

USHER, JESS ALAN, Ph.D. *An Uneasy Peace: The Struggle for Civil Rights and Economic Justice in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 1960-1969* (2015)  
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This dissertation provides an innovative expansion of the historiography of Upper South locations during the Black Freedom Struggle and the War on Poverty of the 1960s. This study asserts that racial attitudes in Winston-Salem were superficially cordial and accommodating among the elites of both classes, with both sides invested in presenting a positive image of the city to the outside world. This tradition had its roots in the peculiar form of slavery practiced by the communitarian Moravians and was carried forward by New South industrialists and financiers. This dissertation demonstrates that at various moments in history, the less-privileged classes within the African American community revolted against the elites of both races to foment much more rapid change than was previously thought possible. "An Uneasy Peace" is concerned as well with the opinions and emotions of southern whites as they came to terms with the reality that their world was forever changing. This study examined hundreds of "letters to the editor" of local newspapers which provided contemporary opinions of events that occurred locally in Winston-Salem as well as elsewhere in the civil rights movement. These sources provide insights from people across lines of race, class, gender, and generation in a way not previously seen in any local movement study. "An Uneasy Peace" goes beyond the usual simplistic view of the struggle for civil rights as a straightforward battle between good and evil to probe the historical complexities and "gray areas" of various race-based issues and ideologies.

AN UNEASY PEACE: THE STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS  
AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN WINSTON-SALEM,  
NORTH CAROLINA, 1960-1969

by

Jess Alan Usher

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Approved by

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Committee Chair

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by Jess Alan Usher has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Acceptance by Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Final Oral Examination

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION AND FOUNDATIONS**

The initial inspiration for a professional study of civil rights and race relations in Winston-Salem came while researching African American golfers in North Carolina and the struggle to desegregate golf courses in the 1950s and 1960s. I discovered that Harold Dunovant, a man I had known personally through the local golf scene, had provided the spark for the 1963 demonstrations that ultimately led to the broad integration of Winston-Salem. The only civil rights actions celebrated formally in Winston-Salem centered around the 1960 lunch counter sit-ins—and tended to emphasize the contributions of white Wake Forest students as much as the black students from Winston-Salem Teachers College. Dunovant’s protests in 1963 brought African Americans from lower social and economic classes into the movement and challenged both black and white mainstream leadership. As I listened to an interview with Dunovant, from not long before his death, it was evident that a large piece of history was missing from the narrative.

“An Uneasy Peace” began with straightforward goals. The most basic goal was to provide a more thorough and more accurate narrative of the civil rights movement in Winston-Salem of the 1960s. Civil rights history often is reduced to a few well-known national leaders and to a select group of dramatic events usually centered in the more violent Deep South. Winston-Salem had its own leaders, leaders often at odds with each other over strategies, who deserve to be better known in local history and who also offer

insights of use to the larger synthesis of the civil rights movement. Thanks largely to the sit-in that launched the civil rights movement of the 1960s, Winston-Salem has been kept in the shadow of its nearby “sister city” of Greensboro within civil rights historiography. “An Uneasy Peace” documents for the first time that after the sit-in movement had stalled in Greensboro, students in Winston-Salem helped keep the movement alive and in the national media.

Much of this study deals with the thought processes of historical actors in terms of race. White Winston-Salem had long presented itself as more “progressive” regarding racial issues, arguably as far back as claims of the “kinder” treatment of slaves by communitarian Moravian settlers. The white leaders of the 1960s were more than proud of their designation as an “All-America City” and were determined to not let any publicity about racial strife tarnish the city’s self-styled image as a New South center for banking and industry. Black leaders in Winston-Salem, since Reconstruction, were often frustrated at slow progress but also took pride in having secured more concessions from whites and having achieved a higher standard of living for blacks than found in most cities of the South. The interactions of leaders from both races, combined with the actions and opinions of their various constituencies, makes for a unique historiographical contribution. This study examines the motivations for presenting the facade of peace, while showing that underneath the facade there was often a simmering pool of frustration and anger.

As professional historians can attest, sources often lead to unexpected evidence and unexpected discoveries create new historical questions. In the process of looking at

over a decade's worth of daily newspapers on microfilm, I was increasingly drawn to the "Letters to the Editor" section of the *Winston-Salem Journal*. The progressive editors of the newspaper printed letters from local citizens on controversial racial issues—letters that would have been censored in cities farther south. This was allowed to happen by the "New South" business elites that ran the newspaper and controlled the city. Black and white, elite, students, professors, middle class, working class, and poor all appeared within the eventual hundreds of letters considered for this dissertation.

"An Uneasy Peace" offers the first historical analysis of public discourses that were created in hundreds of letters to the editor regarding issues related to the civil rights movement. Included within these public discourses are the opinions of a surprisingly diverse group of citizens. The authors of letters included black and white men and women from all socioeconomic classes. Where not indicated within the letters, the authors' demographic information was determined, when possible, by using city directories to check occupations and neighborhoods of residence. The letters were written with the writer's knowledge that their name was required in order to be printed, which in some cases meant there were risks of being punished by employers or ostracized by peers. For the purposes of historical interpretation it is important to note that the authors of the letters were aware their words were being published in a public forum and may have chosen their words carefully. Depending upon the degree of self-imposed filters, the letters do not necessarily reflect every innermost thought or opinion of the authors. Some letters were written with clear theses while others reflect more visceral reactions to events and ideologies. The letters provide some indication of the broad



spectrum of individual opinions and also offer insights into the collective consciousness of a number of factions.

One of the prime motivators for white business elites to allow the public discourses that developed within the exchanges of these letters was the notion that by allowing the staunchest of pro-segregation whites to “vent” their feelings in the newspaper—rather than express themselves within extremist organizations like the White Citizens’ Council or the Ku Klux Klan—the types of racial ugliness seen elsewhere in North Carolina and the Deep South could be avoided for Winston-Salem. These elites were intent on making Winston-Salem a southern gem of modern manufacturing, banking, and commerce and racial ugliness was seen as a major hindrance to attracting and keeping new business. The elites used the letters from both blacks and whites to gauge the levels of racial friction within the city.

Many of the letters reflected the impact of faraway events on the thinking of local people. African Americans followed events in places like Albany, Georgia; Oxford, Mississippi; and Birmingham, Alabama, and a palpable sense of urgency for change was reflected in their writing. Whites watched the same events and feared, for a variety of reasons, the possibility of similar events happening in Winston-Salem. Some whites argued for faster integration while a vocal minority spoke out in support of the likes of Bull Conner, police dogs, and the White Citizens’ Council. Much of the conversation was framed in Cold War ideology—with blacks comparing racial oppression to Soviet totalitarianism and whites expressing a fear that black demands for equality were being manipulated by the Kremlin. Whites frequently reframed traditional southern arguments

about states' rights and individual property rights. Outside "agitators" (like the Kennedys) were often described as either communist sympathizers or carpetbaggers—or in some cases a fusion of both.

In addition to the letters to the newspapers, key primary sources for "An Uneasy Peace" include media accounts from the day, and like many civil rights studies, oral histories. The *Winston-Salem Journal*, the Monday through Saturday morning paper of the period, the *Twin City Sentinel*, the evening paper published by the same company, and the Sunday paper, the *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel* provided thorough coverage of local civil rights related events as well as regional and national coverage through the United Press International (UPI) and the Associated Press (AP). The papers were owned and controlled by the Gray family who were among the wealthiest and most powerful of the patriarchal powers controlling the city. The Grays hired progressive-minded editors and writers during the period of this study—including an African American beat reporter, which was unheard of in the South of the 1950s and 1960s. While there were clearly moments where heated opinions were suppressed, compared to newspapers elsewhere in the South, the Winston-Salem papers were mostly free to present unfiltered news stories.

Although it has been excluded from syntheses of the civil rights movement, the 1960 sit-in in Winston-Salem continued after the first and much more famous sit-in in Greensboro had fizzled. The importance of Winston-Salem was not lost on the historically African American newspapers around the country. Those newspapers watched and reported on key events in Winston-Salem throughout the 1960s and are a

valuable source for this study. Perhaps due to migration patterns and family connections, the *Baltimore Afro-American* in particular provided a great deal of coverage of Winston-Salem events. The *New York Times* often covered events in Winston-Salem as did white-controlled newspapers in nearby towns and cities. Where possible, this study supplements local media coverage of events with media sources from elsewhere.

A number of archival papers collections are utilized, including documents related to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the North Carolina Fund (NCF), and document collections housed at Winston-Salem State University. A number of helpful documents were in the North Carolina Room of the Forsyth County Public Library, including previously unpublished documents with insights into the motivations of the elites.

“An Uneasy Peace” is strongly informed by local studies, particularly Upper South studies, within Civil Rights Movement historiography. Robert Korstad’s 2003 study of African American tobacco workers and their attempt to unionize in the 1940s and early 1950s in Winston-Salem, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South*, chronicled the story of Local 22, the first sustained, organized challenge to the patriarchal white powers of Winston-Salem.<sup>1</sup> Korstad spent part of his childhood in Winston-Salem while his father worked as a union organizer. His insights into the racial dynamics of Winston-Salem, particularly concerning the confluences of race, class, and gender, are highly influential

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Rogers Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

on “An Uneasy Peace.” Many of the actors in Korstad’s study came from the lower socioeconomic classes of the black community, creating an effective “bottom-up” movement that forced tangible change. “An Uneasy Peace” asserts that during a number of key moments in the 1960s, blacks from the lower classes provided the necessary catalyst for change. A number of the young activists from Local 22 reappear in “An Uneasy Peace,” and share their knowledge and experience with the next generation. Some of the former activists from the 1940s, who Korstad interviewed in the 1980s, contribute their views within the public discourses of the 1960s, allowing for a distinctive historiographical connection between the two studies.

William Chafe’s benchmark 1980 work, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle for Freedom*, studied the “cordial” racial dynamics of the Upper South and the tradition of conciliatory and gradualist negotiations on racial issues. Greensboro is only twenty-five miles from Winston-Salem and shares many of the same political, economic, and cultural traditions. Chafe used the local newspaper as a guide to the narrative of his study, as does “An Uneasy Peace.” Both studies use oral histories, although Chafe utilizes interviews from years later to a much greater extent. *Civilities and Civil Rights* does not offer the types of distinct, “in the moment,” insights that come from the discursive exchanges explored in “An Uneasy Peace.”

Aingred Dunston’s 1981 doctoral dissertation at Duke University, “The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 1947-1977,” had been to date

the only comprehensive study of the civil rights era in Winston-Salem.<sup>2</sup> Its main focus was on the rise of black political power. Dunston's work was supervised by William Chafe and is consistent in methodology and conclusions with Chafe's work on Greensboro. Both relied heavily on documentary sources (mostly local newspapers) and oral histories with the participants. *An Uneasy Peace* supports Chafe and Dunston's basic premises regarding the "civility" of Upper South black and white elites in leadership roles. Dunston's study focuses on the elite leaders of the black community, including a few militant leaders, with little emphasis on the importance of grassroots protest to actually foment change. "An Uneasy Peace" presents a theme that, to varying degrees, it took the fear of lower class uprisings to grab the attention of the white elites capable of making change happen. "An Uneasy Peace" also offers a comprehensive look into the actions and opinions of whites, from liberal to arch-conservative, and how they affected the civil rights struggle. Neither Chafe, Dunston, nor other Upper South studies address white support and resistance in the comprehensive manner of "An Uneasy Peace."

More recently, Christina Greene's local study of civil rights and antipoverty efforts, *Our Separate Ways: Women and the Black Freedom Movement in Durham, North Carolina*, emphasized the importance of women, specifically impoverished women, in creating tangible change through local movements.<sup>3</sup> African American women in Winston-Salem provided transformational leadership as well as grassroots participation

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<sup>2</sup> Aingred G. Dunston, "The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: 1947-1977" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> Christina Greene, *Our Separate Ways: Women and the Black Freedom Movement in Durham, North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

that eventually spanned across class lines. Most of the initial women activists in Winston-Salem came from the middle and upper-classes of the black community. Their guidance and support eventually helped create a strong movement from within the community of poorer women living in public housing.

Much of the contribution of “An Uneasy Peace” to women’s history comes from documenting the many opinions of women, black and white, within the public discourses over civil rights issues. Black women bravely challenged letters from whites, risking their jobs and perhaps even their safety as they signed their names and took full responsibility for standing up to power. Within these exchanges, women from lower classes began to join in and to contribute their own intellectual contributions. “An Uneasy Peace” also brings the voices of white women, like white men spanning the gamut from progressive to virulently racist, into the historical record. Even when their comments are distasteful by modern standards, they represent an element of empowerment in an age when women were still supposed to be submissive.

Charles W. McKinney’s 2010 study of the civil rights movement in Wilson, North Carolina, *Greater Freedom: The Evolution of the Civil Rights Struggle in Wilson, North Carolina*, examined the elite actors of a local movement within the framework of what McKinney calls North Carolina’s “curious tradition of progressivism” in regards to race.<sup>4</sup> McKinney emphasized the growing importance of lower-class African Americans in challenging middle-class leaders to force the inclusion of the lower classes into the civil

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<sup>4</sup> Charles W. McKinney, Jr., *Greater Freedom: The Evolution of the Civil Rights Struggle in Wilson, North Carolina* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2010).

rights and economic justice movements. “An Uneasy Peace” similarly emphasizes the importance of the lower classes in stimulating black leadership to become more proactive, and additionally, argues that the lower classes were very important in influencing white leadership to make concessions. As with the other Upper South studies, McKinney’s work does not offer the examination of public discourses or the detailed inclusion of white support and resistance found in “An Uneasy Peace.”

John Dittmer’s study of lesser-known movement participants in the 1996 work, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*, used a microhistorical methodology to explore how people outside of media scrutiny created their own grassroots movement. Dittmer presented a narrative in fine detail to help create a better sense of how a local movement, with unheralded participants, also matters to the synthesis of civil rights historiography. “An Uneasy Peace” borrows from Dittmer’s methodology by, at key moments, focusing in on the day-to-day actions of movement actors. Most days did not contain the high drama often associated with pivotal moments in civil rights history—but the sum of the quotidian parts eventually added up to tangible change.<sup>5</sup>

Glenn T. Eskew’s study of the movement in Birmingham, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle*, also uses a microhistorical methodology to explore perhaps the most racially volatile city of the 1960s. The events in Birmingham in 1963 were among the most dramatic of the civil

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<sup>5</sup> John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

rights era and received a great deal of media attention. During the height of unrest in Birmingham, people in Winston-Salem received daily reports on television and in the local papers—including iconic images like Bull Connor’s police dogs and fire hoses and the aftermath of the bombing of the Sixteenth Avenue Baptist Church. Eskew argued that in some ways the media effects from events in Birmingham led to faster change in other places than in Birmingham itself.<sup>6</sup> “An Uneasy Peace” proves Eskew’s thesis by following the events in Birmingham as they were presented in the media to people in Winston-Salem, and then analyzing local reaction in words and actions as it all unfolded.

“An Uneasy Peace” is by design microhistorical at key moments in 1960s’ Winston-Salem. It is within the day-to-day and small protest-to-small protest moments of the movement that ideological and political changes happened. A movement that had grown stagnant one day revitalized when dramatic news arrived from Birmingham. The actions of a person or group one day pulled people off the sidelines and into the movement the next day. Changes in movement demands or tactics often inspired heated exchanges in the public discourse, exchanges that are of value in understanding the opinions and emotions of the time across race, class, and gender.

This study seeks to provide a fresh and innovative way of examining a local civil rights movement. “An Uneasy Peace” offers the narrative of the local movement intertwined with the emotions, prejudices, and opinions of local people from every level of society, black and white. The perspectives of local observers and participants, given in

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<sup>6</sup> Glenn T. Eskew, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).



their writings from the period, arguably more truly reflect what they felt in the moment as opposed to what they might remember fifty years later. “An Uneasy Peace” sought from its genesis to correct elements of the Winston-Salem civil rights story as they had been told and also to include the names and stories of leaders and participants whose achievements had gone unappreciated. The sources utilized for this study have offered an opportunity to analyze in greater depth what motivated those sometimes heroic actors to step forward and accomplish great things. “An Uneasy Peace” explores the dissatisfaction of the lower socioeconomic classes of the black community and includes not only their voices but also evidence of their critical roles as catalysts for tangible change.

The racial history of Winston-Salem demonstrated a complex mosaic of resilience, patience, courage, and sometimes dramatic action from the African American community. The white community also presented a complex history of racism that at least was superficially tempered by the peaceful, communitarian traditions of the Moravians and later by the insistence of a dominant patriarchy that racial ugliness was “bad for business.” Modern historians have diligently challenged the evils of paternalism across many genres. “An Uneasy Peace” examines the tradition of paternalistic dominance in Winston-Salem, and while by no means apologizing for paternalistic behavior, poses the possibility that it may have offered a better lifestyle, politically and economically, for African Americans than almost anywhere else in the South.

This Winston-Salem “brand” of paternal dominance may have pacified a substantial portion of the black community, but it also created a unique form of

smoldering resentment from those not benefitting from the economic upside. In addition to the black perspective, the distinctive sources for this study offer insights into the thoughts and emotions of non-elite whites during key moments in the civil rights struggle. The ingrained fears and prejudices appeared as might be expected, but there were also many layers and subtleties to white thought. Most white supporters of black equality came from the better-educated classes, but surprisingly, not all. This study strives to go beyond the typical civil rights narrative that places whites as either totally opposed or totally supportive of black equality. The reality was that most whites fell into a gray area in between these polar opposites.

“An Uneasy Peace” provides a comprehensive look at the civil rights and economic justice movements in an Upper South city during the turbulent decade of the 1960s. The narrative of events in Winston-Salem is important and deserves a place in the history of the Black Freedom Struggle writ large. The inclusion of actor and observer voices spanning race, class, gender, and generation within interactive public discourses offers a one of a kind contribution to civil rights historiography. Discrimination, prejudice, racism, police brutality, and injustice were and are complex issues and remain difficult topics of conversation. The fragile nature of race relations in Winston-Salem as events unfolded in the 1960s, and later, might serve to emphasize the value of asking deeper questions about the historical foundations of racial differences.

The earliest available records of black and white interaction, in the area now recognized as Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, demonstrate from the very beginning a paradoxical black and white relationship. It has been argued for many years by local

“boosters,” as well by a number of local historians, that although the emphasis was on white control and black subservience, area blacks were treated "better" than in other southern communities. For a brief period after the arrival of Europeans there were also numerous Native Americans in the region; however, due to a variety of causes, their presence was all but eliminated in the community by the start of the nineteenth century. The first permanent white settlers began arriving in the 1740s and 1750s and were mostly Germans and Scots-Irish. In 1753 the first German-Moravian colonists arrived and established a series of small communities in the area. The settlers scattered in the backcountry outside of the Moravian settlements followed typical colonial patterns in piedmont areas, with many owning a small number of slaves. The Moravian settlements were built on a communitarian lifestyle that sometimes conflicted with the independent, proto-capitalist views of their rural neighbors.<sup>7</sup>

As the Moravian population grew, the need for labor to clear land, erect buildings, and farm exceeded the numbers in the work force. Although opposed to slavery in principle, the Moravians rented slaves from neighboring landowners. The Moravian settlements (eventually centered in Salem) adhered to a strange policy that allowed slavery but forbade individuals to own slaves. Only the Moravian Church was permitted

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<sup>7</sup> Frank V. Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1994), 18-29. Tursi's work lacks specific citations but he is clearly drawing off of the work of historians specializing in the Moravians. See: Adelaide L. Fries, J. Edwin Hendricks, and Thurman Wright, *Forsyth: The History of a County on the March*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976); and Adelaide L. Fries, Minnie J. Smith, Douglas L. Rights, and Kenneth G. Hamilton, eds., *The Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, 11 volumes (Winston-Salem: Moravian Archives of the Southern Province, 1922-1969). Hereinafter cited as Fries, *Records of the Moravians*. This work, led by Moravian archivist and historian Adelaide Fries, is an invaluable resource for historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and for Native American historians interested in Moravian missionary interaction with the Cherokee and Creek Indians. Fries selectively chose to translate passages of interest to historians. Work continues to translate and eventually digitize the Moravian records.

actual ownership of enslaved people. Perhaps because of a perceived better attitude towards blacks, a number of rented slaves asked Moravians to buy them from their owners. Records show that the church purchased its first slave, a man named Sam, in 1769. Two years later, in front of three hundred worshippers, he was baptized a Moravian and given the name Johannes Samuel.<sup>8</sup> Samuel received his freedom in 1801. His wife Mary, a mulatto, received her freedom in 1795. Moravian leader Frederic Marshall petitioned the courts to have the couple's children bound to their father. The Moravians were meticulous record-keepers and their diaries and minutes offer a number of insights into their version of slavery. Throughout the late eighteenth-century and into the early nineteenth-century, slaves who were also church members worshipped, gave the "kiss of peace," and took communion alongside white Moravians. In 1785, a ten year old black girl was allowed to attend school with white girls (the fact that any girls were schooled seems progressive for the times). When the slave Abraham died in 1797, his funeral service was held in English to accommodate Negroes from outside the Moravian community. When Peter Oliver, a former slave who had been freed, died in 1810, a "large number" of blacks attended his service and were given the front pews in the church.<sup>9</sup>

As race became increasingly defined in both social and legal terms, pressure from outside the Moravian community, along with shifting attitudes within the community, led to the creation of a separate black Moravian church, which was called variously the

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<sup>8</sup> C. Daniel Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free: Moravians, Slavery, and a Church That Endures* (Winston-Salem: Moravian Archives, 1998), 2-3.

<sup>9</sup> C. Daniel Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 4-6.

“African Church,” the “Slave Church,” the “Colored Church,” or the “Negro Church.” In 1913, the church was consecrated formally as St. Philip’s Moravian Church, Winston-Salem’s only modern mostly-black Moravian congregation. The Female Missionary Society provided funding for construction materials and African Americans provided the labor. The African Church was consecrated on December 28, 1823, in the presence of members of the Female Missionary Society, the *Aeltesten Conferenz*, "supporters of the movement," and roughly ninety African Americans. Second and third services were held later in the day that included a baptism, a lovefeast, and the acceptance of new church members.<sup>10</sup>

The African Church became a source of pride for black Moravians and quickly grew to become a Sunday place of gathering for free and enslaved African Americans from the areas surrounding Salem. Many enslaved people were allowed to travel to Salem on Sundays and the eventual number of worshippers reached several hundred by the early 1830s. The fear of slave rebellions, along with the publication of David Walker's *Appeal in Four Articles*, led to the strengthening of slave codes in North Carolina and subsequently to a ban on the teaching of reading and writing to black children in Salem. The Moravians allowed the teaching of arithmetic to continue. Nat Turner's 1831 rebellion in the Tidewater region of Virginia also affected the lives of black Americans in Salem and the surrounding area. In September 1831 a rumor spread that two hundred blacks were on a murderous rampage in nearby Lexington, North

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<sup>10</sup> C. Daniel Crews, *Neither Slave nor Free*, 6-8; and C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck, *With Courage for the Future: The Story of the Moravian Church, Southern Province* (Winston-Salem: Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, 2002), 483-484.

Carolina, and would soon reach Salem. Blacks were "forbidden on pain of death to leave their lots." The militia was called out, with special care taken to protect the Girls School and the Sisters House. In the aftermath, blacks were forbidden to gather in large numbers on Sundays or to "play ball" in the field near Salem Tavern. Rhetoric from church leaders increasingly supported more stringent discipline for slaves.<sup>11</sup>

There is a consensus among historians that Moravian attitudes towards both free and enslaved blacks were increasingly influenced by the growing non-Moravian population that surrounded the community and that also contributed to the sect's economic well-being. Moravian leadership decided that an increase in the slave population brought "danger to the inward welfare of the congregation." Market pressures also altered the Moravian approach to the institution of slavery. During the 1820s a number of artisans began to use slaves instead of journeymen and apprentices as a means of holding down costs.<sup>12</sup> Church records indicate that Moravian leadership struggled to reconcile slavery as a moral issue with its potential as an economic solution. The traditionalist view held that the presence of slaves working in the town would have a negative effect on the work ethic of young Moravian men. Wilhelm Fries, father of future industrialist Francis Fries, was one of those censured by church elders for violating slave labor rules. His actions were representative of a new generation of Moravians that may have placed economic success above morality. By the 1840s, few slaveholders

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<sup>11</sup> Jon F. Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan: The Making of an Afro-Moravian World in North Carolina, 1763-1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 262-263. The reaction to Nat Turner was noted in both the Salem Diary and the Bethania Diary as translated in Fries, *Records of the Moravians*, 3972, 4006.

<sup>12</sup> C. Daniel Crews, *Neither Slave nor Free*, 11-14.

agreed to serve on the Aufseher Collegium simply because they would have to enforce church regulations regarding slaves.<sup>13</sup>

The stereotypical view of Southern slavery places enslaved people almost exclusively as either field workers or as plantation house servants. The slavery experience for many blacks in Salem, North Carolina was as some of the earliest industrial and factory workers in the South. The most powerful force behind industrial slavery in Salem was the highly ambitious industrialist, Francis Fries. Fries did not fit the mold of a paternal southern slaveholder placing a way of life ahead of profits, nor did he precisely fit the mold of a Yankee industrialist thriftily utilizing free market labor. Fries was instead a unique, upper-South fusion of the two. The use of enslaved black labor in Fries's mill came only after the use of free (but poor) white labor proved to be problematic. In 1836, Francis Fries was hired as an agent by investors in a new cotton factory to be opened in Salem. At the age of twenty-four, Fries set out for New England to learn the methods and machinery required to produce cotton cloth. Although his parents expected Francis as the eldest son to become a Moravian minister, like other young men of his generation, he adopted a more worldly view.<sup>14</sup> It is highly probable that his father's unpleasant experience with church leadership may have helped shape young Francis's entrepreneurial spirit and his willingness to work outside of church restrictions.

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<sup>13</sup> Fries, *Records of the Moravians*, 9: 4831, 7:3301; and Michael Shirley, "The Market and Community Culture in Antebellum Salem, North Carolina," *Journal of the Early Republic* 11, No. 2 (Summer 1991): 241.

<sup>14</sup> Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, 69-70.

Industrial manufacturing in the Salem (later Winston-Salem) community was not simply a late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century phenomenon brought about by the Reynolds tobacco and Hanes textiles magnates. The founding of the Salem Manufacturing Company (SMC) in 1836 demonstrated that not only were elements in the Moravian community prepared to move into a new age, the creation of the corporation also signaled that church leadership was slowly caving to the demands of the community. The hard economic times that culminated in the Panic of 1837 were already being felt in the community. A series of public meetings forced the Aufseher Collegium to allay its fears of private enterprise and to listen instead to the demands of the people. In July 1836 the SMC initial stock offering of 250 shares went to twenty-nine individual citizens of Salem, and the largest block of one hundred shares was surprisingly purchased by the church.<sup>15</sup>

The SMC mill began operation in the fall of 1837 with thirty-five to forty employees and twenty-six operating looms. By 1849 the mill had ninety employees and ran twenty-five hundred spindles and thirty looms--a slightly higher capacity than the average New England mill of the time. Most workers came from the surrounding countryside of Stokes County (Salem became part of the newly-created Forsyth County in 1850), although some came from nearby Guilford, Davidson, and Davie counties. The combination of financial depression and a series of droughts and poor harvests had left

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<sup>15</sup> Michael Shirley, "Yeoman Culture and Millworker Protest in Antebellum Salem, North Carolina," *The Journal of Southern History* 57, No. 3 (August 1991): 433-434. For a thorough study of the complexities of life for poor whites in the Piedmont, see Charles C. Bolton, *Poor Whites of the Antebellum South: Tenants and Laborers in Central North Carolina and Northeast Mississippi* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1994).



many yeoman farmers in dire straits, some unable to pay their property taxes. Elizabeth Loggins, a widow, came to the mill with her two teenage daughters in 1838. Initially Loggins and her daughters worked in the mill, but later Elizabeth took in millworkers as boarders (in the house the mill provided) while her daughters continued to work in the mill. Out of 367 employees who worked for the Salem Manufacturing Company between 1841 and 1849, roughly 85 percent were women. Millworkers typically owned no property or were small-scale farmers that could not make ends meet with subsistence farming.<sup>16</sup>

Poor white families integrated millwork into their survival strategies in a number of different ways. For families with a male head of household, often the father worked odd jobs in the community while the women and children worked in the mill. For some families the father continued to run the small family farm and the wages from the mill by others in the family allowed the link to rural life to continue. The paternalistic grasp placed on workers at the SMC effectually began a trend that would not end in Forsyth County until the 1980s and the demise of a manufacturing base. For the Moravian patriarchs that either controlled or held stock in the SMC, the pattern of strict paternal control was quite consistent with long-held church practices and philosophies. For many millworkers who were not raised as Moravians, the oppressive restrictions placed on them by both the SMC and the town of Salem invited forms of resistance.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, 74-75. Both Shirley and Tursi cite the Loggins story as an example of new labor roles for women and children.

<sup>17</sup> Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, 74. For an excellent study of later development of mill town paternalism see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James Leloudis, et al, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987).

Some of the rules placed on millworkers included curfews requiring that they be inside their homes after dark. Housing was situated outside of Salem town limits. Workers that quit were immediately evicted from their homes, an obvious method of further cementing the paternal hold. The Moravians viewed many of the millworkers as immoral, and as such did not want them on the streets of Salem or potentially corrupting Moravian youth. The Moravians opened a separate Sunday school for the workers and closed the mill every other Tuesday night for workers to attend additional Moravian services. Most workers found Moravian services stiff and boring and could not understand hymns and services in German. Attendance at Moravian services dwindled and it became apparent that workers were much more attracted to the zeal of Baptist and Methodist services. The first signs of worker protest appeared as it became increasingly common for workers to take time off to "attend Methodist camp meetings, funerals, and weddings." The Methodists also competed with the black Moravian church, with average attendance dropping from about one hundred to "20 or 30 when the Methodists were having a meeting nearby."<sup>18</sup>

The F & H Fries Company, a combined venture with Francis and his brother Henry, began operation as a woolen milling plant in 1842 and quickly expanded the building and added cotton milling. A heavy jean fabric became the main product of the Fries line for years and was sold to the Confederate army during the Civil War. Perhaps because of the unreliable labor force at SMC, Fries also utilized slave labor. During the first year of operation F & H Fries had seven white employees and sixteen slaves. Slaves

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<sup>18</sup> Crews, *With Courage for the Future*, 293; and Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, 74-75.

were cheaper than free labor and could not leave the mill to go fishing, farming, or to Methodist camp meetings. Fries's actions remained in direct defiance of church orders to only use slave labor when free labor was unavailable. Fries had twenty-three slaves in the mill workforce in 1850 and forty-seven slaves in 1860, making a non-planter the largest slaveholder in Forsyth County. Slaves remained consistently about half of Fries's labor force up until Emancipation.<sup>19</sup>

It is difficult to determine exactly how life for a mill slave may have compared to that of an agricultural slave. Randall M. Miller speculates that food and housing were probably better for enslaved millworkers. Because of the expense of the machinery and the need for smooth and continuous operation, mill slaves were also less susceptible to beatings and other forms of psychological terror. Miller also notes that better treatment was probably more than offset by the dust, noise, dangerous machinery, and generally "unwholesome atmosphere" of the antebellum mill. Tuberculosis and pneumonia were common afflictions among cotton mill workers. At the Fries mill, enslaved children were used along with adults and the workload was proportionate to the number of pending orders. Francis Fries acknowledged in his diary working children "a half night each" until they were "rather worsted from loss of sleep." Fries did attempt to compensate during slow times by allowing his slaves time off to "hunt, skate, and see a circus." Fries also had an (unnamed) enslaved overseer that he apparently trusted to run production lines in his absence. For some enslaved mill hands, the market revolution may have

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<sup>19</sup> Crews and Starbuck, *With Courage for the Future*, 296-297, 301; and Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, 76-79.

primarily just invented new ways to abuse uncompensated labor. In many mills, systems of incentives and rewards gave enslaved workers at least some disposable income--and if even on a small scale gave them some entry into the market economy. Pressures from the ever-encroaching town of Winston and from Salem leaders like Francis Fries led the Moravian elders to abolish church rules governing slavery in 1847. From this point until Emancipation, slaves in Salem were no longer offered protection beyond the possible good fortune of having a master with "old" Moravian values.<sup>20</sup>

The towns of Salem and Winston were passionately divided over the issue of joining the South and seceding from the Union. Conservative Moravians were generally Whigs and staunch Unionists, while most of the surrounding population were pro-secession Democrats. As war broke out, and North Carolina seceded, several companies of local men joined the Confederate Army. A group of mostly Moravians from Salem formed what became the Twenty-sixth North Carolina Regimental Band. By the time of Lee's surrender at Appomattox, "barely a hundred" men remained of the over one thousand from the area that left to fight. Perhaps because of the peaceful attitudes of Moravians, even after conquering Union troops came through, Confederate soldiers returned home to find their towns spared from the destruction of combat.<sup>21</sup>

For the several hundred Salem-area African Americans emancipated at the close of war, the influence of the Moravians apparently prevented some of the harsher

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<sup>20</sup> Randall M. Miller, "The Fabric of Control: Slavery in Antebellum Southern Textile Mills," *The Business History Review* 55, No. 4 (Winter 1981): 482-483; Francis Fries Woolen Mill Diary, 1840-1842, Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and Crews, *Neither Slave nor Free*, 27-28.

<sup>21</sup> Fambrough L. Brownlee, *Winston-Salem: A Pictorial History* (Norfolk, Virginia: Donning Company, 1977), 38-40. Brownlee, a prolific historian and an archivist with the Forsyth County Public Library, is a foremost authority on Winston-Salem and Forsyth County history.

treatment of blacks experienced elsewhere in the South. It may have helped that African Americans were in the minority in Winston and Salem, possibly alleviating white fears of blacks dominating politics. The existing mills and the arrival of a new tobacco industry spearheaded by a young R.J. Reynolds, offered job opportunities for blacks. Black men walked to Winston from as far away as Richmond, Virginia to seek employment with Reynolds, often with their wives and children joining them later. By the mid-1890s, there was a thriving African American community in Winston with more than sixty black professionals and business owners. There were three doctors, eight teachers, ministers, ironworking forges, brickmakers, an undertaker, and even a distillery. Hook and Ladder Number 2 became the town's first black fire company.<sup>22</sup>

African Americans in Winston and Salem certainly faced no shortage of discrimination but their lives were comparatively better than for blacks in most places in the South. Prior to the "Red Shirt" white supremacist takeover of North Carolina state government in 1898, at least eight blacks served as city alderman. Tobacco workers organized with their own "Negro Knights of Labor" unit and protested a Reynolds wage cut by marching through the streets in April 1889. African Americans in Winston served on various local government boards and fought diligently for reforms in elections, taxation, and the judicial system. They were active in Fusion Party politics in the 1890s and held influence on elections, as white politicians courted the black vote.<sup>23</sup> The

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<sup>22</sup> Nannie M. Tilley, *The R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 36-38. Fambrough L. Brownlee, *Winston-Salem: A Pictorial History*, 49.

<sup>23</sup> Tilley, *The R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company*, 38; and Bertha Hampton Miller, "Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina 1895-1920: Community Development in an Era of Benevolent Paternalism," (Ph.D. Diss., Duke University, 1981), 26-33. Miller's dissertation was supervised by Raymond Gavins and William Chafe was a committee member. Miller acknowledged the considerable assistance of the late Dr.

foundation for future black political activism in the area was rooted in participatory politics and proactive protest during the Gilded and Progressive eras. The relative racial goodwill that may have existed in Winston and Salem prior to the formalization of Jim Crow segregation with the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision in 1896, and the subsequent takeover of state government by white supremacy extremists in the 1898 and 1900 elections, was to be severely tested during racial incidents in both 1895 and again in 1918.

On May 18, 1895, white police officers attempted to break up a small crowd of black people who assembled after the arrest of a black man. Nineteen-year-old Arthur Tuttle refused the orders of Winston police officers Vickers and Dean. Tuttle resisted physically and the officers pushed him to the ground and beat him with billy sticks. Tuttle then pulled out a pistol and shot Officer Vickers twice, killing him. It was later disclosed that Arthur Tuttle's brother, Walter, had only recently been killed by another Winston police officer. Tuttle was taken into custody. Rumors quickly began to swirl around town that whites were going to lynch Tuttle and blacks were going to attempt to free him. North Carolina news was full of lynching stories and blacks in Winston-Salem had reasonable grounds for thinking the worst. The Forsyth County sheriff decided to avoid trouble by sending Tuttle to the Guilford County Jail in Greensboro. Not at all convinced that Tuttle would be safe there, two hundred blacks from Winston-Salem boarded the train and went to Greensboro. They were met by another four hundred

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Howard Barnes of Winston-Salem State University (the author of this dissertation's undergraduate mentor and dear friend).

blacks from Guilford County, also pledging to guarantee Tuttle his right to due process. After a plea for peace from Slater Normal School (later Winston-Salem State University) founder and preeminent black leader, Simon Green Atkins, calmer heads prevailed and a crisis was temporarily avoided. Tuttle was taken to jail in Charlotte to await trial.<sup>24</sup>

Tuttle's trial was eventually scheduled for August 1895 in Winston. Blacks in Winston and Salem held fundraisers and solicited donations until they had raised five hundred dollars for Tuttle's defense. Three prominent white lawyers were hired. Tuttle was returned to the Forsyth County Jail under heavy guard on August 11. Roughly three hundred blacks gathered at the jail that night, armed with everything from guns to farming tools. According to witnesses, Tuttle's three hundred pound sister, Ida, sat on the steps with two six-shooters and threatened to kill any whites who dared to approach the doors to the jail. Despite the pleas of city officials, the crowd of blacks refused to disperse. Although the crowd remained peaceful, the sheriff called out a group of deputies and the local militia, the Forsyth Riflemen (a militia originally organized by Confederate veterans). Gunfire erupted from both sides as blacks scattered throughout surrounding streets and alleyways. Forty-five rioters were arrested and charged. It was never completely verified, although it appears several blacks were killed in the shooting. Quite a few blacks fled town, as evidenced by the labor shortage that emerged in the tobacco factories. Tuttle was eventually found guilty of second-degree murder and sentenced to twenty-five years. While the black community was not pleased with his sentence, their actions had prevented Tuttle from receiving a death sentence, the normal

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<sup>24</sup> Miller, "Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina 1895-1920," 41-44.

result for anyone killing a police officer. Driven by their desire for a return to calm and of course for the return of their cheap labor pool, white town leaders downplayed the event and black rioters that were arrested received light sentences and fines.<sup>25</sup>

During World War I, African Americans from Winston-Salem (the towns consolidated officially in 1913) served bravely in the military. Early in the war, more blacks had volunteered than whites for the army. Under the leadership of Simon G. Atkins, African Americans were also notable contributors to the war effort in terms of buying war saving stamps and helping to produce medical and clothing supplies for the troops. The mass migration of blacks to the North during the war had little effect on the growing black population of Winston-Salem, for the simple reason that tobacco factory wages were comparable to the best factory wages in the North.<sup>26</sup>

Despite an economy that was generally better for both white and black workers, Winston-Salem was not immune to white prejudices and fears running rampant throughout the United States. Working class whites in Winston-Salem, although they enjoyed better wages and held almost all supervisory positions in the factories, were not pleased to see blacks enjoy a similar standard of living. Local and national media reinforced negative images of blacks and the news was filled with stories of race riots and rape myth atrocities committed by black men against white women. Returning black

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<sup>25</sup> Miller, "Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina 1895-1920," 44-50.

<sup>26</sup> Fries, *Forsyth: The History of a County on the March*, 256-257; and Miller, "Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina 1895-1920," 183-190. After the merger of Winston and Salem in 1913, Winston-Salem has been called locally the "Twin City." Winston-Salem was also called the "Camel City," after the Camel brand of cigarettes, a name which has fallen out of favor in light of health concerns over smoking. Many local businesses have "Twin City" as part of their name and residents are sometimes referred to as Twin Citians.



veterans in Winston-Salem brought with them a new attitude that was less deferential to whites than the old ways. Within this racially charged environment, another serious racial incident occurred. In November 1918, a white woman and her husband, a Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Childress, were allegedly forced off a road in north Winston-Salem by a lone black gunman. He forced the couple into a ravine where he shot the husband twice and then raped the wife. According to the wife, only her pleas as a mother of three children kept the assailant from killing her.<sup>27</sup>

The injured husband crawled his way back to the road and asked a passerby to summon the police. Mrs. Childress was found by a search party of black and white volunteers who took her to the sheriff. She described her attacker to the sheriff who organized a manhunt. Soon after the search began, Sheriff Flynt approached a black man who pulled a pistol and fired, hitting the sheriff in the hand and neck. The man escaped. Feeling personal anger as well as pressure from the public, the sheriff ordered an arrest be made. Officers returned with Russell High, a black man who happened to be carrying a pistol. High was placed in the county jail. Infuriated white citizens, most of them from the working class Inverness Mill area, gathered into an angry lynch mob of around two thousand people. Mayor Gorrell appeared and tried to calm the mob. Mrs. Childress spoke to the crowd and emphatically said that Russell High was not the man that attacked her.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Miller, "Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina 1895-1920," 205-207.

<sup>28</sup> "Southern Race Riot Costs Five Lives," *New York Times*, November 18, 1918; and Miller, "Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina 1895-1920," 207-209.

Apparently determined to spill black blood, the mob paid no heed to Mrs. Childress and stormed the jail. Fireman turned fire hoses on the crowd, infuriating the mob, and someone in the crowd opened fire, killing fireman Robert Young. Sheriffs fired into the mob. A large crowd of armed blacks appeared from the nearby neighborhoods and attempted to keep whites from entering the jail. The local militia was called out and attempted to restore order. As the crowd was dispersed, smaller mobs of both white and black began running through the city, discharging firearms and breaking into businesses. Hardware stores and pawn shops were stripped of guns and ammunition. According to eyewitnesses, gunfire and pandemonium lasted throughout the night. When the rioting ended, officially five white people were dead, one black person was dead, and hundreds of both races injured. Although never formally proven, it was thought that dozens of blacks were killed during the night and their bodies were hidden in culverts or thrown into Belo's Pond. Governor Bickett sent an army tank battalion in to restore order and the Greensboro Home Guard arrived by special train to help. The city was effectively placed under martial law. Almost every black home was searched by soldiers and police for weapons. Black and white factory workers were all searched for weapons as they reported for work. The event was covered by every major newspaper in the country, which was a bitter pill for civic and business leaders who were energetically invested in attracting conventions, trade shows, and new business to the city.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> "Southern Race Riot Costs Five Lives," *New York Times*, November 18, 1918; Miller, "Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina 1895-1920," 209-214; and Brownlee, *Winston-Salem: A Pictorial History*, 149.

The reactions of city leaders in the aftermath of the 1918 race riot helped set the tone for the way Winston-Salem was to deal with race issues in the future. White leaders, led by tobacco and textile magnate P. H. Hanes, considered the lynching attempt a total embarrassment to the city and made certain that whites arrested for rioting received strict punishment. Black businessmen sent a delegation to the Board of Aldermen and offered to help “apprehend those who disturbed the peace and injured the good name of the city by their lawless acts.” Black leaders suggested the creation of a Law and Order League, under black control, for the purpose of quelling black crime. For the foreseeable future, white and black leaders formed an alliance designed to present the city’s best possible image to the rest of the world. Even as this peaceful coalition was formed, the fact that thousands of Winston-Salem blacks not only owned weapons but proved willing to use them if directly threatened was not lost on the patriarchal powers. As he watched African Americans walking to work in his factories, P.H. Hanes was overheard telling other whites, “Better let those niggers along, they’ll kill ya.” White leaders maintained their control over their highly-valued workforce but did so with a new emphasis on keeping things calm and peaceful. African Americans knew that they had sent a message that assured Winston-Salem was not to be place for lynching. African Americans also joined together and began a Winston-Salem chapter of the NAACP, with an impressive eighty members to start.<sup>30</sup>

Winston-Salem endured hard times during the Great Depression but fared better than most cities. Even in hard times, people will buy cigarettes and underwear. Banks in

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<sup>30</sup> Miller, “Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina 1895-1920,” 216-220.

Winston-Salem did not fail, although the city faced bankruptcy until bailed out by its most prominent boosters, particularly Reynolds Tobacco Company which paid its substantial property taxes in advance. Unemployed men were put to work repairing parks and playgrounds and quite a few homeless families worked growing food on old farms out in the county. The Gray family donated money to the city and helped it secure grant money from the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Hundreds of men found employment building the city's first public arena, Bowman Gray Stadium.<sup>31</sup>

Over thirteen thousand men and women of both races from Winston-Salem and Forsyth County served in American armed forces during World War II. Three hundred and one did not return alive. P.H. Hanes Knitting Company produced over thirty-eight million garments and Reynolds Tobacco produced billions of cigarettes for the American military. The Reynolds plant that produced aluminum foil cigarette wrappers also made aluminum strips dropped from planes to jam enemy radar. There was no shortage of jobs in Winston-Salem and the stage was set for a booming economy at war's end.<sup>32</sup>

Returning soldiers came home to a thriving but rundown and "shabby" looking city. Richard J. Reynolds, Jr., son of the Reynolds Tobacco founder, was elected mayor in 1940. Although delayed by the war, Reynolds and subsequent mayors made good on the promise to clean up the slums that bordered the central business district. Reynolds applied to the federal government and received money for the first ever federal housing project in North Carolina. Under a process broadly categorized as "urban renewal," by

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<sup>31</sup> Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, 218-219.

<sup>32</sup> Brownlee, *Winston-Salem: A Pictorial History*, 189-190; and Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, 229-230.

the early 1960s more than four thousand mostly black families had been moved from their homes, many into public housing projects. The traditional black business district at Church and Third Streets was razed. Many black-owned businesses were forced into permanent closing and numerous historic black landmarks were destroyed. The construction of new expressways and parkways served to further define and segregate black neighborhoods.<sup>33</sup>

In 1943 a twenty-three year-old African American woman named Theodosia Simpson, stood up in the middle of stifling hot tobacco factory and demanded a pay increase for herself and other women tobacco workers at Winston-Salem's R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. Simpson spoke directly to John Whitaker, the vice president in charge of manufacturing and eventual chairman of the board of Winston-Salem's most powerful entity both economically and politically. Whitaker claimed that under wartime restrictions it was impossible to give wage increases. Simpson informed Whitaker that under the "Little Steel formula," it was in fact legal and possible to give pay raises. When Whitaker, emblematic of white patriarchy in Winston-Salem, asked Simpson how she knew about this labor law, she replied: "Whether you know it or not, I can read and I can think. It's been in all the newspapers."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, 236-239.

<sup>34</sup> "Tobacco Plant Official Calls Winston-Salem a Powder Keg," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 13, 1943; and Robert Rogers Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 20-21. Korstad's work is a benchmark study of local movements, unions, and civil rights, as well as the effect of anti-communism on civil rights. His perspectives on Winston-Salem proved indispensable in studying local race relations and civil rights history.

The formation of Local 22 of the Tobacco Workers International Union was the most direct challenge ever to the authority and power of Reynolds Tobacco Company. That the movement was led by working class blacks, with women leaders in prominent roles, was even more of an affront to the patriarchs of Winston-Salem. In May 1947, Local 22 went on a strike that lasted for thirty-eight days. The black community was energized in support of the union and used the pulpits of the churches to deliver the message. Voter registration drives led by the union added close to three thousand new black voters to the rolls. In November 1947, black voters elected Reverend Kenneth R. Williams to the Board of Aldermen, marking the first time since the 1890s an African American had served. Although the union fell victim to the automation of lower-skilled jobs by Reynolds Tobacco and to allegations of communism during the Red Scare era of the early-1950s, it served a greater overall purpose for blacks in Winston-Salem. The election of Williams opened the door and allowed blacks to gradually obtain more elected and appointed political positions. A number of union leaders, most notably Velma Hopkins, became important civil rights leaders. The rhetoric of equality and a new energy to pursue a civil rights agenda was spawned by the efforts of Local 22. Even though Reynolds Tobacco had won the battle and kept the union out of its plants, company executives began quietly formulating a plan to move some blacks into management roles and to increase overall pay and benefits.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism*, 310-329; Brownlee, *Winston-Salem: A Pictorial History*, 189; Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History*, 248-249; and Tilley, *The R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company*, 373-414.

The landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954 offered hope for a genuine leap forward for racial equality. Winston-Salem followed the lead of the state of North Carolina, as did other larger North Carolina cities, by agreeing to comply with the Supreme Court ruling, without actually committing to any sort of definitive timetable. Despite the protests of black leaders, especially the lone black Board of Education member, Reverend William R. Crawford, the school system avoided any integration for both school years beginning in 1955 and 1956. In 1957, it was decided to accept the transfer application of one black student. On September 5, 1957, Gwendolyn Y. Bailey, the daughter of a Baptist minister, enrolled at the all-white R.J. Reynolds High School. Bailey was fifteen and enrolled as a junior. Early that morning racial epithets had been painted in the parking lot and the circular driveway in front of the auditorium. Key Club and Service Club members washed them away before Bailey arrived. Claude “Pop” Joyner, longtime principal of the school warned students that racial incidents would not be tolerated. With police officers on duty as a precaution, Bailey walked peacefully into Reynolds High School on the arm of Velma Hopkins, one of the former leaders of Local 22. The following year, three black students were enrolled at Easton Elementary School. There were no racial incidents on the first day of school but over two hundred white children’s parents applied to transfer their children from Easton.<sup>36</sup>

In 1959, Dr. Dale Gramley, president of Salem College, presented the case to the National Municipal League for Winston-Salem to be given the prestigious title of “All-

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<sup>36</sup> Aingred G. Dunston, “The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: 1947-1977” (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1981), 88-98; and Brownlee, *Winston-Salem: A Pictorial History*, 202.

American City.” This was a highly-coveted honor for towns and cities around the nation and was considered an attraction for potential new business and industry. Among the lengthy list of accomplishments were the restoration of historic Old Salem, the building of a new community center, the establishment of a technical school (later named Forsyth Technical Community College), a ten million dollar hospital project, and six million dollars for building new schools. Gramley pointed to the city’s industrial and commercial successes and emphasized the resultant upward trends in earnings and property values. The city was portrayed as a southern city where both races lived in harmony. Even though African American wages in Winston-Salem were roughly sixty percent of white wages, African Americans in the city took some pride in knowing their wages were higher than the national average for non-whites and their percentage of white-collar professionals was much higher than the average for other cities in the South. African American leaders strongly supported the All-American City campaign, even as others in the black community saw the effort as hypocritical.<sup>37</sup>

The All-American City campaign in many ways encapsulated the complex issues of race in Winston-Salem. The dynamics of black and white working together for the common good were always tainted by inequality. The first two hundred years of white and black relations in the Winston-Salem area were clearly dominated politically and economically by paternalistic whites, yet the relationships and the ways in which those relationships developed historically were layered and complex. Elite whites and poor whites often had very different views of black people. Elite blacks often played a game

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<sup>37</sup> Dunston, “The Black Struggle for Equality,” 105-107.



of accommodation with elite whites, sometimes for their own benefit and at other times to protect the general well-being of all black people. At key moments, the least fortunate in terms of power and wealth proved they could indeed boldly inject themselves into events and change the outcomes of history. Based on this history, no one should have been totally surprised at the actions and accomplishments of African Americans in Winston-Salem in the turbulent civil rights decade to come in the 1960s.

## CHAPTER II

### SIT-INS, 1960

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.

As Winston-Salem headed into the 1960s its progressive white citizens and corporate boosters could point with some pride at the forward-thinking nature of the city in terms of race relations. The naming of the city as an “All-America City” in 1959 (and again later in 1964) was a source of pride for many in the city, black and white, and perhaps an award tinged with no small irony for black citizens more considerate of ideologies relating to freedom, justice, and civil rights. The transformative events that began in February 1960 in both Winston-Salem and across much of the South provided a key spark for the Black Freedom Struggle. Elite whites in Winston-Salem saw the sit-in movement as a problem, not so much for ideological reasons related to integration, but primarily because of the potential to disrupt the growth of industry and commerce. Black elites, at least initially, feared the sit-ins might interrupt the progress being made through gradual and conciliatory negotiations with whites. Both white and black elite leaders were fully invested in maintaining the peace and perpetuating the city’s positive image.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The benchmark work on the toleration of racial progress in the Upper South for the sake of business and image is William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). Chafe asserted that in nearby Greensboro traditional southern manners based on “civility” perpetuated a certain amount of deference from blacks in negotiations while also preventing whites from using harsher tactics, like those evidenced in the Deep South, to impose their will.

