



PROTEST DISCRIMINATION — Bennington College girls picket the F. W. Woolworth Co., on Main Street to show sympathy with Southern Negro students refused service at chain store lunch counters. Half a hundred students participated in the demonstration, keeping lunch counter seats occupied and handing out handbills to passersby. (Staff Photo — Allen)

Phone Calls Sooth "Slap In The Face"

Strong support from Village residents was reported last night. Village Attorney Reuben Levin whose pay was cut from \$1,000 to \$300 at Tuesday's annual Village meeting.

Levin told The Banner that "dozens of phone calls" had all been from friends who decried the pay cut which Levin himself had termed a "slap in the face."

Commenting on a report that friends would raise the \$100 difference for him, Levin stated that he would not accept the money, but would be gratified if it were turned over to a local charity. He declared yesterday that he will not resign from the post, but will perform his duties "in appreciation of the 1210 voters who supported him at the polls."

The pay cut was reported to be "backfire" of a political maneuver to forestall a rumored request for a pay increase. Former Village President Harold Griffin who moved the pay cut from the floor failed after the meeting that he intended that Levin's salary should be the same as last year. A supporter on the floor was supposed to amend the cut to its former level.

Levin told The Banner that although the fewer than 150 voters in the assembly approved the pay cut, many hundreds more who did not attend considered it unjustified.

STEAK or LOBSTER DINNER

BENNINGTON CLUB
SATURDAY, MARCH 10
Dancing 9 to 12

Reservations, please!

REDUCED
1/5 FOR QUICK SALE

5 ROOM BUNGALOV

EVE. A. CARELLI
Broker 3284

LOYAL ORDER OF MOOSE
ST. PATRICK'S
DINNER - DANCE
SATURDAY, FEB. 19
Corned Beef and Cabbage 5 — 8
Dancing 8 - 12. Benbrook's Orchestra
ADMISSION 95c

St. Patrick's
MINSTREL, March 17th

Bennington Catholic High School

TIME: 8:00 P.M.
ADMISSION \$1.00

50 College Girls Picket Woolworth's In Sympathy

Half a hundred Bennington College girls picketed Woolworth's on Main Street shortly after noon today in sympathy with Southern Negroes.

The girls, some of whom were Negro, occupied lunch counter seats and refused to yield them to lunchroom customers. Other girls carried signs and distributed handbills to passersby. Three Village police officers, including Chief Edward L. Silver, kept a watchful eye on the students on the street and at the counter.

Handbills urged recipients to write to the Woolworth Company's New York office to protest discriminatory policies in the South. Woolworth's Manager Grover C. Williams told the Banner that he will advise his regional office of the incident as a matter of course.

He declared that the local store has never refused service to any customer and that the company leaves adherence to local customs up to individual store managers.

Signs carried by the girls urged patrons to "Unite against Hate" and "Don't Shop Woolworth's". By 1 p.m. all 15 seats at the lunch counter had been filled by students and no one was being served. A small crowd gathered outside the store entrance, but lunch counter patrons scattered quickly as the protesters arrived.

The action was reportedly decided upon spontaneously last night by the girls. It remained a well-kept secret until they started converging on the chain store. Police reported the conduct of the picketers to be peaceful and Williams stated that there was little he could do as long as there was no violence.

Similar demonstrations have been held in recent weeks at other northern colleges and universities where students have shown sympathy for Southern Negro students conducting similar sit-downs in Southern chain stores.

Village residents reacted with

mixed feelings towards the demonstration. Chief Silver declared that as long as no Village ordinances were broken, his men would merely watch the proceedings to ensure that pedestrian traffic received no interference and that order was maintained.

College President William Felt was on his way to New York this noon and could not be reached for

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Picketing Student Tells Why

The position of the 75 students participating in this afternoon's lunch counter picketing by Bennington College students was explained by the group's spokesman in an exclusive interview with the Banner during the demonstration.

Anne Forrester, 20, of Philadelphia a soft-spoken, articulate Negro social science major, called the demonstration: "a moral obligation and a Christian responsibility." She reported that students were much impressed with questions that passersby had put to them.

