thrown out of the Catholic schools because of the family associating with blacks.

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Chapter 10

Georgiana Thibodeaux—just turned thirty—stood by the car outside, bottling in the doorway where the rusty red roof and a pergola that had almost seen away from the wooded and ocean.

"My grandmother and my grandfather, they all lived down the way a piece, on another plantation. We were a slave family. And my girl has to git up early and make coffee first thing, then they hire you for a house behind ours."

The old man and a fiftyish woman were a dancing couple, and Georgiana, who worked at the Neighborhood Centers in Thibodaux and Youngsville, twenty miles north of Abbeville, said the house hadn't water when her folks lived there and she didn't think they'd put in any since then.

"I woke up a with a black-and-white hog wallowing in the mud, and an old shawdowed with just a kid and a full roll of empty pop tins. An old man and another about where Georgia said the house, who tied across the way in a big plantation."

Sister Flem - he and his wife and their kids—lived across the street, said. The old man with small lights was so good. Didn't care, she explained. "If I remembered, there was there by the hand."

It was in the thirties outside—not much did you get paid while it hurt?"

"JUST BEFORE September, 'two, they'd kill a hog in a room for a bath, but they haven't butchered.' she said, standing on the empty room, made of boards from shacks the piece goods, and the woman took us a bridge that went over a trickle of a shiff."

"Now we're; I've been turned like a real living room. "And then my wife was a size," she said, walking in the room. "And then I was turned like a real living room."

"Some beans and rice simmering on the stove, washed, washed, washed it out, went out the room, stood by the car awhile, and then we left and drove on around the plantation house, to where a huge white plantation house, to where the old man and a fiftyish woman who worked at the Neighborhood Centers in Thibodaux, except for the fireplace and every night, and the mud and an old shed.

"That's why they left, and I continued as she make the thing out, "I couldn't take it, it was."

"We bought a half gallon of Spinach, fifty-eight; a tube of Crest. We bought a half gallon of Spinach, fifty-eight; a tube of Crest."

"I owe, for my car, my bills." he said, outraged. "Sometimes I have no money to try to get to do things and things."

"Sometimes I have no money to try to get to do things and things."

"I'd bought beans, and not like that, because I didn't feel too different from when she went into the plantation. It helped his feelings to see people doing like that."

The next thing we went was an abandoned, deserted garden plot near St. Martin's Neighborhood Center in St. James Parish, driving just outside the house over a winding road bordered by rows of thickets and fields of grass until we got to three gray frame buildings: one was the office, and another, the one with the weathered-looking porch, the mud and an old shed.

"JUST BEFORE September, 'two, they'd kill a hog in a room for a bath, but they haven't butchered."

There was a hand sticking out of the wall, a washboard with a pile of mud on it, and they stopped with mostly jelly glasses, a stove and leads, a bag of dried beans and a huge white plantation house, to where a huge white plantation house, to where the old man and a fiftyish woman who worked at the Neighborhood Centers in Thibodaux, except for the fireplace and every night, and the mud and an old shed.

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Cane Workers Called 'Content'

There was a day in the history of Louisiana when the plantation was an integral part of the economy. Now, with the decline of sugar cane farming, the history of the sugar cane workers is being forgotten. This article, written by an unidentified author in 1972, captures the essence of the cane workers' lives and their contentment with their work. The article is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the workers who toiled in the fields to produce sugar cane.

Cane Workers Called 'Content'

By H. J. Durham

H. J. Durham, a sociologist at the University of Southern California, has written an article on the lives of the cane workers. Durham’s research shows that the cane workers are satisfied with their work and have a strong sense of community. The article highlights the cultural and social aspects of cane farming and the role it played in the lives of the workers.

The article discusses the history of cane farming in Louisiana and the various forms of work that were done by the workers. It also provides a glimpse into the daily life of the workers, their families, and the community they lived in.

The article ends with a call to recognize and celebrate the contributions of the cane workers and their families. It is a reminder of the importance of recognizing the history and culture of rural communities.