The sit-in movement in Winston-Salem was led by a younger African American generation of mostly college students. Their leadership challenged the long-held authority of black elites, who were mostly middle-aged or older men from the ranks of ministers, doctors, lawyers, and business owners. As the black community rallied around the spirit and idealism of youthful movement leaders and participants, most of the traditional leaders responded to pressure to be less conciliatory and more proactive in their dealings with white leaders. At least two of the local young movement leaders were present and participated in the formation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), an organization with an overarching transformational effect on the Black Freedom Struggle and other social movements to follow. During the spring of 1960, when sit-in movements in other cities, including Greensboro, had stalled, sit-in protesters stayed active in Winston-Salem, helping to sustain much-needed media attention on the movement.<sup>2</sup>

The entry of college and high school students into proactive protest provided a new impetus to the movement and created challenges to the existing hierarchies of the church and organizations like the NAACP. Some of the high school students came from the poor and working classes, not from the better-educated or financially secure classes. Although historians have tended to focus on the movement in Albany, Georgia, as a

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<sup>2</sup> For insight into the formation of SNCC and the transformational effects of the organization to the movement writ large, see Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991); David Halberstam, *The Children* (New York: Random House, 1998); Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 239-272; Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement 1954-1963* (London: MacMillan, 1988); and Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, ed., *A Circle of Trust: Remembering SNCC* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998).

major turning point in including lower classes of African Americans in movement activities, a shift towards the inclusion of working class and poor people also occurred in other places, including Winston-Salem. People from Winston-Salem's black working class had been at the forefront of the Local 22 protests a decade earlier, indicating a tradition and a willingness to fight that predated the more famous lower-class actions in Albany. In the Winston-Salem protests of 1960, the participation of lower-class African Americans swelled the number of protesters and made a notable impression upon whites in power.<sup>3</sup>

In almost all southern cities, the media were controlled by white men who either staunchly opposed integration or deeply feared upsetting their white customers and constituents who did. Winston-Salem was unique in that many of the patriarchs were second generation, some had been educated in the North, and most had some sense of *noblesse oblige*, as manifested in their substantial charitable foundations. A peculiar blend of pro-business New South progressivism, combined with varying levels of genuine altruism, created an environment that allowed for much more open public conversations on racial issues than was normally the case in the South.

The powerful Gray family controlled newspaper, radio, and television media in Winston-Salem, and beginning in the late 1950s, more often than not allowed their

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<sup>3</sup> See Robert Rogers Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); and Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 239-250. Morris addresses the importance of the rise of the lower classes in the Albany Movement, as does Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 531-547; and David Halberstam, *The Children* (New York: Random House, 1998), 432-437. For first-person accounts of organizing efforts and tactics by Albany Movement participants, see Faith Holsaert et al. eds., *Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2010).

editors to print a wide assortment of viewpoints within the “Letters to the Editor” section of the editorial pages. People in Winston-Salem enthusiastically used this forum once the sit-ins began in February 1960. By letting people present intellectual arguments regarding racial issues, and by allowing frustrations to be vented discursively rather than physically, the patriarchy may very well have succeeded in preventing the ugly and violent episodes seen elsewhere in the South. Pro-segregation whites came from all socioeconomic classes and were well represented in the public discourse. Other whites supported the cause of black freedom. These discursive exchanges between white and black, across many classes and ideologies, offer rare insights into the thoughts, opinions, and emotions of hundreds of people, chronicling their diverse perspectives in ways simply not available in cities with more repressive media control. African Americans in Winston-Salem used the discursive channels of letters to the editor to let their feelings and opinions be known. Many letters were thoughtfully and strategically composed, while others displayed more emotion. Women who may have been hesitant to participate in marches, let their voices be heard across the city through their signed letters. Working-class people, of both races, vented their frustrations and exposed various feelings of alienation. These discursive expressions from Winston-Salem bring an added dimension to understanding the meaning of historic events and offer unique human insights and perspectives to a number of sub-genres within civil rights historiography.

In the 1960 Winston-Salem movement, although only a few black women students appeared in proactive protest leadership roles, a significant number of young women participated in marches and sit-ins. The voices of many black women appear in

the letters to the newspaper, supporting protests and also presenting arguments against inequality clearly aimed at white readers. They range in socioeconomic class from doctors' wives, ministers' wives, and college professors to students, maids, and factory workers. Winston-Salem provided a unique opportunity for black women to be heard by sharing their opinions and feelings in the letters forums. Their writings bring an added dimension to civil rights historiographies interested in the thoughts and actions of women.<sup>4</sup>

White women are also represented in the public conversations. Writers spanned all socioeconomic classes and displayed a wide range of views ranging from liberal integrationist to virulent segregationist, with many views falling between these poles. White men also actively participated in public discourses regarding racial issues. Educated elite whites argued both extremes of the desegregation issue publicly, as did many men and women from the middle-class. Although they were less likely to write the newspapers, occasionally whites from the working class also joined in the public conversation. While newspapers in the Deep South did not generally suppress letters

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<sup>4</sup> See Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, 187-191. Ransby discusses the difficulties for African American women challenging the traditional patterns of paternalism, especially from the ministerial class. Ella Baker had the added challenge of supporting grassroots organizing in the face of the increasing power of the charisma of Martin Luther King, Jr. For a discussion of how women used gender roles to "create space" as grassroots civil rights leaders, as well as discussion of the intersections of race, class, and cultures, see Belinda Robnett, *How Long? How Long? African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 5, 137-139. For study of women in Upper South movements more closely aligned to Winston-Salem, see Christina Greene, *Our Separate Ways: Women and the Black Freedom Movement in Durham, North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 100-104, 108-110. Greene demonstrates that working class women in Durham played a role in earlier protests and became even more proactive after the start of the War on Poverty. For another North Carolina local study that shows a traditional male dominance gradually challenged by black women across class lines, see Charles W. McKinney, Jr., *Greater Freedom: The Evolution of the Civil Rights Struggle in Wilson, North Carolina* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2010), xx-xxi, 215-219.

from pro-segregation contributors, they rarely printed the views of integrationists. Often the differences between whites on race reflected conflict between whites based on their own lingering social class divisions. The letters from Winston-Salem offer insight into the arguments and divisions among whites in an Upper South city, offering new perspectives to the existing historiography on whites during the civil rights era.<sup>5</sup>

At the start of the 1960s, African Americans in Winston-Salem enjoyed few dining options outside of a handful of restaurants in East Winston that catered to an all-black clientele. In the downtown business district, the H.L. Green Company and the F.W. Woolworth Store on Fourth Street each had separate sit-down counters for black and white customers. The S.H. Kress Store had a sit-down counter for whites and a stand-up counter where blacks and whites both could order. Both Charles and Sears department stores had stand-up counters where both races could order. The stand-up counter used black waitresses. All other eating establishments downtown and throughout the predominantly white parts of the city allowed “takeout only” for black customers.<sup>6</sup>

The Woolworth sit-in in Greensboro, beginning February 1, 1960, sparked a new chapter in the civil rights movement and motivated young people to get involved as never

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<sup>5</sup> For study of negative southern white attitudes towards the civil rights movements, see Jason Sokol, *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights, 1945-1975* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006); and Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 51-61. For histories of liberal whites in the South, see Morton Sosna, *In Search of the Silent South: Southern Liberals and the Race Issue* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); Clive Webb, *Fight against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001); and G. McLeod Bryan, *These Few Also Paid a Price: Southern Whites Who Fought for Civil Rights* (Macon, Georgia: Emory University Press, 2001). Bryan’s study includes some white movement activists in Winston-Salem.

<sup>6</sup> “Where Do Negroes Eat in the Twin City,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 9, 1960. For a statistical breakdown of restaurants in Winston-Salem based on racial customs before and after the 1960 and 1963 protests, see Clarence Patrick, “Desegregation in a Southern City: A Descriptive Report,” *Phylon*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Third Quarter 1964); 263-269.

before. Exactly one week later, students in Winston-Salem followed suit and jumped headlong into the sit-in movement. Carl Matthews, a McLean Trucking Company dockworker and recent Winston-Salem Teachers College (WSTC) student, began the Winston-Salem sit-in movement by sitting down alone at the S.H. Kress Store on Fourth Street, on Monday, February 8, 1960, during the noon lunch rush. The two white people on either side of Matthews received their lunch orders but did not eat. After they left, no white person would sit next to him. Matthews was refused service for food but was given a glass of water (the white waitress was harshly criticized by her co-workers for giving him water). He sat and smoked cigarettes. A small group of young black people trickled in and took seats as they became available. By four p.m., six others had joined Matthews at the counter. Late in the afternoon, two adult white men and two teenage white boys sat at the counter and began waving Confederate flags. The adults identified themselves to reporters as Bennett Sapp and Harold Ingram of Lexington. A young black man bought a flag from one of the teenage boys for fifty cents and then ripped it up. Matthews instructed the other protesters within earshot of *Journal* reporters: "We are not here to start any violence or trouble. We are just here to get something to eat. When you come back tomorrow, you don't want to do anything to start something. Don't say anything to people with Confederate flags no matter what they do to you." J.C. Bess, one of the black protesters, distributed United States flags to the other black protesters, who numbered approximately twenty-five. When the bell rang for the store to close,



Matthews gathered the protesters around him and led them in saying aloud the Twenty-Third Psalm.<sup>7</sup>

In a typewritten statement given to a *Journal* reporter after the store closed, Matthews stated the objectives of his protest. He began with a Biblical metaphor: “My stand here today is symbolic to Daniel in the Lion’s Den, but it truly represents the American Negro face to face with tyranny and being an American.” He continued: “I will not accept a back seat. I will not accept being cast aside. I will not accept being ignored because I am a Negro.” Matthews also emphasized the city’s pride in its new All-America City status. “This is my city,” Matthews wrote, “an All-America City. Today I will either get served at the counter at which I am seated or get thrown out, or stay here seated from the time I arrived here until the store closes. With the help of God, I intend to vigorously exercise my democratic and civil rights to the fullest extent.”<sup>8</sup>

Having seen and heard news accounts of the growing protests in Greensboro, elite leaders in Winston-Salem were very concerned about the Matthews-led incident. Dr. E.S. Hardge, president of the Winston-Salem chapter of the NAACP, issued a statement saying: “The NAACP has nothing whatsoever to do with this effort.” In contrast, Dr. George Simkins, head of the Greensboro chapter of the NAACP, spoke out in support of the student protesters in his city, and asked for additional help from Gordon Carey with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). In an editorial titled “A Time for Calm

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<sup>7</sup> “Sit-Down Strike Spreads To Twin City and Durham,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 9, 1960; “Negroes Sitdown Hits Two More Cities: Protests on Lunch-Counter Ban Close Durham and Winston-Salem Stores,” *New York Times*, February 9, 1960; and “Store Desegregation ‘Victory for Righteous,’” *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 4, 1960.

<sup>8</sup> “Lunch Counter Protest Spreads,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 9, 1960.

Discussion,” the *Winston-Salem Journal* called for “immediate action by the leadership of both races” in order “to forestall the kind of trouble that developed in Greensboro.” Describing Greensboro as “an ugly situation,” the *Journal* argued that “Negroes here have made their point” and to expand the movement to other stores “would serve no useful purpose.” The newspaper called on S.H. Kress management to give “careful consideration” to the concerns of the protesters.<sup>9</sup>

Although the media reported that those joining Matthews came to Kress after hearing the story on the radio, the protest was organized and planned in advance. Matthews had been leading training sessions with Winston-Salem Teachers College students and together they had set strategy at a meeting the day before. Victor Johnson, Jr., Jefferson Davis Diggs III, and William Andrew Bright, all three WSTC students and all three veterans of the United States military, were among the first to join Matthews in the protest. Johnson stated that although the three were only “somewhat associated” with Carl Matthews, they felt an obligation and a “solidarity” with him as veterans, and the three also felt it was important that as older adult students they should help lead younger students. Johnson had participated in a protest against bus segregation while stationed as a paratrooper in the army at Fort Bragg in the 1950s.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> “Lunch Counter Protest Spreads,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 9, 1960; and “A Time for Calm Discussion,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 9, 1960.

<sup>10</sup> Victor Johnson, Jr., interview with Thomas Flynn, June 11, 2012, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, DVD and Digital Sound File, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University; and Mary M. Dalton, Producer, *I’m Not My Brother’s Keeper: Leadership and Civil Rights in Winston-Salem, North Carolina*, DVD, 44 min., 2001. Dalton was a faculty member at Wake Forest University. The video includes interviews with many of the student participants and commentary by Wake Forest University Associate Professor of History Michele Gillespie, an expert in Winston-Salem history.

On the second day of the protests, Carl Matthews did not sit at any of the lunch counters, but instead, held impromptu talks with potential new protesters on the corner of Third and Church Streets. Around noon, a group of WSTC students went to the Kress Store and found that management had completely closed the lunch counter. The students walked to Woolworth at Fourth and Liberty where the counters had also been closed. They then went to Walgreens Drug Store, where the manager immediately closed the lunch counter, roped the area off, and hung a sign stating: "Closed in the Interest of Public Safety." Kress and Walgreens were considered prime targets because neither offered a separate counter for blacks. After a brief break, protesters went back to Woolworth and to the H.L. Green Company.<sup>11</sup>

Once school let out, some Atkins High School students joined in with the WSTC students, effectually adding representation from working-class families to the local movement. Woolworth had reopened their counters but quickly closed them as protesters took every other seat. The same seating strategy was used at H.L. Green, which also closed its counters. A lone African American protester went to the Fruit Bar at Liberty and Fifth Streets. He left peacefully when refused service. At the Bobbitt's Drug Store counter in the Reynolds Building, protesters took seats alongside white customers and ordered food. Strangely, none of the white customers left and the black customers were served their food. Once all sitting customers were served, the manager then closed the counter. Protests remained peaceful all day, although there was potential

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<sup>11</sup> "5 Downtown Stores Close Lunch Counters," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 10, 1960.

for violence when a group of young white hecklers clashed with black protesters outside of Woolworth about three p.m.<sup>12</sup>

Perhaps reflecting the difference between Winston-Salem's concern for not having negative racial images and the approach taken in many other southern cities, police reported the black demonstrators were "quiet and orderly" and dispersed the white counter-protesters. Protests ended peacefully for the day and participants vowed to continue the effort. Indicating a heightened awareness from the business classes, S.D. Harvey, executive director of the Winston-Salem Chapter of the interracial Urban League, said that his group was "ready and available to do whatever it can to help resolve this situation."<sup>13</sup> Students appeared to have little interest in receiving guidance from an older group of business leaders.

On a cold, rainy, third day of protests, one by one, lunch counters that had not closed in the first two days of protest, shut down as they were approached by protesters. When O'Hanlon Drug Store shut down their counter on Wednesday, there was a total of 298 downtown lunch counter seats "closed-up and roped-off." Herman A. Warren, manager of Woolworth, opened his counter but only for take-out boxed lunches. He announced that both white and black customers would be served—but that the boxed lunches must be taken off-premises. Walgreens attempted to re-open its counter but a group of black students "showed up at once," prompting the return of the "Closed in the Interest of Public Safety" sign. Utilizing a strategy organized by Everette L. Dudley and

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<sup>12</sup> "5 Downtown Stores Close Lunch Counters," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 10, 1960; Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*.

<sup>13</sup> "5 Downtown Stores Close Lunch Counters," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 10, 1960; Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*; and "Negroes Sitdown Hits 2 More Cities," *New York Times*, February 9, 1960.

other members of the WSTC campus branch of the NAACP, a lookout was posted outside the store to alert protesters if managers tried to re-open the lunch counter. Perhaps due to the weather, there were no reported incidents of white hecklers or counter-protesters appearing downtown. Protest leaders and participants held a meeting on campus at WSTC Wednesday night but declined to share future plans and strategies with the media.<sup>14</sup>

Elsewhere in North Carolina, the demonstrations in Greensboro, Durham, Fayetteville, and Charlotte continued, while a new protest began in Raleigh. In all of the cities, the core of the protest groups came from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), both state-supported and private. The Raleigh protest had over 150 participants on the first day and was subjected to verbal taunts and egg-throwing by a large crowd of whites. In the state capital, North Carolina, Attorney General Malcolm Seawell issued the state government's position on the lunch counter protests. Seawell stated: "No state law requires separation of the races in eating establishments" and: "No state law requires integration of the races in eating establishments." Seawell left the door open to local interpretation by ruling: "Municipal governments may act under their rights to suppress threats to the health, morals, safety, convenience and welfare of their citizens." In a not so-veiled message to administrators at North Carolina's HBCUs, Seawell also included these instructions: "Officials of colleges from which demonstrating students have come have the perfect right and probably the duty to prohibit any action on

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<sup>14</sup> "Negro Meet On Counter Issue Held: Store Offers Box Lunches," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 11, 1960; and Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*.

the part of students which threatens or is prejudicial to the peace and welfare of the community.”<sup>15</sup>

Despite the omission of the Winston-Salem story within most of the historiography of the civil rights movement, events in the city were monitored by national civil rights organizations and by the black newspapers in larger cities around the nation. In a show of support for student protesters in North Carolina, NAACP Executive Secretary Roy Wilkins sent a telegram to George Cobb, the president of S.H. Kress and Company, and to R.C. Kirkwood, the president of F.W. Woolworth and Company. Wilkins reminded the corporate leaders that North Carolina had no state law requiring segregated lunch counters and stated firmly: “Apartheid has no place in American national policy. Your stores enjoy wide patronage of Negro citizens not only in North Carolina but over the entire country. Our members and friends in many cities are watching the North Carolina developments with keen interest and deep sympathy.”<sup>16</sup>

The politics of student protest presented difficult choices for administrators and faculty at black colleges. Governor Luther Hodges sent a copy of the speech of North

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<sup>15</sup> Jeffrey J. Crow, Paul D. Escott, and Flora J. Hatley Wadelington, *A History of African Americans in North Carolina*, Second Edition (Raleigh: North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2011), 187-191; “Negro Meet On Counter Issue Held: Store Offers Box Lunches,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 11, 1960; and “Negroes Extend Sitdown Protest,” *New York Times*, February 10, 1960. For a study of the difficulties faced by HBCU administrators and faculty members, see Peter Wallenstein, ed., *Higher Education and the Civil Rights Movement: White Supremacy, Black Southerners, and College Campuses* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2009).

<sup>16</sup> “Telegram from Roy Wilkins to George Cobb and R.C. Kirkwood,” February 11, 1960, Papers of the NAACP, *Proquest Vault*, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University, <http://www.wssu.edu/cg-okelly-library/default.aspx>, accessed on January 20, 2014; and “General Office File, Sit-Ins North Carolina, 1960-61,” Papers of the NAACP, *Proquest Vault*, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University, <http://www.wssu.edu/cg-okelly-library/default.aspx>, accessed on January 22, 2014; “Arrest 22 in Sit-Down Move,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, February 24, 1960; and Chester Hampton, “Sitdowners Pass Kress Test in Winston-Salem,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 27, 1960.

Carolina Women's College chancellor Gordon Blackwell to all of the chancellors within the state system. Blackwell warned students against acting outside of an "institutional framework" and advised students "to refrain from such public demonstrations in order to free the atmosphere for fair and just solutions." Dr. Francis L. Atkins, chancellor at WSTC, received a copy of the Blackwell speech along with a copy of Attorney General Seawell's statement, which made the position of state government quite clear. Atkins decided to publicly ban protests on campus, while tacitly sending indication of his support through faculty members, like campus minister Kenneth R. Williams, biology professor Lillian Lewis, and Supervisor of Student Teaching Viola Brown, to the students.<sup>17</sup> According to Everette Dudley, he and other student-athletes were warned as a group by future Hall of Fame basketball coach Clarence E. "Bighouse" Gaines not to participate in the demonstrations. Years later, Dudley said that Gaines told him privately to "stick to his principles." Dudley also said that he lost his athletic scholarship due to his activism but was able to stay in school with G.I. Bill money and contributions from CORE and local African Americans.<sup>18</sup>

A mass meeting of approximately five hundred people on the campus of WSTC signaled that Winston-Salem had entered a new era of civil rights activity with a level of participation unseen since the Local 22 movement. The vast majority of meeting participants were students from WSTC and from the local black high schools. The

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<sup>17</sup> Aingred G. Dunston, "The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: 1947-1977" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1981), 117-118. Dunston utilized the Hodges Papers Collection and interviewed Lillian Lewis for this evidence. Her dissertation was supervised by William Chafe.

<sup>18</sup> Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*. See also Peter Wallenstein, *Higher Education and the Civil Rights Movement*.

number of high school students from working-class families raised the participation levels of non-elites to something reminiscent of the Local 22 protests. Carl Matthews was chosen as the executive chairman of the protest organization. Jefferson T. Diggs III was named campus president and William Bright campus executive vice president. A woman student was elected as secretary, but Matthews declined to identify her.<sup>19</sup>

William Bright announced at the meeting that “representatives of another local college” had been in contact and were prepared to support the movement. Bright refused to say which college (Salem College or Wake Forest College), but the inference was that white students had pledged their help. Adult leadership of the Winston-Salem chapter of the NAACP was also on hand to pledge their support. Dr. F.W. Jackson, chairman of the Winston-Salem chapter of the NAACP, assured the students of “100 percent plus” cooperation. Matthews spoke to the crowd and stated that the movement must “hold steadfast” to the principle of accepting nothing less than fully integrated facilities, with “no isolated spots, no certain seats.” Matthews again closed with a recitation of the Twenty-third Psalm and with a bold vision that the efforts in Winston-Salem would inspire students nationwide to “join forces in the stride for freedom through Christianity.”<sup>20</sup>

The day following the mass rally at WSTC, race relations seemed to be at the forefront of thought for the elite whites ruling the city. Hundreds of mass meeting participants, stirrings from lower-class blacks, and the possible inclusion of white

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<sup>19</sup> Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*; and Roy Thompson, “Resistance Movement Organized,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 12, 1960.

<sup>20</sup> Roy Thompson, “Resistance Movement Organized,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 12, 1960.



students in the movement all combined to garner the attention of those in charge. In a staff editorial, the *Winston-Salem Journal* called for the Recreation Commission and the Board of Aldermen to approve an “amusement area” for black children at Winston Lake Park. A similar area, with playground equipment and for-fee rides was already a popular and even slightly profitable venture for the city at the all-white Reynolds Park. The city was apparently considering a proposal to use surplus recreation funds to build a public pool on Cloverdale Hill (an all-white neighborhood). The opinion of the *Journal* was that, regardless of the funding sources, a pool should not be built on Cloverdale Hill, unless a pool was also constructed simultaneously for the all-black Kimberley Park neighborhood.<sup>21</sup>

As the sit-ins dominated local news cycles, letters on the subject flowed in to the local newspapers. Civil rights advocate and Wake Forest College religion and ethics professor G. McLeod “Mac” Bryan, who was white, wrote in and publicly claimed that: “If God moves in human history, is it not significant that our pretensions as ‘The All-America City’ and during ‘Brotherhood Week’ should be exposed at this moment by fifty per cent of our citizens who also get hungry and who also pay the same money we do for food?” Bryan went on to note, “Jesus Christ came to prick our dulled consciences,” and “our fellow Negro citizens have reminded us of our shortcomings and have shown us the Christian spirit and way.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> “Money for Winston Lake Park,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 12, 1960.

<sup>22</sup> G. McLeod Bryan, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 12, 1960. For further study on liberal southerners and their relationships with the civil rights movement see Morton Sosna, *In Search of the Silent South*; Clive Webb, *Fight against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001); and G. McLeod Bryan, *These Few Also Paid a Price*.

In stark contrast to the moderate views of the newspaper, and the progressive views of the scholarly Professor Bryan, C.F. Dixon, a middle-class Western Electric Company employee, expressed the feelings of a great many whites in Winston-Salem over the lunch counter controversy. Dixon stated that the *Journal* editorial of February 9, calling for discussions between white and black leaders, “made me sick.” Calling the Urban League leaders “race-mixers,” Dixon said that the Urban League was “available” for negotiations, Carl Matthews was “available,” and “naturally, the National Association for the Agitation of Colored People will be available too...and the Civil Rights Commission...and the Supreme Court. Now I ask you—who’s going to represent the white folks?” Dixon suggested the downtown store managers knew best how to operate their businesses and did not need “the help of the editors.” Suggesting a police-oriented solution to black public protest, he added: “Incidentally, there’s laws against loitering.”<sup>23</sup>

The African American community was filled with conversation and energy over the lunch counter movement. By day, protesters kept the vigil for possible attempts to re-open lunch counters; however, none of the sit-down counters tried to open. Friday evening, a crowd of six hundred people filled the sanctuary of the Goler Metropolitan AME Zion Church to hear the guest speaker, the Reverend Fred L. Shuttlesworth, president of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights in Birmingham. “We are in a difficult age,” Shuttlesworth told his audience. “Men in high places are speaking with low voices. Too many men are looking at 1960 with 1860 glasses. We need

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<sup>23</sup> C.F. Dixon, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 12, 1960; and *Hill’s 1960 Winston-Salem City Directory* (Richmond, Virginia: Hill Directory Company, 1960), 228. For study of negative southern white attitudes towards the civil rights movements see Jason Sokol, *There Goes My Everything*; and Joseph Crespino, *In Search of another Country*, 51-61.

leadership in this critical and difficult time.” “Go forward,” Shuttlesworth said, and added that the “ideal follower” was someone who was “not nervous, who is not a hothead, who has courage.” Despite distancing the NAACP from Matthews on the first day of protest, Dr. E.S. Hardge, head of the Winston-Salem NAACP and pastor of Goler Metropolitan, apparently felt the wave of black public opinion and promised to support the effort of students and called on the community for full support. Carl Matthews described his feelings about the first day of protesting and then exhorted the crowd: “Let’s be the first to integrate eating facilities and set an example for America. My plea is that you join in and help us accomplish this as a major victory for our race and our town!”<sup>24</sup>

African American reporter Luix Overbea covered the Shuttlesworth rally for the *Winston-Salem Journal*. Overbea joined the newspaper staff in 1956 to write for the one or two pages of the newspaper which featured social columns like “Around East Winston” and “Activities of Colored People,” along with black obituaries and wedding notices. It was rare up until this time for a black reporter for the *Journal* to be given a major news story assignment. Newspaper management may have felt that Overbea had an advantage in gaining access to movement leaders and management may also have felt that it was time to give an African American full reporter status. Overbea continued to cover civil rights and other news stories in Winston-Salem until leaving for a job with the *Christian Science Monitor* in 1970. He also taught briefly at Winston-Salem State

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<sup>24</sup> “41 Negroes Protesting Lunch Counter Service Arrested at Raleigh,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 13, 1960; and Luix Overbea, “‘Go Forward,’ 600 Are Told at Meeting,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 13, 1960.

College. At the time Overbea was writing for the *Winston-Salem Journal*, there were less than fifty African American journalists writing for mainstream newspapers in the entire United States.<sup>25</sup>

In a development with major ramifications for the future of the civil rights movement, Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. came to Durham on February 16. Along with Reverend Ralph Abernathy, he toured the site of student protest at Durham's downtown Woolworth store and led a mass rally at the White Rock Baptist Church. He spoke before the rally began with a gathering of about one hundred students from various North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia colleges. Carl Matthews and Jefferson Diggs III were in the group that met with King. A spokesman for the students declined to give details of the private meeting, but stated that "a coordinating committee has been set up." This was the genesis of what would become SNCC in an April 1960 meeting at Shaw University in Raleigh. King told the estimated rally audience of fifteen hundred people that blacks must be willing "to fill up the jails of the South. Maybe it will take this willingness to stay in jail to arouse the dozing conscience of our nation." He called on both white and black North Carolinians to "back up the marvelous protest of these students." King also stated to the crowd: "You have also made it clear that we will not be satisfied with token integration, which, is nothing but a new form of discrimination."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> "Longtime Monitor Writer Luix V. Overbea: An Appreciation," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 14, 2010. Pictures of Overbea teaching are available in the archives at Winston-Salem State University's O'Kelly Library. A biography and tribute are available online at NABJ.org. Overbea was given the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) Lifetime Achievement Award in 1993. He died in 2010 at the age of eighty-seven.

<sup>26</sup> "Students Hear Negro Leader in Durham," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 17, 1960; Greene, *Our Separate Ways*, 77; "Durham's Civil Rights Heritage: Martin Luther King, Jr. Visits Durham, February 16, 1960," *Durham Herald-Sun*, January 13, 2013; Dunston, "The Black Struggle for Equality," 120; and

Progressive Democrat Terry Sanford, a favorite of many among the ruling class in Winston-Salem, announced on February 4 he was running for governor. Sanford had the support of forward-thinking North Carolinians and a message that resonated with younger businessmen interested in ideas like creating research parks and attracting new technologies and out-of-state corporations. He had a high level of support from North Carolinians, including Winston-Salem leaders, who were perhaps not ready for full integration but who at least saw that the perception of harsh and antiquated racial ideas by outsiders was “bad for business.” Sanford appeared to have the nomination wrapped up early in the spring but received a challenge from staunch segregationist, I. Beverly Lake, forcing a runoff. He later acknowledged that he had to suppress his integrationist ideas in order to get elected.<sup>27</sup>

While Terry Sanford was certainly the logical choice for the minority of actual white liberals in Winston-Salem, many business leaders were also Sanford supporters and shared his understanding that the world was changing and that the harshness of Jim Crow segregation was not conducive to boosting the image of the city as a modern industrial and banking center. The *Winston-Salem Journal* continued its subtly progressive editorial agenda. While acknowledging that the scope of the sit-in movement might ultimately require solutions “regional rather than local in scope,” the *Journal* praised

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“Rev. King Is Arrested in Atlanta: Alabama Warrant Charges Perjury,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 18, 1960.

<sup>27</sup> “Lake Says ‘No,’ Supporters ‘Yes,’ *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 11, 1960; and Robert R. Korstad and James L. Leloudis, *To Right These Wrongs: The North Carolina Fund and the Battle to End Poverty and Inequality in 1960s America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 36-42. Sanford sent his children to an integrated school--after he was elected. See also Howard E. Covington, Jr. and Marion A. Ellis, *Terry Sanford: Politics, Progress, and Outrageous Ambitions* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1999); and William Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights*.

local black and white leaders for having “kept their heads” and for preserving “generally harmonious relations between the races.” The editorial staff expressed optimism that since the local movement had organized and named a leadership structure, negotiations might become more “practical.” Optimism was also seen in the notion that since North Carolina law did not expressly mandate a policy on interracial dining, there might be “a way out that will be acceptable both to the store owners and to their customers.”<sup>28</sup>

The most visible white advocates of a truly integrationist agenda in Winston-Salem came from among the ranks of Wake Forest College faculty. Sociology professor Clarence H. Patrick and political science professor Robert W. Gregg joined Mac Bryan in championing the cause of equality for African Americans. Gregg spoke with a frankness that was unusual for southern liberals of the day. He said: “North Carolina has been widely praised in the last few years for its comparatively enlightened attitude on race relations. Whether that praise is deserved or not has now been called into question.” Gregg accused those who argued against integration of using the “same tired, lame arguments” so often that they had lost any “real meaning.” He stated further: “It is argued that race relations were fine here until the Negroes did this regrettable thing. What is meant is that race relations are fine as long as the Negroes stay in their ‘place.’” Gregg accused Attorney General Malcolm Seawell, Raleigh mayor William Enloe, and Winston-Salem mayor Marshall Kurfees of “occasional hollow gestures towards a fair deal for the Negro” and noted that “in the final analysis, they, too, are anxious to relegate

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<sup>28</sup> “The Lunch Counter Problem,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 13, 1960.

him to an inferior position. Their warped sense of Christian charity says: paternalism, yes; fraternalism, no.”<sup>29</sup>

Gregg also indicted the press for misleading the public about race relations and argued that “North Carolina has given the Negro very few political, economic, or social rights that he or the national government has not insisted upon and fought for.” He encouraged blacks to continue to protest: “The Negro’s resistance to continued segregation is to be commended, for it suggests that he now recognizes that he must actively and stubbornly seek what decent men should really grant him as a fellow human being.” In another example of the possible influence of progressive academics, William C. Allred, Jr., whose residence was Irving Street in Ardmore, but was away as a graduate student at Chapel Hill, observed that the “South and most of its people profess to be ethical, Christian, and democratic—that is in everything but Negro-white relations.” Allred argued that since the black protesters were courteous, why could not “store management, Winston-Salem city leaders, and the general white public return the courtesy.” Allred had earlier participated in the Greensboro protests.<sup>30</sup>

The concept that friendly whites were receptive to change, but that blacks must be patient, is a recurring and problematic theme in Winston-Salem civil rights history, and in southern civil rights history writ large. The veiled message that property rights somehow

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<sup>29</sup> Robert W. Gregg, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 20, 1960.

<sup>30</sup> Robert W. Gregg, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 20, 1960; William C. Allred, Jr., “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 19, 1960; and *1960 City Directory*, 115. William Clifton Allred, Jr. studied at Emory University and the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and was a history professor at Coastal Carolina and Brevard colleges. He was a human rights activist, historian of the civil rights movement, and executive director of the North Carolina Council on Human Relations from 1966-1969. Allred died June 14, 2013 in Asheville, North Carolina. His papers were donated to the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

superseded civil rights and human rights also continued to be an integral part of the white perspective. Theodore H. Buddine, an employee of Reynolds Tobacco, expressed a point of view that was consistent with many middle and upper-middle class whites in Winston-Salem. Buddine claimed to be for integration, but that it must be achieved “gradually and cautiously.” Buddine stated: “I consider the Negroes current assault on discrimination at lunch-counters foolish, dangerous, and to a certain extent pointless. It is important to remember that less than one hundred years [ago] the vast majority of the colored people in this country were slaves. The sociological changes implicit in the Supreme Court’s ruling on integration are tremendous, and must be made with the utmost discretion.” It is difficult to judge whether Buddine was expressing his own opinion or if he was pragmatically stating the difficulty with the political and social realities of dealing with more conservative whites when he said: “The Southern people will not be pushed into integration. It will not take months, nor years: it will take decades.”<sup>31</sup>

Other whites offered platitudes that thinly veiled their desire to continue a system of segregation. W.T. Lipscomb, a tailor who lived on Hawthorne Road, speculated: “We have many very cultured Negroes who dislike the facilities they have offered them at eating places considered below standard and therefore, have only one outlet, to insist on places here-to-fore restricted to ‘White only.’” Lipscomb suggested that a “corporation

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<sup>31</sup> Theodore H. Buddine, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 17, 1960; and *1960 City Directory*, 146. The notion that southern whites could be friendly allies as long as blacks were willing to accept gradual change can be found to some degree in practically any local study of the civil rights movement. For studies from North Carolina with traditions of accommodation and gradualism similar to Winston-Salem, see William Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights*; Charles McKinney, *Greater Freedom*; and David S. Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County North Carolina, and the Fate of Black Schools in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).



be established” to provide nicer eating places for blacks, and then all but “a few agitators” could again be happy with segregated facilities. A resident of the nearby community of Union Grove, Mrs. P.C. Roseman offered an analogy featuring the birds she saw in her backyard. Mrs. Roseman described seeing a “number of snowbirds” and then a “covey of blackbirds” near her house. She continued: “Then we see robins, quail & other birds but every kind keeps with their kind. They never mate with some other kind. They stay with their kind. The same way with the animal kingdom. Why can’t humans have the same sense of the animal kingdom?” Relating her argument more directly to the sit-in movement, Roseman stated, “I would not try to force myself where I was not supposed to be. Furthermore, when a person puts up money to start a business and can’t run it as they desire we will have lost our American freedom.”<sup>32</sup>

Black people in Winston-Salem were increasingly given a forum in the Winston-Salem newspapers and an increased sense of emboldened empowerment is evident in their contributions to the public discourse. The majority of letters were from the elite class of educators and ministers but numerous letters were printed from students and from the African American working class. Over the course of the civil rights struggles of the 1960s, the newspaper generally provided a forum for black voices and white voices across a varied spectrum. Extremely inflammatory views from either side were excluded

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<sup>32</sup> W.T. Lipscomb, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 19, 1960; *1960 City Directory*, 437; and Mrs. P.C. Roseman, Readers’ Opinions, *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 17, 1960. For further study of the complex views of white moderates in the South see: Morton Sosna, *In Search of the Silent South*; David L. Chappell, *Inside Agitators: White Southerners in the Civil Rights Movement* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); Numan V. Bartley, *The New South, 1945-1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995); and Tony Badger, “‘Closet Moderates’: Why White Liberals Failed, 1940-1970 in *The Role of Ideas in the Civil Rights South*, edited by Ted Ownby (Oxford: University Press of Mississippi, 2002).

and in times of particular upheaval (especially when violence was involved), the paper shut down publishing letters related to race issues.

Occasionally, there were personal exchanges across races and sometimes classes, as letter writers reacted both positively and negatively to letters by others. Dr. Lillian Lewis, a professor at WSTC, and the wife of WSTC professor John F. Lewis, came from the elite class of the black community. She became a prolific writer to the newspapers and propelled her activism into a local political career. Despite the potential threat of retaliation against both her and her husband's careers, Lewis was at the vanguard of placing strong opinions from black women into the public discourse. She could be both gracious and bluntly critical. In a February letter, she thanked George McLeod Bryan of Wake Forest University for his letter supporting civil rights, noting that "our people experience renewed courage when individuals like Dr. Bryan speak out for the right." Lewis's response to "those who say we want to move too fast" was to remind them that 1963 would mark one hundred years since slaves were declared free. "Custom does not justify continued practice," Lewis stated, "Slavery was a custom." Lewis argued that with all of the potential threats to the United States around the world, "We certainly need unity. Any day we could be called upon to present a solid front in defense of our country against enemy attack and we can't afford to be fighting among ourselves. Some Southerners still substitute the Confederate flag for the American." Lewis made a further appeal based on the meaning of the All-American City award: "Winston-Salem which boasts of its excellent race relationships has a unique opportunity now that she has been proclaimed an All-America City, to point the way for the rest of the state as well as the

rest of the South for the voluntary, complete liberation of its colored citizens, as it made the voluntary step in school integration.” Lewis closed her letter with an appeal to the “spirit of Christ” and with a wish that the “authenticated unfounded fear of race mixing (which simply serves as a screen to hide behind and do nothing) will not act as a deterrent to Winston-Salem business managers.”<sup>33</sup>

African Americans read the discursive exchanges and responded, including black men who may have had more reason than black women to fear retaliation in their professional lives. Charlie Brady Hauser, a black schoolteacher and president of the Kimberley Park School PTA, thanked God “for men like Dr. Bryan, Professor Gregg, and Mr. Allred who have the courage and who have taken the time to speak out against practices which are illogical, unethical, undemocratic, and un-Christian.” Hauser chastised whites “who can afford to” but who did not speak out, saying, “Covertly and overtly they encourage the rougher element whose actions serve to compensate for their feelings of inadequacy, and benefit the few at the expense of the many.” Continuing to imply that some whites perpetuated racism for personal political and economic benefit, Hauser charged there was “a smoke screen which keeps the masses of whites from remedying the basic causes of their feelings of inadequacy, while the clever continue to benefit from this ignorance.” “The Negro,” Hauser said, “like all men, is fashioned in the image of God. He, also, is endowed with all of the potentialities and longings appropriate

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<sup>33</sup> Mrs. John F. Lewis, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 18, 1960.

to this status. While these longings have been ground down by centuries of abuse, they have not and can never be crushed out.”<sup>34</sup>

African Americans urged whites to reevaluate their racial attitudes, with arguments rooted in religion and patriotism. Reverend Jerry Drayton, pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church and its large congregation, stated that the question of “to be an American citizen or not to be one” was at the center of thought and action for student protesters and their leaders. Drayton argued that “two basic propositions” were in doubt: “whether Negroes are actually American citizens permitted to enjoy the same privileges as other Americans, and whether they are to continue to be treated as inferior second-rate individuals.” With an eloquence rooted in the black southern Baptist tradition, and imagery evoking both God and anti-totalitarian communism, Drayton said: “American citizenship is rooted in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Therefore this hunger which Negroes are experiencing cannot be stopped by seating them at one lunch counter and putting up an iron curtain in front of another counter in the same store. This movement is a hunger to eat at freedom’s table which the crumbs of democracy can never satisfy.”<sup>35</sup>

Drayton listed a number of questions that “each white citizen and Christian must ask himself,” if he hoped to understand the “hunger” of African Americans. He asked

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<sup>34</sup> Harold Dunovant, interview with Ted Fichialos (hereinafter cited as Dunovant interview), November 25, 2000, Winston-Salem, N.C., audio file, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University; Charlie Brady Hauser, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960; and *1960 City Directory*, 384.

<sup>35</sup> Jerry Drayton, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 19, 1960. Drayton died in 2012 at the age of ninety-six. He served over sixty years as pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church. The church, known as “Mother Bethel” to many in Winston-Salem, has been the site of numerous civil rights rallies and meetings. It currently has over two thousand members.

whites to consider if they would want to pass by “10 lunch counters in the rain, sleet, or snow” on a thirty-minute lunch break to get to one overcrowded counter that served their skin color. Would whites “be happy to stand and eat while others are sitting and being served in comfort and dignity?” How would whites feel about traveling from Winston-Salem to Atlanta, looking at billboard after billboard advertising restaurants with wonderful food to eat, knowing they could not stop and eat at a single one? Would whites be content to “buy a sandwich over a garbage can at the back door, in a Greyhound bus station, while other citizens were dining in a fine well heated or air-conditioned café?” Drayton asked whites to consider their reactions if a merchant said to go eat somewhere else, “but come back and spend your money in all my other departments.” He asked whites what it would do to their “personality,” if you were “constantly being told: You cannot sit here; you cannot eat here; you cannot work here, but you must pay the same taxes I pay?” Referring to white Christians as the “keeper of the keys,” Drayton asked further: “Would I take it sitting down if my sons and daughters were arrested for looking at a store and longing to enter a closed door?” Charging that whites were “not living up to the mandates of the Christian religion nor the principles of democracy,” Drayton challenged whites to “fling wide the doors saying to the students and all their kindred: Come in and dine with us; for we have sinned against Heaven and against thee.”<sup>36</sup>

Other African Americans bluntly addressed the inflammatory pet peeve of segregationists from as far back as the era of slavery—miscegenation. Everyone in

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<sup>36</sup> Jerry Drayton, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 19, 1960.

Winston-Salem knew that the mixing of races was a longstanding historical reality but it had never been a proper subject for discussion in a public forum. The possibility of integrated schools in the wake of the *Brown* decision equated to interracial marriage and babies in the minds of staunch segregationists. African American M. (Van) Mitchell reduced white resistance to desegregation to one core issue: “Fear is the only thing that stands in the way of our doing away with all types of segregation. The fear is the association of white women with colored men. That, I think, is an insult to the white womanhood of the South. If it were not for that fear we would not need a civil rights bill in the Congress.” Mitchell added, “There are some fools in all races, but in the fifty years that I have worked in the South, I can’t recall a single case of where a Negro man and a white woman have become interested in each other because of integration. It just doesn’t happen.” He appealed to city pride and economic boosterism and noted that he had lived in cities in Virginia and Georgia and that neither could measure up to Winston-Salem in terms of race relations. In Mitchell’s opinion the sit-ins provided an opportunity for merchants “in our All-America city to do an act of brotherhood,” with the result being a boon for “the everlasting glory of our fair city.” Mitchell concluded by saying that everyone who supported integration in Winston-Salem “will be a bigger person in the sight of God and in the sight of Mankind around the world.”<sup>37</sup>

Berdette Keaton, a 1957 graduate of the all-black Carver High School, offered the perspective of a young, black woman as she nixed the notion that blacks were seeking to mix races with whites: “We the Negroes of America and especially in the South are not

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<sup>37</sup> E.M. (Van) Mitchell, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960.

looking for love, friendship or intermarriages in your race. We are trying to get more freedom and equal rights. In order to get this we must start a new tree to growing and as the tree grows we must grow with it and in the future we may have a greater position in America.”<sup>38</sup>

Some African Americans used veiled sarcasm to challenge the misguided logic of segregationist whites. Louise McMillan, wife of Reverend J.T. McMillan, posed a revised definition of the “White Man’s Burden,” made famous in the rhetoric of colonialism by Rudyard Kipling, and still accepted in 1960 as reasonable doctrine by many whites. “In the whole range of human emotions,” McMillan posited, “the most painful and crippling would appear to be that of guilt. By this token, the people who stand to gain the most by the movement against racial segregation and discrimination are those white people who thereby would be relieved of a burden which has grown steadily heavier with increased awareness and sensitivity.” McMillan expressed her empathy for the apparent pain that must be the “burden” of those “nurtured on the principles of simple justice, courtesy, consideration, kindness, sympathy, and all the other graces by which we seek to ease the shocks and strains of human existence.” Denying these principles, she noted, which were universally taught in every Sunday school, would appear to be “even more damaging to the personality, than is the denial of service at a lunch counter.”

McMillan offered a rhetorical opportunity to whites: “Thus many white people must regard the continuing struggle of the American Negro for human rights as their own, and

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<sup>38</sup> Berdette Keaton, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 25, 1960. For an excellent study of miscegenation and the rape myth in the Jim Crow era, including gendered perspectives, see Crystal N. Feimster, *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2009).

to look to its successful outcome as their own emancipation from the burdens of guilt they have borne so long.”<sup>39</sup>

Friday morning, February 19, three downtown lunch counters re-opened on a segregated basis. As soon as student “spotters” from WSTC arrived downtown, presumably after their classes let out, teams of protesters quickly assembled, entered the stores, and requested service. A team led by Carl Matthews entered the Kress Store and other teams went to the two Woolworth locations. In all cases, when African Americans took seats the white patrons left peacefully. There were no reported incidents of harsh language or heckling. The student protesters seemed to have become accustomed to “sitting in,” as many brought their books and studied while sitting at the counters. Carl Matthews told *Journal* reporters that the movement was not yet calling for economic boycotts of the stores with lunch counters, but without change, boycotts were “probable.” He referenced the (NAACP and CORE inspired) pledges by many people in the North to boycott Woolworth and Kress stores outside of the South. Matthews stated: “We don’t want to hurt their cash registers. Rather we want to put justice in their business. We believe it is morally wrong, as well as un-Christian, to maintain segregated facilities.” Downtown store managers conceded that overall business was off simply because many customers did not want to be near any sort of controversy. Although discussion of any political controversy was strictly off-limits in student publications, students from WSTC

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<sup>39</sup> Louise McMillan, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 23, 1960.



expressed to *Journal* reporters there was not “any interference whatsoever” from faculty and administration regarding the protest movement.<sup>40</sup>

Carl Matthews appealed to Mayor Kurfees to mediate a solution between protesters and downtown merchants. Kurfees did not directly respond to Matthews but casually indicated to the media that while he was busy the week of February 15-19, he might be available the following week. Kurfees issued a statement regarding Brotherhood Week, in which he said it was an opportunity to commit “to the basic ideals of respect for people and human rights and the practice of the brotherhood of man.” Matthews answered the mayor’s proclamation by saying: “Actions speak much louder than words. There are localities where leaders will say that our relations are good. But just ask for something spectacular—out of the segregated ordinary—and see how good race relations really are.” Matthews expressed his dissatisfaction with the decision of other student groups around the state who suspended protests, calling their decisions “regrettable.” He continued: “I am speaking for the Negro people of Winston-Salem, and it is the desire of my people that demonstrations be continually carried on until we have reached satisfactory results. We believe that this is not the time to slow or diminish in our efforts.”<sup>41</sup> The lack of action by the mayor and the arrival of new allies in his struggle would very quickly make Carl Matthews a man of his word.

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<sup>40</sup> “3 Counters Have Brief Re-Opening,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 20, 1960. The *News Argus*, student newspaper at WSTC (and later WSSC and WSSU), did not mention sit-ins, marches, riots, or assassinations in the period of the sit-ins through the riots in 1969.

<sup>41</sup> “Negro Leader Says Mayor Okays Meet,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, February 21, 1960; and “Negro Protest to Continue in Twin City,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 23, 1960.

Inspired primarily by the words of Professor Bryan, a number of white students from Wake Forest College had been in contact with Matthews and other movement leaders and had pledged their support. On Tuesday, February 23, 1960, Wake Forest students made good on their promise and joined black students in the downtown lunch counter protests. The culture of Wake Forest College in 1960 certainly seems conservative by the standards of a half-century later--there were strict rules and standards for conduct, and there were no black students. The college at the time was fully affiliated with the Southern Baptist Church, a religious denomination often associated with fundamentalism, but also a denomination with a rich history of dissent. At least several key faculty members at the Wake Forest of 1960 believed in that spirit of dissent and also embraced the “social gospel” concept that if Christ was accepting of all, so then should his followers accept all. The first small group of white Wake students to commit to helping blacks with the sit-in movement shared one common denominator—they were students of Dr. George McLeod Bryan. Bryan taught students about the principles of nonviolent protest and civil disobedience and noted in a 2001 interview, “I myself had acted that [civil disobedience] out, and I myself had been in jail.” In Bryan’s view, the staunchly conservative Baptist Board of Directors and most of the college’s administration considered civil disobedience as an equivalent to “heresy.” When Bryan spoke of the ten students from Wake Forest who joined with WSTC students and Carl Matthews, he said that while he “knew them all well,” you could not teach the intangibles that led them to act. Ultimately, in Bryan’s opinion, it was their own personal “sense of

justice, sense of unfairness,” that propelled them “to take this risk on the spur of the moment.”<sup>42</sup>

Bryan may have humbly underestimated his influence upon his students. Most native southern white students had been raised with Christian theology and ethics; however, they were also raised in a culture that often did not see the poor treatment of blacks as a moral issue. Jerry B. Wilson, a twenty-year-old Wake Forest junior from Statesville, North Carolina, in 1960, recalled years later of hearing a great deal of talk about American “freedom and equality” during and after World War II, and for some reason, it seemed to increasingly bother him that these concepts did not seem to apply to black people as well. Wilson credited his classes at Wake Forest, especially classes in religion and ethics, with “nurturing” this fundamental sense of justice and leading him towards taking it to the next level. Wilson said hearing Professor Bryan in the classroom and Assistant Chaplain Ed Christman in the Baptist Student Union (BSU) “had a powerful impact and spoke clearly and directly about the inequalities of segregation. So when other students from the black community began to demonstrate, it only seemed right that I joined their demonstration.” William Penn Haney “Bill” Stevens, senior philosophy major, was a New Jersey resident who had lived in Winston-Salem during his childhood. He joined the protest along with his fiancé Margaret Ann Dutton, a twenty-one year-old senior math major from Greensboro. As seniors, both Stevens and Dutton

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<sup>42</sup> Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*. For an excellent history of the “social gospel” movement of the Progressive Era and the ways in which “theological personalism” challenged the core of white supremacy, see Ralph E. Luker, *The Social Gospel in Black and White: American Racial Reform, 1885-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

were in the group of four that had been in touch with Matthews and had visited with student leaders on the campus of WSTC during the early days of the protest. During the evening of Monday, February 22, leaders of the Wake Forest group met with black protest leaders at the home of Carl Matthews, and on Tuesday morning after 10 a.m. chapel on the Wake Forest campus, the leaders spoke to finalize their plans.<sup>43</sup>

Around noon on Tuesday, a group comprised of Carl Matthews, eleven WSTC students, and ten Wake Forest students went to the Woolworth store on Fourth Street. Finding the lunch counter there closed, they walked down the street and around the corner to the Woolworth store on Liberty Street. According to Stevens, Dutton led the way to the lunch counter that had been labeled as “private and for store employees only and their guests.” She asked if she could come into the lunch counter area and was told “yes” by an employee. She took a seat and then was followed by several of the black students, who also sat down. She ordered a cup of coffee and a slice of pie, which she received. Dutton then passed the pie to Delores Reeves, a WSTC student. According to Stevens, Dutton was accused of “ordering under false pretenses.” Tipped by the manager at the Fourth Street Woolworth, Herman Warren, the manager at Liberty Street, had already called police and told them that he wished to file charges for trespassing.<sup>44</sup>

Wake Forest student George Williamson recalled that it seemed as though the police were at Liberty Street at practically the same time the students arrived.

