



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
for the ADVANCEMENT
of COLORED PEOPLE**

20 WEST 40th STREET
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

*The Day
They Changed Their Minds*



We would like to make it clear that this mass movement was not begun to bring economic suffering to the state but to bring to the realization of the citizens of North Carolina that the Negroes, who are also citizens of North Carolina, can no longer remain quiet and complacent and continue to accept such gross injustice from those who desire no change in old customs and traditions solely for the purpose of personal gain or because of the warped ideas which have been instilled in the minds of many responsible citizens.

— Open letter from students
of North Carolina A&T
College at Greensboro to
North Carolina Attorney
General Malcolm Seawell
February 15, 1960



OKLAHOMA CITY, 1958: "If we can't eat, we can study."

Negroes,
Sweet and docile,
Meek, humble and kind:
Beware the day
They change their minds!*

— LANGSTON HUGHES

A single Negro demanding service at a Dixie Jim Crow lunch counter invites humiliation and possibly violence.

A dozen or a score seated at a southern lunch counter

* Reprinted with permission of author from "Selected Poems of Langston Hughes," Alfred Knopf, 1959.



MONTGOMERY: A southern hoodlum slugs from the rear.

create a problem.

A thousand young Negro students (supported in some instances by a few sympathetic white persons) quietly and resolutely asking for coffee and sandwiches at lunch counters in a score of cities across the Southland signal a loud and insistent challenge to an outmoded, anti-democratic and un-Christian way of life.

The difference is in volume.

The police, representing state power, and the mob, representing primitive emotionalism, traditionally know



NASHVILLE: White demonstrator also challenges southern justice.

how to deal with the lone Negro who rejects his white-assigned "place." At best, they give him the "bum's rush"; at worst they lynch him.

But what to do with hundreds, even thousands, of calm, unterrified young Negroes, backed up by millions of Americans of all races who abhor discrimination? That's the problem with which the South is today faced.

For the individual Negro — the blackjack, the "jug," the lynch mob.

For 1,000 Negroes standing firm and united — what?

Fines and prison are not the answer. They can raise the money for fines and are willing to go to jail.

Lynch law is not the answer. In 1960, the nation will not countenance the lynching of 1,000 Negroes.

When and where and how did this revolt of Negro youth against the color bar begin?

On February 1, 1960, four students of the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College in Greensboro took seats at a lunch counter and asked for service. They were refused.

But this was not the beginning. Two years before, in 1958, youth units of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Oklahoma City launched a carefully planned campaign of sit-in demon-

strations, to secure service at lunch counters in chain stores. The movement spread to other cities in Oklahoma and to Wichita, Kansas. Success crowned this effort. In Oklahoma City alone, Negroes are now served at some 56 eating places which until 1958 barred them.

The Oklahoma City high school students discovered that group action secured results that individual action could not.

Following the success of the demonstrations in Oklahoma and Kansas, the NAACP, through its youth secretary, called upon youth groups throughout the country to take similar action.

What was started in Oklahoma City and renewed in Greensboro has spread like wildfire throughout the South

— to other cities in North Carolina, to South Carolina, Virginia, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, West Virginia and Texas.

In two North Carolina cities — Salisbury and Winston-Salem — Negro students have received service at regular lunch counters. Business leaders in San Antonio, Texas, voluntarily agreed on March 15 to serve Negro customers at lunch counters without discrimination. Elsewhere in the South the variety chain stores continue to refuse such service.

The sit-in tactic, however, was not the invention of these youngsters. NAACP branches, units of the Congress of Racial Equality and other groups in Cincinnati, Chicago, Detroit and other northern cities successfully

PORTSMOUTH: No sickle in sight — but the hammer is!



NASHVILLE: In the midst of chaos, a friend.



MONTGOMERY: Some pray while others hate on a Sunday afternoon.



used this method to gain service in downtown eating places in their home cities as early as the 1940's.

In an effort to stem the rising tide of student protest, Dixie officialdom hastened to pass new anti-trespass laws, to arrest, fine and jail the young people on a variety of charges from disorderly conduct to conspiracy to restrain trade. More than 1,000 demonstrators have been arrested in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

That these measures have not halted the drive is an indication of its depth. This is no passing college fad like the panty raids or the telephone booth jam. It has deep motivation and purpose.

For years, Negroes have patronized southern outlets of national variety store chains along with the local stores. For years, their money has been good enough to buy can openers, stationery, notions and the like.

For years, and even today, this same money wouldn't buy a mere hot dog in the same store for the same person if he happened to be a dark-skinned American.

Worse yet is the humiliating, one-sided pattern of life this callous practice dramatizes — a practice that goes further and deeper than any lunch counter.

The parents of today's students somehow endured and managed to live with this humiliation, as did their growing children.

Now — the day has come when they changed their minds!

The day has come when they are demanding *full* service or *none* at stores where they spend their money.

The day has come when they are demanding peaceably, firmly and loudly enough to be heard, their constitutionally guaranteed equality.

They have learned that what one can't do a thousand can.

These young people, tomorrow's leaders, are seeking much more than the opportunity to eat where and as others eat in public places. They seek self-respect, recognition and dignity.

They realize that these are not attainable within the framework of segregation. Accordingly, they seek the abolition of compulsory Jim Crow. And they are pre-



RICHMOND: The odds are three to one in favor of "southern justice." Victim is Mrs. J. M. Tinsley, wife of former Virginia NAACP president.

NEW ORLEANS: It's sort of natural that intelligent young people should worry about their future.





NEW YORK CITY: Southern student sit-in protest leaders hold strategy caucus with NAACP executives. From left: Lacey Streeter, North Carolina College; Miss Betty Johnson, Virginia Union University; NAACP Executive Secretary Roy Wilkins; NAACP Youth Secretary Herbert L. Wright.

pared to pay the price despite attacks by white hoodlums, arrests by police and convictions by courts.

Backing them up 100 per cent are the NAACP and other organizations and youths and adults of all races.

Local and state units of the NAACP have supplied legal aid, other counsel and guidance, and have posted bond and paid fines. The Association's national office has helped focus public attention on their campaign and stands prepared to supplement the aid of the local branches and to take the students' cases to the highest court, if necessary.

Support of the student protest movement has extended far beyond the borders of the Southland. The headquarters of the national chain stores have been flooded with protests from all sections of the nation. Their non-southern outlets have been picketed in protest. Editorials have condemned the refusal of chain store owners to abandon their Jim Crow practices.

The southern Negro students have changed their minds. They have decided that

SEGREGATION MUST GO NOW!

(PHOTOS BY WIDE WORLD PHOTOS, U.P.I. AND CECIL LAYNE)