

NAACP
DIVISION OF RESEARCH
AND INFORMATION

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Expanded Racial Defense Policy



MEMORANDUM

March 16, 1960

To: All Officers of NAACP State Conferences, Branches, Youth Councils and College Chapters

From: Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary

Subject: EXPANDED RACIAL DEFENSE POLICY

Yesterday, March 15, it was publicly announced by F. W. Woolworth, S. S. Kresge, S. H. Kress and W. T. Grant stores that they will continue their policy of refusing to serve Negro customers at lunch counters in their stores in Southern states.

Yesterday, March 15, the police forces of Southern states arrested more than 500 Negro students who were protesting the lunch counter policies of the chain stores.

Orangeburg, S.C., police used tear gas and fire hose on Negro students as the young people were walking peacefully along the streets **before** they had reached the retail business district.

Students numbering 350 were arrested in Orangeburg and held in a stockade. Others were arrested in Rock Hill and Columbia, S.C.

In Atlanta, Ga., 77 students protesting the lunch counter policies of the chain variety stores were arrested by police.

Gov. Ernest F. Hollings, Jr., of South Carolina, has stated that these protests against lunch counter policies will be crushed even though technically no law is being violated. Gov. S. Ernest Vandiver of Georgia has echoed the policy of Gov. Hollings.

Gov. John Patterson of Alabama is the original "get tough" Southern governor. Protesting Negro students have been expelled from Alabama State College in Montgomery, the capital, and the chief of police has urged the governor to close down the college.

Yesterday, March 15, in the House of Representatives in Washington, Congressmen played games with the civil rights bill, with Southern Democrats and many Republicans jockeying for partisan advantage.

It is apparent that the full power of Southern state governments, including special laws rushed through the legislatures, as well as state, local and county police forces, is being used to support chain variety stores in their anti-Negro lunch counter policies, and that at the very height of this persecution the Federal government, through the Congress of the United States, is steadfastly refusing to legislate adequate relief.

Thus, in their campaign for equality and human dignity, Negro Americans are forced to fall back upon their own resources, spiritual, economic and political.

Therefore, under the provocations of March 15, cited above, and in accordance with the clearly expressed consensus of the Board of Directors at its meeting March 14 to support fully the protest demonstrations aimed at the humiliating policy of chain variety stores and to resist persecution connected therewith, all organized units of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People are advised that a racial self-defense policy on an expanded scale is in effect as of the date of this memorandum.

The policy is to withhold retail patronage from all units of the chain variety

stores in all sections of the country which maintain a policy in their Southern stores of refusing to serve Negro customers at lunch counters on the same basis as other customers.

This withholding policy includes, also, Thalheimer's Department Store in Richmond, Va., which was the first to swear out individual warrants for students by name and where, outside the store, Richmond police, using a huge police dog, dragged the wife of a National Board member off to jail. This policy does **not** include stores in several Southern cities which have changed their practices and are now serving Negro customers at their lunch counters.

NAACP officers will call meetings of their executive committees at the earliest possible hour after the receipt of this memorandum to devise plans for the conducting of the local withholding campaigns.



A supplementary memorandum on procedures included instructions on organizing the local campaign and conducting peaceful picketing and a warning against attempts of Communists and related groups to infiltrate the movement and join the picket lines. "Every reasonable and firm effort should be used to prevent such intrusion," the memorandum asserts.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**
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