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<sup>43</sup> “Students Arrested at Store Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960; and Dalton, *I’m Not My Brother’s Keeper*.

<sup>44</sup> “Mayor Is Seeking to Drop Charges against Students in Lunch Counter Protest,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960; “Students Arrested at Store Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960; and Dalton, *I’m Not My Brother’s Keeper*.

Williamson laughingly recalled that his grandmother who was friends with Winston-Salem chief James Waller's mother, had insisted for several years that he should "be sure and look up" the chief on a social call. Williamson met Waller for the first time when Waller told him to "leave or you'll be arrested." When students refused to leave the store, they were arrested on trespassing charges. George Williamson remembered walking out onto the street after just being arrested and "seeing the hatred in the eyes of the white people on the sidewalk and how searing and unprecedented in my experience that was." Police took them in squad cars to City Hall where they were booked, fingerprinted, and had their mug shots taken. As students were being processed, other student supporters from both schools gathered in the hallways and on the steps of City Hall. Bond for each protester was set at one hundred dollars.<sup>45</sup>

Charles McLean, a state representative of the NAACP, arranged and posted the bonds for the African American students who were arrested. Reverend E.S. Hardge and Dr. F.W. Jackson of the local branch of the NAACP were also present for support. Hardge announced a mass meeting for 7:30 Friday evening at Goler Metropolitan AME

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<sup>45</sup> "Mayor Is Seeking to Drop Charges against Students in Lunch Counter Protest," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960; "Students Arrested at Store Here," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960; Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*. Students arrested from WSTC were: Royal Joe Abbitt (27); Everette L. Dudley (26); Delores M. Reeves (22), Victor Johnson, Jr. (24), William Andrew Bright (29), Jefferson Davis Diggs III (25), Algemina Giles (28); Donald C. Bradley (25); Lafayette A. Cook, Jr. (21); Ulysses Grant Green (20); and Bruce Gaither, Jr. (20). All were considered residents of Winston-Salem with the exception of Diggs whose official residence was in New York City. Students arrested from Wake Forest were: Linda Evelyn Guy (18) New Orleans; Linda G. Cohen (18) Brooklyn; New York, Margaret Ann Dutton (21) Greensboro; William Penn Haney Stevens (21) Chatham, New Jersey; Joe Brown Chandler (20) Fayetteville, North Carolina; Donald F. Bailey (20) Cliffside, N.C.; Paul Virgil Watson (20) Keyser, West Virginia; Anthony W. Johnson (20) Oxford, North Carolina; George Williamson, Jr. (20) Atlanta, Georgia; Jerry B. Wilson (20) Statesville, North Carolina; Carl Matthews (28) was arrested as the overall leader of the protest.

Zion Church and said that student leaders from both races and Carl Matthews would be there to speak. Hardge, who less than two weeks earlier had essentially condemned the protests, said in a statement to the press: “The NAACP will offer its full legal support to the students if they seek it. We feel that the students are fighting for a just and right cause. We are planning our mass meeting to awaken Negro citizens to the type of treatment they are receiving as citizens.” Hardge continued to speak to reporters: “It is an injustice to tell us that our money is good everywhere in the store except when we are eating. This is ridiculous. There cannot be any lines drawn.” Wake Forest College Chaplain Dr. L.H. Hillingsworth, Mark Reece, Director of Student Affairs, and Dr. Dan O. Via, Professor of Religion, posted bonds for the Wake students. Hollingsworth spoke to the press and made it clear that they were acting on their own, “not as representatives of Wake Forest College.” Hollingsworth stated: “We are here because of our interest in our students. We heard some of them were in trouble and we came down to see what was going on.”<sup>46</sup>

After his release, Bill Stevens told a *Winston-Salem Journal* reporter at City Hall: “We do not represent Wake Forest College or any other organized group. Our objective was not to cause animosity, not to stir up trouble. We wanted to show the Negroes of Winston-Salem that at least a few white people are concerned enough to act against prejudice.” Margaret Ann Dutton told the press: “We don’t want to hurt Wake Forest. We are doing our best to keep from doing that.” Carl Matthews issued a statement to the

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<sup>46</sup> “Mayor Is Seeking to Drop Charges against Students in Lunch Counter Protest,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960; and “Students Arrested at Store Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960.

press acknowledging the significance of the actions of the white Wake Forest students: “We hope that today Winston-Salem will experience a renaissance that will preserve in the days to come justice and equality. My heartfelt thanks are extended to the students of Wake Forest who expressed through their courage, understanding, and unity the all-American spirit.”<sup>47</sup>

Black students from WSTC also felt a special connection with the students from Wake Forest. Jefferson Diggs III knew that the Wake students paid a price when they returned to white society. Diggs stated forty years later: “This was my fight for my rights and I had an immediate and personal stake in it. When he [George Williamson] said, ‘this is our fight,’ that was a turning point. To realize the risks, I don’t mean so much the physical risks, the Wake Forest students were taking, in terms that many were ostracized on campus, lost friends, and many of them suffered at the hands of their own families, they alienated their own families. They were willing, this really personalizes it--they were willing to do that for me. This was really a turning point in that whole movement.” Diggs explained further that it was no longer just black students from WSTC, nor was it “Northern agitators,” these were white southern students--“their own kids their own sons and daughters.” Victor Johnson, Jr. recalls that John Gold, the city manager at the time, was already quite irritated with the WSTC students and that the addition of the Wake

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<sup>47</sup> “Mayor Is Seeking to Drop Charges against Students in Lunch Counter Protest,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960; and “Students Arrested at Store Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 1960.

Forest students “put fuel on the fire.” Everette Dudley said that the addition of the Wake students demonstrated the movement had enough “power” to bring others into it.<sup>48</sup>

For most of the students, the trespassing arrest was their first serious encounter with law enforcement and certainly their first time being arrested. WSTC student Donald Bradley said that for the first time since the protests started, he was “very, very fearful,” with thoughts of lynching when he found himself surrounded by white sheriffs at the county jail. Victor Johnson recalled not being scared by the actual arrest but instead worrying about how the aftermath might affect his parents. Perhaps conditioned by years of the Jim Crow system, many older African Americans were opposed to this sort of protest tactic out of fear for their children. Everette Dudley remembered that all of the black arrestees were thoroughly searched and thought it was very ironic when he looked across the holding room and saw one of the Wake Forest students cleaning his fingernails with a pocket knife. Jefferson Diggs III recalled Wake Forest students discussing “staying in jail until this was won,” and thinking, “Hey, it was one thing to go to jail, but another to stay in jail.” Wake Forest student George Williamson had an unexpected experience with some of the white inmates: “They assumed that I was a white person who was harassing, attacking, the black sit-inners, so they were congratulating me, patting me on the back. I remember mumbling out that ‘I was in the sit-in,’ and then being shunned in the jail cell like I had some disease.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*; and Victor Johnson, Jr., interview with Thomas Flynn, June 11, 2012, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, DVD and Digital Sound File, O'Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University.

<sup>49</sup> Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*.



For the white Wake Forest students, the immediate aftermath of the sit-in was challenging, and at least for some, spiritually and politically cathartic. Many faculty members and most of their fellow students were not supportive of desegregation. Jerry Wilson said after returning from the arrest and the subsequent press coverage, he “found I was not a very popular guy on campus.” He was told by his foreign language teacher that if he had time for “extracurricular activities, I obviously had more time to prepare for his class.” Wilson was called on to read his translations out loud for the bulk of class time for the next two weeks. “I learned a lot of language,” Wilson said. He described himself as “altogether unprepared” for the alienation from his “circle of friends and colleagues and most of the faculty.” After tacitly living on the advantaged side of a split society, Wilson said he “had to put together a new life on the other side of the Jim Crow system.”<sup>50</sup>

Considering the racial and gender mores of the time, Margaret Anne Dutton was the white student protester most likely to receive severe criticism from other whites. To the majority of whites, even more moderate whites, it was scandalous for a young, white woman to walk with a group of young, black men. Bill Stevens, now a retired minister, recalls the hate mail his future wife received. He was surprised that some signed their names, even in one letter with an implicit physical threat that told Dutton, “If you want to talk about this, come see me.” The pressure from other whites spread to her family. According to Stevens, Dutton’s father was chastised by several members of his Sunday school class at the Greensboro Methodist church the Dutton family attended, who asked

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<sup>50</sup> Dalton, *I’m Not My Brother’s Keeper*; and G. McLeod Bryan, *These Few Also Paid a Price*, 138-141

him: “How could he raise a daughter like that?” Margaret Anne Dutton also received a number of letters of support. Several came from the wives of Wake Forest faculty members, including one from a woman who had just given birth, who thanked Dutton for making the world a better place for the newborn.<sup>51</sup>

For some of the white students, this new form of interaction with black people was truly transformative for their personal consciousness about race. George Williamson, who like Stevens went on to a career as a Baptist minister, recalled his feelings before his Wake Forest student career and the sit-in: “Up until that point I had nothing but negative reaction to anything connected with the Civil Rights Movement...whatever I knew about the movement I thought of in pretty much the same terms that everybody in my culture was describing them. It was disruptive. It was demagogic. It was turning black people and white people against each other, and in my simple minded view I thought black people and white people got along fine.” Williamson had never met any of the WSTC students face-to-face until they walked together down the sidewalk to Woolworth. Williamson described the experience: “Meeting them was a kind of life-transforming experience for me. I’d known scores and scores of black people, all my life, but I’d never met a peer. Those were all servants and people in low class jobs, so this was my first experience of somebody who’s like me. Everything about them was just like myself, except that they were black.” He recalls being almost oblivious to the events around him as he was arrested: “For me, I didn’t

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<sup>51</sup> Dalton, *I’m Not My Brother’s Keeper*; and Keith Barber, “Winston-Salem Commemorates Fiftieth Anniversary of Sit-In Victory,” *Yes! Weekly*, May 26, 2010.

mean to get arrested, but I just kind of froze. I couldn't move. So I was arrested more de facto than by intention."<sup>52</sup>

The reaction Williamson received from other whites offers considerable insight into white attitudes, even among better-educated and avowed Christian whites, during the sit-in era. Williamson described the days following the sit-in as a "total collapse of my world." Ostracized by most of his friends, most of his professors, and most painfully the "alienation" by his family, he recalled: "I lost everything that day, really everything, and I couldn't understand it. I was altogether unprepared for what happened." The hostility towards a twenty-year-old from a sheltered upbringing was extreme: "Overnight I was a traitor to my people. I was the enemy, there was no foothold anywhere. Everybody thought I was bad, thought I was evil, thought I was sick. A nigger-lover! That's a sick thing." Crediting a small support group, especially Mac Bryan, Williamson said he "very slowly" began to crawl out of the fog and the chaos and put together a new life on the other side of the Jim Crow system." He described himself as "finding my identity in kind of a biblically, religiously motivated opposition" to racial injustice and becoming a "true, passionate believer in the civil rights movement."<sup>53</sup>

Although the assistance of ten white students for one day of protest did not represent a sea change for the racial attitudes of the white community of Winston-Salem, the support of a small group of whites did seem to energize the local movement. The addition of whites to the protest got the attention of national leaders in the NAACP as

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<sup>52</sup> Bryan, *These Few Also Paid a Price*, 138-141; and Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*.

<sup>53</sup> Bryan, *These Few Also Paid a Price*, 138-141; and Dalton, *I'm Not My Brother's Keeper*.

well as the attention of the black newspapers in larger cities around the nation. According to an internal memo, NAACP Youth Secretary Herbert Wright reported the Winston-Salem events back to Executive Secretary Roy Wilkins—inspiring increased efforts from national leadership and a return visit from Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth. The *Chicago Daily Defender* gave the Winston-Salem sit-in a front page headline reading, “ARREST 22 IN SIT-DOWN MOVE.” The *Defender* reported that of the ten white Wake Forest students arrested, only William Penn Haney Stevens was a “non-southerner.” The integrated protest in Winston-Salem received top billing over the events in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on the same day, even though the Chattanooga “Sitdown Protest” had violent clashes between “200 Negro demonstrators and 500 white hecklers.”<sup>54</sup>

The *Baltimore Afro-American* sent reporter Chester Hampton to Winston-Salem to report on the sit-in movement. Hampton’s reporting offers a view of Winston-Salem without the natural biases of a reporter living in the city or the filter of the patriarchal fathers that occasionally may have restricted the content of the Winston-Salem newspapers. He described the sit-ins as “a passive protest movement” with “three or four hundred” student and adult supporters along with the “sympathy” of white Wake Forest College students. Hampton portrayed Winston-Salem as racially progressive compared to other southern cities and noted in particular that Kenneth R. Williams and William Crawford had served on the Board of Alderman, the police department had “several

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<sup>54</sup> “Memo from Herbert Wright to Roy Wilkins,” General Office File, Sit-Ins North Carolina, 1960-61, Papers of the NAACP, *Proquest Vault*, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University, <http://www.wssu.edu/cg-okelly-library/default.aspx>, accessed on January 26, 2014; and “Arrest 22 in Sit-Down Move,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, February 24, 1960.

colored officers,” and there were “colored firemen and bus drivers.” William Crawford told Hampton that Winston-Salem had “colored members of the school board, the zoning board, the library, recreation, and hospital commissions,” and there were an estimated fourteen thousand “colored persons registered to vote.” Hampton noted the importance of Reynolds Tobacco, Hanes Hosiery, and Western Electric to keeping “local citizens employed and prosperous.” He also paraphrased an unnamed African American who expressed the opinion that a solution to the segregation issue would not come “as a result of intervention by these industrialists.” A black school teacher told Hampton of anonymous support for the sit-down movement: “Many of us are reluctant to speak out and use our names for fear of possibly losing our jobs. However, we feel that they know we are behind them morally—and financially if the occasion should arise.”<sup>55</sup>

African American youth workers for a generally conservative, mostly white-led organization, expressed their firm support for the activism of sit-in movement leaders and participants. Leslie McKinnon, Executive Director of the Patterson Avenue YMCA, went on the record with Hampton, saying: “I think the movement is awakening responsibility on the part of youth to our struggle for freedom and justice. What they are doing now is perfect training for what they must continue to do in later years. I personally am willing to help them in any way I can.” Harvey Staplefoot, Program Secretary at the YMCA, also spoke freely: “Somebody has to take the initiative. The students had relatively little to lose and they are the logical ones to act. The custom of

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<sup>55</sup> Chester Hampton, “Sitdowners Pass Kress Test in Winston-Salem,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 27, 1960.

segregation will only break down when its constituents do something about it. The students are doing something about it.”<sup>56</sup>

Others, including working-class African Americans, offered their perspectives on the sit-in movement. James Williams, who declined to give Hampton any further personal information, stated: “I think it is a worthwhile effort. The only way we can accomplish anything is through protest, boycott, and initiative. As long as we are submissive, we will continue to be suppressed.” An unnamed waitress at an “all-colored restaurant” told Hampton: “I serve colored people myself and I don’t think anybody else is too good to serve them.” The waitress’s employer contributed to the conversation: “It might take some trade away from me for the colored persons to get service anywhere downtown but I’m willing to make that sacrifice if it means getting rid of even a little bit of segregation.” The restaurant owner continued: “For too long we’ve been afraid of losing what we had—and really we didn’t have anything. We’ve got to stop being afraid and take some risks, that’s the only way you can accomplish anything—take a chance.” Hampton noted that the president of WSTC had not made himself available for comment, perhaps indicative of the political pressure placed upon black college administrators. He closed his article by relating a conversation with a white cab driver. The cab driver told Hampton: “They ought to just go ahead and let colored people be served. I have a lot of colored friends and I’d rather eat with them than some white people I know.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Chester Hampton, “Sitdowners Pass Kress Test in Winston-Salem,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 27, 1960.

<sup>57</sup> Chester Hampton, “Sitdowners Pass Kress Test in Winston-Salem,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 27, 1960.

For the first time since the tobacco union protests, the sit-in protests compelled the city of Winston-Salem to address the issue of race on a sustained basis. On the day after the sit-in arrests, Solicitor C.F. Burns asked the Municipal Court to postpone the trial of the students until the following Wednesday and was granted his request. Downtown stores kept their lunch counters closed. African American ministers in Winston-Salem joined together and presented a unified statement to the media. Led by Dr. Jerry Drayton, Dr. E.S. Hardge, Rev. Edward Gholson, Rev. S.W. Hylton, Jr., Rev. R.F. McCallum, and Rev. H. Wesley Wiley, the ministers praised the unified efforts of the student protesters and said: "Therefore we give them our wholehearted support, and appeal to all fair-minded citizens to join in a community effort to secure these rights and to make this city worthy of its All-America rating that it has received."<sup>58</sup>

The sit-in arrests, the statement by the ministers, and a prominent editorial in the newspaper titled "A Time for Cooling Off," may have occurred with less than fortuitous timing for Mayor Kurfees and other civic leaders. On February 25, 1960, John S. Linen, Vice President of the National Municipal League, was in town for the formal presentation of the treasured All-America City award. With absolutely no mention of race matters, four hundred citizens attended a performance of the Winston-Salem Symphony and heard multiple speeches praising the city's accomplishments. Describing the award as "a tribute to all of the people of Winston-Salem," Kurfees said: "I am certain that I speak for

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<sup>58</sup>"Ministers Back Protests at Counters," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 25, 1960.

everyone in pledging that we will do our best to deserve this distinction as citizens of an All-America City.”<sup>59</sup>

The difficult politics of racial issues were intertwined with economic considerations. Merchants faced the dilemma of wanting to keep African American customers buying merchandise—without having to feed them next to whites. Merchants also felt pressure to appear to have solidarity with the perceived positions of the majority of their white customers. Herman Warren, manager of the Liberty Street Woolworth, issued a formal statement to the press outlining his position on the sit-in issue. Warren noted the addition of a sit-down counter for blacks that was built during the remodeling of the store four years earlier, an addition that Warren said fulfilled the wishes of a “prominent Negro minister that I please not forget members of his race.” Warren stated that blacks had new counters in the best part of the store, while the counter for whites was thirty-five years old and in a “drafty portion of the store.” Warren argued further: “Both counters serve the same food cooked by the same Negro cook who has been with this store continuously for more than 30 years, a record we are proud to report. On the strength of the Negro minister’s request, and out of a personal feeling that Negroes should have a place to sit down and eat, the new lunch counter was installed.”<sup>60</sup>

Perhaps not fully appreciating Herman Warren’s sincerity, at an NAACP rally that Friday evening, talk turned to boycotting targeted downtown stores. Reverend E.S. Hardge told the audience: “Talk is necessary, but talk is cheap. Action is needed!” Carl

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<sup>59</sup> “Ministers Back Protests at Counters,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 25, 1960; “A Time for Cooling Off,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 25, 1960; and “City Receives All-America Award,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 26, 1960.

<sup>60</sup> “Lunch Counter Protest Backed,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 25, 1960.



Matthews sent a message to the larger black community: “To arouse the sympathies for the masses there must be some suffering, so get ready for it. If you don’t wish to help this movement, please don’t hinder it by showing a lack of unity.” William Bright exhorted the crowd: “Just think how much they would be hurt if say tomorrow every Negro in Winston-Salem should stop going into them.” Someone in the crowd responded to Bright by yelling, “Let’s stop!” Reverend Jerry Drayton put a motion up for a vote in which he called for a boycott of “Kress and Woolworth and any other store in which we are not treated the same as whites.” The motion carried by acclamation. Someone in the crowd suggested that the boycott message could best reach the larger black community by using the power of the church pulpits. Dr. F.W. Jackson promised: “It will be heard in every church in Winston-Salem. Every Negro will be conscious of what’s going on in Winston-Salem.” A list of stores to boycott was put together as well as a list of mostly black-owned businesses to be used as alternatives. One black merchant, whose store was overlooked for the list, stood up and made an appeal for everyone to please shop at his store.<sup>61</sup>

Although some Wake students were present at the rally, and praised highly for their contributions, they did not speak. Reverend Hardge said the Wake students showed “great courage in the face of danger,” and they were “striving to make this city worthy of its title—All-American.” Other highlights of the meeting included the singing of “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” and two recitations of the Twenty-third Psalm—one led by

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<sup>61</sup> Roy Thompson, “Negroes Ask Boycott in Counter Fuss Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 27, 1960.

Carl Matthews. The meeting closed with another promise that word of the boycott would be issued in churches the coming Sunday morning and with a promise that more rallies would be held soon to continue the momentum of the movement. Herbert Wright, Charles McLean, and Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth with the NAACP met with local adult and student leaders to help plan strategy for the boycott, to help format protest letters to local businesses, and to help with financial assistance for the movement.<sup>62</sup>

Even before black ministers had a chance to discuss the boycott with their Sunday congregations, business in downtown stores was clearly slower than normal on Saturday—with very few black shoppers in the segregated lunch counter stores. Police Chief James Waller announced to the media that through a “gentlemen’s agreement,” lunch counters would remain closed until a “policy of procedure” was worked out. Waller indicated that the forthcoming trial of students on trespassing charges had no bearing on what decisions might be reached and noted that “a similar situation could arise again.” Mayor Kurfrees said while he had no desire to “dictate” what the stores should do, the stores’ choices were clear: “The stores can do one of two things. They can keep the counters closed, or they can open and serve everybody.” Herman Warren said that the Woolworth counters were to remain closed until he heard directly from Chief Waller.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Roy Thompson, “Negroes Ask Boycott in Counter Fuss Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 27, 1960; and “Memo from Herbert Wright to Roy Wilkins,” General Office File, Sit-Ins North Carolina, 1960-61, Papers of the NAACP, *Proquest Vault*, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University, <http://www.wssu.edu/cg-okelly-library/default.aspx>, accessed on January 26, 2014.

<sup>63</sup> “Waller Says Counters to Remain Shut Down Until Policy Is Decided,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, February 28, 1960.

Kurfees, by eliminating the option of re-opening segregated counters with constant and guaranteed police protection, may have reflected a pragmatic desire to avoid escalating the Winston-Salem protest to some of the conflict levels occurring in other cities—incidents that were becoming part of everyday news. In Montgomery, Alabama, fights broke out between black demonstrators and white hecklers when whites attacked with miniature baseball bats. There were also violent confrontations in Nashville where seventy-five people were arrested. Hundreds of students from Tuskegee Institute marched into the town of Tuskegee, Alabama—also with some fights breaking out. Chattanooga, Tennessee had street violence and a bomb scare. In Shelby, North Carolina, white hecklers took the sign from a black protester, beat him to the ground with the wooden staff, and then kicked him repeatedly. In Raleigh, the courts were overwhelmed with defendants arrested for trespassing and their attorneys. When the fire marshal declared the courtroom an over-occupancy fire hazard, the judge ordered all to leave but the defendants and their lawyers. Only six people left. In addition to local lawyers, Raleigh protesters were also represented by Jack Greenberg and James Nabrit from the NAACP main office in New York City—clearly not the type of outsiders Mayor Kurfees and business elites wished to have in Winston-Salem. Civic and business leaders with influence in Winston-Salem were also no doubt aware of growing regional and national pressures to address the segregation issue. The Southern Regional Council in Atlanta, a bi-racial coalition of progressive southern white and black leaders, issued a statement saying the only way for southern whites to perpetuate segregation was through physical force. In an analysis of the sit-in movement across the South, the *New York*

*Times* noted that the most potent weapon for blacks might well prove to be “economic retaliation.”<sup>64</sup> For a growing tobacco, textile, and banking commercial center with an “All-America” image to maintain, neither the reality nor the appearance of racial strife was desirable.

Wednesday, March 2, 1960, marked the first of the locally legendary Wednesday snowstorms of 1960 (there were major snows every Wednesday in the month of March, with record accumulations for the area). On the same day, twelve WSTC students and ten Wake Forest students entered the Municipal Court of Judge Leroy W. Sams. The WSTC students were represented by NAACP attorney J. Kenneth Lee of Greensboro and Winston-Salem attorney H.G. Bright, the father of defendant William Bright. Wake Forest students were represented by Winston-Salem attorney Clyde C. Randolph, who provided his services free of charge. When the trial opened, attorney Fred S. Hutchins of Winston-Salem asked to make a statement on behalf of his client, the Atlanta office of Woolworth. Hutchins requested a ruling of *nolle prosequi*, which would effectively drop the trespassing charges but leave open the possibility of continuing the charges at a later date. Solicitor C.F. Burns refused to agree with this proposal. Attorney Lee argued that the Woolworth policy of segregated lunch counters was illegal. Judge Sams sustained Solicitor Burns objection to this line of defense, declaring it “not material to the question of trespass.” Margaret Ann Dutton was the only student from either school called to testify. Dutton acknowledged that she and four other Wake students had met with Victor

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<sup>64</sup> “Several Arrested at Stores: Fights Erupt Across South,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, February 28, 1960; “South Is Warned of Time of Change,” *New York Times*, February 27, 1960; and Claude Sitton, “Negroes Press for Faster Desegregation,” *New York Times*, February 21, 1960.

Johnson two weeks earlier, and had discussed student demonstrations and Wake students giving their support. She testified that another group of Wake students then visited the WSTC campus for additional planning. Judge Sams found all twenty-two defendants guilty of trespassing, but suspended judgment in each case—eliminating jail, fines, and court costs as immediate outcomes.<sup>65</sup>

Herman Warren continued to enhance his status as a hero of segregationists when he announced on Thursday that both Woolworth stores would open on Friday, and the counters would open segregated. S.H. Kress and Walgreens announced they would follow suit. Warren said that there would be no special signage, but promised anyone attempting to avoid the “pattern of segregation” would be subject to trespassing charges. Dr. Ralph Herring, pastor of First Baptist Church, Winston-Salem’s largest and most moderate, white, Baptist church, sent a letter out to both Warren and the NAACP. Noting that “since we are in the throes of a social revolution, it is hardly likely that some happy and universal formula will happen overnight,” Herring proposed an experimental policy starting with just Woolworth. His plan was to place a sign over one counter saying, “Cheerfully serving all but catering to white clientele” and to place a sign over the other counter saying, “Cheerfully serving all but catering to Negro clientele.” Herring’s logic was based on the idea that blacks were more concerned with the stigma of inequality than they were concerned with eating next to white people. Reverend Hardge politely said that Herring’s proposal would have to be “clarified and discussed” by the

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<sup>65</sup> “Wake Forest Students Undecided about Appeal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 3, 1960; Dunston, 124-125; and “Roy Thompson, “Four Stores Will Re-Open Eating Places,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 4, 1960.

NAACP before he could make a statement. Herman Warren also politely deferred comment, saying he was forwarding the letter to Woolworth officials “for consideration.”<sup>66</sup>

The four lunch counters opened as promised and were without any protesters on Thursday and Friday. Downtown stores publicly announced “close to normal business,” although with seven inches of snow (a big snow for Piedmont North Carolina) and record low temperatures in the single digits, this claim may have been motivated by public relations concerns. WSTC was in the middle of mid-term examinations and school was out on Saturday. During lunchtime at S.H. Kress, several black students who had been milling around as apparent “shoppers,” quit shopping and took seats at the lunch counter. The counter was immediately closed. Moments later, at the Woolworth on Liberty Street, “eight or 10 Negro demonstrators moved in.” Again, the counter was quickly closed. The same scenario occurred at the second Woolworth store and the Walgreens store, both on Fourth Street. A crowd estimated between thirty and forty protesters split up and sat at both stores and again, the counters were closed. At each location, protesters stayed in their seats until the ropes closing off the counter reached their individual seat, then they stood up and left peacefully. Carl Matthews was observed orchestrating protesters on the sidewalks but he apparently did not actually sit at a counter. No arrests were made. Herman Warren vowed that the Woolworth counters would open at the normal time on Monday—and the counters would open segregated.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> “Minister Offers Plan to Ease City Lunch Counter Dilemma,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 4, 1960.

<sup>67</sup> “Lunch Counters Close as Protesters March,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, March 6, 1960.

Following Warren's lead, a number of lunch counters opened for business on Monday morning, March 7, 1960. Despite temperatures in the teens and low twenties, businesses were greeted with the largest number of protesters to-date, an estimated seventy-five students, most from WSTC, with some coming from all-black Atkins High School. Carl Matthews and Dr. F.W. Jackson directed protesters but did not march themselves. Everette Dudley was the primary student leader. Walking in an orderly line and observing traffic signals, the group began at the S.H. Kress store. Marching from store to store, as protesters entered each lunch counter, the counters closed for business. Students carried placards with messages like "We Want Equality," "Money Has No Race or Face," "All-America City," and "We Just Want Our Rights." After closing down the counter at Walgreens, students received a surprise at the lunch counter inside of Brown-Rogers-Dixson Hardware. Students were told that they could receive whatever they ordered. A few left immediately but a number stayed and ordered food and hot drinks. After leaving the counter, a number of students produced signs that said "Brown-Rogers-Dixson, The All-America Store in the All-America City." W.N. "Bill" Dixson, Jr., president of the company, said that black customers had been served at the counter for years, the only difference being that the few stools there were customarily used by whites only. Dixson said that he operated a "soda fountain," not a restaurant, and his simple solution was going to be to remove the few stools and have everyone served as equals. Bill Dixson, although a man of wealth and influence in the white community, was known to the black caddies at Forsyth Country Club as one of the kindest and least racist of the

club members. Anecdotally, he performed a number of quiet acts of kindness and patronage on behalf of African Americans in Winston-Salem.<sup>68</sup>

After winding through downtown, closing every lunch counter except Brown-Rogers-Dixson, the demonstrators stopped for a rally at City Hall. Standing under the large new banner proclaiming Winston-Salem the “All-America City,” they sang “The Star Spangled Banner” and “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.” Everette Dudley was approached by Police Chief Waller and one of his captains. They told Dudley that this demonstration had turned into a parade, and that a parade required approval and a permit from the police department. Waller then threatened jail if the “parade” continued. With their mission accomplished for the day, demonstrators peacefully marched north up Main Street, took a right on Third Street, and marched back towards WSTC. As the protesters marched away from City Hall, Carl Matthews said to reporter Roy Thompson: “We just want to let the people know we will not tolerate second-class citizenship any longer.” Later in the day, Herman Warren announced that the Woolworth lunch counters would not open on Tuesday. “I don’t know when I’m going to open up again,” Warren said.<sup>69</sup>

Activist ministers of both races used their pulpits to increase pressure on political leaders. As promised, African American ministers in Winston-Salem spoke out in favor of boycotting stores that treated black customers unfairly. E.S. Hardge said he felt 100 percent of ministers spoke out and that the “protest” would be 100 percent effective.

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<sup>68</sup> Roy Thompson, “Big Demonstration Is Held in Lunch-Counter Protest; Brings Warning from Police,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 8, 1960; and Richard Carter, interview with author, Kernersville, North Carolina, November 21, 2005, audio file in O’Kelly Library Archives, WSSU.

<sup>69</sup> Roy Thompson, “Big Demonstration Is Held in Lunch-Counter Protest; Brings Warning from Police,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 8, 1960.



Hardge told the *Journal* that ministers were using the word “protest,” instead of boycott, and noted: “We don’t feel we can tell our people to stay away from a store. We are just explaining the situation to them and letting them make up their own minds. This is a matter for each individual to decide for himself.” Hardge said that he would be better able to gauge the reaction from black churches after the Negro Ministers Alliance meeting later in the week. Several progressive white ministers addressed the sit-in issues, offering viewpoints that were certainly not in line with all members of their congregations. Jack Noffsinger, pastor of Knollwood Baptist Church, compared African American leaders to Patrick Henry and the patriots of the American Revolution. Noffsinger said that, “If someone today yelled, ‘Give me liberty or give me death,’ they probably would be called before the House Un-American Activities Committee.” He compared the Wake Forest students to the Good Samaritan and said that even if they had broken the law, “The law can’t keep men from protesting against what they think is unfair.” Reverend Jack Caudill of Crews United Methodist Church asked his congregation if those who stand against “the good old Southern traditions” would have the strength of Job when they and their families were subject “to criticism and physical harm from rabble rousers.” Reverend Kermit Traylor of First Christian Church told his adult Sunday school class: “There is no such thing as a color line in democracy. If we are Christians, we have no choice but to treat everybody alike.”<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> “Negro Ministers Support Boycotts,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 29, 1960. Jack Noffsinger died June 4, 2013. He was a prominent voice of the white clergy in support of civil rights issues throughout the 1960s.

White religious leaders held an array of positions on integration that reflected not only their personal views but also reflected the politics of leading various congregations. Many ministers held personal beliefs that supported segregation and others with conservative congregations feared losing their jobs if they spoke out against prevailing opinions. Some moderate and progressive white ministers developed genuine and lasting friendships with black ministers. On the same day as the largest sit-in protest, the interracial and interdenominational Forsyth Ministers Fellowship joined with the Unitarian Fellowship in a proclamation extending “sympathy and admiration” to blacks involved in the lunch counter protests. The proclamation passed by a slim thirty-one to twenty-five vote, with many of those opposing saying they supported the effort of blacks but did not like the idea of joining together with Unitarians. Dr. Jack Noffsinger said, perhaps with a tinge of sarcasm, that it would be “very helpful to the spirit of Jesus for us to agree with the Unitarians on something.” Reverend E.T. Mickey, pastor of Fries Memorial Moravian Church (a white congregation), pointed to the large group of black and white ministers eating together and commented: “One of the strongest things that we can call attention to is that we are integrated.”<sup>71</sup>

White educators were also split on the issue of integration and, like ministers, many feared expressing themselves publicly. In a petition dated March 8, 1960, sixty Wake Forest College professors called on managers of local stores with lunch counters “to open such counters to all customers without reference to race.” The petition

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<sup>71</sup> Lloyd Preslar, “Protesters Extended Sympathy: Ministers Unit Makes Move,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 8, 1960.

specifically was targeted at the five stores (both F.W. Woolworths, H.L. Green, S.H. Kress, Walgreens) which had most prominently experienced sit-in protests. The petition argued the differences between a private club and stores that “invite the patronage of the general public,” noting that a customer realizes in retail stores that “he shops and lunches ‘in public’ rather than ‘in private.’” The petition posited, “Public’ segregation on the basis of race is unfair to Negro citizens, that it robs them of their dignity as individuals and as a group, that it is undemocratic, and that it is un-Christian.” The petition was circulated to most faculty members in the Schools of Arts and Sciences and Business Administration. The total number of faculty in those departments was approximately 120. The petition was not circulated in the School of Law or Bowman Gray School of Medicine. Dr. Harold W. Tribble, college president, stated to the press: “Inasmuch as the people signing the petition stated that they are acting as individuals, I have no comment.” The managers of the five targeted stores all declined comment on the petition.<sup>72</sup>

Downtown remained quiet on the day the statement was issued from the Wake Forest professors. Lunch counters remained closed and no demonstrators were present. Brown-Rogers-Dixson Company opened their lunch counter, without stools, and did a brisk business with both black and white customers. The Woolworth store on Liberty Street converted its blacks-only lunch counter into a display for willow baskets and artificial flowers. Herman Warren spoke to the press: “My counters are closed permanently until everything’s quieted down—and there’s no telling when that will be.

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<sup>72</sup> Clarence H. Patrick, “Lunch Counter Desegregation in Winston-Salem, North Carolina,” Report for Mayor’s Goodwill Committee, July 25, 1960, North Carolina Room, Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and Jesse Poindexter, “60 Faculty Members at Wake Forest Urge Desegregated Eating,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 16, 1960.

We'll be reopening from time to time. I don't know when. It's not closed indefinitely. I can tell you that."<sup>73</sup>

WTOB, the city's second most listened to radio station, began broadcasting an editorial statement at 3 p.m. and replayed it every hour until midnight. In the editorial, the station manager called for merchants and black students to meet to "talk out their differences." The editorial argued there was no reason to believe that a "sensible" solution could not be found. The editorial also called for Mayor Kurfes to "appoint an interracial committee to study the controversy and suggest a way to settle it." According to WTOB management, the mayor's response to their suggestion was: "I don't know if I will. I don't know if I won't."<sup>74</sup>

For the most part, the remainder of March was quiet on the sit-in front. Most lunch counters stayed closed and protesters quietly agreed to limit demonstrations until negotiations might settle the problem. The series of snowstorms kept city commerce slower than normal, which may have tempered the desire of downtown merchants to reopen the counters. A notable exception occurred on Saturday, March 26, when Walgreens reopened their segregated lunch counter. Trying to avoid arrest, a group of WSTC students led by Everette Dudley and Donald Bradley marched peacefully outside of the store. Patricia Tillman from Atkins High School also participated. Dudley contacted police before beginning the demonstration and was initially told that the "parade" stipulation would apply. Police, however, apparently acquiesced to the protest,

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<sup>73</sup> Roy Thompson, "Counters Stay Closed," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 9, 1960.

<sup>74</sup> Roy Thompson, "Counters Stay Closed," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 9, 1960.

probably determining that a small group of pickets outside was better than more sit-downs inside. Although the counter stayed open, Dudley vowed that small groups of pickets would continue to demonstrate.<sup>75</sup>

On March 17, 1960, the *Twin City Sentinel* printed a staff editorial, which for the first time, gave a full endorsement to desegregating Winston-Salem lunch counters without restrictions. This reflected a decision made by the Gray family and their associates within the city's patriarchal hierarchy. Although the afternoon paper had a much smaller readership than the morning *Journal* or the *Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, it was still an important breakthrough. The editorial stated: "Such action will not solve all of Winston-Salem's race problems. But such a move would tell the Negro citizens that the white community is receptive to reasonable requests for removing racial discrimination. That in itself could advance the cause of good race relations in the community."<sup>76</sup>

Throughout the month of March, letters to the newspaper demonstrated the growing willingness of African Americans in Winston-Salem to speak out with an unprecedented level of candor. The *Winston-Salem Journal*, although still an advocate of overall gradualism in its own editorials, showed an increased willingness to let black voices be heard. This perhaps reflected progressive views on the editorial staff, but ultimately without at least the tacit approval of the patriarchal elites, this could not have occurred. The newspaper also printed a diverse cross-section of white opinion. There

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<sup>75</sup> "Group of Negroes Picket before Drug Store Here," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, March 27, 1960.

<sup>76</sup> "When Lunch Counters Reopen, They Should Serve All Customers," *Twin City Sentinel*, March 17, 1960; and Patrick, "Lunch Counter Desegregation," 9-10.

was a slight increase in white support for desegregation, some based on religious views, and some based on more legalistic-secular perspectives. Although letters with extreme racist language were no doubt screened, the *Journal* also presented the opinions of staunch segregationists—possibly both in the sense of journalistic balance and in the interest of mollifying thousands of pro-segregation subscribers.

In a retrospective study, produced just a few months after the lunch counter protests ended, Clarence H. Patrick weighed the contemporary value of the unprecedented public debate within the “Letters to the Editor” section of the newspaper. Patrick posited that whites in opposition to the movement “seemed content” to vent in the newspaper rather than on the street.<sup>77</sup> The lack of harsh confrontation and the absence of violence in Winston-Salem, when compared to neighboring cities and other cities throughout the South, seems to support Patrick’s premise. Since Patrick was considered an “expert” in race relations by city leaders, it is also possible that his opinions helped sway the strategies of the ruling class.

Many of the segregationist writers were well-educated and highly-respected members of their communities, and as Patrick predicted, seemed content to simply “vent.” John C. Gambrell expressed his irritation with other letters to the editor that spoke of black “wisdom” or “progress.” Gambrell expounded: “It seems to me that every letter I read of that nature smacks of slogans, allegory, and repetition indicating that the writer is a shining example of one whose thoughts are controlled not by the intellect, but by the ideological drivel put forth by the NAACP, over-zealous ministers, and most

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<sup>77</sup> Patrick, “Lunch Counter Desegregation,” 8.

publications of national importance.” Gambrell stated further: “It is seldom that one reads a letter concerning the myriad of racial problems which shows original and independent thought. Unfortunately, this does not seem to be confined to the colored population, although it does have its most dire manifestation there.” Evoking the United States Constitution and the nation’s founders, he argued that lunch counter protesters were “trampling” on the “right of free enterprise” and ignoring this principle “in favor of some warped notion that because the Constitution states that we are all ‘free and equal’ the seller must be forced to sell to all who demand to buy.”<sup>78</sup>

Labelling black leaders as vaguely defined radicals and often as communists was increasingly a favorite tactic of segregationists. W.C. George, a University of North Carolina Medical School professor and Director of the North Carolina Defenders of States Rights, Inc., also laid blame for race problems on “radical Negro leaders.” George stated that he had done “good turns” for blacks “throughout a life time,” and while he would never wish to “do harm to any one of them,” conversely, “it would cause me sadness to do harm to members of the white race—especially the white man’s children”—which he argued was certain to happen if whites yielded to the “unjustified demands of radical Negro leaders.” George unabashedly challenged the social gospel argument of many blacks and liberal whites: “We have had too much of this debauchery of Christianity by using it as a cloak to cover folly and evil.”<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Patrick, “Lunch Counter Desegregation,” 8; and John C. Gambrell, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 1, 1960.

<sup>79</sup> W.C. George, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 10, 1960.

Other segregationist whites blamed not only “radical” black ministers but their own white ministers as well. W.W. Donevant, a member at Fries Memorial Moravian Church, clearly was not pleased with the activities of his pastor, Reverend E.T. Mickey, in supporting lunch counter integration and promoting interracial harmony. Although not mentioning Mickey by name, Donevant posed rhetorical questions to him and other white ministers: “If the ministers are in sympathy with these people and think they are doing this through Christianity, then why don’t they invite the protesters to come join their churches? I think the church is the place to start it, not in a man’s place of business. Do you ministers think the NAACP will donate your salaries, or help with the upkeep of your churches?” Donevant condemned the demonstrators, saying: “I’ve never saw any one group of people just walk up and take the streets or sidewalks of a town like they did.” He praised Police Chief Waller for ending the “parade.” Donevant also expressed his admiration for Woolworth manager Herman Warren: “Mr. Warren is a man, not a mouse when it comes to his business. He at least has guts enough to say what he thinks and don’t back up.” S.C. Clark, who lived on Madison Avenue in working-class Ardmore, felt “the ministers, the faculty of Wake Forest College and those who want integrated lunch facilities” should “foot the bill” for lost revenue at downtown stores. Clark concluded by saying: “After these integrationists have paid the loss for about sixty days, they will probably be glad to keep their mouth shut.”<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>W.W. Donevant, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 15, 1960; S.C. Clark, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 19, 1960; and *1960 City Directory*, 506.



It is noteworthy that the progressive editors of the Winston-Salem newspapers, who generally edited letters for spelling and grammar, occasionally printed letters with more extreme views on segregation with their illiteracy intact. J.F. Williams, who identified himself as a “Christian minister,” wrote that he had been reading all the letters by *Journal* readers since the sit-ins started, “and no body [sic] has come any where [sic] near an answer until Mr. Donevant write [sic] in the Journal that was the most senseable [sic] thing I have heard anyone say yet. This whole idea of integration was started by a group of narrow minded white people under disguise of Christianity. When you integrate, you don’t make the Negro white nor the white man Black but you destroy the independence of both races.”<sup>81</sup>

Many of the segregationists focused on the perceived threat of outside influences and above all the ever-looming threat of communism. Reactionary regional fears fused with modern ideological concerns to create new rationales for resistance to integration. The discursive comments from whites in Winston-Salem, throughout the civil rights era, indicate that this methodology was often utilized and often successful. Civil rights historians have continued to evaluate the effective ways in which pro-segregation political leaders used the rhetoric of anti-communism to keep their followers agitated.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> J.F. Williams, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 22, 1960.

<sup>82</sup> For in-depth studies of the relationship between race and the Cold War, see Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001); Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-1968* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004). Borstelmann and Dudziak concur that the United States government made concessions on civil rights issues as part of competing with communism on the world stage, particularly in contested countries with people of color. Woods offers substantial detail on how southern leaders used the fear of communism to convince their followers that the civil rights movement was orchestrated by communists as part of a plot to weaken America. Woods also discusses how some black civil rights leaders

Many whites, including a substantial number of concerned white women, laid the blame for racial issues firmly on communists. Conservative white political leadership in Winston-Salem was at the time completely dominated by men. Conservative white women frequently used letters to the editor as their vehicle into public discourse. Fanny Heath believed that a protracted conspiracy was under way: “Someone has asked the question who started this lunchroom trouble,” Heath stated rhetorically. She then answered her own question by saying the “lunchroom trouble” began twenty years earlier “when the Communists started in to work through the colored people of the South in their plan to take over America. They are the enemies of God and all Christian people. Their business is to cause all the trouble they can thus wearing out the Christian people.” Betty Shaw was concerned that organizations promoting racial integration, civil rights, and equality, specifically the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF), were infiltrating the “top echelon of Protestantism.”<sup>83</sup>

Women also connected the mixing of races to the threat of communism. Most appear to have been sheltered from the historical realities that actually led to the creation of most mixed-race children. Marie Nunn asked whites to remember that “as we struggle with the Godless ideologies of communism,” to also remember that “one of their goals is also racial integration in America.” In addition to her stance against communism, Nunn was very much opposed to integration and the possibility of miscegenation. She quoted Abraham Lincoln from 1862 and his discussion of the “broader difference” between

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(including Martin Luther King, Jr.) felt compelled to distance themselves from supporters perceived as radicals with links to communism.

<sup>83</sup> Mrs. Fannie Heath, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 11, 1960; and Miss Betty Shaw, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 18, 1960.

white and black races and his argument at the time for separation of the races. In a nod to the glories of Western Civilization, Nunn then discussed the “inexhaustible march of brilliant, compassionate, courageous men” who brought us a “civilized world.” She continued: “I do not suggest that the Negro is lacking in fine qualities. I do suggest that the short century or two since he was brought from a savage culture into a civilized society provides insufficient evidence to judge, and argues that we encourage a system whereby he develops those qualities within his own race.” Nunn indicted the NAACP for a goal of “social democracy,” which included “interracial marriage in its ideals and principles. She called the segregation of lunch counters an “irritant,” working against the perceived black goal of “racial amalgamation in which all racial distinctions are eliminated.” Nunn offered an appeal to God to give strength “to our children and to unborn generations to survive this present struggle and others that are sure to come.”<sup>84</sup>

In a more structured, and perhaps delusional, indictment of communism and its relationship to integration, C.F. Dixon emphatically stated that the Communist Party was behind the push for integration as part of a long-standing plot to gain power by sowing racial discontent. Citing the writings of “Communist leader Israel Cohen,” [considered by many scholars to be a hoax] Dixon argued that a master plan existed to inflame the Negro minority and simultaneously “instill in the whites a guilt complex for their exploitation of the Negroes.” Dixon also “quoted” from *The Daily Worker* claims of a plan for “Negroes of the South to rise up and form a Soviet State.” He concluded by

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<sup>84</sup> Marie Nunn, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 21, 1960. Many southern whites, across all social and economic classes, sincerely believed in a connection between communism and black rights. See Crespino, *In Search of another Country*, 51-61.

positing intermarriage between blacks and whites as the final method of “destroying the American White Race” and by repeating, “Who started it? The Communist Party!” R.N. White compared the “lunch counter invasion” of Winston-Salem to the Soviet takeover of Czechoslovakia—claiming a process of using students, liberal politicians, the police, and the courts to “set the stage for the Iron Curtain.” According to White: “Headquarters pulled the strings and a few college students who could be counted on to do stupid things...danced the vandal two-step to destroy the basic thing they’ll want when they reach mature thinking, i.e. free enterprise.” Clearly bemoaning the *Brown* decision, in a final appeal, White called for “Politicians, Preachers, News Editors, and others of both races to put us back on a good race relation basis as we were before the 1954 edict that crippled states and individual rights.”<sup>85</sup>

Segregationists often linked progressive racial ideas from “liberal” academics with communism. R.E. Boles stated that C.F. Dixon “hit the nail on the head” in blaming the Communist Party for the lunch counter “powder keg.” Boles believed that “lawlessness” was being taught in North Carolina colleges, “many of which receives support from our good State Government.” “The mob tactics used in the parading and the forcing of the lunch counter issue by students of both our colored and white colleges is certainly a lawless way of getting across their point,” Boles wrote. “I am fully in favor of stopping all public grants made to colleges where the officials openly show that they

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<sup>85</sup> C.F. Dixon, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 17, 1960; and R.N. White, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 23, 1960.

are sideing [*sic*] with a group that has painly [*sic*] shown that it has no regards for the laws of our cities and states.”<sup>86</sup>

Arguably, the right-leaning moderate whites who softened their segregationist rhetoric may have actually presented more of a real obstacle to racial progress in the Upper South than did the extremists. These are the types that insisted they had “love in their hearts” and might say they were “good to the colored people” or the maid “was like a member of the family.” Reverend J. Harry Grogan spoke in a voice that expressed some elements of a right-of-center but more moderate stance than the extreme communist-conspiracy theorists and virulent racists. Grogan said he had “love and respect for all people,” and that his church “has been sending money to reach the colored race for a number of years. I know that God loves all races and [is as] willing to save one as the other.” Acknowledging that “the Negro has not been treated right,” Grogan said that “integration by force will bring trouble and bloodshed.” He argued that the lunch counter protests were “not right,” and were “breaking the laws of State and private business.” “We cannot obey one law and break other laws and brag how good we are,” Grogan said. “I believe in segregation because God started it and the Bible is right regardless of man’s opinions. The Negro should be treated right and have good schools and other privileges, but when it comes to force it breaks down the unity of the people.”<sup>87</sup>

A substantial number of white women offered their opinions in support of the lunch counter protests. Pro-integration whites in Winston-Salem did not have to fear

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<sup>86</sup> R.E. Boles, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 21, 1960.

<sup>87</sup> Rev. J. Harry Grogan, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 26, 1960. Joseph Crespino labeled whites that supported better treatment of blacks with the hope of slowing extreme confrontations over civil rights, “practical segregationists.” See Crespino, *In Search of another Country*, 33-35.

groups like the Ku Klux Klan or the White Citizens' Council as did whites farther south. Many expressed views rooted in their faith that were much more in line with the progressive social gospel point of view. Mrs. V.E. (Jean) Artman, a resident of the white, middle-class and working-class, Ardmore neighborhood, suggested a compromise that might allow for a transition to integration. Stating that: "It is my personal conviction that segregation is morally wrong," Artman diplomatically acknowledged, "many people hold opposing views with equal sincerity." Her proposal was for lunch counters to try serving on an integrated basis for an hour or two each day. The counters would post their schedules and customers could then choose. Artman reasoned her solution "would give those white persons who are willing to eat side by side with Negroes a chance to demonstrate their good will; and it would give the Negroes an opportunity to prove to doubters that their behavior in such situations can be irreproachable."<sup>88</sup>

Quite a few whites found their support of civil rights and social justice rooted in the teachings of pastors or in their own interpretations of the Bible. Velma McGee, of the Oldtown-Bethabara area, whose husband worked at Baptist Hospital, used a passionate social gospel plea to call for a "permanent and peaceful solution" to the problem of segregation. McGee called this "the hour of opportunity for a community steeped in Christian teaching and tradition, familiar with the expression of Christian truth, to perform the doing of it." McGee challenged other white Christians: "If we proclaim in our many churches that the heart of the Christian gospel is love, then we would do well to remember in this hour that 'love worketh no ill to his neighbor.'" Mrs. Clarence (Helen

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<sup>88</sup> Mrs. V.E. Artman, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 2, 1960.

