

The following is an account by Beth Taylor of her recent experiences in connection with desegregation activities in Greensboro, N.C. Beth will probably be in Meeting June 2, if anyone wishes to discuss this further after Meeting for Worship.

I have just received a letter from Larry Miller suggesting that I relay to you the recent happenings in my life. I don't really know quite what to say, but shall first give the details of the incident and then the reactions of this in-name-only Quaker institution.

On Thursday, May 9, Bill Thomas, local chairman of CORE in Greensboro, called to notify me of a stand-in demonstration at McDonald's--a drive-in hamburger place--that Saturday. Two other freshmen and I went in. The turn-out was small because little interest was aroused by the demonstration. Four CORE leaders, negroes, were arrested for refusing to leave the property when asked by the manager in the presence of a police officer. The four were released Monday on bail.

Monday night we went to a CORE meeting. Tuesday Reverend Stanley, minister from A & T College, one of two Greensboro negro colleges, Dick Ransey, AFSC College Secretary from High Point, and two negro students came to speak to Guilford students. As permission to meet on campus would be difficult to get, and not assured, Aldean Pitts had us meet in the Friend's Church. It was announced that night that McDonald's had been desegregated, largely due to the fact that white students, as well as negro, had participated. This was a major victory for CORE and it prompted a very large turnout for the demonstration Wednesday.

Two sophomores went in with the three of us. At the mass meeting preceding the march, Bill Thomas called me aside to ask our special help. Six or so negro students had volunteered for arrest once in the S & W Cafeteria. Negotiations with this and another cafeteria and two theatres have been going on since September, to no avail. The remainder of the students would picket. As we were all white and could easily enter the S & W (The demonstration was expected, and managers and police were guarding the entrance.) we were to distract the manager's attention so that the negroes could enter. We all agreed to do this and left. This was all timed precisely. The remainder of the 1200 students were singing "We Shall Overcome".

We entered the cafeteria and went to ^{the} end of the line. I was first and was asked what I would like. I replied that I wanted such-and-such when they served my friends outside. They asked who my friends were. I replied, "The negro demonstrators outside." There were about six pickets. The waitress then told the others in line to go around us. This had not produced the desired effect. We demanded service, and got the Manager. He, being familiar with the procedure involved, asked each of us to leave, and said that he would not serve us. I reminded him that we did not have to do so until each of us was asked individually in the presence of a police officer. The police came, as did TV, movie cameras and newspapermen. We were asked, and realized that refusal would mean arrest. We had asked Bill Thomas about this, but he had only told us that this was completely up to each of us as individuals, and he could not advise us either way.

Four of us, two girls and two boys were arrested. One girl chose to leave. We were taken to the city hall in a police car. There, we were finger-printed, had "mug-shots" taken (I was #58907) and were put in jail cells. We called two people. One was a Mr. Engleman, philosophy and French instructor, who has proved to be of more help than anyone else in our "crusade", and Aldean Pitts. We asked Mr. Pitts only to get in touch with Reverend Stanley. However, he called Pete Moore, who in turn called the President of the College, the dean of students, and dean of college, and came himself to get us out, much to our dismay. We would have preferred not to have been given special attention.

Our warrants were read to us, part of mine being - "The State of North Carolina vs Haldan Elizabeth Taylor...with force and arms...with a strong hand, with a multitude of people and not in an easy and peaceable manner...." While in jail, we learned that others had also been arrested and we heard the hundreds of voices singing "Freedom, freedom" below us in the streets.

The whole school found out about it immediately as we were on television that night. In the Greensboro paper, along with information on the 240 negroes who were arrested, were the names and addresses and school name of the four Guilford students. This unfortunately, had been given to the press willingly by Pete Moore.

A lot of this is extraneous so I shall attempt to cut it down. Thursday we went back; no one was arrested. Friday, 400 students were arrested (Two were from Guilford. However, no one except about 15 people know of this, and it is being kept quiet.) Saturday, 200 more were arrested. Sunday, there were no demonstrations but James Farmer spoke. Tonight, more arrests are planned. First offenders are released without bail, and must appear May 28th (including us.) Other offenders have refused bail, and there are presently 700-800 in jail.

The students' reactions have been varied - mostly curiosity. At the Senior Follies, "Baby Face" Taylor received an award for the jailbird of the year.

I cannot explain all that is involved in this - a lot of local politics. However, of the five local colleges, four have come out with statements supporting the demonstrations. Guilford has not. A few faculty members have given us support, but it has become apparent that the general consensus of opinion here is that financial support is more valuable to the college than the preservation of Quaker ideals. The reputation of the college is of vital importance. While we have not been forbidden to participate, the Dean of the College has said that if any more arrests of Guilford students are made, we will be ordered to stop. The same applies to any newspaper or TV publicity. In addition, girls are unable to obtain permission to go off campus to participate with CORE groups. What more can I say?

Each of us participating feels a deep responsibility for the entire white race. We have used "what we consider to be effective (and are proving so) methods of obtaining freedom and liberty. Unfortunately, our efforts are being thwarted.

So, this is it - I was arrested for trespassing. As I told the sheriff when he asked if I weren't ashamed, I am not ashamed, and would gladly do it again. The struggle, on my part, has ceased to be only a struggle merely for civil rights for a race, and a personal protest, but has become personalized as I associate with and become close to my brothers. The handshake, before only a gesture, means more now. It means "we're together, and we'll sing together and 'sacrifice our bodies' together, and, brother, we'll eat in the S & W together". I was marching Thursday with a negro boy and we had to wait quite a bit at street corners. I commented on this. He smiled, and said, "I've waited 100 years, and I'll wait 3 minutes longer". How he's in jail - and we shall overcome, Guilford or no Guilford.

I personally cannot continue to watch segregation. As John Woolman said, - "To conform a little strengthens the hands of those who carry wrong customs to the utmost."

This is emotional, true, but it is also moral and religious. I hope though, that I have not told too much about my emotions, and not enough about facts.

I shall be in Meeting on June 2nd. Thank you - Beth.