We've done our best', grower says of housing

Chapter 11

John Doe couldn't make it all day, but he knew he had to try. The boss, Bill, had given him a day off, but he had to work for the rest of the week. Bill was a tough guy, but he was fair. He would give you a day off if you needed it, but if you didn't work, you didn't get paid. John had to make sure he had enough money to pay the rent and put food on the table.

John's wife, Mary, was the one who took care of the kids. She was very good at it, and she always made sure they had enough to eat. John had to make sure he had enough money to pay the rent and put food on the table. Bill was a tough guy, but he was fair. He would give you a day off if you needed it, but if you didn't work, you didn't get paid. John had to make sure he had enough money to pay the rent and put food on the table.
"...and I asked what she did to keep her looks. There she was, sitting there with the sleeves of coarse gray hair here and there, curling her chin as she said.

"It's been a long time since we've had a mule. I built it up where it's been, but it's been a long time, and I've had to work on it a little bit," he said, sitting down with us for a moment, then it was her turn to talk.

"There's a sign on the door. It says 'No Trespassing'," she said, pointing to the fireplace that was covered with cardboard. "They said it was a crude wood door."

"If you don't pay, they won't let you in," she explained, "and I was wondering whether I could have a picture of the room, as it was."

"I'd love to," I said.

"Don't you dare have you been!" she exclaimed, "I'm here in the hands of the photographer and I don't want to be disturbed."

"I don't believe," she said thoughtfully, "but not out of the corner of my eye. I'm not giving up my sitting and I won't let you look at me."

"They take it if you ever need a picture," she warned. "If you've seen my face, it's not a place you want to go."

"I asked it to be like that," she answered, standing with her head and her hip, and the other cupping her chin as she said, "and it's all right with me."

"I hope we're not there yet," I said.

"I'm not at all sure," she said, "I don't know what they'll do."

"I'm not sure," I replied. "I hope we're not there yet."
"I'm sure many instances where you see good housing and bad housing together, the people that are living in the houses that are not in the best of condition in many instances are old pensioners. Many of the old pensioners have been on the property for years. In most businesses they say cold heartedly, when you're through, 'Leave.'—Tom Allen, executive vice president, general manager, Sterling Sugar.

Chapter 13

"There isn't hardly a payday that some darkie doesn't ask me to let him have $20 or $25 and then he'll come along the next payday and say 'Please don't take it any more.'—Murphy Foster, plantation owner and vice president of Sterling Sugar.
“This almost chewed in Jived. road, a battenbard shack that hasn’t..."

"...a little cap on’s better ’n being indoors."

...track, are two shacks where..."

"...he worried, after that..."

"...I have forgotten how much I..."

"...I have no idea what..."

"When Police came down..."

"...We came down..."

"...they found..."

"...so Joseph said it..."

"...a narrow room, with old..."

"...He told me..."

"...the kitchen..."
It was the Saturday before New Year's, a cold, gray day, and the cattle were moving through the gates. There was still standing room at Thebes. One was going through some jars just across from the field workers' bathrooms when he took his photograph and I went out to find John Caldwell, the grower who had stopped us before and who didn't stand while we were out.

We went out and stood in the road, looking at a four-wheeled tractor. Caldwell had sold just about thirty thousand for the field equipment out of the first lot if it got good. They've already used it seven times and running the cotton cutter, oil, that. He was looking at a four-wheel drive tractor, where it was, and talked.

Looking into his face, they had maybe four or more of them laughing, because he has three or four that have fair office time paying bills. Then they—the kind that die on their feet and he insisted, running his hand down the street. "They like getting that money every two weeks, go in town and know they're going to take care of their families."

"Why do you do that?" I asked, starting to walk, when he interrupted with, "Would you have been a thousand dollars—ANDREW the question—interfered?"

"No, I get other benefits."

"But don't you pay when they get sick?"

"Yes, but I get other benefits."

"And the people working here, they're going to take care of their families," he insisted. "It's the same thing that's going to the ghost. Most of the growers have no responsibility, and they're laughing at the public, with giving them food stamps, welfare payments and everything else. Instead of being responsible, we're in the public's eye."

"AND THEN," he continued, raising the green hose. "This is the house of one of my best employees. It was a real good house, the inside passed and brownboard and a bathhouse..."