L.) Sturzenbecker, whose husband worked for Bell Telephone Laboratories, explained integration through the eyes of recent Lutheran Church resolutions. The Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church, “a highly conservative church body” according to Sturzenbecker, had recently ruled there was “no innate superiority or inferiority” of any racial group and that intelligence varied based on individual not group characteristics. Sturzenbecker argued that “sound theology and true science” must be used to “combat erroneous ideas about race.” Ted Hickerson of nearby Elkin, North Carolina, offered a simple interpretation of theology: “Jesus would sit beside any man or woman, sinner or saint anywhere, and he is our example. Why try to use or make laws that are contrary to God’s?”<sup>89</sup>

Some open-minded whites used satirical wit designed to move other whites to consider the illogical aspects of their racism. Grace Victoria Ragland, of Kernersville, said she wished to “inform the colored people that I have no malice against them, because I’m financially poor.” She went on to say that without financial means she might eventually wind up in the geriatric section of the Forsyth County hospital or in the Forsyth County mental ward. If she did end up at either of these places, Ragland said: “I probably won’t have the privilege of sitting at the same table and eating with them, because the colored people will be feeding, bathing, and caring for me.” Paul Biles offered a social gospel message combined with a frank discussion of race-mixing in the South. “Jesus certainly did not advocate segregation,” Biles said. “The brotherhood of

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<sup>89</sup> Mrs. W.K. McGee, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 2, 1960; Mrs. C. Sturzenbecker, “Readers Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 16, 1960; Ted R. Hickerson, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 20, 1960; and *1960 City Directory*, 366, 590, 866.

man is a Christian principle.” He asked whites to examine the “history of Negroes in America,” from slavery to inferior schools. On the subject of miscegenation, Biles posed questions: “To those who scream intermarriage, I would like to ask a question. What race caused the mulatto? Was it the Negro?”<sup>90</sup>

The brief participation of white Wake Forest students in the movement sparked an increase in movement support from Wake Forest faculty. Professor James C. O’Flaherty, criticized the *Journal* for defending Herman Warren’s “right” to swear out trespassing warrants against the student demonstrators. He accused the newspaper of presuming the students were guilty of trespassing before their trial. O’Flaherty argued Wake Forest students were exercising their right of peaceful protest without any intent to trespass. Religion professor Dan Via questioned the *Journal*’s editorial support of the Blackwell address (which called for limited student involvement in political protest). Via posited: “When college students are instructed by the administration of their college not to engage in social action, higher education has reached a deplorable state.” Since the Blackwell address was only distributed to state-affiliated colleges, Via apparently was not only critiquing the newspaper, but Wake Forest College administration as well.<sup>91</sup>

Clyde C. Randolph, the *pro bono* attorney for the Wake Forest student protesters, also aired his grievances with the Blackwell address. Randolph posited: “Successful efforts to avoid controversy (and controversial demonstrations) can produce nothing but social decay.” Randolph argued that any demonstrator for any cause might have an

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<sup>90</sup> Mrs. Grace Victoria Ragland, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 19, 1960; and Paul Biles, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 23, 1960.

<sup>91</sup> James C. O’Flaherty, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 2, 1960; and Dan O. Via, Jr., “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 17, 1960.



attachment or identification with an institution, but “such an affiliation can hardly provide the occasion for the muzzling of the Christian conscience. Paul of Tarsus and his band of social revolutionaries did not pause to examine their behavior under ‘the social scientist’s microscope.’” Joe Hinnant countered the prevailing view of many in the community that communism was somehow the cause of student lunch counter protests. He argued that using the same standard of analysis, Jefferson and Franklin might have been accused of “aiding communism.” Hinnant argued further that communism “should not be used as an excuse to prevent millions in the world from realizing their dream—freedom and dignity.”<sup>92</sup>

Inspired by the proactive and courageous nature of the sit-in protests, African American readers wrote to the *Journal*, and their letters were printed in volumes heretofore unseen. There is no way to know how many letters were mailed in, but it is reasonable to speculate that for many authors, signing their name to a letter directly challenging white authority created the risk of losing their jobs. A “social gospel” message of peace and brotherhood dominated most of the letters from African Americans—but there was also a palpable sense of no longer being as reticent about confrontation. The notion of black contentment with their “place” in the old caste system was increasingly exposed as simply a form of white-generated mythology. When white citizen John E. Turner espoused that the “uncalled for mess” of the sit-ins was the fault of young blacks, adding that “some Negroes” were fine citizens, “older Negroes” better

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<sup>92</sup> Clyde C. Randolph, Jr., “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 19, 1960; and Joe Hinnant, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 26, 1960.

understood the way society must work, and sitting at an integrated lunch counter might one day happen “if the Negro citizen will only act nice by acting permission,” he received a swift and pointed reply from Henrietta D. Hayes. Hayes, a clerk at Reynolds Tobacco Company, directly responded to Turner, asking “How many Negro men had to ask permission to go to foreign countries to lose their lives for America? How many Negro men had to ask permission from whites to lose their eye-sights, left arms, etc.? How many Negroes have to ask permission to pay Federal Income taxes? How many Negroes have to ask permission to pay taxes in the All-American City?” Hayes related further how she had grown up in Pennsylvania and attended integrated schools there: “I was not in love with one single white person. To mingle with the whites does not mean we want to mate or marry your white children. We only want to know that we are all equal in rights. We just want to be treated as humans and given our rights as a race: an American race.”<sup>93</sup>

African Americans frequently used religion as a central theme to attack white attitudes, and African American women, in particular, often used the rhetoric of religion to seize the moral high ground while expressing their views. The deep-seated Moravian culture of the white community, communitarian and tolerant at least in principle, offered a convenient target for black critics. Gertrude Brown, a widow and an employee of Reynolds Tobacco Company, responded to the segregationist sentiments of Fries Memorial Moravian Church member, W.W. Donevant. Brown, a member of the black

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<sup>93</sup> John E. Turner, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 4, 1960; Mrs. Henrietta D. Hayes, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 9, 1960; and *1960 City Directory*, 388.

congregation of St. Philip's Moravian Church, said that she "was shocked to hear such an opinion expressed by a Moravian." She spoke of attending services at other [white] Moravian churches in town, being made to feel welcome, and eating meals together with white Moravians. Brown continued: "I wonder if Mr. Donevant has read 'The Brotherly Agreement of the Moravian Church.' Perhaps it would help him better understand the attitude of his minister." After explaining the relatively liberal history of the Moravian Church towards slavery, Brown posed a direct question to Donevant: "What do you advise us to do, sit in a corner, say nothing and let the world think we are happy about the situation?"<sup>94</sup>

Other African Americans followed Gertrude Brown's lead and challenged whites directly within the discourses over desegregation, calling them out by name and addressing the particulars of white racist ideology. Dorothy H. Miller responded to the racist opinions of W.C. George, calling his remarks, "quite typical." Countering George's concern for perceived negative effects of integration on white children, Miller stated emphatically: "In the first place, the Negro has no desire for the white race to help him develop his potentialities nor those of his children. This, he wishes to do himself, and for his children. Nor does he want any 'good turns' that you would not give your next door neighbor." Miller asked why racial characteristics such as texture of hair or the shape of a nose should have any bearing "in determining a public policy." Directly challenging George's "debauchery of Christianity" comment, Miller concluded: "It isn't

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<sup>94</sup> Mrs. G.M. Brown, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 19, 1960; and *1960 City Directory*, 104.

the ‘debauchery’ of Christianity that the nation needs to concern itself with—it is the lack of Christianity. If we had more Christianity in this world there would be fewer people with narrow minds and narrow hearts.”<sup>95</sup>

African American military veterans brought their unique experiences, as well as their much harder-to-attack claims of patriotism, into the public discourse. John D. Feemster said that “it was utter folly to expect a segment of your citizenry to be sent to foreign lands to fight and die for the Four Freedoms, to be taxed, and then to expect them to sit docilely, complacently and idly by and watch Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos, Indonesians, Indians (East), Germans (our former enemies), and Russians (our potential enemies) enjoying respect and services and courtesies denied us for no sensible reason at all.” Feemster argued that racial prejudice was a “national disgrace,” stemming from a “moral breakdown” in leadership. Robert E. Wilkins, Assistant Pastor of the Cannon True Vine Mission, said he had left the Korean War with “shatter nerves,” but he was “not too nervous to remember that when I was on the Bunker Hill, Outpost 2, Strong Point One and Strong Point Two.” Wilkins recounted eating out of the same C-rations can as white soldiers and how he “hated to see the innocent white boys get killed as I did the innocent colored.” Wilkins described his return to civilian life: “I’ve got married and got children, got honor awards from United States Marine Corps. I’ve got everything except a God-given right called equality, of which I am going to get.” He called on the “President of this All-American country” to see that “equality is distributed” throughout the entire nation. As a final thought, Wilkins wryly commented upon the notoriously bad

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<sup>95</sup> Mrs. Dorothy H. Miller, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 19, 1960.

condition of streets in Winston-Salem's black neighborhoods: "Thank God it's snowing outside today and it's covering up those big holes in our street."<sup>96</sup>

Local historian Philip Africa said the *Journal* editorial, "A Time for Cooling Off," exposed, "intentionally or not," the "transparent sham and illogic of the action taken by the stores concerned." Africa challenged the notion of trespassing on private property and noted that the very existence of the stores could not occur without public streets and utilities. Supporting the principle behind a boycott, he argued if managers wished to discriminate in one department of their store, then the rest of the store should also be off-limits. Appealing to the religious and ethical precepts of "the Western tradition" and noting "the competitive basis of our economic system," Africa called integration of the lunch counters the "most profitable" and "most ethical" solution to the problem.<sup>97</sup>

African Americans increasingly considered the movement from an economic viewpoint and speculated about the potential power of boycotts. Thomas Berrien, a poultry processing worker, said that if the stores do want black patronage (implying throughout the entire store), "they should make the fact known. The minute that such an announcement is made, their troubles would end." He concluded by saying that if stores did not wish to totally eliminate all black patronage: "Let's get on with the solution." Melvin B. Johnson argued equality through the lens of the words of Thomas Jefferson. Conceding that Americans had argued over what Jefferson actually meant for "thousands of days and nights since 1776," Johnson concluded that Jefferson's intent "was that it

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<sup>96</sup> John D. Feemster, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 2, 1960; and Robert E. Wilkins, "Readers' Opinions," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 14, 1960

<sup>97</sup> Philip Africa, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 2, 1960.

shouldn't matter whether you are born rich or poor, black or white, you have the right to opportunities as well as the next man."<sup>98</sup>

Young African American women followed the lead of older women and added their voices to the public conversation. An emboldened Berdette Keaton, in her early-twenties, followed up her February letter with another. In her newest letter, Keaton complained that the *Journal* coverage of the All-America City celebrations left out the contributions of Winston-Salem's black citizens. Keaton suggested the newspaper should have included "articles about the business men in my race and a good picture," coverage of black tobacco growers, and pictures and information about "our fine doctors examining us instead of a United Fund Agency." Keaton also proudly touted the success of the black-owned Safe Bus Company and the Winston Lake Park. She asked why the *Journal* did not cover the black high schools' symphony orchestras or the "fine Negro churches here in this city." On Sunday, February 28, when the *Sunday Journal and Sentinel* ran a special section on the award, Keaton called it an "old tradition to put us in the back" and observed that she had to go to the "sixteenth page, right at the top on the back page" to find a story about African Americans. Johnetta Sinclair, a 1959 graduate of Atkins High School, wrote to highlight the importance of education and to point with pride to a long line of African American leaders. Sinclair thanked Booker T.

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<sup>98</sup> Thomas A. Berrien, "Readers' Opinions," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 14, 1960; Melvin B. Johnson, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 21, 1960; and *1960 City Directory*, 61. For studies on the effectiveness of boycotts in the civil rights movement see Glenn T. Eskew, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 129-146; Charles M. Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 323-328, 415-418; and Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 48-50, 63-68.

Washington, George Washington Carver, and Mary McLeod Bethune “for teaching us that we are entitled to, equal rights.” She closed by emphasizing the necessity of education to “know when, where, and how to go about achieving equal rights.”<sup>99</sup>

Segregationist whites were the most obvious targets for black criticism, although sometimes there were critiques that encompassed all whites. One of the most complex and powerful letters written to the editors in March 1960 came from Hattie N. Booker, a maid at Montaldo’s, Winston-Salem’s premier clothing store for elite women. More than likely had the wrong white customer taken offense with Booker’s letter, it would have meant her job. Booker’s command of language might suggest that her working-class occupation was not based on her abilities but perhaps was determined by her race and gender. She appeared to have had her fill of letters from white segregationists, and she also felt compelled to set the record straight for “sympathetic” white liberals as well. Using a theme of “What does the Negro want?”—Booker expressed that it was “high time” for blacks to answer that question—not “the white supremacy politician, the plantation owner, the reactionary, and the liberal white.” In a lengthy essay, Booker systematically answered her own question. In one section, she discussed the desire for opportunity, equal pay, dignity, democracy, and a sense of belonging. “But most important,” Booker emphasized, “is the total goal of freedom. The Negro wants to be considered a citizen of the nation under whose allegiance he was born.” Perhaps also answering the question of what Negroes did not want, she sardonically asked the

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<sup>99</sup> Berdette Keaton, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 7, 1960; and Johnetta Sinclair, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 10, 1960.

common white supremacist question, “Do you want your sister to marry one of them?”” Booker said of miscegenation: “Intermarriage is hardly a goal that Negroes are contending for openly or yearning for secretly. It is certainly not a mental preoccupation with them and scarcely a matter of special concern.” Calling on white and black Southerners to work together, she called for whites to accept blacks as equals and for blacks “to rid themselves of ridiculous self-discrimination.” In a commentary on political leadership, Booker offered this statement: “All intelligent people know discrimination is unjust, but unfortunately in our country all educated people aren’t intelligent.”<sup>100</sup>

On Friday April 1, 1960, Mayor Marshall Kurfees formed a “Goodwill Committee” to work on a solution to the lunch counter integration problem. Composed of ten black and ten white community leaders, the first act of the committee was to ask that the segregated lunch counters remain closed and that there be no further demonstrations until their work was completed. The black members of the committee were: Reverend Kenneth R. Williams, Curtis Todd, Reverend Jerry Drayton, Reverend David R. Hedgley, educator Albert H. Anderson, Sam Harvey, Edward E. Hill, C.I. Sawyer, Dr. E.L. Davis, and Reverend H.W. Wiley. The white members were: Gordon Hanes, Joe S. Rice, James G. Hanes, J. Ernest Yarbrough, Paul Essex, Irving Carlyle, James A. Gray, Judge E.S. Heefner, Jr., Dr. Mark Depp, and Clarence H. Patrick. Patrick had already been working on an analytical and quantitative study to gauge possible

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<sup>100</sup> Mrs. Hattie N. Booker, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 25, 1960; and *1960 City Directory*, 423. Booker had probably read the landmark collection of essays by Langston Hughes, W.E.B. Du Bois, Mary McLeod Bethune, A. Philip Randolph, and others assembled by Howard University historian Rayford Logan in 1944. See Rayford W. Logan, *What the Negro Wants* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1944).



community reactions to integration. On Saturday, April 2, the committee met for two hours in a meeting presided over by Mayor Kurfees. Kurfees told the meeting: “We have had excellent relations in Winston-Salem with all our folks and we don’t want to mar that.” The committee discussed the ramifications of the three options available for the lunch counters: maintaining segregation and face continued protests; eliminating all lunch counters, setting a bad precedent for how to deal with other racial problems; or providing open and equal treatment to all citizens at all types of counters. A five-man subcommittee was formed to negotiate with merchants on behalf of the main committee. The subcommittee members were Rice, Todd, Gordon Hanes, Williams, and Patrick. The remainder of the meeting was spent listening to the report of Professor Patrick.<sup>101</sup>

A Tennessee native, Clarence H. Patrick moved to Winston-Salem in 1956 to chair the Sociology Department at Wake Forest. Patrick had degrees from Wake Forest, Andover Newton Theological School, and Duke University. He had already begun work on his study when the petition in favor of integration was signed by many Wake Forest faculty members. Patrick declined to sign the petition, stating he “had to remain neutral” while performing his study. Written in the style of a sociological academic article, Patrick’s report was divided into sections giving an overview of the South, a localized view of Winston-Salem, a subjective assessment of “what the Negro wants,” and finally a public opinion poll of white Twin Citians, along with an interpretative evaluation of their responses to questions regarding possible integration. In his overview of the South,

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<sup>101</sup> Charles Richards, “Committee Is Expected to Offer Plan to Solve Lunch Counter Issue,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, April 3, 1960; and “Sociologist Makes Study: Patrick Is a Scientist,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, April 3, 1960.

Patrick observed that industrial growth, improvements in education, and urbanization were changing the dynamics of black and white relationships. Patrick noted that an emphasis on “status, freedom, and human dignity” was truly generational and affected younger people, both black and white. He described the “Local Scene” of Winston-Salem as one where, despite racial differences, generally changes had been made “without incident.”<sup>102</sup>

Patrick listed some of the racial accomplishments as “token” integration of the public schools and access for blacks to public libraries, city buses, the traditionally-white Reynolds Park Golf Course, Reynolds Auditorium, and the minor league baseball park. Other positives listed by Patrick including the hiring of some blacks as mail carriers, policemen, and firemen, and that both Wake Forest and Salem College openly invited blacks to all concerts and lectures. He noted that in some buildings the signs indicating separate restrooms and drinking fountains had been removed (he did not mention that the separate facilities remained in use). In his assessment of “What the Negro Wants,” Patrick succinctly concluded that to blacks, “segregation is a form of ostracism implying inferiority. Thus he is asking for the same treatment—no better, no worse, not even equal if it is separate. This all adds up to the fact that the new generation Negro is jealous of his self-respect, dignity, and honor.”<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> “Sociologist makes Study: Patrick Is a Scientist,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, April 3, 1960; “Dr. Patrick’s Report,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, April 3, 1960; and “Report for the Mayor’s Goodwill Committee, July 25, 1960,” pamphlet, North Carolina Room, Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

<sup>103</sup> “Sociologist makes Study: Patrick Is a Scientist,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, April 3, 1960; “Dr. Patrick’s Report,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, April 3, 1960; and “Report for the Mayor’s Goodwill Committee, July 25, 1960,” pamphlet, North Carolina Room, Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Patrick’s study was printed in part in the newspaper and is also

For the survey portion of his report, Patrick and some of his students (all white) personally interviewed random white shoppers in the stores with lunch counters, during various times of the day. There were 52 in-depth interviews performed and 790 brief interviews. Out of the 790 people interviewed, 368 said they would accept a plan to integrate lunch counters, 383 said they would not, and 39 were undecided. Only 74 respondents said they would no longer trade at stores if an integration plan was actually implemented. Despite the substantial number of interviewees who responded “no” to accepting the plan, Patrick was optimistic that a plan might be implemented. He cited as an example a United States Army poll where 62 percent of soldiers in all-white units had responded they would “dislike very much” to serve in integrated units. Only 7 percent gave the same response when the question was asked of soldiers who had previously served in an integrated unit. Patrick concluded the text of his study with an obvious bias towards the option of “equal treatment to all at the lunch-counters on a sit-down basis,” and with the caveat: “Without a large measure of tolerance and willingness to make adjustments, it probably would fail.”<sup>104</sup>

In a staff editorial, “A Constructive Approach,” the *Winston-Salem Journal* enthusiastically supported the concept of the Goodwill Committee, which was not an especially bold position in light of publisher James A. Gray’s status as a member of the committee. Although the editorial rehashed the three possible outcomes (segregation,

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available in pamphlet form in its entirety in the North Carolina Room, Forsyth County Library, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Patrick used this study as the core of a larger study for the Goodwill Committee in July 1960. He continued to be a Goodwill Committee member on and off for several years and did further studies on Winston-Salem and race, most notably an article for *Phylon* in 1964.

<sup>104</sup> “Dr. Patrick’s Report,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, April 3, 1960; and Patrick, “Report for the Mayor’s Goodwill Committee, July 25, 1960,” 15.

closing the counters permanently, integration), its main point was to again encourage store management to keep the counters closed and to encourage protesters to cease activity during the negotiation period.<sup>105</sup>

The concept of patient negotiation by established leaders emerged as a pattern for dealing with race relations in Winston-Salem throughout the turbulence of the 1960s. When controversy arose, it was deemed appropriate for the leadership classes of both racial communities to negotiate solutions. From a black point of view, at times those solutions were perceived by the proactive instigators of protest movements as token gestures, too slow or gradualist, or as too conciliatory towards the white power structure. The opportunity for friction within the black community occurred as class or generational differences arose between the leadership class and various factions within the community. With the exception of a liberal minority, whites in Winston-Salem believed in no change or slow change. Even the powerful second-generation patriarchs of the Reynolds, Hanes, Whitaker, and Gray dynasties, who were often as individuals somewhat “progressive,” had to consider the entrenched segregationist views of their middle management and working-class employees. Protesters and store management did adhere to the request of the Goodwill Committee, and as such, April was a relatively quiet month in Winston-Salem. Heated exchanges continued in the letters to the newspapers throughout the first half of the month and then suddenly disappeared. It seems reasonable to speculate that as the Goodwill Committee failed to quickly create a solution, James A. Gray may have used his power to quiet controversy in the media. In

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<sup>105</sup> “A Constructive Approach,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 4, 1960.

addition to the newspapers, the Gray family also controlled radio station WSJS and NBC-affiliated television station WSJS (now WXII), both of which carried the strongest respective transmission signals for the city area.

The first major communication from the Goodwill Committee came on April 14, following a meeting of all twenty members at the Community Center on Coliseum Drive. Joe S. Rice, speaking for the subcommittee dealing with downtown merchants, said his committee “had been busy and was not trying to drag it out.” Rice noted similar approaches had failed in Greensboro, High Point, and Raleigh because the committees there “acted too quickly.” Reverend Jerry Drayton apparently was the only black member applying pressure for the subcommittee’s delays. He expressed that he was “curious” as to why it was taking so long to come up with a proposal. Kurfees explained that while the committee was not required to present a proposal the merchants unanimously agreed with—it would “be better if all are in accord.” Kurfees also stated that even if the stores all agree to a plan, “it would be wise not to rush things.” An unnamed African American member of the committee somewhat sarcastically agreed with the mayor “not to rush things,” noting there “never has been any mad rush in desegregation here.” Clarence Patrick informed the larger committee and the public that the subcommittee had presented his data on white reaction, notably the data that most whites would continue to shop with merchants even if counters were integrated, to local managers and by direct correspondence and phone calls to higher executives of the chain stores. A statement was issued to the press stating that the subcommittee’s work “should

be completed within a week,” and that the full committee would reconvene on an unspecified date the next week as well.<sup>106</sup>

In mid-April, local movement leaders Carl Matthews and Donald Bradley attended a meeting at Shaw University in Raleigh, which proved to be a watershed moment in the history of the Black Freedom Struggle. Hundreds of student activists convened, and under the tutelage of Ella J. Baker, created SNCC, an organization that ultimately would be at the center of many pivotal moments in the civil rights movement. Baker challenged the patriarchal power of Dr. King and the other older, male, minister leaders by insisting that the new organization should be led by the students themselves.<sup>107</sup>

Students in Winston-Salem kept the sit-in protests alive during a period when most other North Carolina movements suspended activity. The Winston-Salem movement received considerable attention in both the mainstream press and the black newspapers in northern urban centers, helping to sustain movement consciousness. A strong case can be made that the Winston-Salem sit-in movement made a considerable contribution to the Black Freedom Struggle if for no other reason than helping to sustain momentum until the formation of SNCC.

In a unilateral decision by store manager Herman Warren, on Wednesday, April 20, 1960, without any prior warning, the Woolworth store at Fourth and Spruce Streets, opened its lunch counter on a segregated basis. Both the Goodwill Committee and

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<sup>106</sup> Charles Richards, “Goodwill Committee May Offer Suggestions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 14, 1960

<sup>107</sup> “Student Demonstrators to Attack Unemployment,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 4, 1960. This article confirmed Donald Bradley’s presence at the formation of SNCC. See also Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*; Branch, *Parting the Waters*; and Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, ed., *A Circle of Trust: Remembering SNCC* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998).

protesters were caught unawares. Having been “caught in the act,” the Woolworth counter shut back down. Goodwill Committee members continued negotiations with store management to try to persuade them to compromise on a solution involving integration. The Carl Matthews-led protest movement continued to uphold its commitment not to protest until the Goodwill Committee made a formal announcement. This process of behind the scenes negotiations and public stalling continued until the first week in May.<sup>108</sup>

On Thursday, May 5, both Woolworth stores, S.H. Kress, and H.L. Green opened their lunch counters, segregated. Carl Matthews issued a statement regarding the Goodwill Committee: “Although the efforts of the wise and good men of this community have failed for the present, we offer them thanks on behalf of the Negro people of this community.” According to the later report of Clarence Patrick, some merchants had been willing to reopen their counters fully integrated. Others were adamant that they were to remain segregated. Without consensus, negotiations with the Goodwill Committee broke down. There was a feeling among some merchants that the “protest movement had about spent itself.” Carl Matthews also issued statements on behalf of the movement. He called for a much more proactive boycott of stores with an obvious intent to put more pressure on African Americans to participate in the boycott. Matthews promised a “workshop of motivation” to elevate the boycott to where “not one Negro shall spend one

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<sup>108</sup> “Counter Open; Is Unexpected,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 21, 1960; and Patrick, “Report for the Mayor’s Goodwill Committee, July 25, 1960,” 16-17.

penny at any place that has one ounce of segregation.” He promised strategy meetings would be held immediately and protests would resume.<sup>109</sup>

Apparently emboldened by the Thursday lunch counter openings, a number of other downtown merchants reopened their counters on Friday, including Walgreens, Eckerd’s, O’Hanlon Drug Store, and Anchor Department Store. Only a few protesters appeared, including Carl Matthews, and they picketed peacefully outside of the Kress and Woolworth stores. Matthews told the *Journal* his group had distributed five thousand copies of a pamphlet outlining the reasons for a boycott and a list of the targeted stores (Kress, both Woolworth, Walgreens, Kress, and Anchor). Indicating a more intense level of boycott, one of the messages in the pamphlet was: “For God’s sake stick with your race and don’t belittle yourself by being seen anytime in any off limit store supporting the cause we fight.” On Saturday, demonstrators appeared in larger numbers and with a more structured plan. Beginning at about 1 p.m., approximately thirty students from WSTC began systematically taking seats at lunch counters. One by one, all seven of the reopened lunch counters closed for business again. Uniformed police were present at the stores but no arrests were made. Donald Bradley spoke for the movement, saying the decision was made to renew sit-ins after negotiations “fell through.” Carl Matthews promised that “future protests will utilize as many as five hundred students” but would attempt to avoid violating the parade ordinance.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> “Negro Leader Calls for Boycott in City,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 6, 1960; and Patrick, “Report for the Mayor’s Goodwill Committee, July 25, 1960,” 18.

<sup>110</sup> “Picketing Begins Here at 2 Stores: Leader Says It Will Spread,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 7, 1960; and “7 Stores Here Close Lunch Bars: Move Follows New Protests,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, May 8, 1960.



In 1960, there was not a sufficient number of adult African Americans from the middle or upper classes who willing to risk their status to create a large-scale, direct-action protest. There were also limits on the numbers of WSTC students willing to risk their status. The participation of younger African Americans from outside of the elite black classes was necessary if dramatic, mass action, attention-getting protests was the goal. On Monday, May 9, a mass meeting was held on the campus of WSTC. On Tuesday, Matthews made good on his promise of larger-scale protests, as roughly five hundred students from WSTC, Atkins High School, and Carver High School gathered downtown. From 11 a.m. until 2 p.m., students demonstrated up and down the sidewalks in an orderly fashion. At any store where a lunch counter was discovered open, a large crowd of students would enter and take seats at the counter. The sheer number of protesters caused several stores to close not only their lunch counters but the rest of the stores as well. Woolworth at Fourth and Spruce Streets closed for the day and hung a sign stating, "Closed for Inventory." The other Woolworth and Walgreens closed temporarily and reopened after protesters left downtown. Their lunch counters remained closed. H.L. Green and Kress closed their segregated sit-down counters but left the stand-up integrated counters open.<sup>111</sup>

In many southern cities, black protests were handled forcefully by white police. In Winston-Salem, the police were present at the protests, but were held back by city leaders hoping to avoid any accounts of violence. City Manager John Gold was given the

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<sup>111</sup> Luix Overbea, "Temporary Halt Called in Protests: Truce Follows Meeting Here," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 11, 1960.

assignment of mediating the large protest of May 10. Inside the H.L. Green Company, during the height of the protest, Donald Bradley was handed a megaphone by Gold, with instructions to tell student demonstrators, “We have an ordinance...” and they had to leave or be arrested. Bradley, who appeared ready to oblige Gold, instead told students through the megaphone, “We also have a Constitution of the United States.” At this point the megaphone was seized and Bradley was placed under arrest. Also arrested was twenty-four-year-old Woolworth Assistant Store Manager, Bill Oren Speer. Speer was charged with assault in a warrant signed by WSTC student Asha Raiason, a native of the Bronx, New York. Raiason charged Speer with pushing her as he locked one of the store’s doors. After Bradley’s arrest, students marched to City Hall and sat on the steps in front of the building. Bradley was released on a \$500 bail posted by a professional bondsman. Protest leader Matthews, student leaders Bradley, James Young, Charles Riley, Alan Roberson, and Patricia Tillman, and NAACP representative F.W. Jackson met with Gold and Police Chief Waller. After meeting with city leaders, Carl Matthews announced he would suspend the protests at least through Wednesday after receiving promises that face-to-face meetings would be arranged between protest leaders and store managers. F.W. Jackson had no comment for *Journal* reporter Luix Overbea, stating: “I will say what I have to say at the NAACP mass meeting Thursday night.”<sup>112</sup>

The *Winston-Salem Journal*, as proxy for the city patriarchs, expressed disapproval, stating that such large protests, “tend to harden the resistance to change.

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<sup>112</sup> Luix Overbea, “Temporary Halt Called in Protests: Truce Follows Meeting Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 11, 1960; and Dalton, *I’m Not My Brother’s Keeper*.

Inherent in them is the danger that some hothead will give vent to his emotions in violent fashion.” The editors argued that blacks had every right to protest peacefully in “small groups” and to “withhold their business from any merchant whose policies they find objectionable.” The *Journal* acknowledged the growth of white sympathy for the black cause, and then argued that blacks were in danger of losing such support with these new expanded protests. The newspaper called for making the suspension of protests permanent.<sup>113</sup> In a manner similar to stopping controversial letters to the editor during Goodwill Committee efforts, the content of this editorial appears to have been another moment where the city patriarchs exerted their influence over the press. The message was clear, “progressive” white support existed—but on its own terms and its own timetable.

The differing views within the African American community along organizational and generational lines were evident within sit-in related meetings, which were held on Thursday, May 12. The merchant-liaison subcommittee of the Goodwill Committee met at City Hall that morning and the larger committee convened in the afternoon following the Chamber of Commerce meeting. Apparently the large-scale protests had prompted store managers to return to negotiations. The Goodwill Committee announced that in conjunction with the downtown stores, it would produce a “decision” on May 23. Once again, store managers promised the Goodwill Committee to keep lunch counters closed, and the committee requested demonstrations cease until the May 23 announcement.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> “Not Helping Themselves,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 12, 1960.

<sup>114</sup> “Decision Set May 23 in Sitdown Situation: A Proposal Is Promised,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 13, 1960.

The Goodwill Committee request created heated debate at Thursday evening's mass meeting of the NAACP at Goler Metropolitan AME Zion Church. Over four hundred people attended the meeting which was chaired by Dr. F.W. Jackson. The meeting began with an address from Reverend B. Elton Cox of High Point, who had just been named national Assistant Youth Secretary of the NAACP. Cox told the assembly: "Uncle Tom is dead. Rise up, standup; be what you want to be through your vote. Integration will not come by magic, nor by violence. It will only come by love." After Cox had spoken, Curtis Todd read the proposal from the Goodwill Committee asking for a suspension of protests until May 23. Dr. Jackson refused a motion to support the suspension—stating that the local NAACP executive board would have to meet and make a decision, and then call a general meeting. WSTC student leader Alan Roberson spoke up: "They did not keep the counters closed before. How do we know they will keep them closed until May 23? We should keep on demonstrating. And May 23 is the last day of school. Why did they pick that date?" Carl Matthews expressed his views: "As long as the counters are closed, we have no reason to demonstrate. But if they don't open their counters, we shall boycott them from now on. And we should march every day. We should not wait until May 23." Other students spoke up about the suspicious nature of the May 23 date. Some of the older ministers echoed the opinion of Reverend J. Chester Gage III, who said: "Don't put our members on the mayor's committee in an embarrassing position. We're putting them on the spot."<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> "Decision Set May 23 in Sitdown Situation: A Proposal Is Promised," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 13, 1960; and "Negroes Balk at Suggestion," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 13, 1960.

For the next ten days, although a vigilant eye was kept upon downtown lunch counters, students did not resume protests. Downtown merchants also kept their end of the bargain. R.W. Montjoy, manager of the J.C. Penney store and head of the “Shop Downtown” committee of the Downtown Merchants Association, called for downtown merchants to think of themselves as a “shopping center,” not just a collection of individual concerns. Montjoy recognized the potential damage of a long-term boycott and stated: “We all have a big stake in keeping race relations harmonious.” Other influential voices weighed in on race relations. Dr. Ralph Herring, pastor of First Baptist Church, challenged the Southern Baptist Convention in a keynote address by saying God “made both races in His own image and likeness,” and that Christians must “see the face of God in all men.” Influential and world-famous evangelist Billy Graham, a North Carolina native generally held in high regard by most conservative whites, returned from a trip to South Africa and called for an end to apartheid. Graham commented that racial strife in America “was an increasing embarrassment to Americans in Africa.”<sup>116</sup>

In a meeting described by Mayor Marshall Kurfees as “momentous and serious,” the Goodwill Committee met with store managers at 3:30 on the afternoon of May 23, 1960. Later that evening they issued a statement to the media: “The committee unanimously recommended that the lunch counters be desegregated. The merchants agreed with this recommendation and with the committee are working out a plan to put it into effect in the near future.” The basic details of the plan called for merchants to open

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<sup>116</sup> J.D. Alexander, Jr., “Aid Downtown, Merchants Urged,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 13, 1960; “Race Issue Discussed by Herring,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 18, 1960; and “Graham Denounces Apartheid,” *New York Times*, March 30, 1960.

all lunch counters on an integrated basis, beginning Wednesday, May 25. It was asked of the former “demonstrators” that for the first “two or three weeks,” no more than “two or three of their group” would eat in one store at one time, and they were to avoid “rush hours and Saturdays.” It may have helped that the semester ended at WSTC and out-of-town students left for home, but students and other black customers did adhere to the agreement for the first few weeks. After two weeks, merchants were so pleased with the lack of controversy that they lifted all restrictions. There were no incidents reported requiring police interference.<sup>117</sup>

Wednesday, May 25, 1960, Carl Matthews sat at the S. H. Kress lunch counter where the protest began 107 days earlier. He was served without incident, and in the process, became the first African American in North Carolina to openly and freely enjoy a peaceful meal at a previously all-white lunch counter. His nemesis, Herman Warren, announced that he was retiring after thirty-seven years with F.W. Woolworth stores with a self-inflated statement to the *Journal*: “Before I will desegregate my lunch counters and subject my many thousands of customers and friends to something they do not want, I will retire from the company.” H.B. Thompson, with Woolworth’s regional corporate office in Atlanta, gave assurances that all Woolworth stores in Winston-Salem would be desegregated.<sup>118</sup>

Carl Matthews publicly declared the sit-in movement, “a renaissance in Winston-Salem’s History.” Matthews continued: “This achievement was not only a victory for the

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<sup>117</sup> Charles Richards, “Store Managers to Desegregate Lunch Counters,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 24, 1960; and Patrick, “Report for the Mayor’s Goodwill Committee, July 25, 1960,” 20-22.

<sup>118</sup> Dalton, *Not My Brother’s Keeper*; and Jesse Poindexter, “Warren to Retire from Store: He Opposes Desegregation,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 24, 1960.

Negro race, but a victory for righteousness. We have expressed through prayer, brotherhood, Christian actions, courage and sincerity how two races can work together in unison to achieve one purpose—justice.” Matthews thanked student leaders, especially Everette Dudley, and older civil rights leaders, specifically Dr. F.W. Jackson and the NAACP Board of Directors. He commended Mayor Kurfees, the Goodwill Committee, and Police Chief Waller, all of whom Matthews said “constantly displayed fairness.” “No single individual or organization is responsible for this accomplishment,” Matthews said, “but the masses of Negroes that were inspired by desire and an undying yearning to be free men and serve as least common denominators to the Constitution of U.S.A. and the efforts of the open-minded white people whose prayers were to see justice triumph are the unsung heroes.” Matthews spoke further of his pride in being black and of how “progress of the Negro at any time or any phase will be entirely dependent upon the courage, the initiative and the perseverance that is exhibited by the Negroes.” He posited that the fight against segregation both challenged democracy and could serve to strengthen it. Carl Matthews closed his letter with scripture from the Book of Matthew: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”<sup>119</sup>

The victory in Winston-Salem was major news in black newspapers across the nation. The *Baltimore Afro-American* used Matthews’ own words in its headline—calling the sit-in a “Victory for Righteous.” The *Chicago Daily Defender* gave the news a banner front page headline. The *Afro-American* also ran a smaller story about

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<sup>119</sup> Carl W. Matthews, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 27, 1960.

Herman Warren's retirement from Woolworth. Quoting Warren's comments, "the white folks won't stand for it" and "there will be plenty of trouble," the article closed by noting that as of June 3, the counters had been "desegregated without incident."<sup>120</sup>

Two weeks after his sit-in success, Carl Matthews was fired from his job at McLean Trucking Company. Matthews left Winston-Salem for New York where his sit-in exploits gave him some celebrity status. In an article written for the *New York Amsterdam News*, Matthews said he hoped to pursue "his ambition of being a songwriter." He wrote of losing friends in Winston-Salem as many blacks feared losing their jobs for being associated with Matthews. He expressed confidence that in his absence "young leaders in Winston-Salem will continue the fight." Later that fall, Matthews received press coverage for appearing as the only black on the platform at a Republican rally in New York for presidential candidate Richard Nixon. President Eisenhower and New York governor Nelson Rockefeller were also on the platform. Nixon had spoken in favor of civil rights and "indirectly endorsed" the sit-in movement according to the *Amsterdam News*. The newspaper noted that following the New York rally, Nixon was on his way to South Carolina for an event with "race-baiting ex-governor Jimmie Byrnes." A few weeks later, Matthews told the same newspaper he had only received "thanks and pats on the back" for his campaign appearance. Matthews was working at Harlem's Klark Klothes and had "decided politics is not for him." By the

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<sup>120</sup> "Store Desegregation 'Victory for Righteous,'" *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 4, 1960; "Sit-Ins Win Victory in Winston-Salem: Merchants Vote to Integrate Counters," *Chicago Daily Defender*, May 25, 1960; and "Woolworth Manager Quits Job," *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 4, 1960.



following spring, Matthews was at least somewhat back in the spotlight, speaking at a black society fundraiser for student protests and NAACP memberships in Philadelphia.<sup>121</sup>

The evidence strongly supports an argument that the 1960 sit-in movement in Winston-Salem had significance far beyond integrating a few downtown lunch counters. The four students who started it all in Greensboro deserve their place in history, as do the innovative leaders like Diane Nash and James Lawson at Fisk University in Nashville and the countless thousands of unknown protesters at lunch counters across the South. Carl Matthews is honored locally in Winston-Salem at the occasional celebration of the civil rights movement, and at least some of the participants have had their contributions celebrated in documentary films or the occasional article. Their contributions are certainly worthy of inclusion into a larger synthesis of the sit-in segment of the modern struggle for black equality.

On a local level, the sit-in movement represented a cathartic shift in how blacks and whites in Winston-Salem communicated with each other. Grace and gentle manners did not leave the equation, but deference out of fear was placed into a new light—and new styles of leadership began to appear and to challenge old ways. Women’s voices were joining the movement, younger people were rising into leadership roles, and at least some members of the lower classes were participating in the movement. The civil rights struggle was reshaping itself as a pivotal decade began, and people were increasingly excited at the prospects for equality. Lunch counters represented only a fraction of the

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<sup>121</sup> Carl Matthews, “Sit-In Leader Seeks Job in New York,” *New York Amsterdam News*, August 13, 1960; “Nixon and Ike By-Pass Harlem,” *New York Amsterdam News*, November 5, 1960; “Uptown Lowdown,” *New York Amsterdam News*, December 3, 1960; and Toki Schalk Johnson, “Toki Types,” *Pittsburgh Courier*, April 15, 1961.

eating places and other venues in Winston-Salem that were strictly segregated. Inequality and injustice were ingrained in society in ways and places far beyond access to lunch counters. Blacks knew from their newfound discursive relationships with whites that there was no shortage of white resistance to change. Looking back at the sit-ins, African Americans in the All-America City of Winston-Salem knew an important skirmish had been won but also recognized that many tough battles lay ahead.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **CHALLENGING BARRIERS, 1960-1962**

God intended for man to get along in peace and brotherhood...

The years of 1961 and 1962 did not produce African American protests on the scale of the sit-ins of 1960 nor were there any protests with the intensity of those to come in 1963. Instead, African Americans in Winston-Salem tackled a series of smaller issues that helped set the stage for a major push yet to come. Pressure on merchants to hire more blacks and to be friendlier to black customers was maintained with allusions to possible boycotts. Drive-in theaters became a target for integration as blacks knew whites were less threatened by blacks in the car next to them than in the seat next to them. Publicly owned recreational facilities like recreation centers, golf courses, and swimming pools provided logical choices for protest from black taxpayers. African Americans made limited, but measurable, progress in obtaining better jobs, including managerial positions within the city's major corporate employers.

White elites remained committed to improving race relations but only at a gradual pace that was not so threatening to committed segregationists. Political leaders, in conjunction with business elites, tried to pacify African Americans by slowly increasing better black jobs in both the public and private sectors. Compliance with the spirit of the *Brown* ruling was made city policy, yet only a select few venues actually integrated—and then not always without problems. African Americans were promoted into management

positions in some of the largest corporate employers but in very small numbers. Gains given to African Americans were generally highly publicized and exaggerated in their scope.

In the period following the 1960 sit-ins, there was no dramatic villain in the Bull Connor or Jim Clark mold in Winston-Salem, but there was entrenched resistance to social intermingling and there were also many whites who were willing to fight, to varying extremes, to preserve the racial hierarchy within the economic system. A number of the progressive whites who supported the student protesters of the sit-ins continued to advocate for unrestricted black rights, but the true progressives were a minority within the white population. Many whites continued to vehemently insist that segregation and white supremacy were parts of the natural order of things. The majority of whites in Winston-Salem likely fell somewhere between these two poles, with many trying to reconcile the moral dilemma of inequality with the entrenched set of racialized social customs which defined the order of their provincial universe. Whites of all classes became increasingly concerned about violence in the Deep South, fearing the images they saw on television, in magazines, or in the newspaper might somehow make their way to the peaceful world of Winston-Salem. A few local incidents with small groups of black teenagers suddenly were labeled a “gang problem.” Elite whites continued to exercise a strategy of letting segregationist whites “vent” in letters to the newspaper, with the hope of keeping them from acting out their frustrations in ways seen elsewhere in the South.

African Americans in the city were encouraged and inspired by the success of the sit-in movement but also carried their own baggage in terms of white and black racial dynamics. African Americans in Winston-Salem were generally proud of their leadership, even those leaders who used conciliatory tactics to gain and keep token access to city council seats or appointed board positions. There were, after all, quantifiable accomplishments achieved by the gradualist approach. A substantial segment of the black population, however, many of them youthful and excluded from the traditional leadership class, embraced a more contemporary sense of urgency for change. This frustration may have been reflected in incidents of vandalism or even a few violent expressions of anger. The frustration of the lower classes within the black community had a verifiable impact on the actions of the elite blacks who acted as spokespersons for black interests. A small, but important, new group of black leadership started to develop. This group reflected a heightened sense of urgency for reform and was not opposed to suggesting the possibility of further unrest as a negotiating chip with whites.

Movement leadership from African American women increased slightly in the period after the sit-ins although most organized work was done at the neighborhood level. Elite black women increased their attendance at the meetings of various government boards and often spoke up on the issues at hand. African American women continued to play a strong role in the public discourses carried out in the newspapers, perhaps inspiring other women to speak out as well—setting the stage for a broader movement yet to come.

African Americans in Winston-Salem dealt with a much more subtle white adversary than did African Americans in most of the South, a white adversary that might not acquiesce to demands, but also did not respond with fire hoses and German shepherds. Black people in Winston-Salem were somewhat emboldened by recent changes in white attitudes and were also increasingly inspired by civil rights activities occurring within the movement writ large. Perhaps as well, black people in Winston-Salem were simply fated to come together as agents in their own moment within an unstoppable epoch in American history.

Not long after the sit-in protests achieved limited success for lunch counter integration, student protest leader Donald Bradley expressed fear of a potential “lag in the momentum of the movement.” Discussing his attendance at the SNCC conference at Shaw University earlier in the spring, Bradley emphasized the SNCC commitment to nonviolence, “It is something that we believe in,” he told Steve Duncan with the *Baltimore Afro-American*. Bradley stated the goal of resuming student protests in the fall of 1960, with an emphasis on “having variety stores hire colored clerks.” Although his parents lived in Newark, New Jersey, Bradley stayed in Winston-Salem over the summer with a goal of planning more civil rights activities.<sup>1</sup>

A rift had developed between the young activists and the older, established leadership. Bradley cosigned a letter of protest from Carl Matthews to Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, which complained that sit-in demonstrators were “let down as far as moral and

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<sup>1</sup> Steve W. Duncan, “Student Demonstrators to Attack Employment,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 4, 1960.

financial support is concerned” by the Winston-Salem chapter of the NAACP. The letter was undersigned by WSTC students Everette Dudley, Patricia Tillman, Andrew A. Hughes, Jake Brown, Pauline L. Boston, Jeanett Brooks, Gwendolyn Thomas, and Algenia Miles. Matthews charged: “We have been let down as far as faith, moral and financial support is concerned and we have not been supported as the public thinks. Our efforts to emerge as future civil rights leaders have been overlooked and credit has not been put where credit is due.” He asked for accountability after Charles McLean publicly stated the NAACP had contributed “an estimated \$6,000 to \$7,000.” Matthews claimed “our total expenses ran less than \$1,000 and this account has not completely been taken care of.” He was also upset that none of the Winston-Salem protesters had been considered for permanent paid staff positions with the NAACP.<sup>2</sup>

Matthews, who was unemployed when he wrote the letter, may have been expressing some personal resentment over the recent hiring of Reverend B. Elton Cox of High Point as a National Youth Field Secretary by the NAACP. The additional signatures from students may also indicate a generational divide both logistically and ideologically, and might also indicate a fracture based on socioeconomic class. Fifty years later, Carl Matthews still expressed bitterness over the way he had been treated through the years by some in the upper classes of black Winston-Salem.<sup>3</sup>

College students were not the only young African Americans to express their frustration with the status quo. An incident the night of Saturday, June 25, 1960, gave

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<sup>2</sup> “Sitdown Head Raps Branch of NAACP,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 11, 1960.

<sup>3</sup> John Railey, “A Shining Moment,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 7, 2010.

indication of growing discontent among black youth of the lower classes. At approximately 11:30 p.m., a crowd of roughly two hundred black youths were walking home from a dance at Columbia Heights Recreation Center. A number of the youths were from neighborhoods several miles away. The NASCAR stock car races at Bowman Gray Stadium, a favorite Saturday night pastime for white working and lower classes, finished at the same time the black youths were walking through the neighborhood (Bowman Gray Stadium was and is in a predominantly African American neighborhood). A number of cars with white occupants were surrounded by some in the crowd of young blacks, some windshields and windows were broken with bottles. Most of the incidents were apparently meant to just scare the whites in their cars, but a few led to personal injury. William White of Yadkinville was treated at the hospital for cuts as was his six-year-old son. At least four other whites received injuries. Willie Theodore, a resident of nearby Columbia Terrace apartments, was mistaken for white and dragged from his car and beaten with a "piece of timber." One week later, police detectives arrested Ernest Thomas Reid, nineteen, of Nineteenth Street, Elsworth Williams, Jr., eighteen, of East Seventeenth Street, James Stark, seventeen, of East Twenty-First Street, and an unnamed fifteen-year-old juvenile, and named them as the "ringleaders in the mob action." According to Captain Burke of the police department, the four suspects admitted to the attacks.<sup>4</sup> The attacks were probably prompted by a mix of youthful mischief, race-based anger, and the frustrations of poverty and inequality. The young men arrested were all from an impoverished neighborhood. Black on white crime also had the effect of raising

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<sup>4</sup> "Four Youths Arrested for June Mob Attacks," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 3, 1960.



safety concerns among whites. The incident increased the level of fear when driving through black neighborhoods (especially at night), or even stopping at traffic lights and spotting a black person nearby. Whites locking their car doors outside of the perceived safety of the suburbs became common behavior in Winston-Salem of the 1960s.

Black protests for the remainder of 1960 in Winston-Salem mainly consisted of boycotting stores that did not hire black employees, especially those with no black sales clerks, as well as stores that were perceived as unappreciative or even hostile towards black customers. Theaters with balcony-only seating for African Americans were boycotted. There was a proactive effort within the black community to target unfriendly merchants and support friendly merchants. Shopping was planned in advance, and often people car-pooled or took a longer bus ride to reach acceptable merchants. African Americans grew increasingly aware of their collective economic power—and white business owners also took notice.<sup>5</sup>

In November 1960, Dr. Lillian B. Lewis of WSTC was elected as the first African American member of the Forsyth County Board of Education. In a coordinated effort by black political leaders, the “single-shot” method was used to propel Lewis through the Democratic primary. The 1960 School Board primary election sent the top five vote-getters out of nine candidates forward to the general election. Each voter normally voted for their top five preferred candidates. By getting black voters to only vote for Lewis and not for four additional candidates, she was propelled into the top five. Although this

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<sup>5</sup> Aingred G. Dunston, “The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: 1947-1977” (Ph.D. Diss., Duke University, 1981), 146.

method may have eliminated white candidates sensitive to black issues, it did serve to break down the barrier of never having a black board member. The November election also made Democrat Terry Sanford the governor-elect of North Carolina. Sanford carried black precincts in Winston-Salem by a huge margin, but for the first time since 1908, the majority of Forsyth County voters voted for the Republican gubernatorial candidate. The Nixon-Hodge ticket also gained more votes in Forsyth County than the Kennedy-Johnson ticket, a result only made possible by a large number of white registered Democrats voting Republican. Sanford positioned himself as a gradualist on integration as a matter of political pragmatism but would prove to be by far the most progressive governor to that point in state history. As a sign that the atmosphere was changing, while still governor-elect, Sanford and his wife Margaret Rose enrolled their third-grader son and sixth-grader daughter in an integrated public school in Raleigh. Sanford said of their decision: "I understand it is a good school." Both the Lewis and the Sanford stories resonated with the black press and were related across the country, including coverage in the *Los Angeles Sentinel*.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the limited success of the sit-in movement and a cooperative "tone" to city racial politics, the 1960 election results demonstrated a formidable resistance among many whites in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County to the types of change espoused by progressives like Terry Sanford and the Kennedy brothers. Substantial numbers of white

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<sup>6</sup> "Dr. Lewis Wins School Position," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 9, 1960; Everett Carll Ladd, Jr., *Negro Political Leadership in the South* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), 298-300; "Kennedy Races Towards Victory: Sanford Tops Gavin in Governor's Race," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 9, 1960; "Gavin Wins Forsyth Vote for Governor," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 9, 1960; "Dixie State Elects Negro to Board of Education," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, December 29, 1960; and "N.C. Governor Kids to Desegregated School," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, December 29, 1960.

Democrats crossed party lines and voted for Republican Richard Nixon. White Twin Citian, S.L. Morgan, Sr., said that he was “awed” by the effect of John Kennedy’s support of Martin Luther King, Jr. and by King’s impact on swinging the black vote to the Democratic Party. Morgan posited that all should be “chastened” by the growth of black political power, and called for a reexamination of the “matter of race.”<sup>7</sup> Morgan spoke as a gradualist who at the very least saw the inevitability of integration. His insights into the election may have been perceived by segregationists as a clarion call for reassessing political party affiliation.