Miles Forrester attended a conference at Yale University last weekend, sponsored by a student group which discussed ways to strengthen democratic ideals.

Her comment that even a small college such as Bennington with only 150 students could play a part was taken up by others. From this the idea of the demonstration developed.

"We are not picketing against local businessmen or individuals," she declared, "but to show our sympathy with both white and colored students in the South."

"It is our Christian duty to put pressure on Southern chain store managers," she emphasized.

The freshman stated that the school has a half-dozen Negro students enrolled. All of them reportedly participated in the picketing.

"It is the support which the white girls have given us which is most impressive," she declared. "None of them have eaten at the counter."

Commenting on public reaction, Miss Forrester told The Banner that some had torn up handbills, while others engage in conversation with students to learn more about the issue. Some expressions of sympathy were voiced by the lunch hour crowd.

Reaction To Student Demonstration Proves Cool, Borders On Hostile

By ED BOWMAKER

"And, they call themselves college students, I suppose this will earn them their degrees," was one of the caustic remarks heard by local citizens as they were confronted by a group of Bennington College students who staged a anti-discriminatory sit-down strike in the lunchroom counter section of the F.W. Woolworth store on Main street this noon, and who paraded before the store carrying placards of protest against what they termed discriminatory policies of the chain store group against Negroes in the South.

Staid Vermonters, to whom the sight of a Negro is a rarity rather than an every day occurrence, seemed appalled by the demonstration and were vehement in their denouncement of the demonstrators whom they looked upon as "publicity grabbers", snobbish college girls with nothing better to do than create a public display, and as one guarded farmer put it "fools".

Local office workers, clerks and shop and store employees faced with the situation of having to give up their usual stools for lunch were especially bitter in their re-nouncement of the protest sit-down and more than one tired shop clerk hurled insults at the parading merry-go-round of students who seemed to take the entire affair as an afternoon outing.

"We're taxpayers, and yet we're unable to eat our lunch in Wool-

worth's. It's a shame was the complaint of one woman who found her usual place at the lunch counter barred by a group of students, most just out of their teens, who occupied every stool at the counter and refused to move.

A local business man handed a mimeographed sheet headed by the words "Vermonters Support Civil Rights" was heard to observe. "This is not only ridiculous but also a disgrace to the community. I have lived here most of my life and have never seen any form of discrimination. This display can do nothing but bring disgrace to Bennington."

The demonstration at first drew a curious crowd of onlookers who seemed more puzzled by the placard bearing students and the demonstrators than sympathetic or angry. However, as it became obvious that this was no five minute affair the crowd voiced their opinions, the bulk of which were against any demonstration of this type.

As one woman shopper put it, "Why do they have to pick on Bennington for their demonstration, we have never had any racial trouble here and something like this could cause much more trouble than good. I hope this isn't an everyday affair."

It seems as though the average person in the street couldn't believe it could happen in Bennington, and the fact that it was happening left them more outraged than sympathetic.

50 College

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comment.

Thomas P. Brockway, dean of Bennington College, said no formal announcement of today's action had been made to college authorities prior to noon. Upon being advised of the demonstration, he talked with Grover Williams, local Woolworth manager, and then commented to The Banner.

In a general statement which he emphasized was not authorized insofar as other college officers were concerned, he said he would deplore any action on the part of the students which interfered with the rights of other citizens. He said he had been advised that no such infringement had occurred. He added that this type of demonstration showed the keen interest of students in current public affairs and in that sense it was a healthy sign.

Nancy Machler, student government chairman at Bennington College, said she hoped it would be made clear that the local demonstration was not aimed at the Bennington Woolworth store but against the Woolworth chain and their stores in the south which follow a policy of discrimination. She said that as long as this protest was carried out in an orderly manner, she felt that it was admirable. "As a student, I am in sympathy with the girls," she said.

The demonstration was quiet for the most part with the exception of several insults hurled at the picket by would-be lunch customers who were deprived of their accustomed luncheon seat. Local police were at the scene as well as a Vermont State Police patrol car which parked in front of the Woolworth store as the second shift of marchers and sitdowners took over at 1 p.m.