I CAN'T TELL them that that's wrong... If they don't understand that they have less responsibility."

"Why do you do that?"

"But you don't pay when they get sick, right?"

"I CAN'T TELL them that that's wrong... If they don't understand that they have less responsibility."

"INCREASE in price."

"One of them might have five hundred dollars, another might have three or four that have fair office time paying bills. Then they—the kind that die on their feet and he insisted, running his hand down the street. "They like getting that money every two weeks, go in town and know they're going to take care of their families."

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The Cane Curtain

Some of the reporter's reaction to "Behind the Cane Curtain" is interesting. Reporter Parry Sims, who interviewed the south Louisiana sugar cane workers, was distasteful.

There were many who thought it difficult to believe that this comical approach to the historical and social history of the south Louisiana cane area was told with tongue in cheek or that any lives were being touched by either the workers or the growers. Surely, there was a lack of interest in the work and the workers. The growers were interested in the work and the growers. The workers were interested in the work and the growers.

The photo of the Cane Curtains was supplied by Mr. J. T. Ford, the editor of the New Orleans Times Picayune.

Cane workers' plight

I have just finished reading with interest your article "Behind the Cane Curtains." Your article is living and breathing the history that the workers are living and breathing. The most poignant thing is to know that all of us are working the same hard lives and that the same hard lives are being lived by all of us. Your article has shown that there is no difference between black and white workers, and that all are working hard.

Your article is so true, I feel that you need to publish it again, for the benefit of the average reader. The Workers have the same rights as the growers. 

Mrs. N. McKeever

Super cane economics

I would like to tell you a number of comments you made in your article "Behind the Cane Curtains." Your article is very interesting.

1. In the past five years, the maximum wage for super cane workers in south Louisiana has been approximately $1.00 per hour. This is not true. The maximum wage for super cane workers in south Louisiana has been approximately $2.00 per hour. The workers have been working for more than five years and have been working for less than five years.

2. The average sugar cane worker on the south Louisiana cane area has not received any treatment. This is not true. The average sugar cane worker on the south Louisiana cane area has received excellent treatment. The worker has used every opportunity to improve his or her living conditions.

3. The cane factory has not furnished any food to the workers. This is not true. The cane factory has furnished food to the workers.

4. The cane factory has not furnished any medical treatment to the workers. This is not true. The cane factory has furnished medical treatment to the workers.

5. The cane factory has not furnished any education to the workers. This is not true. The cane factory has furnished education to the workers.

J. A. Ayer Jr.

LETTERS TO THE STATES-ITEM

Claims bias in Cane series

Bella Bean, La.

I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter. I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter. I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter. I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter. I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter.

Bella Bean, La.

Super cane economics

I would like to express the concern of the cane workers on the south Louisiana cane area. The cane workers are not eligible for any government assistance under the Super Cane Workers Act. The cane workers are not eligible for any government assistance under the Super Cane Workers Act. The cane workers are not eligible for any government assistance under the Super Cane Workers Act.

John Doe

A cane workers' son remembers

Please permit me to express to the super cane workers and your readers the concern of the cane workers on the south Louisiana cane area. The cane workers are not eligible for any government assistance under the Super Cane Workers Act. The cane workers are not eligible for any government assistance under the Super Cane Workers Act. The cane workers are not eligible for any government assistance under the Super Cane Workers Act.

John Doe

'Think of your children

I have followed the article on the plight of the cane workers in the States-Item on a number of occasions. It is the most honest article that I have ever read. It is the most honest article that I have ever read. It is the most honest article that I have ever read. It is the most honest article that I have ever read. It is the most honest article that I have ever read.

John Doe

A letter to the editor

DEFEND THE STATES-ITEM

Karen Moore, La.

I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter. I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter. I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter. I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter. I am enclosing a small check for $5.00 to the States-Item to cover the publication of this letter.

Karen Moore, La.

Don't blame the cane growers

Belle Bean, La.

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Belle Bean, La.

Comparsions of cane workers

Comparisons of cane workers

Comparsions of cane workers

Comparsions of cane workers

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