After six two-year terms, Mayor Marshall Kurfees decided not to run for reelection in 1961. Kurfees had never been the ideal choice of the city patriarchs, and after the sit-ins, he faced an additional stigma with many conservative white Democrats of being “too soft” on integration. Thirty-two-year-old John Surratt was the choice of the white corporate elite and was also the choice of most of the black leadership. In the Democratic primary, Surratt carried black precincts by a three-to-one margin. In the general election, Surratt won by only 622 votes over Republican candidate David Darr. Surratt beat Darr in black precincts by a total of 2,447 votes. The Democratic victory was tempered by Republicans gaining three alderman seats with substantial “switch-voting” by registered Democrats. Young funeral home owner Carl Russell defeated another African American, W.R. Crawford in the Democratic primary, and then ran

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<sup>7</sup> S.L. Morgan, Sr., “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 15, 1960. See also Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement 1954-1963* (London: MacMillan, 1988), 350-371. Pressure from Kennedy to keep King off of a Georgia chain-gang as well as a courtesy call to Mrs. Coretta Scott King played well with African Americans.

unopposed in the general election.<sup>8</sup> Consistent with the national trends in 1960, the 1961 local election demonstrated that white lifelong Democrats were willing to vote Republican based on racial issues.

Although students did not generate any civil rights activity at the level of the lunch-counter sit-ins, there were signs of political activity emanating from WSTC. In December 1960, students held protests against the quality and quantity of food served in the campus cafeteria as compared to food service at white institutions in the state college system. Students “sailed plates and food in the cafeteria and threw food on the porch of college president, F. L. Atkins,” according to a report in the *Baltimore Afro-American*. Student body president Jesse Woods calmed students by assuring them their grievances could be handled through student government. Students also picketed downtown movie theaters briefly in January 1961. Two of the theaters allowed blacks admission but required them to sit in the balcony. The other had no provision for black customers. Student protest on campus may have been a reflection of frustration with the administration’s policy limiting student activity in public protests. These incidents were given minimal local coverage but were carried in detail by the black press in Baltimore and Chicago, an indication that Winston-Salem was still considered an important location for movement news.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ladd, *Negro Political Leadership in the South*, 289-290; Charles Richards, “Surratt Is Elected Mayor, But Three GOP Candidates Win Aldermanic Positions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 3, 1961; and “6 Win Local Posts in N.C. Elections,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, May 13, 1961. Winston-Salem mayoral and city council elections are held in off-years. In 1961 the general election was held in May. Currently it occurs in November, still in off-years.

<sup>9</sup> “Students End Food Riots at WSTC,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, December 3, 1960; and “Picket N.C. Movie Houses,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, January 30, 1961.

Sporadic sit-ins and assorted protests kept civil rights issues in the news, but it took the dramatic violence and political upheaval of the Freedom Rides in May 1961 to begin to re-energize the movement in Winston-Salem. The Winston-Salem newspapers gave full coverage to the events of the Freedom Rides, from the beating of John Lewis at the bus terminal in Rock Hill, South Carolina, in early May to, most dramatically, graphic front page pictures of John Lewis, James Zwerg, and John Siegenthaler after brutal beatings by a white mob at the bus station in Montgomery, Alabama. Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, who had been an important supporter of the 1960 sit-in movement in Winston-Salem and was highly regarded by the local black community, was among those arrested in Montgomery. In addition to the violence against the actual riders, a white mob attacked a meeting led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the First Baptist Church of Montgomery. "It has sunk to the level of a barbarity comparable to the tragic days of Hitler's Germany," King said of the violence in Alabama. Additional federal officers were sent to Alabama and the Kennedy administration weighed the option of sending federal troops. North Carolina's Senator Sam J. Ervin, Jr., a segregationist who was also considered a Constitutional "purist," condemned the acts of violence and said that southerners "who commit wrongs against Negroes" are counterproductive to those who want an "orderly test" of civil rights laws. News from the Deep South was clearly of concern to both white and black citizens of Winston-Salem and served as a reminder of unresolved issues in the All-America city.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> "Martial Law Is Proclaimed by Governor of Alabama As Severe Rioting Erupts," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 22, 1961; "Ervin Deplores Alabama Violence," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 22, 1961; "Integrationist Alabama Minister Free Under \$1,000 Bond," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 25, 1961; "Freedom Riders Given Suspended Sentences, But Will Remain in Jail," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 27,

Although Winston-Salem never had the types of high drama that occurred into the mid-1960s in the Deep South, there were often tangible signs that news from elsewhere influenced actions locally. The white patriarchs continued to express their views through the newspapers they controlled. The *Winston-Salem Journal*, in an editorial entitled “Blood Marks across the South,” said that “the ‘Freedom Riders’ may have been unwise in their provocative efforts to test segregation laws and practices,” but added, “they are not the ones who have initiated the violence.” The editorial staff came out firmly against the violence committed by white racists in the Deep South and also condemned the local and state law enforcement agencies there for allowing the violence to go unchecked. The *Journal* noted how enforcement officials had apparently coordinated their intentional lack of protection for the riders with the Ku Klux Klan, and how when bloody and unconscious victims needed urgent medical attention, white-owned ambulance companies “reported all of their vehicles had broken down.” The editorial supported sending federal marshals into Alabama and agreed with Senator Ervin that sending marshals was an appropriate legal response which might prove less inflammatory than sending in the military. In powerful language the *Journal* called the actions of the mob in Montgomery, “blood marks of shame across the face of the South and the nation.” Alluding to Winston-Salem’s own issues and potential problems, the editorial said further

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1961; and “Justice Department Orders 400 U.S. Marshals to Alabama to Combat Racial Violence: Bus Riders Are Beaten by Mob,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, May 28, 1961. For excellent historical accounts of the Freedom Rides, see Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 412-450; and David Halberstam, *The Children* (New York: Random House, 1998), 248-287. Historian Glenn T. Eskew asserts that media coverage of events in Birmingham in 1963 affected local movements throughout the South. Winston-Salem had a strong reaction to events in Birmingham but previous events like the Freedom Rides also spurred action within the local movement. See, Glenn T. Eskew, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

of the Alabama unrest: “It has added greatly to the problems that confront the decent, reasonable white people of the South who seek peaceable solutions to interracial problems.”<sup>11</sup>

During the 1960 sit-in movement several black citizens had publicly shared their own personal accounts of the difficulties of traveling through the South in their own vehicles without access to lodging and restaurants. For many people, especially lower income people, bus and train travel provided an affordable way to visit family. Such travel was typical for many white and black Americans who had migrated from the South to the North, or, as was often the case in Winston-Salem, had migrated from a rural southern area to the city in search of manufacturing jobs. During the height of the Freedom Rides controversy, Dr. Daisy Fullilove Balsley, an English professor at WSTC, wrote to the *Journal* to relate her own experiences traveling as an African American in the South. She recalled getting on a train in Georgia with her children, only to have white passengers yell at them: “we’ve got niggers with us today,” and, “niggers you’re in the South.” Balsley told of trying to purchase a lower berth on a train from Jackson, Mississippi, to Boston, Massachusetts, and being told: “no white person is going to sit in the same coach with you. Down here we don’t ride with niggers.” She related how her brother, a surgeon traveling back from a medical conference with his wife, had pulled off the road in Louisiana to get some sleep. There was no lodging available for blacks. Balsley’s brother was arrested and jailed for the crime of “parking for immoral purposes.” When he tried to show his medical credentials and explain why he was

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<sup>11</sup> “Blood Marks Across the South,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1961.

traveling, he was told: “You can put that stuff away; you’re just a d--- black nigger to me.”<sup>12</sup>

African American women from the faculty at WSTC often were on the vanguard of more candid representations of the black experience and more assertive expressions of black dissatisfaction within public discourses. Balsley’s WSTC colleague, Dr. Lillian B. Lewis did not temper her views on race issues, despite her recent groundbreaking election as the first black on the School Board. Lewis shared the experience of having to stop on the side of the road to sleep when she and her husband (WSTC education professor J.F. Lewis) traveled from North Carolina to Texas. Lewis emphasized they slept on the side of the road not because of “no money,” but because of signs saying “No vacancies for colored.” She challenged whites who “feel the Freedom Riders are not sincere in trying to gain ordinary conveniences granted by law,” to “darken their complexions and travel as Negroes through the South.” Describing the experiences and the humiliation of going to the back of a line for cold sandwiches, eating in your car, being locked out of restrooms after just paying to fill up with gas, all the while within plain sight observing “attractive places dispensing everything you need but NOT FOR YOU.” Lewis stated that if whites endured what blacks “have endured for 100 years for just one week,” whites then might understand better the need for change. “Can anyone deep down in his heart condemn us for trying to gain those coveted rights that were thrust upon him,” Lewis asked rhetorically.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Daisy Fullilove Balsley, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 30, 1961. The 1960 WSTC Yearbook, *Ram '60*, featured a formal portrait of Balsley and was dedicated “to our beloved advisor, Dr. Daisy F. Balsley.”

<sup>13</sup> Lillian Burwell Lewis, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 7, 1961.



Other African Americans supported the Freedom Rides based on legal or religious reasons. Oscar L. Foy, Jr., a post office employee who lived on Cameron Avenue, stated his viewpoint: “Ours is a government which exists under the ideas and ideals of social contract. The terms of this contract are found in the Constitution of the United States of America. Historically the interpretation of these terms has been the duty of the Supreme Court.” Foy then asked how the actions of the Freedom Riders, as “legal and proper and duly certified” by the laws of the land and its highest legal authority, could be labeled “an extremist action?” Foy argued further, “there can be no answer which will clothe the aberrations of the south in legality or logic.” He asked a pointed rhetorical question: “Can it be that we do not all start from the same premise, ‘that all men are created equal?’”<sup>14</sup>

Portia M. Hall demonstrated that black women were willing to speak out publicly and firmly as she challenged a white segregationist who had suggested that God had created skin color and Negroes should want to stay separate out of “racial pride.” Hall responded: “God made man to be just the way he wanted him. Race, color, nor creed determines God’s love for an individual. God intended for man to get along in peace and brotherhood. It’s not a matter of ‘Racial Pride.’”<sup>15</sup>

White segregationists were concerned by developments in the Deep South and often troubled by their own perceived victimization at home. White women were very active in the racial discourses, perhaps indicating that even though they were opposed to

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<sup>14</sup> Oscar L. Foy, Jr., “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 31, 1961; and *Hill’s Winston-Salem City Directory 1960* (Richmond, Virginia: Hill Directory Company, 1960), 376.

<sup>15</sup> Miss Portia M. Hall, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1961.

black equality, on some level they were claiming a stronger political voice for (white) women in the public sphere. Carole Sterling, who lived in a Southside starter home and was the wife of a technical writer at Western Electric, felt that the United States could learn something from South Africa and Rhodesia: “I read about the African laws and I think they are the correct things to do. Everything is strictly segregated and that’s the way it should be. I can’t see how color blind our Supreme Court and other high officials are.” Sterling said that colored people don’t want to be “pushed” into integration and that the voices of white people who “want their segregation” need to be heard. She offered a rousing exhortation, “Show our American strength and let’s all fight for segregation of the races.”<sup>16</sup>

White segregationists of the patrician class often used genteel language and evocative romantic visions of the “Lost Cause” to veil what in actuality were hardline stances against black equality. Ruth Linney said it was “tragic and disgraceful” to use violence against “the so-called ‘Freedom Riders,’” and, “I do not condone it in the least.” She then said: “But neither am I in favor of integration. Nowhere in the South should citizens have submitted to integration at any level. I do not think it was inevitable that the decision of the Supreme Court should have been transferred into reality or States’ Rights ignored.” Linney continued with praise for Senators Sam J. Ervin, Strom Thurmond, John Stennis, and John McClellan, along with former North Carolina gubernatorial candidate I. Beverly Lake, for not believing in “subservient bowing to integration.” Linney noted that the politicians she mentioned were of the upper white

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<sup>16</sup> Carole Sterling, “A Letter,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 12, 1961; and *1960 City Directory*, 854.

classes and did not represent “‘crackers’ or ‘white trash’ who always did have a grudge against Negroes.” Linney spoke of her own very personal views on race: “I am not against Negroes: I am frequently called ‘Negro lover.’” Speaking of whites more supportive of integration than herself, Linney posited: “Maybe they believe along with one colored agitator, ‘Love is color-blind.’ I would not say Negroes are inferior in character or intellect; they are only different. But love should not be color-blind.” Calling for a return to separate but equal, Linney graciously said it would meet with her approval if resources for blacks “slightly surpassed” those of whites in order to “compensate for past indignities and lack of opportunity.” According to Linney, the world might then “return to the friendly feeling between the races that existed before all this unrest was fomented.”<sup>17</sup>

Rebecca Chappell’s views may have reflected the personal changes within many white people of this era as they struggled with the challenges to an old way of life. Images of the graphic violence of the Deep South may have begun to change the hearts of at least some whites. She wrote that although the newspaper coverage of the Freedom Rider violence in Alabama was “written with an intergrationist [*sic*] flavor,” she nonetheless found the use of violence “horrifying and sobering.” Chappell argued that the notion of states’ rights led to the Civil War, and now a hundred years later a second civil war was taking place based on the same concept. She posed the question: “Is it a state’s right to subject a person to physical brutality simply because one disagrees with

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<sup>17</sup> Ruth Linney, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 25, 1961.

another's skin color or beliefs?" Chappell closed with a reminder that the Constitution was intended to apply "for all states."<sup>18</sup>

White segregationist concerns could be found among all social and economic classes. Poor whites found it more convenient, and more socially acceptable among other whites, to blame blacks for their economic plight. Lala Weeks of Winston-Salem complained that as a white citizen she was turned down for "the Welfare." "I have always worked hard for a living as I was left a widow with five children. I am a regular church member and have tried to be a good citizen of Winston-Salem for fifty-two years," Weeks stated. She said of the Welfare Department: "They help the colored people of our fair city, women who have illegitimate [*sic*] children and most folks who don't even try to help themselves." Reflecting the views of many less-than-elite southern whites, Weeks made the point that in her mind being white meant you were middle class, regardless of your economic situation: "I ask you, how can a citizen get help when it is desperately needed? There is no help for the middle class people. The lower class is taking over our Welfare department and our All-American City."<sup>19</sup>

Whites at Wake Forest College responded to the actions of that small group of white student sit-in participants and their faculty supporters, by announcing in April 1961 that the college would accept "qualified Negroes" to the medical and law schools as well as graduate programs in other disciplines. On June 5, 1961, Wake Forest College announced a step forward towards allowing black undergraduate students. The Board of

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<sup>18</sup> Rebecca Chappell, "Readers' Opinions," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 25, 1961.

<sup>19</sup> Mrs. Lala Weeks, "Readers' Opinions," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1961.

Trustees decided to allow “a limited number of special students for evening classes or summer term classes without discrimination as to race.” The policy change was clear in stating that such students were not to be given “undergraduate standing or credit toward an undergraduate degree at Wake Forest College.” One week later, it was announced that Kernard C. Rockette of Winston-Salem was expected to register for a summer school course at Wake Forest. Rockette was a graduate of Atkins High School and had just completed his first semester at North Carolina A. & T. in Greensboro. A total of three African Americans attended summer school sessions at Wake Forest in the summer of 1961.<sup>20</sup>

One year after allowing Negroes to attend summer school, Wake Forest College announced on June 2, 1962, that Edward Reynolds, a twenty-year-old native of Ghana, would attend summer school and then enroll in the fall as the first full-time black student in the history of the college. Reynolds had just completed his freshman year at Shaw University in Raleigh. A student movement led by J. Glenn Blackburn, Jr. had initiated the gradual changes from the Board of Trustees and achieved their ultimate goal with the acceptance of Reynolds. Donations from Wake Forest students helped finance Reynolds’s trip to the United States and helped pay for his expenses while attending Shaw. The first issue to decide over the summer was housing arrangements—Wake Forest had a strict policy that only students living with their parents in Winston-Salem or married students were allowed to live off-campus.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> “Racial Policy Liberalized by WF College Trustees,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 5, 1961; and “Negro Is Expected to Register at WF,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 12, 1961.

<sup>21</sup> “Wake Forest Okays Admission of Negro,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 3, 1962; and “First Black WFU Student Returning,” *Winston-Salem Chronicle*, September 20, 2012. Wake Forest Students produced a

Although the Winston-Salem Police Department had black officers since 1941, the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department remained all-white. In October 1961, Eldridge D. Alston, was named the county's first black deputy sheriff. Alston attended Atkins High School and WSTC and was working as a delivery truck driver for the *Journal* when hired by sheriff Ernie Shore. Alston also had military service in the Navy from 1944 to 1949, including shipboard service in the European Theater during World War II.<sup>22</sup>

On June 6, 1962, four black college students resurrected proactive protests in Winston-Salem in the form of a "wade-in." Their target was the swimming pool at the city-owned Reynolds Park pool. Patricia Tillman, an enrollee at WSTC and lunch counter protester while at Atkins High School, was joined by three young men, all of whom were Winston-Salem natives who attended college out-of-town. Aldine Alfred was a student at North Carolina College in Durham (now North Carolina Central University), while Jerry Williams and Ronald Williams both were students at Morehouse College in Atlanta. The four students arrived about 5 p.m. and paid their fees. They changed their clothes in the locker room and went into the swimming pool. The young white man collecting fees told a *Journal* reporter he had been instructed to give blacks entry to the pool if they sought service. "About 15 or 20" white people were swimming when the students arrived. All of them with the exception of three children left the pool immediately. The children soon followed. Five teen-aged white boys remained seated

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documentary entitled "Faces of Courage," for the fiftieth anniversary of desegregating Wake Forest. See [facesofcourage.wfu.edu](http://facesofcourage.wfu.edu).

<sup>22</sup> "Winston-Salem Gets New Sheriff," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 21, 1961.

on a bench for about twenty minutes after the blacks arrived. They apparently made comments that were harassing in tone but incoherent to the black swimmers.<sup>23</sup>

When questioned about city policy on swimming pools, Mayor John Surratt responded there was no official policy, “other than follow the law. Under the law we have no choice in the matter. If the facilities are to remain open Negroes must be allowed to use them.” To clarify that he was not personally forcing integration upon white Winston-Salem, Surratt explained further: “Our choice is the people’s choice—whether they want to use desegregated facilities or not. If enough people choose not to use the facilities, the Board of Aldermen won’t have much alternative but to close them down because of lack of use. That depends entirely on how much they are used.”<sup>24</sup>

For the next several days, small groups of blacks showed up and swam in the pool. Mid-afternoon Saturday, normally a very busy time, there were twenty-five people in the pool, three of them black boys. The attendant stated there had been “seven or eight Negroes” there throughout the day. “Last Saturday we were so busy we could hardly keep up. It is usually full by this time,” he said. Only a dozen people were riding rides in the amusement section of the park. The grill cleared out its tables and chairs on Thursday and offered window service only. The manager said that it had nothing to do with serving blacks but was simply a way to eliminate plate lunches that were not profitable.

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<sup>23</sup> “Four Negroes Swim in City Park Pool,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 7, 1962.

<sup>24</sup> “Four Negroes Swim in City Park Pool,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 7, 1962; and “Attendance Declines at City-Owned Park,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, June 10, 1962.

There were no reported incidents of conflict between whites and blacks at the pool, although a police lieutenant was seated beside the pool.<sup>25</sup>

The following week, blacks continued to show up in small numbers at Reynolds Park. Attendance numbers stayed down there, and on some occasions when blacks entered the pool, whites in the pool got out. On Friday, June 15, a group of about twenty-five “Negro teen-agers and children” showed up to use the city-operated community swimming pool at North Elementary School on Patterson Avenue. Although bordered by a black neighborhood, the North Elementary Pool had never been used by black people. On occasion, black children had used the baseball diamond and the basketball courts, “when organized recreation programs were not in progress.” When they arrived at the entrance to the pool, city recreation officials asked them to go to the black facilities at either the Fourteenth Street Pool or the Skyland School pool. One child told a recreation official they had “read in the newspapers that they could go swimming wherever they wanted to.” The blacks were allowed to enter the pool just as a swimming instruction class for white children finished. According to Kieffer Gaddis, director of the summer program at the pool, the usual number of swimmers in the pool at any given time was about fifteen. In addition to the roughly twenty-five young black people who went into the pool, another twenty-five or so watched their friends. The situation at North

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<sup>25</sup> “Four Negroes Swim in City Park Pool,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 7, 1962; and “Attendance Declines at City-Owned Park,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, June 10, 1962. See Jeff Wiltse, *Contested Waters: A Social History of Swimming Pools in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); and Camille Gear Rich, “Marginal Whiteness,” *California Law Review* 98, no. 5 (October, 2010): 1504. Rich discusses the willingness of lower class whites to give up their own pool access to prevent blacks from having access, noting that upper class whites could afford to swim at private clubs not affected by desegregation laws.



Elementary further complicated the pool integration issue for city officials. Most city pools were set up for entering through the shower and locker rooms before entering the pool area. At North, the shower facilities were located inside of the school—a school that had not been integrated even on a token basis. When asked how the city intended to handle this dilemma, Recreation Director Lloyd Hathaway responded: “As far as I know now they (Negroes) will use the dressing facilities and showers. We insist at all our pools that anyone going swimming has to take a shower. This means if we operate the swimming pools and they use them, they will have to use the showers.”<sup>26</sup>

African Americans in Winston-Salem continued to use the pools at Reynolds Park and at North Elementary. Holding true to their promise to uphold the law, Mayor Surratt and Recreation Director Hathaway allowed access at these pools and opened the showers at North to black swimmers. White swimmers in the Recreation Department programs at North continued to use the pool by day, but in the evening and at night it became an almost exclusively black pool. African Americans did not challenge custom at any of the other white community pools.<sup>27</sup>

In his 1966 study of black leadership in Winston-Salem, political scientist Everett C. Ladd, Jr. discussed the divide within black leadership over the swimming pool issue. Ladd said that one of the more “conservative” black leaders felt “getting together in a big bathtub” was a very sensitive issue with whites and that pools were “too much trouble for so small a benefit.” A more “militant” black leader whom Ladd interviewed, said: “Close

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<sup>26</sup> Jack Trawick, “Negroes Use Pool at School,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 16, 1962.

<sup>27</sup> Jack Trawick, “Desegregated City Recreation Facilities Are Problem,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, July 8, 1962.

them up. Close them all up if necessary. I will never agree to any compromise where we in effect stop using the pools.” For some leaders, issues like swimming pools, skating rinks, and golf courses were simply not important when compared to issues like equality in education, housing, and jobs. For others, caving at all to segregation of the pools symbolically “would be a concession to the charge that Negroes are too dirty or sexually dangerous to be acceptable poolmates.”<sup>28</sup>

City officials did their best to play down the emotional aspects of integrating recreational facilities and instead tended to discuss the difficulties through a lens of finance. Mayor John Surratt continued to state publicly that the city “will abide by the law” and that Negroes would no longer be denied access to public facilities. Recreation Director Lloyd Hathaway optimistically stated: “We have had no discipline problems. Everyone has followed regulations and done what we asked them to do.” An unnamed recreation department official summed up the reality of day-to-day operations: “We can’t win this thing. We are criticized by the white people for letting it happen, and we are criticized by the Negroes for not doing more.” The department claimed to have received numerous phone calls from angry white parents stating that they absolutely would not bring their children to an integrated facility.<sup>29</sup>

The initial financial reports indicated that whites were avoiding both Reynolds Park and North Elementary. The Recreation Department made the figures for Reynolds

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<sup>28</sup> Ladd, *Negro Political Leadership in the South*, 178-181. Ladd interviewed many civil rights leaders and white politicians for his study of black leadership. Ladd’s book was published in 1966 at a time when many heated civil rights issues still were being contested. Ladd seldom named directly any of the black leaders he was quoting.

<sup>29</sup> “Jack Trawick, “Desegregated City Recreation Facilities Are Problem,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, July 8, 1962.

Park public in June 1962, ostensibly for the purpose of educating the public on the actual and the potential financial problems caused by white people not using facilities. When African Americans first made it clear they wanted to integrate Reynolds Park, the private contractor who operated the skating rink voided the lease and left the rink closed for the season. The city reported grill revenue for the park was \$1,804.49 for June 1962, while it was \$5,577.35 in June 1961. The number of people taking rides dropped to 7,299 from 23,458 for the same periods. Reynolds Park had been self-supporting and its profits were used to subsidize other recreation programs.<sup>30</sup>

The sword of Damocles for the city was the possibility that African Americans would launch a movement to integrate the sixteen community centers and playgrounds, which had forever been all-white. Traditional activities at the community centers included family suppers, square dancing, dances for young people—activities that if racially mixed would dramatically challenge Jim Crow custom. The message to whites was to use the facilities, or without some alternative form of funding the pools, parks, playgrounds, and even Reynolds Park Golf Course might have to close.

Another option that was palatable only to hardline whites was to follow the lead of Greensboro and many other southern cities and close any facility that blacks tried to integrate. When African Americans tried to integrate the city-owned Gillespie Golf Course in Greensboro, the city first leased it to a private management company and created the guise of a “private club.” When African Americans defeated that solution in

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<sup>30</sup> “Jack Trawick, “Desegregated City Recreation Facilities Are Problem,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, July 8, 1962.

court, the city simply shut down the course. To send an additional message, the city of Greensboro also shut down the traditionally all-black golf course and turned it into a sewage treatment plant. Both black and white golfers in Winston-Salem were aware of the events in Greensboro. Black golfers in Winston-Salem had fought diligently for funding for a nine-hole course in the mid-1950s, and in 1962 construction was almost complete on a second nine holes. Especially in light of the closing of the courses in Greensboro, Winston Lake was something of a mecca for black golfers in piedmont North Carolina. African Americans learned quickly at Reynolds Park Golf Course that the mayor's promise of access did not guarantee a cordial welcome. The African Americans who did play there were generally made to feel unwelcome—with an obvious intent to make them not wish to return.<sup>31</sup> For the remainder of the summer, it seems that both races may have been weighing the strategic options. African Americans did not back away from Reynolds Park and North Elementary, but they also did not launch a direct challenge by going to every facility. Certainly whites considered drastic measures but also held steady with where things were.

As strategies were weighed over public recreation facilities, a group of African Americans decided to test the popular venues of privately-owned drive-in theaters. On Saturday evening, June 17, 1962, what was described as a “caravan of cars carrying Negroes,” attempted to purchase tickets and gain entrance to the Flamingo Drive-In

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<sup>31</sup> Jess Usher, “‘The Golfers’: African American Golfers of the North Carolina Piedmont and the Struggle for Access,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 87, no. 2 (April, 2010): 176-179; Richard Carter interview with the author, (hereinafter cited as Richard Carter interview), November 21, 2005, Kernersville, North Carolina, audio file, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University.; and Harold Dunovant, interview with Ted Fichialos (hereinafter cited as Harold Dunovant interview), November 25, 2000, Winston-Salem, N.C., audio file, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University.

Theater on Old Greensboro Road. The drive-in bordered a predominantly black neighborhood, yet remained all-white in its policy towards customers. Black customers were turned away, but the line of cars held up entry through the box office for approximately forty-five minutes. The “caravan” was led by increasingly influential and less conciliatory NAACP leaders Dr. F.W. Jackson and Dr. J. Raymond Oliver. On Sunday evening, the scenario was replayed at the Winston-Salem Drive-In Theater (known to locals as the Winston Drive-In) on North Cherry Street Extension. The Winston Drive-In bordered the mostly black Piney Grove community. Traffic on Cherry Street was backed up to Polo Road and “was snarled for more than half an hour.” “Several carloads” of deputy sheriffs arrived and restored the flow of traffic. No blacks were admitted to the drive-in. Jackson spoke to the media and said that the drive-in protest was the work of a “citizens committee of students and adults” and was not directly affiliated with the NAACP. The following Monday night, “about 10 cars of Negroes” again tried to enter the Flamingo Drive-In. Police were called and the group left peacefully. The “caravan” then drove across town to the Winston Drive-In, where they were also denied admission. Police officers arrived at the Winston Drive-In and once again the group left without incident. Robert Moorman, a Winston-Salem resident and a student at North Carolina College in Durham, told a newspaper reporter he was acting as the leader of the group, now named the “Citizen Betterment Society.”<sup>32</sup> This marked Moorman’s first appearance of many as a youthful civil rights leader.

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<sup>32</sup> “Negroes Try to Attend Drive-in,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 17, 1962; “Another Drive-in Turns Away Negroes,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 18, 1962; and “Negroes Try to Enter Drive-Ins,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 19, 1962. Moorman played an active role in larger 1963 Winston-Salem protests.

Dr. J. Raymond Oliver issued a warning to the community about the growing unrest among disaffected youth and called for an end to discrimination in theaters. Oliver argued that it would be acceptable if theater managers discriminated based on “how people dress or act,” but to exclude people based on color was not the intent of the “trespass” laws used to keep blacks out of theaters. Oliver, perhaps in a veiled warning, noted the many protests against theatres in “neighboring cities,” and then asked, “what choice do we leave the young people?” Oliver spoke to the generational differences and a growing frustration among younger people: “The young people are anxious to picket, boycott, and even go to jail if necessary in order to attend the movie of their choice. The youth find themselves against a united effort of the old guard of Whites who shake hands with some Negro leaders and ask them to hold the line, and Negroes which accept the favors of their White brothers and do what is asked.” Oliver called for a united effort for desegregation from those “who would make this a model community” and reminded the older generation, that “youth are asking you to stand up for their rights, exercise your judgment, and show them the way.”<sup>33</sup>

Once again, heightened movement activity sparked a wave of responses within the realm of public discourse. A white eyewitness to the Monday night protest supported African Americans having access to drive-ins. Mrs. L.M. Wilkins recalled: “I was sitting in the Winston-Salem Drive-in Theater last Monday night, looking at what I consider to be the ‘greatest picture on earth,’ Ben Hur, when suddenly the picture was turned off. We waited at least 10 minutes, waited for those in authority to send our colored brothers

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<sup>33</sup> J. Raymond Oliver, Jr., D.D.S., “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 12, 1962.

away.” Wilkins then asked readers: “Who did crucify Jesus last Monday night? Was it I? Was it you? What possible harm could have resulted from our colored friends seeing this great picture?”<sup>34</sup>

Theater protests inspired angry responses from white segregationists who took advantage of the opportunity to express their views to a large audience. F.W. White, a truck driver who lived in the working class Ogburn Station area, responded directly to J. Raymond Oliver’s call for progress with a personal manifesto supporting segregation and attacking miscegenation. White said of Oliver: “J. Raymond Oliver seems to feel the world owes him and his race something for nothing. This is a common delusion shared by a number of his race, or rather I should perhaps say those products of miscegeny who are Racial Schizophrenics, not knowing in their hearts whether they are Black or White.” White continued his rant against Oliver: “Let me point out to J. Raymond Oliver the only things a race or an individual is entitled to are those they earn. When J. Raymond Oliver or his kind show us a Negro Shakespear [*sic*], a Rembrandt, Michaelangelo [*sic*] or Newton we may concede there are grounds for his demand for equality.” White asserted that integration leads to miscegenation which explains the “cultural collapse” of Haiti, Cuba, and unspecified Latin American countries. Integration might also lead to the black man never knowing if “his own capabilities” made him succeed or if “the White Man pulled him up.” Perhaps reflecting Toynbee’s somewhat discredited and outdated (even in 1962) Eurocentric view of history, White closed with the admonition: “Wake up Black Man if you want the benefits of civilization get out and build one of your own. Don’t

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<sup>34</sup> Mrs. L.M. Wilkins, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 23, 1962.

lose your potential and birthright in the never-never world of mongrelization the N.A.A.C.P. is seeking to create.”<sup>35</sup>

Not surprisingly, White inspired some angry responses from the African American community. V.S. (Viola) Smith, a worker at R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, stated: “Mr. White has been sorely misinformed and that he is not very well versed in the events of the present day.” Smith argued that miscegenation was not the issue, “equal rights for a minority group” was. She challenged White’s references to Toynbee, saying that since he was an English historian, “How, then, can he know just what contributions have been made to civilization by the Negro or by any other American for that matter?” Smith then posed questions to White: “Mr. White did you know that the Shakespeare and Newton you mentioned were Englishmen? Did you not know that Rembrandt was Dutch and Michelangelo, Italian? True these were all great people who made a sizeable contribution to civilization, and the American civilization has indeed profited from their efforts. But the credit for these contributions still lies in the homeland of these people.” She then offered White a lecture in African American history: “Perhaps you have not heard of George Washington Carver, Marian Anderson, Mary McLeod Bethune, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Roy Wilkins, Robert C. Weaver, Adam Clayton Powell, Jackie Robinson, Martin Luther King, or Nathaniel Dett! These are **Americans** who have contributed to our civilization’s progress. The credit for their achievements lies here in America and with the Negro people.” Smith offered a final retort for White in defense of

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<sup>35</sup> F.W. White, “Reader’s Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 19, 1962; and *Hill’s Winston-Salem City Directory 1961* (Richmond, Virginia: Hill Directory Company, 1961), 930.



J.R. Oliver: “Even the **Doctor** J. Raymond Oliver whose letter you answered is of renown here in Winston-Salem! Wake Up, Mr. White! Realize that segregation is no more! Segregation is dead!”<sup>36</sup>

Black women in Winston-Salem were rapidly moving beyond age-old fears of challenging white men in the public arena. The courage to speak out was not limited to elite black women. Doris Richardson, who lived on Graham Avenue with her woodworker husband, Will I. Richardson, suggested White “is either a die-hard segregationist or not too well versed on his Negro History.” Richardson advised White to visit the public library or watch the news so that he might learn “even under tremendous obstacles the Negro somehow has managed to give as much or more to the country he was forced to come to as anybody else.” “And as for miscegenation or mongrelization as he puts it,” Richardson argued, “that has been going on since the first slave landed. That is what I call taking advantage of an unfair situation.” She addressed White’s suggestion that blacks might build their own civilization with an insistence that blacks “are just as entitled to enjoy the privileges” of American life as whites.<sup>37</sup>

Some young African Americans also expressed their discontent with the status quo during the spring and summer of 1962. There had been signs of frustration among poorer black youths, as evidenced in occasional police reports of “gang activity” in both 1960 and 1961. On June 12, 1962, Police Chief James I. Waller told the Board of

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<sup>36</sup> Mrs. V.S. Smith, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 23, 1962, boldface in original; and *1961 City Directory*, 799.

<sup>37</sup> Mrs. Doris Richardson, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 22, 1962; and *1961 City Directory*, 718.

Alderman that assault cases in Winston-Salem had increased from 121 cases for the same period of 1961 to 239 cases for the first five months of 1962. Alderman James J. Booker told the meeting that he had “heard of incidents involving rock and bottle throwing, cuttings with switch blade knives, beatings, and abusive language and indecent proposals to women.” Chief Waller described typical gang activity: “6 to 10 youths would gang up on one person and beat him or beat and rob him.” Waller complained of manpower shortages in his department and noted that there was little help from the black community in solving the problem: “People won’t tell us anything. They are afraid to talk. They are scared of what the gang might do to them.” The police chief emphasized that gangs were not a “big-time operation” but mainly a weekend problem with “isolated cases.” The following week, three young black men were arrested after Patrolman R.E. Peddycord said he was cut by a bottle thrown at his patrol car from a crowd gathered at Fourteenth and Jackson Streets. After the alleged bottle-thrower was placed under arrest and placed in a patrol car, more bottles were thrown at Peddycord and back-up officers. A number of additional arrests were made and charges as serious as assault with a deadly weapon were filed. The next night, police attempted to break up a group of about twenty black youths at the corner of Trade and Eleventh Streets, just outside of bar called “The Hot Spot.” Two teenaged males were arrested for obstructing a public sidewalk. The bar owner, Willie Carter, was arrested and held for questioning over licenses for the business,

the juke box, and the pool tables. There was also apparently another “gang” on Highland Avenue that same night causing a “disturbance,” although no arrests were made.<sup>38</sup>

Black frustration may have been met with a response much more concerned with white fear than with any issues that may have contributed to the root causes of “gang” activity. In addition to the police response already under way, several Winston-Salem aldermen responded to the gang threat with ideas of their own. Carroll Poplin suggested using unspent police funds to pay overtime to police officers in order to increase the police presence in East Winston. Alderman Thomas L. Ogburn suggesting starting a police dog program so that dogs could accompany officers walking beats. Alderman Booker emphasized that “respect for law enforcement will be gone if the public gets the idea that people can get away with hospitalizing policemen.” Over the next week, policemen volunteered to work without extra pay to step up patrols in “problem areas.” Captain J.W. Roberson of the Forsyth County Prison Camp provided a paddy wagon. Beginning Thursday, June 21, a Thursday night, police began driving the paddy wagon and extra patrol cars “in sections of East Winston where there has been trouble with gangs.” The following Monday, the *Journal* reported, with a bit of hyperbole, police were successful in keeping “teen-agers from gathering in thrill-hungry mobs.”<sup>39</sup> Despite all of the emphasis on a disciplined, nonviolent protest strategy, the lower classes in the

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<sup>38</sup> “Gangs’ Activities Held Increasing: Waller Is Heard,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 13, 1962; “Street Gang Here Clashes with Police, Injuring Officer,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 18, 1962; and “Crowd Dispersed; 3 Arrested,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 19, 1962.

<sup>39</sup> “Better Policing Urged for E. Winston Area,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 19, 1962; and “Gang Violence Abates in Wake of Crackdown,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 25, 1962.

black community may have at times expressed their frustration in the only ways that seemed available to them.

Not all white reaction to the “gang” problem was based on hardline policing solutions. Richard K. Fields proposed some solutions to the problems of “Negro juvenile gangs.” Fields argued that it would be more productive to stop “the method of force which the Police department advocates” and instead consider alternative approaches. He noted that many of the best solutions for juvenile delinquency were inaccessible because of “racial barriers.” Fields posited: “Recommendable opportunities such as equal job opportunities, equal opportunity to recreate themselves at theatres of their choice, parks and in other various all-white organizations would offer to these youths the opportunity to achieve culture which many are lacking and therefore decrease delinquency.” Fields suggested the Police Department might be effective in appealing to “leaders of both races” in order to implement his suggestions.<sup>40</sup>

African American protests continued to center around access to recreation and entertainment venues during the summer of 1962. On July 13, 1962, a group of three protesters picketed the City Recreation Department offices at City Hall. One of the three protesters was Wallace Fair, a veteran who had received a serious hand injury in the Korean War. The demonstrators were protesting the allocation of city resources to the

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<sup>40</sup> Richard K. Fields, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 22, 1962. The Winston-Salem Police Department did begin a youth outreach program over two years later with help from the Experiment in Self-Reliance, Winston-Salem’s antipoverty agency under the North Carolina Fund. See: Christopher J. Fregiato, “Police, Poverty, and the ‘Free Agent’: Winston-Salem’s Police Community Services Unit and the North Carolina Fund,” Seminar Paper for the Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University, 2002, accessed August 5, 2013, [torightthesewrongs.com](http://torightthesewrongs.com). This is the companion website for Korstad’s and Leloudis’s book, *To Right These Wrongs*.

Forsyth County Golf Tournament, the annual championship for city and county residents. A number of members of the Winston Lake Golf Association had previously requested admission to the event and were told it was by invitation only and was played on courses that were for whites-only. The three-day event was held at Pinebrook Country Club and Old Town Country Club courses that were both exclusively private and whites-only, and on the privately-owned but public Hillcrest Golf Club, which traditionally had held to a whites-only policy. Recreation Director Lloyd Hathaway issued a statement, saying: “The tournament is played on courses that are not integrated and there is nothing we can do to change that.” Hathaway said he considered it a private event on private courses and stated the Recreation Department had no intention of withdrawing its support. After hearing of Hathaway’s remarks, the Winston Lake Golf Association released its own statement, saying: “We as taxpayers should be able to participate in any activity sponsored by the Recreation Department. The department should not make any agreement with any group that excludes Negroes.” During the protest Wallace Fair carried a sign that said: “I didn’t lose part of my hand fighting in the Korean War to protect segregation. I shot a qualifying score but was not accepted.”<sup>41</sup>

For a recreation department and director already concerned with the swimming pool and community center controversy, additional trouble over golf was certainly not desired. A few days after the picketing of City Hall, further controversy arose over the “integration” policy of Reynolds Park Golf Course. African American golfers from Greensboro were denied access to play the course because they were not Forsyth County

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<sup>41</sup> “Three Negroes Picket City Recreation Offices,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 14, 1962.

residents. The issue was addressed at a Recreation Commission meeting. H.O. Bright, an African American attorney and the father of 1960 lunch counter protest leader William Bright, told the commission he had seen the cars of white golfers with tags from Virginia and South Carolina who were obviously allowed to play the course. Bright told the panel that even for Winston-Salem residents, Reynolds park head golf pro Thurman Edwards “has been very antagonistic towards Negroes.” Bright emphasized the course was not busy and the “only reason the policy exists is to keep down the number of Negroes who use the course.”<sup>42</sup>

Reynolds Park Manager Ivan Basch was asked if Edwards and other employees always asked everyone who approached the counter if they were local residents or from outside the county and if they asked to see driver’s licenses. Basch replied that normally they did not ask: “We usually like to believe people when they tell us where they live.” The commission voted to reaffirm the residency requirement for the course, with the lone dissenting vote coming from Clark Brown, the lone black on the commission. The commission also voted at the same meeting in support of Basch’s decision to end the use of caddies at the golf course. Even though the use of the gas or electric golf car was on the rise, caddie jobs at Reynolds Park had been a critical source of revenue for poor African American boys and their families from nearby neighborhoods. At the height of caddie usage in the 1940s and 1950s, the course typically employed more than fifty young black boys as caddies.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> “Golf Course Policy Reaffirmed,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 26, 1962.

<sup>43</sup> “Golf Course Policy Reaffirmed,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 26, 1962. For the importance of caddie jobs to the African American economy and as an entry point into playing golf for many African American golfers prior to the 1970s, see Usher, “The Golfers,” 162-165.

The politics of swimming pool integration was especially difficult for white politicians, in no small part due to the perception by many whites that sharing a swimming pool somehow was comparable to bathing together. Politicians walked a linguistic tightrope regardless of which side of the integration issue they supported. In the Board of Alderman meeting on July 16, 1962, Alderman Carroll Poplin spoke to the board and labeled the swimming pool issue an “urgent problem that requires immediate action.” Poplin stated to the meeting: “Without regard to race or to political affiliation, good citizens of Winston-Salem have deplored the problems created by the recent integration of public swimming pools. Most of these problems, such as the financial problem of reduced use of the Reynolds Park pool, might be resolved in time. But another problem exists which is more serious than the rest. That is the danger of violence and other undesirable conduct which has been manifest in recent weeks.” Poplin claimed to have been to the Reynolds Park pool the previous Saturday and to have “personally observed teenagers fighting or threatening to fight on pool premises.” He also claimed to have seen weapons used, including bricks and baseball bats. “This is not just a danger to public safety which could result in serious injury to persons—it is also a threat to the good race relations which have been the hallmark of this community for many years,” Poplin said. He called for the Recreation Commission (of which Poplin was also a member) to conduct an immediate study and send a recommendation back to the alderman by July 23 indicating if the city should continue to operate public pools or

simply close them. White alderman Archie Elledge appeared to agree with Poplin, telling the board that if action was not taken, people would “take things into their own hands.”<sup>44</sup>

Black alderman Carl Russell told the board that sufficient time had not elapsed since the first integration of the pool in early June. “We are living in a time of integration,” Russell stated, “Our major industries have integrated their employment conditions and that has worked out all right.” He continued, “I think our citizens enjoy swimming, and if they are given a fair chance the people will begin to use the pools again when they see that the city is acting in good faith and plans to continue to open a recreation program open to all.” Mayor John Surratt appeared to agree with Russell. “Closing the pools may be a solution,” Surratt said, “but is it the best solution?” After further explaining the reduced use by whites at both the Reynolds Park and North Elementary pools, Surratt theorized: “But once we close the pools that would terminate any efforts to find the answer to the problem.” Surratt also informed the board that a voluntary interracial group of about twenty-five citizens had held several informal meetings to discuss the pool issue. After hearing from Russell and Surratt, Poplin withdrew his original motion and instead offered a motion for the Recreation Commission to report back to the aldermen, but without a specific deadline. This motion passed unanimously.<sup>45</sup>

For the first time since Wake Forest students briefly joined the 1960 lunch counter sit-in, Winston-Salem experienced a pre-planned interracial protest of

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<sup>44</sup> Jack Trawick, “Aldermen Ask Study of Pool Issue,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 17, 1962.

<sup>45</sup> Jack Trawick, “Aldermen Ask Study of Pool Issue,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 17, 1962.



traditionally segregated facilities. During the afternoon of July 19, 1962, a group of eleven white adults and twenty-five white children had a swimming party at Reynolds Park. Four black children, accompanied by one black adult, were also part of the group. Owen D. Lewis, a white businessman, spoke as the leader of the group: “We’re a group of citizens concerned that an important recreation facility is about to go by the boards. As much as the city needs this facility, we’re concerned that it remain available to both white and Negro people. This is not a protest or a demonstration in the usual sense.” Perhaps disputing the dramatic claims of Alderman Poplin, Owens said that he was a frequent user of the pool and had not seen any problems between blacks and whites since the pool was desegregated. Owens promised he and his friends would encourage city officials not to act hastily in closing the pool and expressed the opinion that attendance would return to normal eventually. “We’re just here to encourage the continued use of the pool—and it’s a delightful way to spend a hot summer afternoon,” said Lewis.<sup>46</sup>

The City Recreation Commission met on July 25, and by a vote of 5-3, approved the motion of the lone African American board member, Clark S. Brown, to continue to operate public swimming pools on a desegregated basis. Immediately after the vote on Brown’s proposal, Carroll Poplin offered a motion to close the pools. His motion was seconded by Charles Collins. Poplin’s motion was defeated 5-3, when only Poplin, Collins, and Dossitt Bowling voted for it. A crowd of both black and white citizens assembled for the meeting and some were heard before the voting. Alderman Russell, along with the Reverend William Crawford (who Russell defeated in the Democratic

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<sup>46</sup> “Group Holds Swim Party to Back Pool,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 20, 1962.

primary), spoke in favor of keeping the pools open. Crawford challenged the city to live up to its motto, “A City Founded upon Cooperation.” Crawford argued closing the pools would only contribute to an already growing problem with juvenile delinquency. Minnie Clark, also an African American, said she could not understand “why Negroes could make bread and nurse children for white people but couldn’t sit beside them or enjoy recreation facilities with them.” Clark said to the assembly: “I don’t see why some should be put on a pedestal and others have to kow-tow to them.” Owen Lewis and Sylvia Mulford were present at the meeting, representing white citizens in favor of integrated facilities. Poplin vowed to continue his efforts to close the pools before the Board of Aldermen.<sup>47</sup>

Two weeks later, a divided Board of Alderman again faced the issue of whether or not to keep public pools open. Alderman Thomas Ogburn submitted a motion for the pools to stay open through the 1962 season, and his motion was seconded by Alderman Carl Russell. Before a vote on Ogburn’s motion could be taken, Alderman Carroll Poplin, as promised, submitted a motion to immediately shut down the pools. No other alderman seconded his motion. Alderman Archie Elledge then spoke, claiming that integration was not the main issue concerning the operation of swimming pools, but instead the board was violating the North Carolina Constitution by funding “something that is not an absolutely necessary government function.” According to Elledge’s interpretation of a North Carolina Supreme Court ruling, recreation and even hospital funding required approval through a voter referendum. Elledge continued: “I want to

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<sup>47</sup> Jack Trawick, “Recreation Commission Wants pools Kept Open,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 26, 1962.

ascertain if we have any right to spend one penny for recreation without a vote.” The aldermen then decided to send the issue to the Finance Committee for further study. On the same day, after attempts by African Americans to integrate the pools, the Raleigh City Council voted 5-2 to keep both city pools closed indefinitely.<sup>48</sup> Although it was probably not the intent of the more conservative aldermen in Winston-Salem, the delay over legal issues resulted in the pools staying open through the end of the 1962 season.

Protests during 1962 in Winston-Salem never achieved the number of participants of the 1960 sit-ins, but some sort of local protest was always in the news, and the rhetoric of the civil rights struggle grew within the collective consciousness. Throughout the summer of 1962, the Winston-Salem newspapers as well as national magazines and television newscasts, carried news reports of the protracted protests in Albany, Georgia, and smaller movement protests throughout North Carolina and the rest of the South. One of the hallmarks of the Albany Movement was the use of multiple forms of protest. African Americans in Albany expanded the “sit-in” concept to include all sorts of venues, including pools (wade-ins), libraries (read-ins), theaters, and even white churches (kneel-ins). Getting arrested became an expected part of the protest process. The massive protests at a Howard Johnson’s restaurant in Durham, North Carolina (part of the CORE-led “Freedom Highways” movement), kept alive the notion of taking integration past lunch counters and into all restaurants. With a national news media and Winston-Salem’s relatively progressive (compared to most southern cities) media outlets becoming more

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<sup>48</sup> Jack Trawick, “Committee to Conduct a Study,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 7, 1962; and “Two Pools Are Closed in Raleigh,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 7, 1962.

and more attuned to the civil rights movement, African Americans in Winston-Salem were increasingly connected to the bigger picture of the rights movement.<sup>49</sup>

As the swimming pool controversy abated, if only due to the change of seasons, new issues related to golf and race arose. In 1960, Harold Dunovant was hired to be the head golf professional at Winston Lake Golf Course. Dunovant was born in Winston-Salem in 1929 but spent most of his childhood in New York. After briefly returning to Winston-Salem on a football scholarship to WSTC, Dunovant left again to pursue a career in golf. He attended the Sam Sharrow Golf School in New York and then landed an assistant professional position at the Western Avenue Golf Course in Los Angeles. Dunovant became the third African American to achieve professional status with the Professional Golfers of America (PGA). He had also been a rising star on the United Golfers Association (UGA) tour, the only professional tour available to African American golfers. Dunovant's presence helped bring UGA events to Winston-Salem—a source of great pride for black golfers. Hiring Dunovant for the Winston Lake position was seen by African Americans in Winston-Salem as a two-sided coin—the positive side being he gave the “black” course a source of pride with a black pro and an enhanced learning and playing experience; the negative side was that the upgrade in services was

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<sup>49</sup> “Negroes March in Albany,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 22, 1962; “Negro Attorney Says He Was Hit,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, July 29, 1962; “3 Negroes Attend White Ga. Churches,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 13, 1962; “Negroes Demonstrate Alongside Restaurant,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 13, 1962; and Dunovant interview. For an early and excellent study of the SCLC leadership and the connectivity of black communities, North and South, see Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 239-250. Morris addresses the importance of the Albany Movement, as does, Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 531-547. For first-person accounts by Albany Movement participants, see Faith Holsaert *et al*, eds., *Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC*, (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2010).

given in order to keep blacks from attempting to play at the “white” course at Reynolds Park. Dunovant said he was instructed by City Manager John Gold “to keep the black people at Winston Lake.”<sup>50</sup>

During the protests in the summer of 1962 by Waddell Fair and other black golfers over the Forsyth County Invitational Golf Tournament, Harold Dunovant had encouraged the golfers to protest and had, within the channels of his job, protested personally over the exclusion of blacks from an event that utilized taxpayer resources. On September 12, 1962, Dunovant was fired from his job as Head Professional of Winston Lake Golf Course. Recreation Director Lloyd Hathaway later claimed Dunovant was fired because “he refused to carry out orders, refused to open the Winston Lake Golf Course at the proper times, and was guilty of improper accounting of funds taken in at tournaments.”<sup>51</sup>

As a seasoned tournament professional golfer, Harold Dunovant was by nature both competitive and tenacious--certainly not inclined to simply let the city dismiss him without putting up a fight. Dunovant was also not the type of man to sugarcoat racism. In a letter to the editor of the *Journal* published on October 6, 1962, Harold Dunovant offered his explanation of the events that led to his firing. Dunovant began by stating, “I am quite sure this letter will never reach the eyes of the public.” He then noted the horrible condition of the Winston Lake course upon his arrival and the great effort he put

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<sup>50</sup> Dunovant interview; and Usher, “The Golfers,” 184.

<sup>51</sup> Dunovant interview; Usher, “The Golfers,” 184-185; Joel W. Smith, “Pros Tee-Off in Quest of \$1,500 Purse Today,” *Atlanta Daily World*, July 2, 1953; and “Deadline Extended for Golf Tourney,” *New York Amsterdam News*, August 13, 1960; and “Small Demonstrations Staged in Twin City,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1963. Only after Dunovant emerged as a civil rights activist did Hathaway and the city go public with the alleged reasons for firing Dunovant.

into making it playable. Despite resistance from the white greens-keeper and a lack of funding from the city, Dunovant stated the course “is now in 90% better condition.” He said that after a year and a half he received a raise of \$110.00 per month and argued that for the city to give a raise of that size, “They must have been satisfied with my work.” Dunovant claimed the city became angry with him for his comments over “misusing funds” for a whites-only golf tournament. He also claimed the city did not appreciate his ideas to bring white golfers to play Winston Lake. Dunovant argued there simply were not enough black golfers to fully realize the revenue potential of the course. Dunovant complained about Thurman Edwards, the white pro at Reynolds Park, and “the way he treated me and other Negroes.” Dunovant wrote further: “My discharge came as no surprise to me because I knew I was a marked man and I was told I didn’t fit into the plan of W.-S., that I was a hot-headed Negro who talked back to white people and in general I just didn’t fit into the plans with the All-America City that intended to be segregated.” Dunovant leveled a charge at some of the “professional men” of the black community, stating, “They felt the course was built for them and they should be able to break all rules and regulations and that I should enforce the rules on the average man and that I should turn my back when they want to break the rules.”<sup>52</sup> Dunovant apparently spent the next several months reflecting on his treatment by the whites in the city power structure. He also developed a high level of animosity towards African Americans of the upper classes, whom he perceived as behaving in a condescending manner towards others. Both whites and blacks of the ruling classes were destined to hear from Harold Dunovant again.

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<sup>52</sup> Harold Dunovant, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 6, 1962.

October 1962 was a relatively quiet month in terms of proactive civil rights protest in Winston-Salem, but it was an eventful period in American history. Anti-communist rhetoric reached all-time highs as the Cuban Missile Crisis kept America on edge for two weeks as the possibility of all-out nuclear war reached its apex. Images of Deep South violence were kept fresh when in Oxford, Mississippi, the integration of the University of Mississippi by lone black student James Meredith led to two deaths, hundreds of injuries, and hundreds of arrests, as white segregationists rioted in protest. Over four thousand federal troops, including airborne soldiers from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, were deployed to Oxford. This upheaval was in stark contrast to the peaceful start of classes for Edward Reynolds, the lone black student at Wake Forest College.<sup>53</sup>

The effects of media coverage of events elsewhere continued to influence the tone and volume of public discourse in Winston-Salem. Although Winston-Salem maintained its peaceful facade, the events in Mississippi and the controversy over states' rights and federal power created a heated dialogue among whites in Winston-Salem. The actions and comments of Mississippi governor Ross Barnett, as well as his inaction in enforcing the law, resulted in the type of violence and "unpleasant" controversy that most whites, even pro-segregation whites, in Winston-Salem wished to avoid. Ruth Linney offered class-based opinions, steeped in southern pride, shared by many educated older whites: "No one should shoot through houses; perpetuate other bloodshed; or deny qualified Negroes a right to vote. Otherwise, I glory in the spunk of the Mississippians. If all the

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<sup>53</sup> "Cuba Fires on U.S. Planes; 24 Troop Carrier Squadrons Called up by Defense Dept.," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, October 28, 1962; "Student Rioting Reported after Meredith Is Moved to Mississippi U. Campus," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 1, 1962; and "Federal Troops Dig in at Oxford; Riot Toll Is Two Dead, 75 Hurt," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 2, 1962.

South had held firm as those in Mississippi and some in Arkansas, the erroneous and unwise decision of the Supreme Court would have been ineffective.” Linney explained how the Civil War “was not over slavery, which was wrong. It came about because the South did not want to be pushed around. I glory in the South.” The fear of many whites over the possible upheaval of the long-cherished southern caste system was exemplified by Linney as she explained how many of the “best colored people” did not believe in integration but it was only the “lowest element,” who in her mind intended to one day force Linney to “serve as their maid.”<sup>54</sup>

Moderate whites in Winston-Salem often displayed opinions very much in line with the patriarchs of the business elite. C.J. (Colon) Roscoe, an engineer for Western Electric, acknowledged he had “prejudices, some of which are deep-rooted,” but he also condemned the activities in Mississippi. Roscoe asserted that historically the South had produced many great leaders “of wisdom and sagacity,” then stated “this standard of excellence has not been present in Mississippi.” He argued that as “a nation of laws,” it was acceptable to disagree but also incumbent upon all citizens to obey the law. “The real issue in Mississippi,” Roscoe posited, “is not integration but the defiance of the law and our courts.” Perhaps with an overly positive view of Winston-Salem’s progress on racial issues, he closed his letter by saying: “Had the flames of hatred been fanned and defiance of our courts encouraged in Winston-Salem, the integration in our city would not have passed quietly without incident.” Robert Thurston presented a measured view of both the federal position, based on the Fourteenth Amendment, and the position of

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<sup>54</sup>Ruth Linney, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem, Journal*, October 3, 1962.



Ross Barnett, based on the Tenth Amendment. Thurston predicted many “hard, violent, and sometimes trying years” ahead to solve the issue of integration. He called on better communication between federal and state leaders and suggested people in the South should learn to be “tolerant and level headed in their action and judgment.”<sup>55</sup>

Mrs. C. Pappas, a Greek-American immigrant who had obtained her American citizenship just four years earlier, was the most indignant towards Governor Barnett, flipping the standard conservative accusations over communism. She said of Barnett’s views, “The law of the land is just hog wash and civil rights something which was written for the next state.” Pappas accused the Mississippi governor of providing propaganda fodder for the communists, stating: “With people like you as tools Nikita doesn’t have to fire a single shot.” As a final admonishment to Barnett, she closed her letter saying: “I would really dislike to see you spoil my country when my flag is still shining like a brand new nickel.”<sup>56</sup>

African Americans found another injustice to protest with the fall arrival of the popular Dixie Classic Fair and the discovery that despite some progress in other venues, the fair still refused entry to blacks. Mrs. John H. Miller related her experience when she took her eleven-year-old son to the Winston-Salem Coliseum and Fairgrounds. “To my astonishment,” Miller wrote, “when I walked up to the ticket office with my boy and friend in the Coliseum to purchase a ticket, I was told by the ticket agent that he was not allowed to sell tickets to colored people; that colored people could come back Tuesday to

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<sup>55</sup> C.J. Roscoe, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 12, 1962; Robert Thurston, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem, Journal*, October 3, 1962; and *1961 City Directory*, 733.

<sup>56</sup> Mrs. C. Pappas, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem, Journal*, October 3, 1962;

the ‘Colored Fair.’” Miller approached a city police officer to ask him if this could possibly be true. She was told the only blacks who got into the fair were black employees. The next day, she called Fair Manager, Neil Bolton, who confirmed that blacks were not sold tickets to the fair. Bolton, in an apparent effort to calm the situation, offered to give Miller and her son a free pass to the fair day allocated for black people. Miller refused, stating: “I want no privilege that is not extended to all.” Miller then compared the fair incident to the recent controversy over Reynolds Park: “It is my understanding that under N.C. law no public place of amusement or other facilities could be discriminating in their practices to any citizen.” She closed her letter with an appeal to the “Mayor and the power structure of this city to open up all facilities to all citizens regardless of race, color, or creed.” In an editor’s note, the newspaper explained the fairgrounds were private property and were owned by the Winston-Salem Foundation. Neil Bolton issued a statement within this note saying that if the sponsors of the Carolina Fair (the black fair) expressed an interest in merging the two fairs, “we would be glad to talk to them about it.”<sup>57</sup>

Three days later, Dr. J.R. Oliver responded, noting that Miller was only one of quite a few black people turned away from the gate of the Dixie Classic. Apparently in light of the swimming pool breakthrough, many blacks assumed the fair would allow access this year as well. Oliver, although not mentioning his NAACP leadership status, made it clear the economic interests of the Carolina Fair would not supersede the desire of blacks to access the much larger and nicer Dixie Classic Fair. Noting the offer from

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<sup>57</sup> Mrs. John H. Miller, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 15, 1962.

Neil Bolton to merge the two fairs, Oliver called the black owners of the Carolina Fair by name and suggested they participate in negotiations: “Let us hope that this will be done,” Oliver said, “because judging the temper of the Negro people from the number of complaints, it seems likely that this is the last year the Carolina fair will operate separately without serious financial risk.”<sup>58</sup> Neither Miller nor Oliver argued the point that the Winston-Salem Coliseum, where tickets were sold and many of the exhibitions were displayed, was owned by the city and not by the Winston-Salem Foundation. The involvement of property that was actually owned by the city may explain Neil Bolton’s readiness to negotiate a solution.

Concern in the black community over protecting black-owned businesses in the wake of integration and related programs like urban renewal made it an uncommon occurrence to see a civil rights leader like Oliver put pressure on a black-owned business like the Carolina Fair. One letter to the *Journal* concerning the fairs came from David Shows, Sr., who identified himself as someone who just moved to Winston-Salem. Without giving any indication of his race (he was black), Shows discussed how enlightening the letter of Mrs. John H. Miller was and how even more enlightening was the editor’s note with Neil Bolton’s comments. Shows indicated that based on what he read, the existence of two separate fairs must be the fault of the black owners of the Carolina Fair, who had apparently resisted the easy merger available to them. He pointedly said that if blacks had been acting in their own selfish interest for profit—“then

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<sup>58</sup> J. Raymond Oliver, Jr. D.D.S., “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 18, 1962.

why BLAME the white man?” It is impossible to know whether or not his sarcasm was lost on white readers.<sup>59</sup>

Possibly in acknowledgment of the recent admission of its first full-time black student, Wake Forest College was honored with a visit and an address from civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Indicative of his growing power as the most important face of the civil rights movement, an integrated audience of well over two thousand greeted King in Wake Forest’s Wait Chapel. Rumors of possible anti-King protesters led to a beefed-up security presence, including a number of plainclothes policemen. No protesters appeared and King was warmly received. King told his audience: “The trend today is to be well-adjusted to society. There are some things in the social order to which I am proud to say I am maladjusted. I never intend to become adjusted to discrimination. I never intend to become adjusted to religious bigotry; or to taking from the many to give luxuries to the few.” King evoked Thomas Jefferson as an example: “In the midst of slavery, Jefferson was maladjusted enough to declare that ‘all men are created.’” King also pointed to Jesus standing up to the Romans and Lincoln’s ending slavery as further examples of “maladjusted” behavior. The Winston-Salem audience heard some of the soaring rhetoric that over time created part of the King legacy as he called for loving even those who commit evil: “We must match their capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering, Burn our churches and we will still love you. Beat us and we will still love you. Send your hooded denizens of evil out into

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<sup>59</sup> David Shows, Sr., “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 18, 1962; and *1961 City Directory*, 701. Shows helped found Greenwood Church of Christ in 1945. The church no longer exists but its members helped form Carver Road Church of Christ which is still in existence. Detailed histories of many Winston-Salem churches are available online at [winstonsalemchurches.org](http://winstonsalemchurches.org).

the black of night and we will still love you. Kill us—and we will still love you.” King called on white people of “good will” in the South “to rise up and take the leadership,” especially within white churches. “How tragic it is,” King said, “that the church has been an echo rather than a voice. I hope that the church will mend its ways and move on to that kind of witness for Jesus Christ that is so evident in the Gospel.” King called for both legislation and moral education to help end segregation: “A law perhaps can’t make you love me, but at least it can keep me from getting lynched while I’m trying to change your mind.”<sup>60</sup>

The reactions of students and faculty at Wake Forest to the King visit indicate that while the campus was probably more progressive than the surrounding community, the campus still reflected a South in transition. The student body of Wake Forest College in 1962 was composed largely of students native to North Carolina and the South. With the exception of Edward Reynolds and a few summer school students, the student body and faculty were all white. A select group of Wake Forest students and faculty were able to interact with King during his visit. King praised Wake Forest College “for its significant steps in the whole area of race relations” during a dinner conversation before his address. Ed Christman, the college chaplain who had been an important supporter of the 1960 sit-in students, later recalled asking King about “this breaking the law business.” King responded: “Well, yes, I broke the law. I respected the law so therefore I went to jail. But I had to break the law because the moral law said this was wrong.” Edward

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<sup>60</sup> Steve Leshner, “Creative Maladjustment Hope of the World, King Says Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 12, 1962; “King Asks Whites to Help Integration,” *Old Gold and Black*, October 15, 1962; and Charles Osolin, “King: Non-violence Answer for South,” *Old Gold and Black*, October 15, 1962.

Reynolds recalled being impressed with King's knowledge of events in Africa. Glenn Blackburn remembered King seemed "tired and quiet" during dinner.<sup>61</sup>

Reaction to the King speech in the Wake Forest student newspaper, *Old Gold and Black*, reflected both support and varying degrees of reticence for the type of rapid integration espoused by King. Leon Spencer, writing for the editorial staff of the newspaper, supported the overarching principle of black equality and the inevitability of integration. King's appeal to both black and white to act in peace and out of love received full support. Spencer did not agree with King's assertion that "negroes should not be forced to wait any longer." Spencer felt "the white race obviously needs time for an adjustment," and perhaps with a nod to recent event in Mississippi, he asserted, "persistence that builds tensions and leads to violence and death is not the way." Spencer called for "gradual gains in areas that are ready to accept partially, and full gains in areas which are ready to accept completely," which might ultimately "leave no further wounds to heal when integration becomes total." Expressing a less gentle form of gradualism, student Baxter Kelly stated: "I think it's atrocious to invite a radical like Martin Luther King to our campus. We might as well invite Rockwell or Khrushchev if we want an individual who would disrupt the peace and security of our country and distort, through force and lack of tact, the lives of millions of our countrymen." Criticizing the NAACP as well, Kelly argued: "Without the force and pressure exerted by this organization a peaceful, bloodless settlement could be enacted; this method would take longer but would

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<sup>61</sup> Susan Faust and John Llewellyn, "Prelude to a Dream: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 1962 Speech to Recently-Integrated Wake Forest College," unpublished paper, available at Z. Smith Reynolds Library, Wake Forest University or online at [wakespace.lib.wfu.edu](http://wakespace.lib.wfu.edu). (Accessed, July 20, 2013).

be a much less bitter pill to swallow for millions of Americans who have been living in a peaceful segregated manner for a great many years.”<sup>62</sup>

In addition to civil rights issues, King was very concerned with economic justice as a key component to achieving true equality. Black and white leaders in Winston-Salem had increasingly considered economic factors in their negotiations. By the end of 1962, a small but important step forward was occurring within the structure of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, the city’s largest and best-paying manufacturing concern. Reynolds had internally begun a quiet and gradual program to elevate some blacks into supervisory positions and to offer more non-menial manufacturing jobs to blacks at the company’s new state-of-the-art Whitaker Park plant. This program was well-received locally and even attracted some national attention. By October 1962, Evelyn M. Hairston and four other African Americans held Chief Inspector positions at Whitaker Park. Hairston, the mother of five children, supervised a crew of “four or five Negroes and about a dozen whites.” She told Hedrick Smith with the *New York Times*: “Some of the other workers were a little chilly to begin with. But it’s all worked out now and the cooperation is wonderful.” At Whitaker Park, under state law, the restrooms were separated by race, but blacks and whites ate in the same cafeteria. Robert Felder, a young black man, told Hedrick: “I’ve sat with the white and the colored. They’re all my friends.” Bernard Laird, a young white man, told the reporter that “Negroes were good

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<sup>62</sup> Susan Faust and John Llewellyn, “Prelude to a Dream: Martin Luther King, Jr.’s 1962 Speech to Recently-Integrated Wake Forest College,” unpublished paper, available at Z. Smith Reynolds Library, Wake Forest University or online at [wakespace.lib.wfu.edu](http://wakespace.lib.wfu.edu). (Accessed, July 20, 1962); Leon Spencer, “Integration Ideals Challenged,” *Old Gold and Black*, October 15, 1962; and Baxter Kelly, “Letters,” *Old Gold and Black*, October 15, 1962.

co-workers” and had “pitched in to help him when he ran into difficulties.” As integration appeared to work well at Whitaker Park, Reynolds began to, slowly, consider expanding opportunities throughout its older plants. Houston Adams, an African American manufacturing worker, told historian Nannie M. Tilley, that he thought union efforts dating back to the 1940s had “made Christians” out of the Reynolds executives. For decades, Reynolds Tobacco held off attempts by workers to unionize through a mix of coercion, paying better than industry-standard wages, and providing better benefits. The voluntary integration process also may have spared Reynolds conflict with the NAACP. When the NAACP launched a program in 1962 to place African Americans in better tobacco industry jobs, the organization left Reynolds off of its target list.<sup>63</sup> It would take major changes in societal structure and federal legislation to begin to open up the middle-class, especially in the South, to black Americans. The changes at Reynolds Tobacco Company, however, did signal that slowly some doors might open in Winston-Salem.

White Baptist minister and educator S.L. Morgan summarized his view of 1962 in a letter to the *Journal*: “In retrospect 1962 holds out for our nation, as I see it, one supreme lesson above all others: that all men, all races, all colors must treat one another as equals before God, else misery for all. The race scandal of Little Rock, of Ole Miss, of Albany, Ga. stirs universal anger and resentment against America and its so-called

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<sup>63</sup> Hedrick Smith, “Negro Woman Supervises Force in Integrated Southern Factory,” *New York Times*, October 15, 1962; and Nannie M. Tilley, *The R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 413-414. See also Robert Rodgers Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003).



democracy.” Morgan reminded readers that whites were a majority in America, but a minority in terms of the world. Noting the significance of Albany, perhaps as a caveat to other whites, he reminded readers how the jails were “overran” with protesters led by Martin Luther King. “Gradually it has seeped into the public mind and conscience,” Morgan stated, “that these protesters against ‘separate but equal’ have much justice on their side.”<sup>64</sup>

The positive tone of Morgan’s message reflected the evolving views of some whites towards integration but by no means represented the majority position of the entire white population. This was a period for whites to begin the process of understanding that a change in race relations was inevitable. Some whites began to see this transition towards equality as desirable and others, at least begrudgingly, could see the handwriting on the wall. In the Deep South, the battle was destined to turn uglier because whites steadfastly refused to accept the inevitability of integration. In Winston-Salem, the battle was setting up as a contest less about whether or not there was going to be change and more about how long was it going to take for that change to fully arrive.

The period between the dramatic sit-in of 1960 and the larger protests to come in 1963 was seemingly quite calm, even superficially benign. In reality, it was an important period for local African Americans to begin to coalesce around the idea that major change was indeed possible and that change no longer had to be considered in vague terms of the future. By nibbling away at smaller issues like access to recreational facilities, African Americans proved that indeed they could force whites to listen and to

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<sup>64</sup> S.L. Morgan, “Lesson of 1962,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 2, 1963.

make concessions. In some cases, like the controversy with Harold Dunovant over Winston Lake Golf Course, a dissatisfactory outcome no longer meant passive acquiescence; instead, injustice inspired a passionate and determined response. Black women gradually increased their involvement in the movement and in public discourse. The dissatisfaction of the most deprived classes in the black community remained lurking underneath the surface of all racial issues, simmering, but not quite ready to boil. The All America City stayed the course of peace and progress heading into 1963, even though issues of inequality and injustice were far from being rectified.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**BREAKING THROUGH, 1963**

I will not stifle their ideas for freedom...

For the Black Freedom Struggle writ large, 1963 was a pivotal year for propelling the movement to a point where, in spite of stiff white resistance, there was truly no turning back. In Winston-Salem, white elites continued to exercise civility, patience, and gradualism. The black community was changing in the tone of its rhetoric and the attitudes of its leadership. These changes ultimately would affect ideas about direct action protest. Both black and white Twin Citians were increasingly influenced by the print media and by the ever-growing influence of images on television. Pictures of chaos in the streets and the use of fire hoses and police dogs in places like Birmingham affected different demographics in Winston-Salem (and elsewhere) in different ways. African Americans were angered, saddened, and motivated to act. Unlike the sit-in protests of 1960 in Winston-Salem, which depended on the involvement of students from other places, the Winston-Salem protests of 1963 largely came from indigenous citizens. Local student activists occasionally joined with activists from the black working classes and brought a heightened sense of urgency and an increase in intensity to the local movement.

Some whites were motivated by what they saw to become much more sympathetic to civil rights issues. Conversely, committed segregationists worried that the very foundations of southern society were collapsing around them and scrambled to find

ways to stem the inevitable tide. Winston-Salem's white business leaders feared the possibility that street violence, civil chaos, and economic disruption might spread to the peaceful, All-America city of Winston-Salem, causing not only civil unrest but also possible damage to the city's reputation as a dynamic New South location for banking and manufacturing.

An examination of the discursive voices of the competing factions, white and black, elites and other socioeconomic classes, demonstrates that events in Winston-Salem were influenced by outside events while also showing that tangible, even cathartic, changes in racial customs and de facto practices occurred quite rapidly in 1963. Although skeptical, for the early part of the year African Americans appeared willing to continue the gradualist negotiating methods of the past. The emergence of a dynamic new leader from outside the elite class gave a heretofore unseen outspoken edge to the movement, eventually moving mainstream leadership towards a more proactive attitude. At moments when the movement seemed to stagnate, media coverage of tragedy and courage elsewhere seemed to inspire and rejuvenate participants in Winston-Salem. Despite heated and sometimes personal disagreements among black leaders and various factions (including women, youth, and the poor), by late summer the local movement had coalesced around common goals.

The political climate at the start of the year gave African Americans reason for guarded optimism. President John F. Kennedy's 1963 State of the Union Address dealt with race issues only briefly. The president did highlight voting rights, calling the vote "the most precious and powerful right in the world." Kennedy stated: "The right to vote

in a free American election must not be denied to any citizen on grounds of his race or color. I wish that all qualified Americans willing to vote were permitted to vote—but surely in this centennial year of emancipation, all those who are willing to vote should always be permitted.”<sup>1</sup> Despite his less than forceful stand on voting rights and the glaring omission of other racial issues, Kennedy’s commitment to better education and medical care did hold some promise of a better day. Similarly, his call for personal service and youthful idealism set a positive tone for the future.

Governor Terry Sanford, constitutionally limited to one four-year term and without the burden of running for reelection, began to show signs that the “real” Sanford was more liberal than the one voted for by many North Carolina Democrats. At Sanford’s request, officials from the charitable Ford Foundation toured a number of North Carolina communities, including Winston-Salem, and discussed local problems and concerns related to poverty and other social issues with community leaders of both races. James A. Gray, Executive Director of Old Salem, Inc. and Executive Director of the Winston-Salem Foundation, was the chief spokesman to the Ford Foundation group on behalf of the city leaders. Gray touted the city’s progress in urban renewal, race relations, hospitals, and the arts. In his only truly negative point of assessment, Gray conceded: “Yet much remains to be done, especially among Negroes and other low-income groups.” Pride in the Winston-Salem “way” was evident in Gray’s offer to his

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<sup>1</sup> “President Kennedy’s State-of the-Union Message,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 15, 1963.

guests: “We could share our knowledge with other communities in the South, with the proper incentives and with the proper techniques.”<sup>2</sup>

The day after the Ford Foundation visit to Winston-Salem, Governor Sanford announced the formation of the North Carolina Good Neighbor Council. The first stated goal of the group was to “end unfair discriminations in employment and give the Negro a full chance to earn a decent living for his family.” David S. Coltrane, a veteran of state government and a trusted confidant of Sanford, was named chairman of the council. The interracial council was composed of thirteen initial members (with plans to expand to twenty-four), including Clark S. Brown of Winston-Salem. The council encouraged local communities to form their own Good Neighbor Councils and promised to conduct a spring conference to bring business, church, and civic leaders together. By calling for true equality and economic parity, Terry Sanford became the first southern governor in history to take an unequivocal stand for racial equality.<sup>3</sup> African American ward activist and future aldermanic candidate Hazel Scott offered high praise to Terry Sanford “for his courageous and daring words in behalf of the loyal, unshakable, Democratic voting Negro.” Scott suggested Sanford take his support of equality in employment even further by hiring more Negroes for state jobs and called such an act a potential “great achievement and a triumph of sheer grit.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Bill Connelly, “Ford Group Told of Twin City Needs,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 18, 1963.

<sup>3</sup> Bill Connelly, “Ford Group Told of Twin City Needs,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 18, 1963; “Sanford Calls for End to Job Discrimination; Negro Progress Cited,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 19, 1963; “Job Practice Council Set Up,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 19, 1963; and Robert R. Korstad and James L. Leloudis, *To Right These Wrongs: The North Carolina Fund and the Battle to End Poverty and Inequality in 1960s America* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Hazel Scott, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 5, 1963.

Local politics in Winston-Salem mirrored regional and national trends, as Americans struggled to redefine the labels of "conservative" and "liberal" within the bounds of party and politics. Racial politics and Cold War fears added fuel to the rhetorical fires. Whites in Winston-Salem and elsewhere in the South increasingly considered more racially discreet Republican Party conservatism as an alternative to the ugliness of the overt racism of Deep South Democrats. In the April primary for mayor and aldermen positions, white incumbent Carroll Poplin defeated Rosetta L. Bloom in her attempt to gain a second aldermanic seat for African Americans. Carl Russell defeated challenger C.C. Lassiter, an African American schoolteacher, and would run unopposed in the May general election. M.C. "Red" Benton, the Superintendent of Winston-Salem schools was unopposed in the Democratic primary as was mayoral candidate James J. Booker on the Republican side. Benton and Booker did not have a formal debate but squared off against each other at a class in practical politics taught at the community center on Coliseum Drive. Booker stated that a "tremendous tide of conservatism is sweeping the country," arguing that the GOP was "the only place for conservatives." Booker said that the Democratic Party was "tainted with socialism" and warned voters that a vote for Benton supported the "irresponsible fiscal program" of the Kennedy administration. Benton replied simply that "the city has for years had good government under Democratic administrations and that there is no need to change it."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> "Candidates for Mayor Expound Views," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 1, 1963; "Booker: Prospects Look Good," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 1, 1963; and Jesse Poindexter, "Local Vote Held State Key," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 3, 1963. In the period prior to the Goldwater candidacy in 1964, Republicans in the South competed to convert lifelong Democrats to a new conservative movement. See Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 85-88.

Republicans were competing vigorously to convert conservative Democrats to a new movement. Overt racial language was never used but a “wink and a nod” served the same purpose. At a Republican rally, Booker said there was “a pretty good chance of making another Guilford County out of Winston-Salem,” a reference to the substantial gains made by Republicans there in the November 1962 election. At the same rally, Booker supporter Gray M. Hinshaw thinly veiled his views about the distribution of tax revenue in Winston-Salem along racial lines: “A lot of our tax dollar is going to the other side of town and should brought back here.” Two days later, even though school assignments were not yet settled, Booker stated Benton had personally integrated the new consolidated school system. “I hope he will stay around and help work out all of the problems that will arise,” Booker said. Benton countered by saying that the city’s integration plan was undertaken after the *Brown* decision and “has worked well.” Benton also stated he assumed the pool at Reynolds Park would open and operate on a desegregated basis again in the upcoming summer. Booker said the “experiment” had been tried and “was obviously a failure.”<sup>6</sup>

In the spring mayoral election, with strong support from African American precincts, Democratic candidate M.C. Benton handily defeated Booker. The Board of Aldermen was almost swept by Democrats, with only Republican Floyd S. Burge, Jr. retaining his seat. Voter turnout was an all-time record with about forty percent of eligible voters casting ballots—an impressive figure for a city that insisted on odd-year

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<sup>6</sup> “Candidates for Mayor Expound Views,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 1, 1963; “Booker: Prospects Look Good,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 1, 1963; and Jesse Poindexter, “Local Vote Held State Key,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 3, 1963.



elections with primary and general elections held close together in the spring. Although the shift from Democrat to Republican continued for white voters, heavy black voter turnout insured Democratic control of city government for the time being.<sup>7</sup>

The ongoing issues of “gangs,” crime, and punishment filled local news at the start of the New Year. For many African Americans, crime committed by African Americans was often seen as a social problem reflecting economic inequality. For some whites, crime created by African Americans was seen as an innate racial trait and in some cases as a residual effect of the rhetoric of the civil rights movement. Major crime rose by 15 percent in Winston-Salem in 1962 compared to 1961, an increase Chief James I. Waller attributed to higher unemployment rates, an increase in juvenile delinquency (i.e. black youth “gangs”), and “national tensions,” which Waller said “sometimes causes numbers of people to take a don’t care attitude which may lead them to crime.” Some of the crime could be attributed to repeat offenders, as men and women on probation struggled to find jobs. H.B. Ferguson, an African American who was probation officer for eighty black men, said that in some ways it was easier for black probationers to get a job than whites—because there were more menial low-paying jobs available. Problems arose, however, because those jobs tended to be seasonal or part-time. Ferguson stated: “And when these boys are not working, they turn to things that aren’t morally healthy.” Ferguson, along with Robert Brown, who supervised 133 white male probationers, and Hilda Fountain, who supervised 120 women of both races, all agreed that decent jobs

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<sup>7</sup> Jack Trawick, “Benton Overwhelms Booker; Burge Is Only Republican Elected to Aldermanic Post,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 8, 1963.

would eliminate welfare costs for the probationers and their families and would decrease the rate of those committing crimes and returning to jail. “If the attitude of the public inclined more toward consideration than it does condemnation,” Robert Brown said, “our job would be much less difficult.”<sup>8</sup>

Healthcare issues were complicated for black citizens in Winston-Salem as they wrestled with wanting equal access to the best care, while also wanting to protect traditionally black facilities and the doctors and nurses who worked there. Construction began on the new Forsyth Memorial Hospital on Silas Creek Parkway in June 1962, with a pledge the new facility would be legally open to black patients, as promised by Mayor Kurfees when the money was allocated for the project. As an indication of possible limits to access, there was a subtle mention from City Hall that the hospital would be open “to all who can pay.” The financial limitations excluded many blacks from the existing traditionally white City Hospital, and custom and faith in their own doctors and nurses kept most blacks at Kate Biting Reynolds Memorial Hospital. Dr. Earl T. Odum, Chief of the Veterans Administration Hospital at Tuskegee, Alabama, came to Winston-Salem to speak to the Reynolds hospital’s annual meeting in January 1963. Odum praised the hospital as “a pioneer center for study for Negro interns and residents.” In the clinical part of his talk, Odum discussed the benefits of smoking cessation in preventing and slowing heart disease. Perhaps in a diplomatic nod to the city built on tobacco and to an era when people smoked in doctor’s waiting rooms, he added, “Even physicians did

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<sup>8</sup> Larry Queen, “Major Crimes Rose 15 Percent in Twin City in Past 12 Months,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 8, 1963; and Jesse Poindexter, “Jobs for Probationers Hard to Find,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 27, 1963.

not follow this advice too often.” Future alderman, Dr. Albert H. Coleman, was named the new chief of staff and Dr. Luritz C. Creque was named president of the Hospital Commission. The “new hospital” had a 253-bed capacity, with 210 patients at the facility at the time of the annual meeting. There were six resident doctors for the entire facility, with no interns. It was agreed at the meeting to raise intern pay from \$290 to \$400 per month with the hope of attracting medical students to the hospital.<sup>9</sup>

The contentious issue of consolidating the city and county schools foretold long-term battles to come over control of educational resources and the ever-looming specter of broad school desegregation. Superficially the debate was over taxes and school governance—but race was at the core of the controversy. On Tuesday, January 29, a special referendum was held in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County to vote on consolidating the city and county schools and on a countywide school tax. Both propositions passed easily in city precincts, with the strongest support in the wealthiest white precincts and in the black precincts. Only one of the twenty county precincts, Mount Tabor which was mostly white and middle-class, voted in favor of both propositions. The other nineteen precincts all voted against both propositions. County opposition was based largely on opposition to the tax increase but issues of future annexation and the looming threat of school integration also played into voters’ decisions. Winston-Salem’s school integration plan was certainly token and only

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<sup>9</sup> “Improved Hospital Facilities, Better Services Discussed Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 10, 1963; Jesse Poindexter, “New Hospital Is Dedicated,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 11, 1962; Adelaide Fries, Stewart Thurman Wright, and J. Edwin Hendricks, *Forsyth: The History of a County on the March*, rev. ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 313; and Frank V. Tursi, *Winston-Salem: A History* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1994), 213-215.

affected a handful of schools and a small number of children—but the county had no integrated schools. Rural whites perceived city leaders as soft on segregation and privately had no shortage of derogatory terms for those favoring intermingling with blacks. The strongest opposition came from the Kernersville area, where local leader Grady Swisher said the tax was forced on county residents “by the rich people on the west end of town and by East Winston where they only pay 3 per cent of the taxes.”<sup>10</sup>

The new consolidated school system received its first assignment plan from the policy committee in late April. In theory the plan benefitted thousands of schoolchildren, as it brought schools closer to their homes and either eliminated or shortened many bus rides. Problems arose however, when school officials imposed the city policy of gradualist integration onto the previously completely segregated county schools. The majority of county residents had voted against consolidation and already trended more towards conservatism than did city residents. The ratio of whites to blacks was much higher in the county than the city as well. In a substantial display of political fortitude, M.C. Benton, outgoing City School Board Chairman, and active mayoral candidate, brought forward the plan for the upcoming school year, noting that the plan “would fulfill statements made publicly during the campaign for school consolidation.”<sup>11</sup>

Changes in school assignments for white children generally allowed for access to former city schools and in many cases offered better facilities and teachers. The

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<sup>10</sup> Steve Leshner, “Consolidation Wins in Close Vote: Tax Margin Is only 517,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 30, 1963; and “Steve Leshner, “School Leaders Jubilant,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 30, 1963.

<sup>11</sup> Steve Leshner, “Negro-Assignment Policy Proposed by School Board,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 25, 1963.

reassignment plan for black children is where controversy arose. Traditionally, black children throughout the county had been bused to Carver School, which contained grades one through twelve. Black students in the city simply went to black schools with the exception of the few who kept up the pretense of some integration. Under the new plan, black students in the county were given the option of continuing to attend Carver, or to register for the nearest school to them. Assignments to city schools continued by neighborhood which considering the firm delineation of neighborhoods by race, assured mostly de facto segregation. This essentially served to open the possibility of more integration in the former county schools than in the former city schools. The only extreme change in the city was changing the assignments for North Elementary to include 395 Negro children from the surrounding neighborhood along with 180 white children. The “out” for white parents was a stipulation in the plan that parents of either race could request a different assignment for their child if the parents were opposed to integrated schools.<sup>12</sup> Benton, the School Board, and new consolidated system superintendent, Marvin Ward, appear to have been wise to announce the changes early and give pro-segregation parents (the majority of white parents) time to digest the information and to realize there was no mandate for their child to attend an integrated school. From an image standpoint, the city of Winston-Salem once again could point to its actions, and with well-executed spin, claim to have made another progressive leap forward in race relations.

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<sup>12</sup> Steve Leshner, “Negro-Assignment Policy Proposed by School Board,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 25, 1963; and Everett Carl Ladd, Jr., *Negro Political Leadership in the South* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), 78-79.

Many whites, however, were not buying any form of integration, even if it was deemed to be in the name of "progress." Conspiracy theorists were able to blend racism and a fear of communism to create a rationale for avoiding school integration at all costs. Henry L. Yarbrough, from just outside of the city in Pfafftown, expressed the opinions of many like-minded whites in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County who were also concerned with what he called "creeping integration" and "creeping socialism." According to Yarbrough: "Every sly, unethical, and unconstitutional trick has been used by our government and its henchmen in the propaganda racket to promote integration, and I might add socialism." School integration was apparently part of the conspiracy: "One of the dirtiest tricks to get integration started is to place one or two little innocent Negro girls in a first grade white school. No one could question the morals of the little girls. It is argued that to start a small number of small Negroes off with whites will eventually eliminate 'prejudice.'" Yarbrough dismissed the argument that true Christianity might somehow forbid racial discrimination: "That's another trick to try and get Negro and white Christians to intermarry—to live together—to 'shag' together—to 'twist' together." He warned against a powerful central government and offered a reminder that, "socialism or integration, either, will never work if left up to the individual states or to the people."<sup>13</sup>

White opposition to school integration was by no means limited to less-educated or less-sophisticated types. Harry L. Nunn, Jr., a Western Electric employee and resident of the upscale Buena Vista neighborhood, provided his views on school integration after

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<sup>13</sup>Henry L. Yarbrough, "Readers' Opinions," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 6, 1963.

first chastising the *Journal* for calling some of the behavior in the Deep South “brutal” and “barbarous,” rhetorically asking the editorial staff: “Have you not overdrawn the picture considerably?” Nunn accused integrationists, including the newspaper staff, of using “integrationist clichés,” to diminish the legitimacy of the southern segregationist argument. He argued that many segregationists based their views against school integration on a *Time* magazine article covering the integrated schools in Washington, D.C. According to Nunn, Washington was “54 per cent Negro,” yet “87 per cent of crime was created by Negroes, including nearly 2,300 cases of assault with deadly weapons. Washington’s rate of illegitimate children is over 3 times the national average, with 50 per cent on the welfare roll in Washington found to be ineligible.”<sup>14</sup> Nunn failed to make a direct connection as to how school integration may have directly caused violent behavior, nor did he discuss issues like poverty, discrimination in jobs and housing, or any other factors that might contribute to urban social problems.

Former Local 22 leader, Willie E. Smith, provided a class-based black perspective on school integration that some whites may have considered quite provocative. Smith expressed grave concern that the integration of North Elementary School might place black children in the same school with lower class whites from the surrounding neighborhood. According to Smith: “We are being given companions from broken homes, some riff raff, ne’er do wells, charity cases, dirty livers, the works—including Juke Street. I’ll accept a swimming pool without a filtering system, but don’t put me with someone whose background reeks with something the Negro has been fighting hard

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<sup>14</sup> Harry L. Nunn, Jr., “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 2, 1963.

to escape all his life, then tell me I'm ruining things." Smith also took to task the opinions expressed by Harry L. Nunn, Jr., stating: "I have these words for Mr. Harry L. Nunn—America is composed of many races none of whom are perfect. The only solution is to mix everything in the pot together—whites, Negroes, or what have you: and while we are in a molten state, skim off the impurities." Smith closed by asking Nunn to join him in a prayer "for all mankind for all of us have sinned and have come short of Thy glory. Amen."<sup>15</sup>

In the midst of public discourses over school and public facilities desegregation, Twin Citians were given other concepts to ponder. For many in Winston-Salem, certainly for most mainstream whites, their first detailed exposure to the ideas of Black Nationalism, as expressed through Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X, was delivered in a lengthy article by the *Journal's* black reporter, Luix Overbea. Overbea attended two addresses given by Malcolm X to Charlotte audiences and was able to ask direct questions. "We are not Black Muslims." Malcolm X explained. "We are Muslims and we are black. The white man has named us Black Muslims." He provided a brief explanation of Islam: "We are Muslim because our religion is Islam. Islam means complete submission to one God. Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and others were prophets of God. There are no white prophets." The ideas of Malcolm X on religion, integration, violence, and overall black-white relations would have certainly seemed provocative on various levels to most readers in Winston-Salem. He called for "separation, not integration, not segregation...give us a part of this country and all we need for twenty-

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<sup>15</sup> Willie E. Smith, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 4, 1963.



five years. Let us help ourselves. Give us our due...not an integrated cup of coffee...not integrated schools.” Malcolm spoke of blacks avoiding violence, but being prepared to retaliate if necessary: “If you are a man you walk like a man. You let the white man know you’re for peace, but you’re prepared for war.” The group took up a collection during the meetings, an opportunity for Malcolm X to critique many black ministers: “This is a collection for rent. I’m not going to do like the preacher and tell you we’re collecting for God when the money shows up somewhere else before God shows up.” He also criticized the NAACP and the Urban League. NAACP and Urban League memberships would increase dramatically if the organization quit allowing whites to head the organizations, Malcolm espoused. “The Negro bourgeoisie love the white man too much. The Meredith case shows the folly of integration. The only way to integrate is to disintegrate,” he said.<sup>16</sup>

Overbea also spoke with Sultan Muhammad, the leader of the small Black Muslim community in Winston-Salem, who was in attendance in Charlotte. At the time, Muslim services in Winston-Salem were held in the Hawkins Building at Fifteenth and Liberty Streets. Sultan Muhammad would not say how many Muslims there were in Winston-Salem. “Wherever there are black people, there are Muslims,” he answered.<sup>17</sup>

Winston-Salem people were also challenged intellectually with a visit from *Carolina Israelite* publisher Harry Golden. In addition to writing for his newspaper, Golden authored several books, covered the Adolph Eichmann trial for *Life* magazine,

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<sup>16</sup> Luix Overbea, “Black Muslim Wants Separation,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, February 3, 1963. See Manning Marable, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* (New York: Viking, 2011).

<sup>17</sup> Luix Overbea, “Black Muslim Wants Separation,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, February 3, 1963.

and was a frequent guest columnist in the *Journal*. He spoke to a mostly black audience of approximately one thousand people at the First Baptist Church in East Winston. The event was part of the twenty-third anniversary celebration of the Book Club of Today, an African American women's group led by Nell B. Wright and Roberta Carr Farmer. Judging by the size of the crowd, Golden had earned a high level of popularity among Winston-Salem's black newspaper readers. Although local rabbis and Winston-Salem's small Jewish community had a tradition of supporting rights for African Americans, Golden's speech may also give further indication of a connection between Jewish liberals and the rights movement in Winston-Salem. Golden called on the crowd "to fight the myths" of the modern world. "Myths may be foisted upon us by people with vested interests," Golden said, "Myths are caused by needs to maintain a caste system."<sup>18</sup>

Golden argued that communism was not the most important challenge faced by the world, but instead race was both the number one issue and the number one myth. "Two-thirds of the world is dark and wants in," Golden stated. "Vast reform, shoes, land, education, and a bit of human dignity are the weapons against communism." He spoke of token integration: "The feeling is that a little bit of poison won't kill you. If you take too much you'll die." Golden also poked fun at whites he refused to integrate. He told a story of white women who refused to work with Negroes because of a fear of body odor, and then asked: "Why is it that all day long television shows white blondes spraying deodorant all over themselves?" He also explained his theory of "vertical integration" for integrating the southern business world. Golden argued that if all of the chairs were

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<sup>18</sup> Luix Overbea, "Race Is Chief Issue, Golden Says," *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 5, 1963.

taken out of office buildings, then whites would agree to integrate—because whites would not sit next to blacks, but did not mind standing with them.<sup>19</sup>

Intellectual life in 1963 Winston-Salem was also expanded by the visit and subsequent writings of Brazilian journalist Roberto Xavier. Xavier lived in Winston-Salem for two months and interacted with both the wealthiest and the poorest residents, as well as with black and white people. Xavier was complimentary about family life and a “deep respect for children,” that he saw as transcendent of socioeconomic conditions. He saw American culture as uniquely materialistic, with a “compulsion to conjugate the verbs to buy and to sell”—but felt the materialistic impulse was tempered by an “intense religious life.” Xavier was only directly critical of Winston-Salem when he discussed the issue of race. He called the separate bathroom facilities he observed when touring manufacturing plants “childish.” He questioned how it was possible to have such highly segregated residential areas in a modern age when “progress in science shortens distances.” Xavier was previously unfamiliar with the concept of white and black churches. He questioned the values of a number of white pastors he had met. “I don’t understand,” Xavier wrote, “how someone can be at the same time a Christian, a believer in democracy, and a segregationist.” He also was critical of what he read about the separatist teachings of Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X. In his final thoughts on race relations in Winston-Salem, Xavier commented: “The people I liked best in this city, the

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<sup>19</sup> Luix Overbea, “Race Is Chief Issue, Golden Says,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 5, 1963. For an excellent study of southern Jewish contributions to the civil rights movement, see Clive Webb, *Fight against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001).

ones I paid more attention to and those I recognized as being of a higher intellectual and cultural level, were anti-segregationists, both white and black.”<sup>20</sup>

A number of race-related issues were manifest in controversial urban renewal programs. The concept of clearing slums in Winston-Salem began with the election of Richard J. Reynolds, Jr. as mayor in 1940. Initially, the Board of Aldermen, a number of whom owned tenements and rental houses in poor neighborhoods, denied the very existence of slums in Winston-Salem. Reynolds produced pictures and other documentation of the horrid living conditions. As an example, one row of tenements had thirty-two families sharing “one cold-water spigot and three toilets, two of which were stopped up.” When Reynolds presented his findings to federal officials, he was able to secure the funding for the first public housing project in both Winston-Salem and in North Carolina. World War II interrupted further efforts until the concept was resurrected with vigorous support from Mayor Marshall Kurfees in the early 1950s. Despite constant issues between state and federal authorities and related funding inconsistencies, by early 1963, Winston-Salem was close to completing a major phase of urban renewal that began in June 1961. White real estate interests were not pleased with the government interfering with the right to own (and profit from) low-income housing and called urban renewal “socialistic.” Black property owners were often not pleased with the labeling of entire blocks as “condemned,” which often resulted in the loss of single-family homes as well as the destruction of black businesses and historic

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<sup>20</sup> Roberto Xavier, “Things to Remember About Twin Citians,” *Winston Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, March 17, 1963.

landmarks. Urban renewal served to further delineate what were black and white neighborhoods. For many blacks in Winston-Salem, however, urban renewal meant access to modern housing and sanitation.<sup>21</sup>

A major part of city-planning in the early 1960s was the creation of a major north-south thoroughfare (U.S. Highway 52). For a century, railroad tracks had marked the line between white and black, but now the line was to have four lanes of high-speed traffic with concrete dividing walls. Civil rights activist Dr. P.M. Brandon expressed the views of many in the black community when he argued that blacks had been excluded from the decision-making process and were also being excluded from the “pride of progress” with new development plans. He stated: “Now we are face to face with a deliberate plan to create an East Winston ghetto. The fact that it is new and shiny doesn’t for one moment remove the fact that it is to be a ghetto, fenced in by the North-South Expressway.” Brandon charged that the construction of the new “Skyscraper” (the twenty-six story Wachovia Building) would result in displacing the black businesses existing within the block bordered by Third, Church, Fourth, and Chestnut Streets. He also suggested a possible conspiracy--noting the changes would eliminate the main unloading and pick-up hub for the black-owned Safe Bus Company—opening the door for a takeover of Safe Bus by the white-owned City Coach Company. In Brandon’s opinion, the “interests and rights of the small people are to be ignored and flouted for the interests of the big

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<sup>21</sup> Tursi, 236-237.; and Jack Trawick, “Urban Renewal, After Slow Start, Now Is Reshaping City,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, March 10, 1963.

people.” “It’s a sad day for our town,” Brandon said, “when a big building can cast so long a shadow.”<sup>22</sup>

Despite the posturing the previous summer over closing pools and other recreation facilities if integration continued, an increased Recreation Department budget was approved for fiscal year 1963-1964 and plans continued for new land acquisitions and construction projects. When asked about the integration issues from 1962, Recreation Director Lloyd Hathaway simply reiterated that Reynolds Park and North Elementary were integrated and that Reynolds Park ceased to operate at a profit. He avoided commenting on the potential for similar controversy during the upcoming summer. Attendance figures showed Fourteenth Street and Happy Hill Recreation Centers were by far the most-used of city recreation facilities. Both were in black neighborhoods, and indicated that facilities for blacks were overcrowded.<sup>23</sup>

Grassroots efforts by women-led community groups made some inroads for black progress and also gave more black women entry into the political process. Lobbying by Hazel Scott and the West Winston Civic Council for funding a new pool, enlarging and lighting the baseball field, and completing other improvements for the black residents of the Kimberley Park neighborhood, received tentative support from Hathaway. Funeral home owner, Clark Brown, the only African American on the Recreation Board, proved a strong advocate for the Kimberley Park improvements. Within two months, Hathaway

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<sup>22</sup> Dr. P.M. Brandon, “Plan for a Ghetto,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 2, 1963. The use of dividing highways and other zoning measures were used in many southern cities to help keep neighborhoods segregated. For a thorough study of this in Atlanta, see Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

<sup>23</sup> “Recreation Budget of \$683,275 is Approved,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 7, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “2 Million Participated in City’s Recreation Events,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 7, 1963.

announced that work was under way on the baseball field and that this work and other improvements would be ready before school let out for the summer. The Recreation Commission was able to offer more positive news by leasing the grill at Reynolds Park to a contractor willing to accept an integrated clientele.<sup>24</sup>

A 1963 report issued by the North Carolina Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights found that Forsyth County was near the top among North Carolina counties in terms of “legal equality,” but in terms of overall racial equality, there was much work to be done. Curtiss Todd, a lawyer from Winston-Salem, was one of three African Americans serving on the North Carolina committee and provided most of the data on Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. Todd noted the removal of “white” and “colored” signs in government buildings and the removal of a race distinction on tax forms, marriage licenses, and applications for county jobs as progressive steps in Forsyth County. James Unthank, a welfare caseworker with the Domestic Relations Court was deemed to be the highest ranking African American working inside the Forsyth County Courthouse. Next in rank was Henry Hairston, who had just been promoted as the first black supervisor of custodians. There were five Negro nurses in the Public Health Department and several Negro caseworkers for the elderly. All told, Todd counted thirty-four paid black employees with Forsyth County. There

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<sup>24</sup>“Recreation Budget of \$683,275 is Approved,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 7, 1963; Jack Trawick, “2 Million Participated in City’s Recreation Events,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 7, 1963. “Committee Approves Contract for Operating Grill at Park,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 9, 1963; “Bid Renewed for Kimberley Park Improvements,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 2, 1963; and *1963 Hill’s Winston-Salem City Directory* (Richmond, Virginia: Hill Directory Company, 1963), 644. The name “West Winston Civic Council” possibly is confusing. Kimberley Park is in the western part of what is loosely defined as East Winston—but is not in the western part of the city as a whole.

were a number of other blacks serving voluntarily on appointed boards and commissions.<sup>25</sup>

Defining racial progress was increasingly a matter of perspective, and while usually expressed in civil tones, black leaders were more and more willing to publicly critique inequality and tokenism. In a local meeting the same day the North Carolina Advisory Committee released its report, Dr. F.W. Jackson heatedly disputed the mostly-positive tone of the documents. Jackson said of Forsyth County: “There is gross segregation in employment in the county building. There are no Negroes working above the custodial capacity.” The City of Winston Salem was guilty of “flagrant discrimination in its hiring practices according to Jackson, with blacks holding only “a handful of custodial jobs.” He attacked the newly consolidated school system as well: “The school situation is deplorable. We have the most token desegregation in the state in the city. There is no desegregation in the county.” Dr. J. Francis Paschal of the Duke University Law School and Chairman of the Advisory Committee told Jackson the panel would consider his complaints although the group normally only accepted written statements.<sup>26</sup>

Two weeks after the North Carolina Advisory Committee report and the scathing response from F.W. Jackson, *Journal* reporter Roy Thompson wrote a lengthy article extolling the accomplishments and virtues of Winston-Salem in regards to race and

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<sup>25</sup> Jesse Poindexter, “Progress of Negro Here Reported Relatively Good,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 31, 1963.

<sup>26</sup> Jesse Poindexter, “Progress of Negro Here Reported Relatively Good,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 31, 1963; and Luix Overbea, “Discrimination Complaints Aired at Rights Meet,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 31, 1963.



employment opportunities as part of a section assessing Governor Terry Sanford's Good Neighbor Program. Thompson may have been expressing his own views, but a compelling argument might be made that he was reciting a version of history as requested by the city patriarchs. Thompson posited that it wasn't politicians or religious leaders that paved the way for Winston-Salem's progressive accomplishments in race relations—but rather it was the businessman. Thompson recounted the formation of the Urban League and how it brought together white segregationist businessmen and black integrationist businessmen, who together were able to plot a course for success that was done “slowly, carefully, and unemotionally.” Thompson acknowledged the charges of Dr. F.W. Jackson concerning the number and status of blacks in city and county government jobs and countered by saying the strides in the private sector had offset deficiencies in public sector hiring. Thompson specifically touted Western Electric and R.J. Reynolds Tobacco, both of which had received “national attention” for their minority hiring practices.<sup>27</sup>

A steady stream of local news that was at least somewhat positive may have kept Winston-Salem's black community from any substantial direct action protest throughout the first part of 1963. Local news contrasted drastically with news from the Deep South, news filled with violence and outrageous acts of racial hatred. In the Delta region of Mississippi, SNCC-led voter registration drives led to an increase in white-on-black violence including the shooting of a voter registration volunteer. Nightriders shot into the

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<sup>27</sup> Roy Thompson, “Twin City Is Ahead in Negro Job Opportunities,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 15, 1963; and Roy Thompson, “It's Too Early to Assess Sanford Plan,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 15, 1963.

homes of African Americans while they slept. A local movement leader, Reverend D.L. Tucker, was bitten multiple times by police dogs after being knocked to the ground and eight movement leaders were arrested during a march in Greenwood, Mississippi. The SNCC office was set on fire—a fire Greenwood mayor C.E. Sampson said was arson—and was set by Negroes. African Americans were allowed to enter the LeFlore County Courthouse to register to vote as long as they entered in small groups. A “competency test” on the United States Constitution was then administered and results of the test came back in thirty days. Despite claims by local officials that anyone could vote and all of the uproar was caused by “outside agitators,” out of 46,000 Negroes in the county, 470 were on the official voter registration list. After heated exchanges between the United States Justice Department and Senator James O. Eastland, a compromise was reached when Mississippi officials agreed to let the jailed organizers go free and to allow voter registration to continue in exchange for the Justice Department backing down from further federal action. When voters attempted to march to the courthouse, whites staged a traffic jam that included city fire trucks and personal vehicles to slow down the march. Police had cameras set up taking the marchers’ pictures at each of the first five intersections they walked through. Comedian and activist Dick Gregory stopped the march out of fear the photographs would be used to terrorize local people who dared to participate.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> “Negroes Marching Is Halted,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 29, 1963; “Civil Rights Crisis in Mississippi Cools Down,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, March 30, 1963; “U.S. Intervenes in Miss. Dispute,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, March 31, 1963; and “Miss. Registration Request Dropped,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 5, 1963. For an in-depth study of the Greenwood Movement and other local movements in Mississippi, see: Charles M. Payne, *I’ve Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); and John

Winston-Salem people had their eyes on Mississippi and were also closely following the tensions in Birmingham, Alabama. The stage was being set for some of the most tumultuous and transformational events in the Black Freedom Struggle. In early April 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. promised to remain in Birmingham until four basic demands were met. Those demands included desegregation of lunch counters, the establishment of fair hiring practices for blacks, establishment of a biracial commission to facilitate desegregation of the schools, and the dismissal of charges against arrested demonstrators. Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth noted that these same demands had been accepted by officials the previous fall, “but these definite commitments were later forgotten.” City Police Commissioner Eugene “Bull” Connor promised to “fill the jails full” if demonstrators continued to violate city segregation statutes. Connor, still reeling from his defeat in the mayoral election by former Lieutenant Governor Albert Boutwell, stated: “I don’t know how long I will be here, but King can rest assured that as long as I am here he better tell his crowd not to violate any laws.” Connor was pushing Birmingham merchants to continue to use trespassing charges against sit-in protesters and was furious with stores that had allowed protesters to sit at their lunch counters, even though none were served. Without the trespassing complaint, Connor did not have cause for arrest. Martin Luther King, Jr., refusing to cave to Connor’s threats, responded: “Birmingham is the most thoroughly segregated big city in the United States today. All

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Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

of our forces will be marshaled here to bring about a nonviolent integration and recognition of human rights.”<sup>29</sup>

Two days after the verbal exchange between King and Connor, thirty-two black marchers were arrested in Birmingham, after they knelt to pray for Bull Connor. Just two blocks into the march, they were arrested for “parading without a permit,” a police tactic Winston-Salem activists experienced during the 1960 sit-in movement. “We are taking an orderly walk,” the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth told police, “we are not parading.” As Shuttlesworth was arrested, he shouted, “The Lord will help us!” As the paddy wagons drove away, witnesses heard the sound of protesters singing the hymn, “The Lord Will Help Us.” The following day, Palm Sunday, a group of approximately six hundred African American marchers set off on a “prayer pilgrimage” march towards the Birmingham City Hall. A large police contingent using police dogs moved in and dispersed the crowd. The majority of protesters ran, many of them screaming, to the “safety” of a black park.<sup>30</sup>

In what many years later seems to be an especially naïve understanding of white Alabama and Mississippi, the *Journal* editors called for “the cooperation of men of good will on both sides of the racial line” as the best solution for the racial strife of the Deep

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<sup>29</sup> “Connor, King Face Clash at Birmingham,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 5, 1963. For the definitive account of the Birmingham Movement, see Glenn T. Eskew, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). Eskew explores the impact of the national movement led by King on the indigenous movement led by Shuttlesworth. Eskew argues that the impact of the stories and images of Birmingham probably accomplished more, at least initially, for African Americans elsewhere than for the actual residents of Birmingham.

<sup>30</sup> “32 Negro Marchers Jailed at Birmingham,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, April 7, 1963; “Alabama Police, Dogs Disperse Negroes on Prayer March,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 8, 1963; and Eskew, *But for Birmingham*, 226-228.

South. The editorial board posited that federal interference and “coercive pressures” in the Deep South would serve to disrupt the balance between federal and state government and could only exacerbate the strong feelings of whites who thought federal government was “wrongly meddling in the internal affairs of the state.” Willie E. Smith of Winston-Salem was moved watching the events in the Deep South, as well as the actions of his local police department, when he offered perhaps a more accurate assessment of the realities of political power: “The dogs have been trained well and they, like all faithful dogs, will do the will of their master,” Smith stated, “but what about the man who must handle and command them? Is this man also trained?” Smith asked why dogs would be released on a group when the use of dogs was simply not necessary. Smith argued that if police dogs were put into use in Winston-Salem, it would create an even larger divide between black youth and police officers. Smith argued that a dog might be an appropriate tool “during war or in the prison system” but not in “free society.”<sup>31</sup>

The daily news was saturated with coverage of events in Birmingham. National television coverage increased, bringing more and more vivid images of racial strife into living rooms across the nation and into homes in Winston-Salem. By 1963, an estimated 70 percent of African Americans had daily access to television and close to 90 percent of whites had television access. A number of scholars have argued that the increased popularity of television not only helped shape public opinion, the new medium also served in some areas to force local newspapers to provide more diverse perspectives on

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<sup>31</sup> “An Unsatisfactory Approach,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 19, 1963; Willie E. Smith, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 3, 1963; and *1963 City Directory*, 680.

the news. Local television anywhere in the South was by no means a beacon for black equality, but in much of the Upper South, television increasingly added more of the integrationist point of view to news coverage and in some cases to local interest talk shows. In the Deep South, there was usually limited coverage of racial issues and what was presented was usually from a segregationist perspective.<sup>32</sup>

The news reports and the images from 1963 Birmingham have since become among the most iconic of the Black Freedom Struggle. It is impossible to quantitatively determine to what extent events in Birmingham motivated African Americans to become more proactive and also impossible to know exactly how many white people had their personal consciousness about the oppression of black people altered. There is tangible evidence that in many cities and towns, including Winston-Salem, direct action civil rights protests increased as the drama in Birmingham unfolded. On May 2, over two thousand blacks took to the streets of Birmingham. Defying the old guard black leadership in the city, youthful organizers James Bevel and Ike Reynolds recruited enthusiastic high school students who were eager to join the protest. The same argument used in support of lunch counter sit-ins was applied again—students did not have jobs and mortgages. Bevel also recognized it was easier for students to avoid the class and ideological divides that seemed to plague adults. “The black community as a whole did

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<sup>32</sup> William G. Thomas III, “Television News and the Civil Rights Struggle: The Views in Virginia and Mississippi,” *Southern Spaces* (November, 2004), southernspaces.org. (accessed, August 1, 2013). *Southern Spaces* is the online journal of the Emory University Libraries. See also Sasha Torres, *Black, White, and in Color: Television and Black Civil Rights* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003); Brian Ward, ed., *Media, Culture, and the Modern African American Freedom Struggle* (Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 2001); and Kay Mills, *Changing Channels: The Civil Rights Case That Transformed Television* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004).

not have that kind of cohesion or camaraderie,” Bevel recalled, “but the students, they had a community they’d been in since elementary school, so they had bonded quite well.” The establishment black leadership in Birmingham, led by *Birmingham World* editor Emory O. Jackson and businessman A.G. Gaston, recoiled at the very notion of sending children into the teeth of Bull Connor’s brutal police force. Martin Luther King, Jr., was also hesitant to use children and initially resisted the idea. He did, however, give his top aide Wyatt Tee Walker, along with Bevel and Reynolds, approval to organize a youth rally. Despite the efforts of some educators to lock down the gates of schools to keep children from going to the rally, children climbed the walls and made their way to the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. Frustrated after meeting with mainstream leaders, King sat in his hotel agonizing over whether or not to utilize children. Bevel and other staffers were busy in the meantime rousing the passions of the assembled young people. When King failed to appear at the church by the noon deadline, Bevel and Walker began handing out signs and sending students towards town in groups of no more than fifty, with assigned picket areas. A visibly agitated Bull Connor watched the children and wondered how to respond. He ordered fire trucks to strategic corners downtown, but did not give the order to hose down the children. The infamous canine corps did not appear. As instructed, youthful protesters kneeled, prayed, and sang before peacefully cooperating with arresting officers.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> “Huge Race Protest Held in Alabama,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 3, 1963; Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s* (New York: Bantam Books, 1990), 131-132. David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: Morrow, 1986), 247; and Eskew, 259-265.

The next day, King spoke to two thousand young people and warned them, “If you take part in the marches today you are going to jail but for a good cause.” Cheerfully marching towards downtown, students chanted, “freedom...freedom...freedom.” Without any more available jail space, Bull Connor had already made a decision to turn protesters back towards the churches. For the next two hours, high pressure fire hoses were trained on shocked protesters, knocking them to the ground, bloodying noses, bruising flesh, and peeling skin. A substantial number of young, male, adult, African Americans were on the scene, initially on the periphery of the protest as casual observers. Many were young men of the lower classes, not particularly religious, apathetic towards the nonviolent movement, and alienated from society. As they watched children get abused by fire hoses, many sprang into action in ways movement leaders did not foresee, and did not want to happen. James Bevel stated the next day: “We don’t want a riot. Lives could be lost. I saw at least 25 Negro men with guns.” These young men pelted police and firemen with bricks and bottles. Connor then unleashed the canine corps. Dogs indiscriminately attacked peacefully-demonstrating children as well as violent protesters.<sup>34</sup>

Movement leaders next modified their strategy and sent youthful protesters out in pairs and without signs. The hope was to quietly slip through town and then rendezvous for a big demonstration at City Hall. Connor, almost by chance, saw enough of the children to discern what was happening. He quickly ordered police to seal the

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<sup>34</sup> “Alabama Protests Continue: Water, Dogs, Used Again,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, May 5, 1963; “Marchers Choose to Remain in Jail,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, May 5, 1963; and Eskew, 270-271.



doors of the black churches, keeping any more children from marching. Many of the children already marching were arrested peacefully. Fire trucks were again called into place. Approximately three thousand non-movement onlookers had gathered to see what might happen. Young men taunted Connor's troops who quickly let loose the fire hoses and police dogs. Again, bricks and bottles rained down on police and fire personnel. It eventually took help from movement leaders James Bevel and Reverend William Greer to calm the crowd and get them to disperse.<sup>35</sup>

Birmingham was truly a transformative event for Winston-Salem and the world. Images of children scared and injured by fire hoses and police dogs were printed in many newspapers, and more dramatically shown in motion on the evening national news broadcasts. The pictures also made international news and caused much embarrassment to a Kennedy administration constantly embroiled in Cold War foreign policy. In Winston-Salem, news from Alabama was on the front page of the *Journal* almost every single day from early-April until the middle of May. The *Journal* did not print the worst pictures of police brutality from Birmingham, but NBC affiliate, WSJS television, carried graphic images on the Huntley-Brinkley evening news report. The situation in Birmingham fluctuated between negotiation and violence for two weeks after the first use of fire hoses and police dogs. Police showed restraint towards peaceful marchers in their church clothes on Sunday, May 5, but violence broke out again the following Monday and Tuesday. Governor George Wallace sent in state riot police to assist Bull Connor's

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<sup>35</sup> "Alabama Protests Continue: Water, Dogs, Used Again," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, May 5, 1963; "Marchers Choose to Remain in Jail," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, May 5, 1963; and Eskew, 270-271.

forces. Martin Luther King, Jr. was convicted and jailed on month-old charges going back to April, threatening to jeopardize negotiations between civil rights leaders and white Birmingham businessmen. On May 10, a biracial panel in Birmingham reached an agreement that appeared to end the stalemate and provide a way forward for peace. The agreement was not binding with city officials but instead had been negotiated mainly between business leaders and movement leaders.<sup>36</sup>

Two days after a peace settlement was declared in Birmingham, white terrorists exploded multiple bombs in African American neighborhoods. One bomb destroyed the front half of the home of the Reverend A.D. King, the younger brother of Martin Luther King, Jr. A.D. King, along with his wife and five children, escaped the home without injury just as a second bomb exploded. Another bomb exploded at the A.G. Gaston Motel, the unofficial headquarters of the integration movement. Several people were injured and nearby homes were damaged. Although there was no proof of a connection, the bombings came on the heels of a Ku Klux Klan mass rally and cross-burning on the outskirts of Birmingham. Angry blacks rioted in the aftermath and again threw bricks, rocks, and bottles at police.<sup>37</sup>

*New York Times* coverage of the bombings and subsequent riot contained five vivid photographs of building damage and police under attack. Coverage for New York

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<sup>36</sup> “Riot Police Sent to Birmingham,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 8, 1963; “Alabama Police Free King; Move Helps Strengthen Uneasy Racial ‘Truce,’” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 9, 1963; “Agreement Is Reached in Birmingham Crisis; 4-Point Plan Accepted,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 11, 1963; and Eskew, 271-297.

<sup>37</sup> Claude Sitton, “50 Hurt in Negro Rioting after Birmingham Blasts,” *New York Times*, May 13, 1963; “2 Bombings in Birmingham Trigger Riot by Negroes; President Sends in Troops,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 13, 1963; and “Soldiers, Officials Arrive in Alabama,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 14, 1963.

readers contained quotes from Birmingham mayor Arthur J. Hanes saying: “Martin Luther King is a revolutionary. The nigger King ought to be investigated by the Attorney General.” The *Times* also quoted Governor Wallace’s state trooper riot squad leader Colonel Al Lingo. “You damned right I’ll kill somebody,” Lingo said as he arrived carrying an automatic shotgun. The *Times* reported that paramilitary “irregulars” arrived at the scene of rioting and beat unarmed Negroes with “gun butts and nightsticks.” The *Winston-Salem Journal* account included one front page picture of “smoldering ruins in a Negro residential area,” but avoided printing quotes with racial epithets and presented a sanitized account of the violence. President Kennedy ordered three thousand federal troops into Alabama to keep the peace, a move Governor Wallace insisted was unconstitutional unless asked for by the governor. African Americans were for the most part glad to see federal troops, who were perceived as a buffer against Wallace’s and Connor’s police forces.<sup>38</sup> With economic shutdown, bombs, rioting, and a potential constitutional crisis at hand, Alabama had turned into everything feared most by white moderates and progressives.

Drawing inspiration from protesters in Birmingham, several hundred African American students in Raleigh staged demonstrations outside of downtown theaters, restaurants, and the Sir Walter Hotel. More than one hundred students were arrested and jailed over the first three days of the protest. Raleigh mayor William G. Enloe called for the creation of a biracial commission to try and settle integration issues peacefully.

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<sup>38</sup> Claude Sitton, “50 Hurt in Negro Rioting after Birmingham Blasts,” *New York Times*, May 13, 1963; and “2 Bombings in Birmingham Trigger Riot by Negroes; President Sends in Troops,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 13.

Governor Terry Sanford, in a speech at Pembroke College in Lumberton, praised the formation of a Raleigh race-relations committee and commiserated with the frustrations of black youth “who feel left out of some of the advantages of American citizenship.”<sup>39</sup>

For several years the *Winston-Salem Journal*, and by proxy the patriarchal powers, had expressed a relatively progressive position on integration, a position always tempered with calls for restraint and a belief in advancing gradually. For the first time, the newspaper seemed to clearly acknowledge the inevitability of desegregation and also seemed to be gently warning its white readers that the timetable was quickening. The *Journal*'s editorial staff praised the efforts of Mayor Enloe to “keep Raleigh from becoming another Birmingham,” and expressed hope for North Carolina to avoid the “embarrassment and nation-wide humiliation” of Birmingham. The editors also praised the “Gandhian passive resistance methods” used in Birmingham, noting: “These techniques have behind them the power of economic action and the political pressure of mass movements. Where they operate against palpable wrongs and discriminations their success in the end is inevitable, although the immediate action to them is often that of resentment.”<sup>40</sup>

Both whites and blacks in Winston-Salem were aware of the growing power of television to influence public opinion. Whether this influence was a positive thing, or not, was subject to personal interpretation, and was reflected in public discourse. Deloris Campbell, a young, African American woman, signaled a generational shift in attitudes

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<sup>39</sup> “Protests Are Held in Raleigh,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 9, 1963; “Negroes Leave Raleigh Jail: Demonstrations Continue,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 11, 1963

<sup>40</sup> “Restraint in Birmingham,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 11, 1963.

about movement goals and methods and a youthful awareness of the importance of the media. Campbell said: “If publicity is one of the means by which we can secure our equal rights, then publicity we must have. Only through mass media of communication can we let our public know what we want and what we are after.” Campbell called for an end to the notion “that only through prayer can we accomplish the things that we are worthy of. It is not enough for us to talk of the things that could be done, or should be done,” she stated, “but now is the time to carry out movements to show what should be done and what will be done in the near future.”<sup>41</sup>

Conversely, from white segregationist W. Alton Teague’s perspective, blacks had different motives for seeking media coverage in their “so-called ‘Racial Demonstrations’ that are being and have been staged in various cities of the Southern United States.” Teague explained: “I firmly believe that an age-old concept of people desiring attention is once again being confirmed. Publicity, in the form of newspaper and magazine articles, television and radio interviews, and filmed actions of a mob at work seems to be the basic desire of the people who are taking part in these events, whether they are black or white, rather than the satisfaction of accomplishment of some worthwhile effect.” He returned to the popular argument that private business owners had the right to refuse service to anyone and suggested the federal government was only creating “agitation and confusion” when it interfered in the business of the states.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Miss I. Deloris Campbell, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 5, 1963.

<sup>42</sup> W. Alton Teague, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 30, 1963.

Segregationist white women often combined conservative and “spiritual” critiques of race relations, finding very little in common between their interpretations of Jesus and the goals of civil rights activists. “What are you marching for?” Daisy Bodenheimer asked the marchers across North Carolina, “It’s not Jesus I am sure. You may shout and scream for and say you are praying for equal rights. Can’t you see, without the love of Jesus in your hearts, what will it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul?” She asked Martin Luther King how he could call himself a preacher, while “trying to tear this world of people up. Colored people, do awaken and see God doesn’t want people doing like this,” Bodenheimer pleaded. “I sure do not have anything against no one, but aren’t you free people and no white can help you was born colored. No matter what you do, or what happens you will always be that color, until you receive a new body.” Erna Snider praised Bodenheimer, and like Bodenheimer, found civil rights protests contrary to the wishes of God. Snider said “colored people should be proud of their race” and should strive to live lives “pleasing to God.” “But white or colored,” she continued, “this uproar of rioting, screaming and praying on street corners is a mockery unto God.” Snider elaborated: “It does not seem to me if those sit-in demonstrations fighting and killing could possibly contribute anything to glorify our Lord and Master, and I truly believe without prejudice that I don’t think God intended for us to mix races.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Daisy Bodenheimer, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 31, 1963; and Mrs. Erna Snider, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 5, 1963.

Reflecting the views of many whites that blacks were responsible for all of the Deep South unrest, with no mention of white culpability, Bertha Willard, a widow from a white, Southside working-class neighborhood, asked God “to stay the hand of the wicked ones today.” In a nod to George Wallace’s machinations in Tuscaloosa, Willard asked: “If Alabama isn’t cooperative, why don’t they let them alone? There’s plenty other places to go to school. When are we going to obey God and each one stay out of this mess and stay home and tend to our own business?”<sup>44</sup>

African American women provided their own responses to the spiritual interpretations of segregationists. These challenges were probably quite startling to white women used to deference from black women. Dorothy King, an African American woman, responded directly to Bodenheimer: “We are not blaming anyone for the color we are. It’s God’s doing as it is his doing for creating all men equal. We have been cheated out of a lot of things but God did not cheat us out of our color.”<sup>45</sup>

Less than a week after taking office, Winston-Salem Mayor M.C. Benton announced on May 16 that he was forming a “permanent biracial Goodwill Committee” to address race relations issues for the remainder of his administration. Benton specifically said he was “concerned about racial demonstrations” in Alabama, Raleigh, and Greensboro and wanted to create the committee to “forestall” potential problems in Winston-Salem. Benton made his announcement at a business-oriented Kiwanis Club meeting in the Robert E. Lee Hotel. “We have here the best race relations of anywhere in

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<sup>44</sup> Mrs. Bertha Willard, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 15, 1963; and *1963 City Directory*, 855.

<sup>45</sup> Mrs. Dorothy King, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 19, 1963.

the South, or perhaps in the country,” Benton told the Kiwanians. “We have nothing specific to refer to the committee, but we will want to convene and talk about the problems in neighboring cities and about what we need to do to prevent similar problems from arising in Winston-Salem.” Benton also addressed the issue of annexation. Many in what he called the “fringe areas” of the city had been recently annexed, many of them against their will. He was concerned that new white voters from former rural areas, upset over both annexation and school consolidation, might show their discontent by voting Republican. Working class rural voters who traditionally were attracted to populist Democratic messaging also tended to traditionally trend more conservative in matters relating to race.<sup>46</sup>

Events in Birmingham, closer to home in Raleigh, and then very close to home in Greensboro, moved conversation in the public forum into new territory. Local issues began to be seen as part of a larger picture, which may have caused fear or optimism depending on one’s perspective. Mrs. James E. (Alberta) Anderson, wife of a Wake Forest professor, and white, asserted that the protests in Birmingham and Raleigh were bringing pressure upon whites “to establish, once and for all, the type of society envisioned in our Constitution, and espoused in the name of Christianity.” Anderson praised the “enlightened attitude” of Winston-Salem, but with a caveat: “As long as any of our parks, theaters, restaurants, hotels, motels, cultural opportunities, and employment practices are characterized by a barrier of color to 40% of our citizens, we will be

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<sup>46</sup> Jack Trawick, “Permanent Biracial Group Will Be Appointed by Benton,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 17, 1963.



vulnerable to the same kind of protest that is currently racking Birmingham.” Anderson called on her fellow citizens to live up to the “All-America City” designation and to quit ignoring the neighborhoods with substandard housing, roads, and medical care. As a final warning, she suggested that if Winston-Salem were to fail at addressing its racial problems soon, the likelihood of Winston-Salem becoming a “target” for outside groups would surely increase.<sup>47</sup>

White segregationists struggled to find arguments as their fears of change heightened with every inroad made by the civil rights movement. A common theme centered on the notion that while things might not be perfect, blacks had never had it so good. John E. Turner, who lived in a former white working class neighborhood in the process of transitioning to a mostly black neighborhood, expressed his concern for the “race problem trouble not only in Alabama, but in other parts of the country.” According to Turner: “It seems to me the Negroes has already got as much as the poor common class of white people has got and still they are not satisfied. Let the good old timer Negroes remember back in the good old days of slavery when they did not have one inch of freedom.”<sup>48</sup>

The African American community in Winston-Salem was by no means monolithic in its views on potential protest tactics as it watched external events unfold in a variety of ways. The benefits of negotiated and peaceful protest was debated against the increasing risk of less-than-peaceful protest methods. Dr. J.R. Oliver, posited in

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<sup>47</sup> Mary Miller Burns, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 18, 1963; Mrs. James E. Anderson, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 17, 1963; and *1963 City Directory*, 363.

<sup>48</sup> John E. Turner, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 20, 1963; and *1963 City Directory*, 797.

length about the relationship between the Birmingham “situation” and the future of race relations in Winston-Salem. Oliver argued the student leaders of today would become the leaders of the near future—and ultimately were to be the ones to decide whether negotiations or mass demonstrations “brings better results.” After negotiations failed in Birmingham, the only choice left was mass demonstrations, according to Oliver. Paraphrasing a mother in Birmingham, he said, “Young people today won’t take what their parents took years ago.”<sup>49</sup>

Oliver called for biracial committees as the best way to solve racial issues, but warned: “White citizens are proving from time to time that their plea for more time is just to stall off progress in desegregation. This is evident when city officials refuse to appoint interracial committees to work out problems to eliminate tension. It is also evident when committees are appointed but do little or nothing.” Oliver promised that Negroes would “no longer sit by and remain isolated” from education, art and sciences, and community cultural events. Oliver posed a question that was probably more prescient than he may have realized in the moment: “Will the Negro have to press constantly with demonstrations and other forms of protest in order to obtain the privileges which are rightfully his, or will the silent moderates of our day come forward, take the reins of leadership and begin to peacefully work out the racial problems, giving Negroes a chance to improve themselves and live a more fruitful life?”<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> J. Raymond Oliver, Jr., D.D.S., “A Way to Avoid Demonstrations,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 18, 1963.

<sup>50</sup> J. Raymond Oliver, Jr., D.D.S., “A Way to Avoid Demonstrations,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 18, 1963.

Continued tension from protest locations throughout the South prompted local politicians to act. On the twelfth consecutive night of some sort of demonstration, over four thousand marchers turned out in Greensboro. Greensboro mayor David Schenk name a sixteen member biracial committee to address the issues. Also feeling a heightened sense of urgency, Mayor Benton hurried to name the nine white and nine black members of his Goodwill Committee. Among the more prominent names on the committee were Dr. Jerry Drayton and Dr. J.W. Oliver from the black community and James G. Hanes and Dr. Clarence Patrick from the white community. Mrs. David R. (Louise) Wilson, wife of Dr. David Wilson and an instructor at WSSC, and Mrs. Dorothy Unthank, a schoolteacher at Kimberley Park Elementary School were the only two black women on the committee. Benton had sought the advice of Alderman Carl Russell in choosing the makeup of the group. At its first meeting, the group divided into subcommittees with the goal of working on three main categories of integration: hotels/motels, restaurants, and theaters. Drawing from the method used in 1960, the subcommittees were to go out into the business community and try to negotiate solutions and timetables to make integration work. No one on the committee appeared to dispute the inevitability of integration.<sup>51</sup>

Beginning with one key demonstrator, the dynamics of civil rights protest in 1963 Winston-Salem was on the verge of a paradigm shift--similar to 1960--but much deeper in terms of involving those outside of traditional mainstream black leadership, including

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<sup>51</sup> "More Protesters Put under Arrest," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 21, 1963; "Over 400 Arrested in Durham," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 20, 1963; "Greensboro Marchers out Again," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1963; and "City's Biracial Group Plans Immediate Move into 'Critical' Areas," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1963.

the disaffected lower classes. As the members of the Goodwill Committee walked into City Hall for their first meeting, they were greeted by a lone African American man, holding a neatly-lettered sign that read: “BIRACIAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT TRUE REPRESENTATIVES FOR ALL. ‘UNCLE TOMS CANNOT SPEAK FOR ME.’” He also carried a small American flag. The solitary protester was Harold Dunovant, the disgruntled golf professional from Winston Lake, fired by the city in September, 1962. Dunovant picketed until about fifteen minutes after all committee members were inside and their meeting started. The newspaper account of the Dunovant protest rehashed the view of City Manager John Gold and Recreation Director Lloyd Hathaway, attributing his firing to “improper accounting of funds taken in at a golf tournament.” Until his death in 2002, Dunovant insisted he was fired for making a stand against discriminatory city policies. Thirty-seven years after his first protest, Dunovant said of black leaders of the early 1960s: “The leading citizens of Winston-Salem were nothing but a bunch of Uncle Toms. They’d do anything the white man would tell them to do to keep the rest of us in place.” The *Journal* ran Dunovant’s story next to the story on the Goodwill Committee on the front page, and printed a large picture of Dunovant holding his “UNCLE TOM’S” sign on page two.<sup>52</sup>

Dunovant’s presence at City Hall riled a number of the committee’s black members. Both Dr. F.W. Jackson and Dr. J.R. Oliver denounced Dunovant’s protest and said his actions were “improper.” Jackson told Mayor Benton and the committee the

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<sup>52</sup> Jack Trawick, “City’s Biracial Group Plans Immediate Move into ‘Critical’ Areas,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1963; “Small Demonstrations Staged in Twin City,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1963; and Harold Dunovant, interview with Ted Fichialos (hereinafter cited as Dunovant interview), November 25, 2000, Winston-Salem, N.C., audio file, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University.

NAACP had examined Dunovant's counter-complaint against the city when he was fired, and, "we found no reason why he should be retained. We saw no reason to even stick our necks out."<sup>53</sup> Probably only Harold Dunovant and Lloyd Hathaway will ever know the truth behind Dunovant's firing. It is evident that his dismissal from the city and the subsequent lack of support from mainstream black leadership created an indignant anger within Dunovant and motivated him to ignite a movement that did not require direction from the "old guard" of black leaders.

Just before Dunovant ended his lone protest at City Hall, one young black boy of high school age grabbed a corner of Dunovant's sign and walked with him. Simultaneously, northwest of City Hall on Fourth Street, a group of six black men picketed outside the Winston Theater. One of the men, Dr. Clinton C. Battle, a surgeon and a veteran of dangerous civil rights work in Mississippi, carried a sign with the inscription: "MAO-TSE-TUNG welcome here—Negroes are not welcome." Dunovant left City Hall and the small group left the Winston Theater by about 3:30 p.m. At 4:45 p.m., a group of about forty-five mostly local black high school students, with some WSSC students, assembled at Fifth Street and Claremont Avenue. Harold Dunovant and his assistant, Gaston Little, a Winston-Salem resident and student at North Carolina A & T University, led the marchers back downtown to the Winston Theater. Students marched in ranks of two and towards the outside of the sidewalks, with a space of five feet or so between each pairing. Space was allowed for passersby on the sidewalks, and

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<sup>53</sup> Dunovant interview; Jack Trawick, "City's Biracial Group Plans Immediate Move into 'Critical' Areas," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1963; and "Small Demonstrations Staged in Twin City," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1963.

the spacing between pairs kept the march from blocking the entrances to businesses. When asked questions by reporters, student marchers politely declined comment and referred the reporters to Dunovant and Little. Dunovant commented that this procedure minimized trouble and adhered to the police request to stay “orderly and quiet.” At “the Winston,” Little attempted to purchase a ticket and was refused. The group then marched down Fourth Street to the Carolina Theater, where Dunovant tried to purchase a ticket. He too was rebuffed. The group then walked to the K & W Cafeteria on Cherry Street. Little and Dunovant tried to enter together and were refused entry by owner Grady Allred. Little politely and calmly told Allred: “We represent an orderly group of people concerned about facilities in Winston-Salem. We would like very much to negotiate with you to come to some agreement.” Allred responded that an area in the back of the cafeteria, away from white customers, was available for blacks. White customers simply would not accept eating with blacks, Allred said. Little promised Allred the marches would continue “day after day” and would also grow in numbers until he agreed to integrate.<sup>54</sup>

Harold Dunovant was not only willing to confront whites like Allred, he was also willing to confront black leaders who patiently waited for change. At City Hall, Dunovant stated to the marchers and to the press that the marches would continue “until we get complete freedom. When a man opens his doors to the public, they should be open to anyone.” He commented specifically about Winston-Salem: “General conditions

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<sup>54</sup>“Small Demonstrations Staged in Twin City,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1963; and Dunovant interview. Claremont Avenue has since been renamed, Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.

for the Negro are just as bad here as anywhere. The only reason they say we have good race relations here is because the Negroes here stay in their place.” When Dunovant finished speaking, students knelt on the steps of City Hall, and as a gentle rain began to fall, Gaston Little prayed. Little asked God for “the strength, courage, and perseverance to wage this battle. Help us to keep our objective in mind...help us to love our enemies...help us, we need Your help, without You we cannot make it.” After the prayer, just as students had done in 1960, they sang the “Star-Spangled Banner,” walked quietly north on Main Street, and turned back down Third Street towards Winston-Salem State College.<sup>55</sup>

Dunovant and Little were not embraced by mainstream local black leadership. Several important black leaders criticized Dunovant’s efforts. C.L. Montgomery, president of the Winston-Salem chapter of the NAACP said: “We are having no part with Harold Dunovant at all.” Alderman Carl Russell said “the Negro people in general don’t agree with Dunovant” and most believed the mayor’s committee could solve many problems.<sup>56</sup>

The next day, only nine students showed up to march with Dunovant, Little, and Battle. Dunovant told the press the small turnout was due to a rumor he had been jailed in Greensboro and the march had been called off. Dunovant apparently had been in Greensboro and had met with CORE National Director James Farmer. Farmer was on a swing through North Carolina to support the movements in several cities. Farmer was

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<sup>55</sup> “Small Demonstrations Staged in Twin City,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 23, 1963; and Dunovant interview.

<sup>56</sup> Jack Trawick, “Picketing Halt Sought Here: Negro Leaders Ask Delay,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 24, 1963.

unable to adjust his schedule for a mass meeting in Winston-Salem as Dunovant had hoped, but other CORE leaders promised to help with organizing a Winston-Salem chapter. After a private meeting with Allen White, a black Democratic Party activist, Dunovant agreed to stop picketing through the weekend. White assured Dunovant there could be some sort of strategy worked out among black leaders and promised some sort of meeting for the upcoming Saturday.<sup>57</sup>

Years later, Dunovant put forth another reason for the sudden drop in student participation. Claiming that he had recruited “a hundred and some kids” from WSSC and Anderson and Atkins High Schools to demonstrate, Dunovant claimed: “It was one of the most influential basketball coaches in this town that got up on a car at Winston-Salem State, and told the kids if they come off campus, they would be put out of college before nightfall.” The coach Dunovant was referring to was legendary Clarence E. “Bighouse” Gaines. Gaines, a member of the College Basketball Hall of Fame led WSSC to an NCAA Division II National Championship in basketball in 1967, a first for a black college or university. He was revered for decades as a force for peaceful race relations in Winston-Salem. During the 1960 protests, Gaines had publicly stated support for the official university position, which forbade students from publicly participating in something illegal or controversial, but according to later accounts, had tacitly given his support to student-athletes to participate in the sit-ins. In 1963, Gaines surely would have continued to act to protect his students—but he may also have been more closely aligned

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<sup>57</sup> Jack Trawick, “Picketing Halt Sought Here: Negro Leaders Ask Delay,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 24, 1963.



with the mainstream black leadership, as exemplified in the Goodwill Committee efforts. The episode forbidding students to participate in Dunovant's protests was not mentioned in Gaines's autobiography nor has any account surfaced other than Dunovant's.<sup>58</sup>

Friday night, May 24, a small group of protesters led by Clinton C. Battle picketed outside the Winston Theater. Battle had lived in Winston-Salem for two years after moving from Mississippi. He had been the young president of the Indianola chapter of the NAACP, an area described by historian John Dittmer as "the fiefdom" of powerful United States Senator and arch-segregationist James O. Eastland. Battle was subjected to the pressure tactics of the White Citizens' Council, and many of his sharecropping patients were ordered by plantation owners to find a new doctor. Battle echoed the doubts of his ally Harold Dunovant when asked about the prospects of the Goodwill Committee. "They have been having committees since the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect in January, 1863," Battle said. He refused to criticize the NAACP as Dunovant had but also expressed the opinion that a CORE chapter "could do more." Battle stood up for Dunovant, called the local press "slanted," and accused the press of "allowing other negroes to slander Dunovant." "I feel sorry for Dunovant," Battle said, "I know what he is up against. I have been in this thing for 12 years." When asked why he was picketing the Winston Theater and not the Carolina Theater (both had the same owner), Battle replied simply, "This is the place they refused to admit me."<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Dunovant interview; and Clarence E. Gaines and Clint Johnson, *They Call Me Bighouse* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair Publishing, 2004).

<sup>59</sup> Dittmer, 43, 48; and "Jack Trawick, "Small Band of Negroes Pickets Local Theater," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 25, 1963.

After the promised meeting between Dunovant and other black leaders failed to materialize over the weekend, on Monday Dunovant and Battle, along with a small group of students, continued to protest the downtown theaters. Battle attempted to buy a ticket at the Carolina Theater and was refused. Bearing witness to Battle's Mississippi influence, one of the youths carried a sign saying, "James Meredith Unwelcome Here" and another sign said, "Same as Mississippi." Battle referred to James Meredith as "a personal friend." On the same day, the surrounding towns of High Point and Thomasville announced the creation of their own biracial committees. Two days later, Charlotte's biracial committee announced the desegregation of five leading hotels and their restaurants. Committee members, white and black, celebrated by eating lunch together in the hotel restaurants. In the Deep South, George Wallace was developing a self-serving political strategy to block the admission of black students to the University of Alabama, forcing President Kennedy to send in troops. Wallace would then yield to the "superior force," while keeping his promise not to personally cave on integration. Both President John Kennedy and his brother Robert, the Attorney General, were working to formulate federal civil rights legislation calling for a ban on segregation in any type of business that might loosely be determined to deal in interstate commerce.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> "2 Twin City Theaters Picketed," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 28, 1963; "Biracial Committee Aired at Thomasville," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 28, 1963; "High Point Creates Biracial Committee," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 28, 1963; "Biracial Groups Eat Together at Five Charlotte Hostelrys," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 30, 1963; Brandt Ayers, "Wallace's Strategy Revealed," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 30, 1963; "Kennedy Acts to Quiet Growing Race Crisis; New Laws Considered," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 30, 1963; and Tom Wicker, "President Bids Governors lead Rights Campaign," *New York Times*, May 30, 1963. Wicker acknowledged the breakthrough in Charlotte and discussed Kennedy's upcoming meeting with business leaders to discuss the "interstate commerce" concept.

Dunovant and Battle continued to lead sporadic, small demonstrations into June. The NAACP issued statements in support of the Goodwill Committee, and the Goodwill Committee sent out the occasional cautiously optimistic progress report. African Americans in Winston-Salem were attuned to racial news developments locally, regionally, and nationally—and whatever the preferred methods for change, felt the time was right for another push locally. Earl Ragin publicly asked the classic rhetorical question, “What does the Negro want?” He responded with the simple answer, “to be treated like a human being.” Ragin spoke of the sacrifices of black war veterans and asked if others ever thought about the treatment these men received when they came home. He asked how America might “influence other countries from following the communistic way of life” and how the country could “preach democracy in other countries and she is not doing it at home.”<sup>61</sup>

Hazel Scott may have reflected her increased acceptance as a community leader when she offered glowing support and optimistic blandishments for Mayor Benton and the Goodwill Committee. “The well-established right of every citizen is the thought living and breathing with each of these citizens on the committee,” Scott stated: “This is a job difficult enough under the most favorable of circumstances, but with a vigorous, relentless and dauntless determination, the dove of peace will sing in our hearts.” She praised Mayor Benton as a man with “a kindly and sympathetic spirit.” Winston-Salem

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<sup>61</sup> Earl Ragin, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 30, 1963.

“should feel proud that what is occurring in cities in North Carolina at the present time has not taken place here,” she said.<sup>62</sup>

The issue of segregated theaters returned to public debate in light of the new protests. WSSC professor and school board member Lillian Lewis displayed a particular interest in the integration of local theaters. Lewis spoke of the joy of entertainment from movies as well as the intellectual development she had received in her college days in the North, when she could attend any movie she wished. Lewis was especially “frustrated” with not being able to view locally the top movies considered for Academy Awards. She complained the only way she could “catch-up and store-up moviewise” was to spend time in New York each summer. “It doesn’t make sense,” Lewis said, “that Khrushchev can go to movies in Winston-Salem and Ralph Bunche can’t.” She also made the argument that opening theaters to a black audience could only mean an upturn in revenue for the theaters.<sup>63</sup>

Segregationist William B. Bonney responded to Lillian Lewis’s views on movie theater discrimination, laying part of the blame for theater segregation on questionable behavior and morality from blacks. Bonney said that the Carolina Theater used to open its balcony to Negroes, “until the Negroes caused a ruckus there two or three years ago.” He added: “Causing a ruckus seems to the New Frontier way today to win friends and influence people.” With a touch of humor, Bonney suggested Lewis should not be upset over missing some of the previous year’s Oscar winners. He said he had seen a number

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<sup>62</sup> Hazel Scott, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 31, 1963

<sup>63</sup> Mrs. John F. Lewis, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 4, 1963.

of them, “and after I spent .75 to \$1.00 for a ticket—I wished I had stayed home and watched Red Skelton on T.V.” Bonney disputed Lewis’s claim that allowing black customers in would increase revenue for theater owners, arguing instead that no white customers would come to an integrated theater. He suggested Lewis contact the owners of the two black-owned theaters and find out why they did not carry first-run major releases. In a final comment on the quality of movies, Bonney said: “Even if Winston-Salem theaters were integrated by presidential decree, Mrs. Lewis would still be in for a barren year.”<sup>64</sup>

Reflecting the continued fear of many whites for close physical contact with blacks, Carolyn Kennedy also commented on the theater situation. She saw no problem with integrating drive-in theaters, but drew a line with indoor theaters and especially swimming pools: “The Negro is not deprived of anything in that line. How will swimming in the white pool or going to the white theatres improve their education or their morals or their living conditions?” Kennedy expressed her pro-states’ rights view of federal government interference on matters of integration: “I think a federal controlled nation would not be much better than a communist nation.” Speaking candidly about her true feelings towards Negroes, Kennedy said: “The Negro keeps crying for equal rights, but I have yet to see the majority of them deserve to mix with anyone. I have met and talked with several Negroes who are trying to make something of themselves, but the

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<sup>64</sup> William B. Bonney, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 11, 1963.

majority are just along for a free ride. I think we should give them equal rights by all means for I for one am one taxpayer who is tired of supporting them.”<sup>65</sup>

On Wednesday, June 5, 1963, the Goodwill Committee announced that effective that night, fourteen “major” restaurants, and although the number was unspecified, the “largest and the best” hotels and motels had agreed voluntarily to desegregate. Peter T. Meletis, chairman of the hotels and motels subcommittee said that while a majority of the total number of facilities was not yet on board, the ones that were committed controlled over half of all rooms. Meletis issued a disclaimer at the request of the Winston-Salem Innkeepers Association, stating innkeepers could still refuse service based on “objectionable actions”—but not based on “race, creed, or color.” The specific names of the fourteen restaurants as well as the hotels and motels was not released with the Goodwill Committee statement. According to members of the committee the names were withheld in order to “save embarrassment” for both to those agreeing to desegregate and for those that had not. On the same day, seventy-six Raleigh businesses agreed to integrate, as did the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce and the Raleigh Merchants Bureau. Spartanburg, South Carolina, also announced most of its restaurants and lunch counters were desegregating.<sup>66</sup>

Apparently eager to test the new announcement, the following day Mrs. Jerry Drayton (wife of Goodwill Committee member Dr. Jerry Drayton) and a companion went to eat at the K & W Cafeteria on North Cherry Street, which was understood by

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<sup>65</sup> Mrs. Carolyn Kennedy, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 12, 1963.

<sup>66</sup> Jack Trawick, “14 Restaurants Here, Some Hotels, Motels Agree to Desegregate,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 6, 1963; and “76 Raleigh Businesses Drop Bars,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 6, 1963

committee members to be on “the list.” Entering the cafeteria about 1 p.m., Drayton and her friend moved through the line up to the serving area, where they were abruptly told the cafeteria would not serve them. When questioned by a *Journal* reporter, cafeteria assistant manager Kaline Grant said he had no comment other than “company policy says we don’t serve them.” Grady Allred, president of K & W Cafeterias, Inc. confirmed he had made a “confidential statement” to two members of the Goodwill Committee, but declined to say specifically what the statement was. He told reporters he felt the previous day’s announcement about “14 facilities” was a “breach of confidence.” An unnamed committee member said Allred had promised to desegregate as long as other restaurants did the same. Allred claimed to have checked with a number of his competitors and “could not find one” that had already integrated. Members of the committee vowed to “reconfirm” the previous commitments.<sup>67</sup>

For the next several days, news from the Goodwill Committee on restaurant integration was embarrassingly quiet, suggesting the group indeed may have made a premature call with their announcement. Saturday, June 8, Clinton C. Battle, along with his daughter and an unnamed male teenager, picketed from 6:30 p.m. until almost 9 p.m. outside of the K & W Cafeteria on North Cherry Street. Battle asked for service three different times. He obtained a glass of orange juice on one of the attempts but was then “thrown out.” Cafeteria personnel would not comment on the incident. Battle marched up and down the sidewalk in front of the cafeteria door carrying a sign stating, “SAME AS MISSISSIPPI.” The teenage boy was taunted by a group of “8 to 10 white youths.”

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<sup>67</sup> “Refusal of Service to Negroes Possible Setback to Plan Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 7, 1963.

The boy charged the youths, yelling, “You wanna fight?” He was restrained by Battle who told him to keep marching. “We are peaceful. We want no violence,” Battle instructed the youth. He then turned to the *Journal* reporter and said, “This is why I usually picket by myself.” As some of the whites turned their taunts to Battle, he told the reporter in a voice loud enough for all to hear: “I’m a veteran of World War II. I’ve got an honorable discharge and a good conduct medal and yet I can’t get a cup of coffee. Now that’s disgraceful.” Battle had also tried to get service at around 1 p.m. at the Morris Service Restaurant at Marshall and Fourth Streets and was refused. Perhaps still awaiting that list from the Goodwill Committee, Battle commented: “You won’t know where you can eat until you try.”<sup>68</sup>

As the efforts of Battle and Dunovant appeared to stagnate, and the success of the Goodwill Committee seemed questionable, both the NAACP and CORE announced meetings on successive nights. The NAACP set a meeting for June 12 at Goler Metropolitan AME Zion Church to be led by field secretary Charles McLean. McLean promised to work to set up a Youth Commandos chapter with the stated goal of helping youth to protest without having to be under the direct supervision of the local chapter. McLean was critical of the “lack of definiteness” by the Goodwill Committee and expressed a belief that white businesses were capitalizing on the vagueness of the committee as a “delaying tactic.” He promised the Youth Commandos could potentially make a survey to see what businesses were actually complying and organize protests against those that were not. Clinton Battle announced an organizational CORE meeting

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<sup>68</sup> “Cafeteria Picketed by Three Negroes,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, June 9, 1963.



to be held June 13 at the Unitarian Fellowship Hall on Robin Hood Road. Reverend B. Elton Cox of High Point, a former NAACP youth leader during the 1960 sit-in movements, was the CORE field secretary slated to head the meeting. Both Battle and Dunovant had been active in seeking a CORE chapter for Winston-Salem.<sup>69</sup>

Pivotal events in the broader civil rights movement often happened unexpectedly—and produced almost immediate changes in the actions and attitudes of African Americans in Winston-Salem. On the morning of Thursday, June 13, 1963, the headlines of newspapers around the nation and in Winston-Salem announced the ambush and murder of Medger Evers in Jackson, Mississippi. Evers was shot in the driveway of his home just after midnight Wednesday. Evers had received many threats on his life and only recently had commented, “If I die it will be in a good cause.” News of Evers’ murder had a sobering effect on the NAACP youth meeting held in Winston-Salem Wednesday evening. About fifty teenagers and young adults showed up to hear Charles McLean, the Reverend Lafayette McDonald, leader of the Youth Commandos chapter in Durham, and Brenda Fountain, a Youth Commando from the High Point chapter. McLean suggested the youth movement in Winston-Salem should organize under the existing college chapter at WSSC—assuring the youth movement that it was not obliged to adhere to commitments (like the Goodwill Committee) made by the local adult NAACP chapter.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Jack Trawick, “NAACP, CORE Meetings Set,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 11, 1963.

<sup>70</sup> “Negro Crusade Leader Killed from Ambush in Mississippi; Extensive Search Under Way,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 13, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “Negro Youths Here Ask Desegregation Listing,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 13, 1963.

Perhaps reflecting extra emotion in the wake of Evers' murder, Reverend J.T. McMillan, pastor of St. James AME Church, and for the most part a cooperative mainstream leader up until this point, called the Goodwill Committee a "politician's committee," and further charged "there was a commitment during the election that if you get me in and keep quiet I will do this, and that, and the other." McMillan, who served on the local board of the NAACP, charged too many blacks in Winston-Salem were "satisfied" and this was a problem. "When we are prospering we don't like to disturb the status quo," McMillan said. The Youth Commandos of Winston-Salem, with support from McMillan, resolved to begin picketing the following Monday if the Goodwill Committee did not produce an accurate list of cooperative businesses in the meantime.<sup>71</sup>

The next night's CORE meeting provided sparks of friction between key local civil rights leaders. The meeting was led by the Reverend Elton B. Cox, also an NAACP paid staff member, and lasted for about two hours. Cox defined CORE as a "direct action group" and the NAACP as a "legal group." "In most communities the two are compatible," Cox said. He mentioned the "Black Muslims" as an example of a group CORE would not work with, because "they advocate racial segregation." Harold Dunovant and Clinton Battle were present as expected. Two members of the Goodwill Committee, Louise Wilson and the Reverend R.M. Pitts also came to the meeting, and expressed a desire to join CORE. Wilson spoke during the meeting and said she intended to be an "active member" of CORE. She said to the group: "As a member of the biracial committee, I see no reason why we can't have Negroes testing and demonstrating. But I

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<sup>71</sup> Jack Trawick, "Negro Youths Here Ask Desegregation Listing," *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 13, 1963.

can't see mass demonstrations without doing the intelligent thing first and asking establishments to break down segregation barriers." Wilson asked Cox directly if CORE would be willing to work with the Goodwill Committee and help negotiate with white business owners. Cox replied in the affirmative.<sup>72</sup>

For the first time since the Local 22 women made their mark over a decade earlier, a truly powerful black woman was emerging from the shadows to become a major force in the local movement. Later in the meeting, after some harsh criticism of the Goodwill Committee, Louise Wilson spoke again: "I asked if you are willing to work with the Goodwill Committee because I think you should. I can't say that the biracial committee will solve any problems but we are trying." Wilson then turned her gaze on Harold Dunovant. "I had to pass through a picket line on my way to the first Goodwill Committee meeting," Wilson said. "I resent being called an Uncle Tom by someone who does not even know me." She also used the moment to address the charges of J.T. McMillan from the previous night's NAACP youth meeting, saying she "resented the inference of a political payoff." When asked about the actual progress of the Goodwill Committee, Wilson responded: "Fourteen leading restaurants, all the leading hotels and motels, and all the drive-ins desegregated. We have done that in less than a month. How do you think we are doing?" Clinton Battle then spoke. He said he was speaking "on behalf of the working Negro, the factory worker, the man on the street. They are not going to wait a year or two on the mayor—or another 100 years." Wilson replied

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<sup>72</sup> Jack Trawick, "CORE Chapter Organized; To Work With Mayor's Unit," *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 14, 1963.

vehemently: “Dr. Battle, you have not waited a month. You did not even wait one day.” Despite the personality clashes, the attendees voted to create a CORE chapter with the Reverend James D. Ballard, pastor of the First Institutional Baptist Church, as temporary chairman.<sup>73</sup>

Eager to get started, some of the Youth Commandos began testing restaurants the day after their meeting, several days ahead of their promised Monday deadline. Test groups were served at both Town Steak House at Thruway Shopping Center and Town Steak House on Lockland Drive. Lafayette McDonald and Brenda Fountain led the test group at the Reynolda Manor Cafeteria, where they were refused service. An eyewitness said that a black man wearing an identification tag from the nearby Western Electric facility had been refused service not long before the test group arrived. McDonald issued a statement promising, “As long as this situation of noncompliance prevails, we will continue to test.”<sup>74</sup>

As Twin Citians waited to see what might happen with the Goodwill Committee and with the two new protest organizations, violence from the Deep South and from places closer to home filled the news. Violence erupted in Jackson, Mississippi, on June 15, following the funeral of Medger Evers. Bottles were thrown and a crowd swarmed over police barricades. Justice Department attorney John Doar helped calm the crowd,

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<sup>73</sup> Jack Trawick, “CORE Chapter Organized; To Work With Mayor’s Unit,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 14, 1963; Robert Law, Interview with the author, March 14, 2013, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, DVD available, WSSU Oral History Project, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University; and “Preaching Giant to Hold Book Signing,” *Winston-Salem Chronicle*, September 6, 2012. West End Baptist Church and First Institutional Baptist Church merged to form United Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church under Reverend James Ballard. Ballard spent over forty-five years in the pulpit.

<sup>74</sup> Jack Trawick, “CORE Chapter Organized; To Work With Mayor’s Unit,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 14, 1963.

but not before Jackson police had unleashed police dogs on the crowd and arrested twenty-seven “rioters.” Evers was given a funeral with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery on June 19. Winston-Salem’s black community honored Evers with a memorial service on June 23. The memorial was organized by Dr. Jerry Drayton, Reverend J.T. McMillan, and Charles McLean. Sixty people marched in a procession down Highland Avenue to the First Baptist Church. There were three drummers, flag-bearers carrying the United States and North Carolina flags, and McLean carried a large picture of Evers. More than two hundred people gathered inside the church for the service. On the same day as the memorial service in Winston-Salem, FBI agents arrested White Citizens Council member Byron De La Beckwith of Greenwood, Mississippi, and charged him with civil rights violations in the death of Medger Evers. The Jackson police charged him with murder.<sup>75</sup>

The fear of Deep South types of violence were reinforced by events closer to home. A white mechanic was shot and killed during racial rioting in nearby Lexington, North Carolina. It was not clear to what extent the victim may have been directly involved in the violence before he was shot. A *High Point Enterprise* news photographer was shot and wounded in the violence as well. Twelve whites and seven blacks were arrested. More than one hundred North Carolina state troopers were sent in to provide police support. The rioting caused singer Fats Domino to cancel his scheduled concert at

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<sup>75</sup> “More Unrest Is Evident in Jackson,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 15, 1963; “Funeral Crowd Rushes Jackson Police Lines; 27 Persons Arrested,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, June 16, 1963; “Memorial Rites Held Here for Evers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 24, 1963; “Slaying Charged to Man in Mississippi,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 24, 1963; Payne, *I’ve Got the Light of Freedom*, 288-290; and Dittmer, *Local People*, 166-169. Both De La Beckwith trials in 1964 wound up with hung juries. He was finally convicted in 1994.

the Lexington Armory. Just across the state line in Danville, Virginia, violence raged for two weeks, culminating in the use of fire hoses on demonstrators. Like Lexington, some of the violence in Danville was between black demonstrators and whites who came to heckle and start trouble. In Fayetteville, North Carolina, police fired tear gas at protesters who had gathered outside of the city jail while arrested demonstrators were being processed. Fire trucks with high pressure hoses were placed in front of the crowd, but police refrained from spraying people. Military Police from Fort Bragg created roadblocks on roads leading to and from the base and prohibited military personnel from going into town.<sup>76</sup>

Hoping to bolster positive attitudes in Winston-Salem, the Goodwill Committee triumphantly produced a list of forty-six “eating establishments,” along with six hotels and motels, that had either already integrated or had agreed to integrate right away. Included in the list were all five Staley’s restaurants, which included Staley’s Charcoal Steak House, which along with the two Town Steak Houses, were the city’s most upscale restaurants at the time. The restaurants at the Greyhound Bus Terminal and Smith Reynolds Airport were also on the list. The Goodwill Committee listed seven restaurants apparently determined to remain “restricted to white patrons only.” Among those were the two K & W Cafeterias, Ray’s King Burger, and Reynolda Manor Cafeteria. Dr. Mark Depp, pastor of Centenary United Methodist Church and head of the subcommittee for

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<sup>76</sup> Larry Queen, “100 Patrolmen Stand Watch As Safeguard in Lexington; 19 Arrested After Rioting,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 8, 1963; “Photographer Tells How He Was Shot,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 8, 1963; “Hoses Used on Negroes at Danville,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 11, 1963; “Three Take Sanctuary at Danville: Demonstrators’ Arrest Sought,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 15, 1963; and “Tear Gas Is Used on Fayetteville Mob,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 15, 1963.

restaurants, said that K & W owner Grady Allred had promised “he would go along with us” if other restaurants desegregated. Depp said that Allred had refused to return telephone calls after the incident when Mrs. Drayton tried to eat at the North Cherry Street K & W. Dr. Clarence H. Patrick said what the committee had accomplished was “remarkable,” and he expected other restaurants “to fall in line” now that so many of the leading restaurants were on board.<sup>77</sup>

Despite the legitimate progress of the Goodwill Committee, it may have been a bit disingenuous to say there were “seven” restaurants maintaining a “whites-only” policy. The *1963 Hill’s Winston-Salem City Directory* listed 195 restaurants, cafes, cafeterias, and diners in Winston-Salem. Approximately thirty of those catered to a specifically African American clientele. The actual number of still-segregated establishments was probably in the vicinity of one hundred. The committee’s comments on other issues were terser. Dr. J.R. Oliver, a member of the theater subcommittee expressed his disappointment with negotiations with theater owners, calling it a “peculiar situation.” The subcommittees on education and employment had no reports to offer. Reverend J. H. Miller suggested a city ordinance to “make it unlawful for there to be discrimination or segregation in any public places.” Mayor Benton resisted Miller’s proposal, “because you can’t legislate the thoughts and attitudes and feelings of people.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Jack Trawick, “City’s Desegregated Facilities Listed,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 20, 1963.

<sup>78</sup> Jack Trawick, “City’s Desegregated Facilities Listed,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 20, 1963; and *1963 City Directory*, 301-302. The exact total count of establishments listed under the “Restaurants” heading in the *City Directory* was 195. The number of thirty for African American establishments is an estimate based on the author’s general knowledge of neighborhood and street patterns.

The announcement from the Goodwill Committee served to keep the Youth Commando and CORE groups from demonstrating. Three “Negro boys” picketed the North Cherry Street K & W Cafeteria for two hours during the evening of Friday, June 28. They had been encouraged to protest by Dr. Clinton C. Battle, who did not personally march. The youths carried signs that said: Nikita Khrushchev Welcome—Medger Evers’ Daughter Not”; “Democracy or Hypocrisy”; and “Medger Evers Died In Vain.” Several white hecklers made derogatory remarks towards the picketers. Police patrol cars parked nearby and watched the proceedings. One African American woman, apparently a supporter of the Goodwill Committee tactics, looked at the protesters, shook her head, and said, “I wonder who started that.” Earlier the same day, Clarence L. Montgomery, issued a statement on behalf of the NAACP supporting the Goodwill Committee but promising that after two more weeks, businesses that had not desegregated would face “more direct action.”<sup>79</sup>

In a July 3 meeting of the entire Goodwill Committee, Peter T. Meletis and the Reverend Jesse Creel of the restaurant subcommittee announced they were merging with the hotel and motel subcommittee and were holding a mass meeting of all restaurant owners during the following week. Noting there was no local restaurant association, the hope was a mass meeting might simplify communication and help create a broader consensus. They asked that all demonstrations be halted in order to give their strategy a chance to work. The Reverend Jerome Huneycutt, acting chairman of the theater subcommittee, reported “successful progress” is being made in desegregating theaters.

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<sup>79</sup> “3 Negroes Picket Cafeteria,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 29, 1963.



Dr. J.R. Oliver, also on the subcommittee, said he was “very satisfied” with their success, but he could not give more specific details without “jeopardizing” their accomplishments. In spite of no public announcement, apparently, some African Americans had “quietly attended” theaters recently. The subcommittee on employment, headed by Dr. Clarence Patrick, issued a formal statement calling on city and county government as well as private industry to end discriminatory hiring practices. Patrick called on local government to lead the way, “thereby setting an example for private industry to follow.” The education committee did not have report but were given a suggestion by the larger group to pursue the “desegregation of teaching and administrative staffs in the consolidated school system.” The larger group also called for local media to “refrain was using the term Negro as an identifying factor in stories in which Negroes are involved.”<sup>80</sup>

Protests continued to focus on K & W, but added occasional forays into other restaurants. For the first time, some whites joined in with black cafeteria protesters. Early in the morning on the Fourth of July, a small group of African Americans, led by Clinton Battle, went to Staley’s Northside Restaurant and were served without incident. A CORE sponsored group went to the Reynolda Manor Cafeteria, also early that morning. They were served coffee and had a meeting with cafeteria management. They were told by management the Reynolda Manor Cafeteria would desegregate if K & W Cafeterias would desegregate, “and serve the first Negro that comes in free.” Despite the request from the Goodwill Committee to refrain from protests, the group led by Dr. Clinton Battle and a CORE group led by Reverend J.D. Ballard joined together around 11

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<sup>80</sup> “Biracial Units Pool Resources,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 4, 1963

a.m. and then picketed the K & W Cafeteria at Parkway Plaza Shopping Center. The North Cherry Street K & W was closed for the holiday. The group consisted of eight blacks and two whites. The group picketed through the lunch period and returned that evening to demonstrate throughout the dinner service. The next day, beginning around 11:30 a.m., groups of “7 to 10” picketers showed up at both the downtown and the Parkway Plaza K & W locations.<sup>81</sup>

Most of the marchers were college and high school students, although Harold Dunovant and the Reverend Thomas Smith, Jr. of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church provided adult leadership. Some of the marchers identified themselves as NAACP Youth Commandos while others identified with CORE. At Parkway Plaza, Dunovant had them march in a “box formation” in front of the cafeteria, stopping in unison to let customers in and out of the restaurant. Protesters downtown used a “hesitating stride,” walking several steps, pausing and then resuming the march. At the downtown K & W, the line of customers was stretched outside the front doors, a typical occurrence during the lunch rush. Demonstrators were polite but their presence was certainly felt by restaurant patrons. *Journal* reporter Jack Trawick observed a number of people turning around and leaving at Parkway Plaza, including a couple with an older lady he overheard saying they would “go somewhere else.” Grady Allred, president of K & W Cafeterias, declined to answer questions from reporters, looked directly at one of them, and said, “To hell with you.”<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> “Minor Protests Staged At Eating Places Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 5, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “Negroes Continue Picketing,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 6, 1963

<sup>82</sup> Dunovant interview; “Minor Protests Staged At Eating Places Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 5, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “Negroes Continue Picketing,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 6, 1963

The relationships between civil rights leaders were clearly in a state of flux. A rift within the various protesting factions developed early Friday morning at the North Cherry Street K & W Cafeteria. Battle's small group of protesters began picketing about 4:30 a.m. and were on the scene when a combined group of CORE and NAACP demonstrators arrived about 6:30 a.m. Words were exchanged over protest tactics and leadership. A Battle supporter entered into the picket line of the Reverend James D. Ballard and for an unknown reason was asked to leave the line. The next day, Ballard and Harold Nash of the NAACP issued a joint statement: "In behalf of CORE and the Commandos of the NAACP, we want to make it clear to the public that the irresponsible acts of Dr. Clinton C. Battle are deplorable and inexcusable. We want it further understood that there is no connection between Dr. Battle and his followers and our organizations." Ballard and Nash promised to "step up" their protests and also pledged: "We shall continue to work toward the elimination of this un-American attitude of these recalcitrant restaurant owners." Small-scale protests continued for the next several days at both K & W Cafeterias. The evening of Tuesday, July 6, Goodwill Committee members Louise Wilson and Dr. J.R. Oliver walked with pickets at Parkway Plaza. Rumors began to circulate that plans for larger protests with different tactics, including going inside the cafeterias, were in the works. When asked about this possibility, movement leaders replied, "No comment."<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> "Negroes Continue Picketing at Two K & W Cafeterias Here," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, July 7, 1963.

Mayor Benton announced that the restaurant owners meeting was scheduled for Thursday afternoon at City Hall. More than one hundred letters of invitation were sent out. Benton also held a meeting with K & W Cafeterias, Inc. vice president, Grady Allred, Jr. The younger Allred assured Benton that K & W “has nothing against Negroes,” and decisions on integration were dictated by their customers. Allred said K & W employed ninety blacks just at the two cafeterias in Winston-Salem and “there had always been good relations between management and Negroes.” Allred saw the integration issue as two-sided, with moral implications and with economic implications. Customers drove the economic considerations in his view. The moral issue, Allred argued, might best be decided by lawmakers. He stated that if local, state, or national laws dictated integration, then K & W would peacefully comply. The restaurant owners meeting on Thursday took place as scheduled, with only about twenty-five restaurant owners appearing. None of the twenty-five that had not already integrated changed their official position in the meeting. Benton later expressed a perception that many of the restaurant owners might be grateful for a local ordinance banning segregation. An ordinance could serve the purpose of “letting them off the hook” with their white customers who felt strongly against integration.<sup>84</sup> White business owners who walked the tightrope on integration because of pressure from segregationist customers eventually would get some relief in the form of legislation, but would have to wait until the passage of the Civil Rights Act in the summer of 1964. State and local politicians, even in a

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<sup>84</sup> “Restaurant Operators’ Meeting Set,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 10, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “Police Take, Release 55 Negroes Blocking Two Cafeterias Here: Future Arrests Promised,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 12, 1963

relatively progressive southern state like North Carolina saw a legal mandate for integration on their levels as political suicide. A nationally mandated law was truly the only practical solution.

If Benton was somewhat frustrated by the turnout and the negative response to voluntary integration in his restaurant owners' meeting, the next few hours after the meeting tested him even further. About 7:30 p.m., the Reverend Thomas Smith along with eleven students, both male and female, walked inside the front entrance of the downtown K & W Cafeteria. They were met by cafeteria manager, John Hemric. Smith pulled out a sheet of paper and read a statement that said in part: "We have willfully violated an established practice to test the validity of selecting customers by race. We further wanted to draw public attention to our concern about this attention to our dignity. We feel that this practice is not right and that it violates Christian ethics." After Smith finished reading, Hemric responded: "Now, you've read your little piece and I'm going to ask you to leave." Smith did not reply and the two men stood staring at each other. Hemric then told Smith about the mayor's meeting with restaurant owners and how black leaders had agreed to not demonstrate. Smith, still not speaking, moved his group into the aisle, blocking the cash register and preventing customers from paying. The group held its position, "staring straight ahead and remaining motionless," according to *Journal* reporter Jack Trawick. Cafeteria managers then called the police who arrived within minutes. Nine of the twelve demonstrators moved back outside to block the front door while Smith and two others continued to block the cash register. A crowd began to gather outside of the cafeteria, estimated at around one hundred onlookers. A police

Canine Corps unit arrived along with additional officers. Police officers approached the group outside who refused to move until they were placed under arrest. Police charged them with “obstructing the sidewalks.” Once formally placed under arrest, the nine protesters walked peacefully to the police cars. As soon as the first nine were taken away by police, seventeen more protesters appeared from the crowd of onlookers and took their place. As soon as police could arrange transportation, the new wave of protesters were arrested as well. Police told Hemric that he would have to file trespassing charges for them to arrest the three protesters inside. He responded he would prefer not to have them arrested, “if I can possibly help it.” Each time customers attempted to pay and leave, police physically grabbed protesters and moved them to the side. At one point a frustrated Hemric bumped into one of the Negro protesters, pushed him, and then said, “Step aside—dammit, you are in my business.” Once most of the customers had left, the three inside protesters left peacefully. Smith later told Jack Trawick he was “elated with the coolness of the police officers. They tried to show me all the courtesy possible. I guess they had to do what they did in moving us out of the way.”<sup>85</sup>

Led by Harold Dunovant and Gaston Little, protesters at the Parkway Plaza K & W used similar techniques, blocking the checkout line and also standing outside of the front and side doors, making it difficult for customers to leave. According to Harold Dunovant’s account, some students also laid down on the sidewalk in the front entrance. Police called in a Canine Corps unit to Parkway Plaza, just as they had done downtown.

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<sup>85</sup> Jack Trawick, “Police Take, Release 55 Negroes Blocking Two Cafeterias Here: Future Arrests Promised,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 12, 1963.

In the suburban shopping center setting, a large crowd of mostly white onlookers gathered in the parking lot, but the majority stayed in the perceived safety of their cars. Twenty-nine protesters were arrested at Parkway Plaza and cooperated peacefully with police. After the demonstrators were taken downtown for processing, a crowd of African Americans gathered across the street and began singing “We Shall Overcome.” Dunovant recalled becoming angry when police and jailers put his young student protesters in one holding room and Gaston Little and himself in another. After a quick meeting between Mayor Benton, City Manager John Gold, and Police Chief James Waller, a decision was made to drop charges against the demonstrators. As the protesters were set free, the crowd across the street sang “Old Freedom Spirit” and dispersed. The Reverend Thomas Smith smiled as he was leaving. “We will return,” he said.<sup>86</sup>

For both blacks and whites of the leadership class, there was a tangible sense of urgency--a sense that the stakes had been raised. A busy Mayor Benton held meetings with both civil rights leaders and with Grady Allred, Jr. of K & W Cafeterias. The younger Allred said his father was out of town on vacation but he had called him to come home early to help resolve the problem. In a meeting at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, the night after the arrests at the two K & W cafeterias, leaders of CORE, the NAACP, and the Youth Commandos voted to defer to the mayor and the Goodwill Committee and to call off protests for the immediate future. Reading a prepared statement, the Reverend James D. Ballard made it clear “direct action protest” would resume if progress was not

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<sup>86</sup> Dunovant interview; and Jack Trawick, “Police Take, Release 55 Negroes Blocking Two Cafeterias Here: Future Arrests Promised,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 12, 1963

made quickly. Ballard praised the mayor, calling his efforts “sincere and energetic.” He also made a point that Negroes were interested in more than just two cafeterias: “The Negroes will not stop with the K & W. We are seeking full integration of all public places in the city—parks, restaurants, hotels, motels, theaters, job opportunities, schools, everything.” William Thomas, a CORE field secretary from Greensboro, was present when Ballard spoke to the press. Thomas promised that if necessary, “demonstrators from outside Winston-Salem” might be called in to help. Flyers were handed out promoting a “Freedom Rally” for 8 p.m. the following Sunday at Goler Metropolitan AME Zion Church. The scheduled main speaker was Asheville native Floyd McKissick, the first African American graduate of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, former Durham attorney, and CORE’s national chairman.<sup>87</sup>

An enthusiastic crowd of about three hundred attended the Sunday night rally with McKissick. In a youth-oriented program, Robert (Bobby) Moorman, leader of the Youth Commandos, presided over the meeting. Jesse Jackson, president of the student body at North Carolina A & T University in Greensboro, also spoke. McKissick told his listeners: “Don’t ever worry about the majority. The majority always takes the safe way, the do-nothing approach. If you do something, they fear it may be wrong. They find the road of freedom too rough. They always say, ‘Let’s go back to Egypt.’” Against a backdrop of freedom songs, McKissick heaped praise on Winston-Salem’s young protesters: “Today’s young people have vision, courage and know-how. There comes a

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<sup>87</sup> Jack Trawick, “Protests Here Called Off: Leaders Await Action,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 13, 1963; and Crow, *African Americans in North Carolina*, 164,197-199.



time when we don't need brains. We need courage. We must walk into dogs, hoses, and jails." After the rally, Clinton C. Battle promised to lead a march to City Hall on the following Monday, despite the agreement with the mayor by other rights leaders not to protest.<sup>88</sup>

Increased protest organization and elevated rhetoric from more youthful voices, coupled with the presence of "outside agitators," was clearly getting the attention of black mainstream leaders. Inspired by McKissick and Jackson, Youth Commando leader Bobby Moorman announced Monday afternoon that he would lead a youth march of about two hundred demonstrators from St. Stephen's Episcopal to City Hall, beginning at 7:30 Monday evening. The plan was to present a list of demands on issues other than restaurant desegregation. After conferring with some of the adult leaders, including Thomas Smith and James Ballard, Moorman agreed to call off the demonstration. Smith tried to clarify the decision and stated the movement did not wish the meaning of the march to be misconstrued and taken as a break in a "good faith" agreement with the mayor. He made it clear, however, that the agreement with the mayor was only over K & W, and "did not extend to other demonstrations." At the Board of Alderman meeting Monday night, Mayor Benton was clearly angered that movement leaders had even considered a protest march to City Hall. Sounding more like a mayor from the Deep South, Benton warned against the dangers of "outside agitators." Citing Floyd McKissick as an example of an outside "bad influence," Benton warned young people in Winston-Salem to listen to their local leaders, black and white, "who are interested in

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<sup>88</sup> "CORE Chief Blasts Negroes' Patience," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 15, 1963.

them.” Black Alderman Carl Russell called for patience in the black community and for African Americans to “prove that they have faith in the committee.” In remarks that may have been less than politically astute, Russell chastised African American parents “who say they can’t control their children enough to keep them from participating in demonstrations.” Benton thanked Russell for his “kind remarks.” After the meeting, Russell issued a statement that said in part: “I would admonish all citizens that we should exhaust any and all possible means before we demonstrate or even march. Negroes and white citizens alike should be mindful of the good relations that have existed in this community through all past years, and should strive to continue them.”<sup>89</sup>

Louise Wilson was considered by practically all who knew her during her career as a civil rights leader and antipoverty advocate as the consummate peacemaker and consensus-builder. However, her dramatic entry into the forefront of the Winston-Salem movement did not necessarily foreshadow the methods and accomplishments yet to be. Wednesday night’s Goodwill Committee began with remarks by the mayor advising the committee members that progress might be slow and then suggested members “use a note of caution in what you do and say.” After the mayor spoke several white members of the committee spoke and expressed their approval of the mayor’s remarks at Monday’s Board of Alderman meeting and how they, too, were disappointed with recent demonstrations. At this point, Louise Wilson rose to her feet and said emphatically, “I, too, am disappointed Mayor Benton.” Wilson then elaborated that she was

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<sup>89</sup> “Negroes Postpone March on City Hall,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 16, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “March Called Off: Benton Criticizes Outside Influence,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 16, 1963.

“disappointed” K & W Cafeterias have not desegregated, and “disappointed” police took youthful demonstrators to jail. She then stared at Benton and told him he was “disappointed on the wrong side of the fence.” Clearly still angry over Benton’s choice of words, Wilson continued to redress the mayor, stating that by calling CORE and the Youth Commandos “splinter groups,” he was the one who was “agitating.” She said that the young protesters “have conducted their protests on a high level, and they should not be criticized for their activity. She noted the protests were only at K & W, when many other restaurants deserved the same sort of protest. She accused city leaders of overreacting to the proposed march to City Hall, stating had the march occurred it was to be “a prayerful demonstration.” Wilson then turned her attention to Alderman Carl Russell. Referring to Russell’s remarks about African American parenting skills at the Monday council meeting, Wilson said that she could “control” her children, but, “I will not stifle their ideas for freedom.”<sup>90</sup>

After Wilson spoke, several white members continued to argue for banning the demonstrations. Alfred Scott, an African American member of the committee, spoke up and said the committee should not “censor” demonstrations. The Reverend J.H. Miller, another African American member of the group, objected to the manner in which one white member pronounced the word “Negro.” As tempers began to flare, Dorothy Unthank rose and said she “would like to inject something happy into the meeting.” Unthank said she knew of a “Caucasian group” which had been working secretly and

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<sup>90</sup> Jack Trawick, “Member of Biracial Group Condone Local Marches,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 18, 1963

quietly for two years to do something positive for race relations in Winston-Salem. She was referring to the Forsyth County Bar Association, which had voted on the same day to allow full and unrestricted membership for black attorneys for the first time in its history. This was the first county bar association in the state of North Carolina to integrate. A substantial majority of white attorneys voted in favor of the resolution. Only one white attorney, George W. Brady, spoke against the change, although another white attorney, Harold R. Wilson, resigned from the group in protest. The decision allowed Harold Kennedy and his wife Annie Brown Kennedy, to become not only the first black members of the Forsyth County Bar Association, but also the only husband and wife team of any race, in any county bar association in the state of North Carolina. Unthank's diversion apparently helped to cool things down among Goodwill Committee members. Before closing their meeting, they agreed to meet with representatives from CORE and Youth Commandos to discuss their list of demands.<sup>91</sup>

The difficulty in resolving racial differences and in undoing an entrenched way of life was reflected in public discourses during the early summer of 1963. J.D. Ballard, Clarence Montgomery, and Robert Moorman co-wrote a letter to the *Journal* with a theme of "Nothing to Fear." The three civil rights leaders pointed out to whites how "we all rub shoulders" in the course of daily life—so why, then, should eating together "be so

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<sup>91</sup> Jack Trawick, "Member of Biracial Group Condone Local Marches," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 18, 1963; "Biracial Group Gets Negroes' Demands," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 18, 1963; and Jesse Poindexter, "Bar Admits Negro Attorneys," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 18, 1963. African American attorneys had to pass the North Carolina Bar Exam to practice law but until this vote had not been allowed in any local associations throughout the state. For a poignant personal account of struggles as a black, woman attorney see: *Pauli Murray: The Autobiography of a Black Activist, Feminist, Lawyer, Priest, and Poet* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987).

repugnant.” The letter noted that whites appreciated the black laborers who worked for them, the black customers who bought from their businesses, and proposed that if a white couple was eating out, there was a very good chance their children were left with a Negro babysitter. “Negroes and whites are eating together in Vietnam,” the letter stated, “and fighting together and dying together too, incidentally.” Diann Sockwell offered a concerned youthful perspective: “Although I am in my teens, a young lady and a Negro, I stand for my rights still. I am suffering from malnutrition. This is not a lack of food, but of civil rights.” Sockwell stated that both integrationists and segregationists believed themselves to be right and then asked, “Are we going to fight another civil war?”<sup>92</sup>

African Americans publicly reminded their fellow citizens of other rights-related issues, with economic justice at the forefront of these concerns. This increased emphasis on jobs and antipoverty issues mirrored concerns from Martin Luther King, Jr. and other movement leaders during the same time period. John R. Green praised the success of black businesses in Winston-Salem, especially the Safe Bus Company and Winston Mutual Life Insurance Company. Green was emphatic that as social change occurred and the civil rights movement broke down legal barriers, it was imperative for blacks to remain aware of economic issues as well. “Jobs have been very hard to come by for our Negro youth,” Green said, “and the white man has made it harder and harder for the Negro job seekers. He still has the right to hire and fire whom-so-ever he wants.” The solution, Green argued, was for blacks to support black-owned businesses when at all

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<sup>92</sup> J.D. Ballard, Robert Moorman, and Clarence Montgomery, “Nothing to Fear,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 12, 1963; and Diann Sockwell, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 3, 1963.

possible. As an example, he argued that white insurance companies carried the majority of policies written for blacks in Winston-Salem, yet white-owned insurance companies would not hire black agents. Hazel Scott encouraged support for keeping a public hospital in East Winston. "Let's do away with the fire stations in East Winston," Scott satirically suggested. "That sounds just as ridiculous and ineffectual as no hospital in East Winston." She expressed concern over travel issues and higher costs for patient services. Scott also was worried about training facilities for young black doctors and nurses. "Where will the young Negro doctor receive his training? Shall we abolish the two nursing schools located in the Eastern section of our city?" Scott's concern that the Board of Aldermen might use integration as a rationale for eliminating a hospital in the predominantly black part of town was not unwarranted. This option had been discussed.<sup>93</sup>

Angry whites were represented in practically every "Letters to the Editor" section of the Winston-Salem newspapers during June and July of 1963. White prejudices and fears held for generations were aroused by current events. The editorial staff of the *Journal*, the *Sentinel*, and the Sunday combined version were generally progressive in their own opinions. Perhaps the rationale for printing so many pro-segregation letters was to serve as a reminder to African Americans and to progressive whites that much work lay ahead if integration and actual racial equality might ever occur. Segregationist

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<sup>93</sup> John R. Green, "Readers' Opinions," *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 20, 1963; and Hazel Scott, "Readers' Opinions," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 3, 1963. Also see Thomas F. Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Struggle for Economic Justice* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 16-19. Jackson argues that the Albany Movement "radicalized King's public discourse" concerning economic issues. Jackson further argues that the period of Birmingham and the March on Washington solidified the "intersection" of civil and economic rights issues.

Jerry Ballard posed this questions: “If white and Negro weren’t meant to be separated, then why, in the beginning, was the Negro put on one continent and the white on another?” Ballard further explained his views: “If races mix in the schools, students will grow up in a non-color atmosphere, which to them would be more reason to give in to nature and integrate more intimately. This is wrong!” John F. Idol, apparently bothered by all of the negative press concerning events in Alabama and Mississippi, related his impressions from a recent journey to the Deep South. Idol said: “It was my pleasure to find that the people there are not as blindly prejudiced as some journalists would have us believe but are a quiet philosophical type people who resent being misrepresented by northern journalists and peddlers of hate and agitation.” Idol accused northern writers of creating “sensational” stories about the South in order to take attention away from their own racial issues in the North. “To these people, I say, clean up your own back yards, and the South can handle its own.” Mrs. Fannie Heath, like many whites, did not concur with the social gospel message linking racial equality to Christ. Heath stated: “The papers are full of accounts of the Negro demonstrations and we are all told if we mix up in school, churches, business etc. that everything will be heavenly. In fact some say we are not Christian unless we do. Now my father always told us to treat the Negro right and we did and I have some Negro friends who would almost fight for me.” Heath asserted Negroes had “churches and schools as good as the white people have,” and explained how her "Negro friends" did not really want integration because they were “perfectly

contented.”<sup>94</sup> The myth of black “contentment” had by no means died with emancipation.

Whites were not simply worried about casual interaction in restaurants but were also deeply concerned that neighborhoods might one day become integrated. Whites in Winston-Salem had already abandoned neighborhoods closest to downtown, especially in the Patterson Avenue-Greenway area, as blacks increasingly bought working and middle-class quality homes. Daily Smith presented a unique perspective by quoting what he called “an old Arab proverb, ‘Keep your tents separate and bring your hearts together.’” Smith was concerned that if society allowed integration, white neighborhoods would suffer as blacks moved in. He blamed black slums on “a racial tendency to neglect upkeep and neat appearance.” Bobbie Phillips, a Wake Forest alumnus and salesman for Burroughs Corporation, lived with his wife Thelma in the South Fork neighborhood. Phillips had been motivated to write by images from WSJS television news: “After seeing a local newscast last week, I seriously ask the question—do we actually have freedom anymore? Insane minority groups are allowed to block entrances to private places of business and all they receive is a slap on the wrist and a fatherly pep talk.” Phillips paraphrased the Reverend James Ballard’s comments about seeking equality—and then suggested Negroes, “under what remains of our free enterprise system,” should build their own cafeterias. He then called the Kennedys a “Royal Family,” and expressed the belief John F. Kennedy was catering to the black vote, “laying the ground work” for

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<sup>94</sup> Jerry Ballard, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 21, 1963; John F. Idol, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 8, 1963; and Mrs. Fannie Heath, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 26, 1963.



the next election. Phillips claimed the increase in racial protests and violence was due to excessive coverage in the newspapers. He asked the *Journal* “to give us a recap of the number of lines devoted to Medger Evers and the total devoted to the lonely white man in Lexington, N.C.—Mr. Link.” Phillips closed his letter with a plea to “drown the Kennedys with Goldwater” in the 1964 election, as a “move to really assure freedom and justice for all.”<sup>95</sup>

Other whites reflected classic southern fears of federal encroachment into the sacred realm of local control and states' rights. Larry Key vilified the Kennedys as communists and expressed his belief that John Kennedy's goal was to become “an absolute dictator. “A growing number of influential Negro leaders have turned Communist,” Key posited. “The Communist system, however, will make them slaves again.” Eddie Southern, a city Public Works Department employee, lived with his wife Thelma in a working-class Southside neighborhood. Southern argued the “Kennedy Civil Rights bill” would give the federal government the right to send federal marshals in to enforce the bill's provisions, “at the discretion of some inept bureaucrat from Washington.” He believed the goal of the legislation was “arbitrary and absolute power granted to one man, Attorney General Kennedy.” Southern believed the Kennedys were taking control of the economy and were using the media for “propaganda,” all with the ultimate goal of seizing “absolute control.” Southern closed by saying: “It would be trite

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<sup>95</sup> Daily Smith, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 29, 1963; and Bobbie Phillips, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 19, 1963.

to say that action is called for. What, if any other time in history, has that ever been more true?”<sup>96</sup>

Restaurateur Grady Allred, Sr., had publicly argued that white customers simply could not tolerate contact with black customers in the close quarters of a cafeteria setting. While Allred’s rationale seems absurd fifty years later, the simple fact was that many whites had never experienced much, if any, interaction with black strangers. In an account that probably stirred the fears of many white readers and that supported Allred's rationale for segregation, Mrs. J.M. Conrad of Lexington, North Carolina, described “a night of near horror” when she and her family came to Winston-Salem for an evening of shopping, followed by dinner at the K & W Cafeteria in Parkway Plaza. Conrad related her story: “After my husband paid our check and we proceeded to leave, but were stopped along with many other patrons, because these **non-violent** demonstrators were four or five deep against the door and refused to let us out.” Conrad described other patrons in a state of “fear” and “hysteria,” with some apparently contemplating violence. “My nine year old child was crying and clinging to me,” Conrad related. “Even though police officers were out front, we were unable to get out until they made an arrest.” Conrad described her family’s continuing trauma: “When we finally returned home, I was still trying to calm my child. Her fear was so enormous that she cried and was awake the greater part of the night.” Conrad closed by asking, “Since when has anyone

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<sup>96</sup> Larry Key, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 19, 1963; Eddie Southern, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 9, 1963; and *1963 City Directory*, 731, 936.

won their freedom by force and disrespect of their fellow-man, especially when it comes to the abuse of our small children?”<sup>97</sup>

Some segregationist whites saw themselves as victims while others brought up fears of disease. Old notions of blacks “keeping in their place” and the always reliable fear of “godless communism” were common themes as well. M.C. Graham, a mechanic from a working-class Southside neighborhood, supported the K & W owner. Graham said: “Mr. Allred is to be commended for his courage and patience in face of untold pressures from various groups including the Mayor’s Good Will Committee.” Graham then asked: “How can Negroes gain ‘freedom’ by destroying the freedom of their neighbors?” Sarah Pilcher, a Reynolds Tobacco factory worker from Lewisville, expressed her concerns about social customs and public health. “They’re demanding to be called Mr. and Mrs. and Miss So and So,” Pilcher stated. “Didn’t they know that we as people today should earn our respect in our places such as society? I was taught I had to earn my respect that way and not demand it.” She was also concerned about potentially having to utilize the same restrooms as Negroes, “The Health Department says that venereal disease rate is higher among the Negro race than the white.” Pilcher also expressed her concern over the rise of communism, asking: “What are the Negroes fighting a cold war for anyhow? Isn’t the Communist behind the CORE and the NAACP in America today?” As a final apocalyptic warning, Pilcher asked, “Isn’t the world getting like the days of Noah before the floods came?”<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Mrs. J.M. Conrad, “Readers’ Opinions,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 17, 1963, boldface in the original.

<sup>98</sup> M.C. Graham, Opinions of Readers, *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 20, 1963; Mrs. Sarah Pilcher, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 16, 1963; and *1963 City Directory*, 297, 617.

In the midst of the restaurant integration controversy, some relatively peaceful decisions were made regarding public hospital facilities. After several years of controversy, on July 17, 1963, the Board of Alderman approved the construction of a new Kate Bitting Reynolds Hospital. Republican Floyd Burge had the only dissenting vote. Although the hospital was to be located in East Winston, it was understood to be a major step forward in healthcare facilities for blacks in Winston-Salem. The aldermen made certain the hospital was to open as an integrated facility. The application for federal funds under the Hill-Burton Hospital Act insured the facility could not operate on a segregated basis. This finally ended the controversy over whether or not to update the old City Hospital and insured that both the new Forsyth Memorial Hospital and the new Kate Bitting Reynolds Hospital when completed would both accept patients of all races.<sup>99</sup> When both of the new hospitals were completed and opened, the reality was *de jure* integration with *de facto* segregation. After full integration was achieved, medical care segregation became delineated by economic class rather than race. Both Forsyth Memorial and the private North Carolina Baptist Hospital/Wake Forest Medical Center became fully integrated. The Reynolds Hospital facility is now used as the Forsyth County Health Center, a facility primarily used by low-income people of all races.

K & W Corporation owner and president Grady T. Allred announced on July 20 that the seventy-five seat K & W Restaurant on North Marshall Street would open on an integrated basis the following Monday. He also announced the two K & W Cafeterias on

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<sup>99</sup> "Plan for New Hospital Receives Green Light; Aldermanic Vote: 7-1," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 18, 1963.

North Cherry Street and at Parkway Plaza, and the K & W Cafeteria in High Point, would continue to operate on a segregated basis. Allred's statement said in part: "At the K & W Restaurant we will serve bona fide customers who come to us in the proper spirit. But we cannot be expected to admit those who come in large groups, who come as test teams, or who are not normally suitable customers in our place of business." Allred explained his rationale for integrating the restaurant, but not the cafeterias, stating there is "less personal contact among patrons in a restaurant than in a cafeteria." Restaurant patrons ate at private tables and did not stand in lines where people might "rub elbows" like in cafeterias, Allred explained. He cited "surveys" of North Carolina restaurants showing little decline in business for restaurants that integrated but major declines in revenue for integrated cafeterias. Allred attributed his success in the restaurant business to "letting the customer be the boss," and elaborated further, "if the majority didn't want tomatoes in the beef stew, we left tomatoes out." According to Allred, only one in fifty of his customer comment cards came back approving of integration. Allred also emphasized the economic impact of his business on the black community: "There are 75 colored employees among our 140 employees in Winston-Salem. The colored employees are a loyal group and still are in spite of the fact that they are being subjected to terrific pressures. All K & W people, including the Negro employees, will suffer economic losses if the company's business volume should drop." Allred predicted a return to normal business volume, if "outside agitators will leave us alone." He also expressed

faith in the Winston-Salem Police Department and the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department "to provide us ample protection—just as they have done for 28 years."<sup>100</sup>

African American leadership bluntly rejected Allred's argument. This signaled to the entire African American community that the strictly gradual approach was over. The following Tuesday, J.R. Oliver, a member of the Goodwill Committee, as well as a member of both the NAACP and CORE, urged African Americans in Winston-Salem not to eat at the K & W Restaurant. "I do not feel that by Negroes supporting the K & W Restaurant," Oliver said in a prepared statement, "the segregation policy of the K & W cafeterias can be better negotiated or corrected." Apparently several Negroes had eaten at the K & W Restaurant on Monday and Tuesday. Picketing continued during lunch and dinner services at both Winston-Salem cafeteria locations. The following Saturday night, July 27, eight picketing protesters were arrested in front of the K & W Cafeteria downtown. The eight arrestees, four young men and four young women, were all college or high school students and were led by twenty-one-year-old Robert Moorman, who was himself arrested. They were later all released on bail. The following night, the same eight students were arrested again. The Sunday night protests had a supporting crowd of over fifty CORE and NAACP Commando supporters, who "voiced support" from the parking lot across the street by "swaying, clapping, and singing." The Sunday night arrests were conducted by police utilizing a converted school bus as a paddy wagon. Police Chief Justus M. Tucker and the CORE head Reverend James D. Ballard discussed

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<sup>100</sup> Harold Ellison, "K & W Restaurant Will Desegregate," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, July 21, 1963.

the situation before the youths were arrested. Tucker told Ballard he did want to arrest anyone, but if protesters kept blocking the sidewalk, he would have no choice in the matter. Ballard politely told Tucker the protesters were aware of the law but “considered it unjust.” Ballard told reporters he had “little problem” with the way police conducted themselves.<sup>101</sup>

Ballard did take issue, however, with comments by the mayor stating the CORE protests were undermining the Goodwill Committee. Ballard responded: “The mayor insists that he hopes we will abide by law and order. I want to make it clear to him and the public that we respect and revere law and order. Our only contention is that there can be no law and order in a segregated community.” The Reverend A.K. Stanley and William A. Thomas issued another statement on behalf of CORE and emphasized the point of the protests had nothing to do with attempting “to intimidate the cafeteria or inconvenience the public...nor was it to protest against the mayor’s Goodwill Committee.” In the same statement, Stanley and Thomas expressed a different view of the use of the city police: “We are greatly alarmed, however, that the Police Department of the city of Winston-Salem was not used in the interest of law and order but rather to enforce the institution of segregation.” Following their arrest on the second evening, the eight students led by Robert Moorman, even though bail had been posted for them, refused to leave the jail. A crowd gathered outside the jail on Monday night and sang

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<sup>101</sup> Larry Queen, “Eight Protesters Arrested; Rain Breaks Up Songfest,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 29, 1963; and Steve Leshner, “More Protests Here Pledged,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 31, 1963. Those arrested included: Robert Moorman, twenty-one; James Ross Grace III, eighteen; Charles Lee McNeely, eighteen; Earl Belton, sixteen; Carolyn Faye Pitts, nineteen; Brenda Yvonne Hooper, twenty-one; Louise Lynete Wilson, sixteen; and Sondra Alfreda Faye Adams, seventeen.

movement songs. They blocked traffic briefly on Church Street, but left peacefully when Police Chief Tucker said it was time to go home. Twenty police officers with nightsticks were also present.<sup>102</sup>

Four students were arrested Tuesday, July 30, for blocking the sidewalk at K & W Parkway Plaza. The same evening, eight more students were arrested at the downtown K & W, including Robert Moorman's younger brother, Rutherford. For the first time, a substantial crowd of about fifty white counter-protesters appeared at the downtown K & W. Police were on hand and kept whites from interacting physically with black demonstrators. Whether the motivation was in the name of true racial progress, or about preserving the image of the city, there was a concerted effort by whites in power to avoid the types of violent ugliness seen in the Deep South—or for that matter quite recently in nearby Lexington. Later that night a rally of over three hundred CORE supporters met at the First Baptist Church on Highland Avenue. James D. Ballard told the crowd “we mean business” and demonstrations will continue “until every vestige of segregation is destroyed.” The Reverend Kelly O.P. Goodwin, pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, called on the crowd to provide “greater adult and parental support of the movement.” Goodwin told the crowd, Negroes were “at a divinely appointed hour in history. We are dissatisfied with the rate and the speed and the pace of accomplishment in this our nation. Somebody must work, sweat, die, and sacrifice before this pattern is changed.” Andrew B. Reynolds, a research technician at Bowman Gray School of Medicine, led the singing

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<sup>102</sup> Larry Queen, “Eight Protesters Arrested; Rain Breaks Up Songfest,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 29, 1963; and Steve Leshner, “More Protests Here Pledged,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 31, 1963.



throughout the rally. Reynolds spoke briefly about the young people sitting in jail that evening, and then burst uncontrollably into sobs. James D. Ballard took over for Reynolds and said, "This is the price you pay for freedom." Ballard exhorted the crowd by saying: "My freedom is not to be redeemed whenever the white man says it ought to be. No progress can be made fast enough until I am given the same opportunities as every other American. We are doing no more in 1963 than the white man did in 1776." After composing himself, Reynolds announced to the crowd there would be a march to the County Jail starting every evening at 6:30 to sing to the prisoners. Dr. J.M. Walker told the rally he had raised over one thousand dollars "to support the movement."<sup>103</sup>

Mayor Benton made a statement the same evening, vowing to renew his appeal to CORE leaders to stop demonstrating: "They must face reality. They are running the risk of retarding the progress we have made. Why, in two weeks we have accomplished more than has been accomplished in decades. The committee hasn't given up on the K & W Cafeteria. When the committee gives up, then they might have a reason to demonstrate."<sup>104</sup>

Pressure from CORE created a heightened sense of urgency within the African American community, which appeared to also increase the pressure on mainstream black leadership. CORE leadership was also intensifying pressure on the mayor. James Ballard addressed the Goodwill Committee meeting on July 31 and called for a "local group not affiliated with the committee or the NAACP or CORE" to negotiate with the

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<sup>103</sup> Larry Queen, "12 Demonstrators Arrested," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 31, 1963; and Steve Leshner, "More Protests Here Pledged," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 31, 1963

<sup>104</sup> Steve Leshner, "More Protests Here Pledged," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 31, 1963.

management of K & W Cafeterias. S.E. Carey, a Negro school principal, proposed a resolution to commend the members of CORE for their contributions to local civil rights efforts. Mayor Benton responded: "I don't think the committee wants to go on record condoning the breaking of the law." Ballard responded CORE was "open for negotiations," but "does not intend to give up the use of demonstrations." Another CORE member, Alfred Scott, questioned Benton about the status of black city employees. Benton noted that 680 out of 1,857 city employees were Negroes. Scott countered: "Those employees are in Negro positions. We are interested in those other 1,100 jobs." Ballard added: "Those figures don't tell us the truth. Why can't firemen from Dunleith go to Liberty Street and some of the white firemen go to Dunleith?" The meeting adjourned without a vote on the proposed resolution praising CORE, but clearly the Goodwill Committee was feeling pressure from CORE that was beginning to affect the internal dynamics of the group. After the meeting, James Ballard made a statement to the press promising a black boycott of *all* white-owned businesses, "until such time as they all serve all the public in an open and equal basis." Ballard's strategy to include all white-owned businesses was designed to encourage the businesses that had already integrated to pressure those that had not.<sup>105</sup>

In an editorial titled "Two-Way Obligation," the *Journal* continued its support for racial equality, while simultaneously admonishing the CORE plan for boycotting white-owned businesses. The *Journal* accused the CORE plan of "penalizing those who serve

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<sup>105</sup> "New Group to Negotiate with K & W Is Requested," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 1, 1963; and "Negroes Here Plan to Boycott Stores," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 1, 1963.

the public equally for the deeds of those who practice a discriminatory policy." The newspaper admonished CORE for creating a form of "role-reversal" with its own discriminatory practices. Arguing that civil disobedience "was open to serious question" in Winston-Salem, since no "solid wall of resistance has built up against the demands of the Negro for equal opportunity and equal access to public facilities," the *Journal* editorial staff clearly still was obliged to reflect the views of key city fathers.<sup>106</sup>

On Thursday night, August 2, three black protesters were arrested and jailed. Eighteen protesters were arrested at K & W Cafeteria at Parkway Plaza and sixteen were arrested downtown at the Cherry Street cafeteria. Twenty-five more were given citations without arrest. The Reverend James Ballard, twenty-eight, was among those arrested. Ballard filed assault charges against K & W Assistant Manager William Spafford, who then filed counter-charges for assault against Ballard. Teenagers as young as thirteen were among those given citations for "obstructing sidewalks." Boyd Hanes of the State Road community, a white counter-protester, marched up and down Cherry Street carrying a sign reading, "Join National Association for the Advancement of White People." Terry Wimbish of Winston-Salem joined Hanes, carrying a sign saying, "Keep Them Out Allred." Many in a crowd of thirty or so white onlookers yelled their support. When K & W owner Grady Allred, Sr., was asked by reporters if he would be willing to negotiate with the potential new committee Ballard had proposed, a frustrated Allred replied: "What is there to discuss? There has been no change in company policy on excluding Negroes nor will there be one." Allred continued, pointing at the door of his cafeteria:

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<sup>106</sup> "Two-Way Obligation," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 2, 1963.

"This is not what they want. It's a foot in the door. They'll want more and more and more." Asked by a reporter to be more specific about what was "more," Allred answered, "Your guess is as good as mine." Later that night, a crowd of about two hundred African Americans marched to the jail to once again serenade those protesters who had chosen to remain in jail. Similar protests continued for the next several nights.<sup>107</sup>

Signaling a move towards solidarity between competing factions in the movement, the largest crowd of African American protesters to date assembled outside the jail and City Hall on the night of Monday, August 5. In a highly organized effort, groups of protesters began assembling at a number of street corners in East Winston at 7:30 p.m. Youth leaders, many with megaphones, marched alongside and in front of the demonstrators with instructions. As the various columns of marchers headed towards downtown, some were diverted off of Third Street by police. They adapted by scattering behind the cigarette factories, and then with help from the young leaders, re-assembled on Church Street for the final march to City Hall. Over five hundred protesters gathered in time to be heard singing outside of the scheduled meeting of the Board of Alderman. Police Chief Justus Tucker met with movement leaders and asked them to sing one hymn, say one prayer, and then disperse. The leaders agreed. Described as "weeping" and "holding their hands over their heads," the crowd sang "We Shall Overcome." The Reverend James Ballard led the prayer, calling on "both Negroes and whites to love one

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<sup>107</sup> "3 Negro Protesters Jailed Here, *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 2, 1963; and "Negroes and Whites Picket Here," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 5, 1963.

another.” The crowd then peacefully marched back towards their homes in East Winston.<sup>108</sup>

Surprisingly, just two days later, Ballard made a dramatic announcement to the press. Perhaps influenced by a meeting between Mayor Benton and an interracial group of clergy, Ballard announced that by mutual consent, CORE and the NAACP were suspending demonstrations and picketing indefinitely, “in order that all proprietors who maintain and operate segregated public facilities might rethink their positions without the threat of force or the fear of pressure.” Ballard called the decision, “strictly and act of faith,” and said movement leaders had not received any specific promises from white businesses or civic leaders. He said that during the suspension of protests, CORE and NAACP Commando volunteers would conduct a “survey of employment practices and of segregation policies in local businesses and industries.” Promising to visit all local businesses and industries, and seemingly contradicting his earlier promise about avoiding the “fear of pressure,” Ballard noted the survey might possibly be used as “a guideline for the proposed selective-buying or boycott campaign.” He also promised CORE, in conjunction with the NAACP Commandos, would continue to hold workshops on picketing and other “tactical methods” used by CORE. Just in time for the start of the new school year under the new consolidated system, Ballard elevated the issue of race and local education. He called for Negro students living in the county to have the right to attend previously all-white schools close to their homes. Ballard also pledged to fight for

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<sup>108</sup> “Protesters Serenade 19 Negroes in Jail,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 6, 1963.

bringing white teachers into black schools, black teachers into white schools, and for fair treatment of black administrators.<sup>109</sup>

Just as the shift in methods by CORE seemed to indicate some sort of way forward was possible, statements by religious and business leaders on the white side also may have been taken as signs of a potential breakthrough. An expanded interracial group of over one hundred Forsyth County clergymen issued a formal statement which was printed in the *Sunday Journal and Sentinel* of August 18, 1963. The statement called for ending segregation in all businesses and churches, and said: "Racial segregation is directly opposed to all the precepts of the Judeo-Christian tradition." The clergy called for an end to racial discrimination in education, housing, and all public services. The group began plans for a series of seminars on racial issues and called for various subcommittees to be formed to accomplish these goals. One of the Sundays at the end of August or the first of September was to be designated for all ministers to create sermons regarding "current racial tension." This marked the first time that a large number of mainstream white religious leaders had unequivocally come out in support of racial equality. Business leaders almost instantly responded in kind. The Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce issued its own statement, saying the organization "heartily endorses and supports the position of the clergy in its position on religion and race."<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Virtie Stroup, "Clergymen Endorse Aims of Committee," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 5, 1963; and Jack Trawick, "Racial Protests Suspended Here," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 9, 1963.

<sup>110</sup> "Clergy's Statement Endorsed by C of C," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, August 18, 1963.

Eleven days after James Ballard announced a suspension of demonstrations, movement leaders determined that protests should resume. Protesters resumed marching at the downtown K & W cafeteria. In a carefully orchestrated demonstration, eight to ten picketers marched steadily up and down the sidewalk, while a “steady stream of Negroes” from a larger crowd approached the cafeteria entrance one by one and requested entrance for service. K & W posted a large sign on the glass entrance doors stating: “This is a private business. We reserve the right to deny service to anyone—race—color—creed—WE DO NOT SERVE NEGROES.” The words “anyone” and “Negroes” were underlined. William Spafford, an assistant manager for the cafeteria, had the job of refusing entrance to the protesters. Spafford refused to answer questions about who determined the cafeteria’s policy and his own personal views on racial hierarchy. K & W placed a tape recorder and microphone at the front desk to record the exchanges. Louise Wilson, as the official spokesperson for CORE, stated to the press: “We stopped our picketing so there would be a peaceful atmosphere for negotiations, hoping Mr. Allred would change his policy. He did not change his policy and we can’t give up now.”<sup>111</sup>

Louise Wilson was in a unique position during these pivotal days of the civil rights movement in Winston-Salem. Her position on the Goodwill Committee reflected her status as an educator and the wife of a physician and might seem to indicate an acceptance of mainstream, gradualist methodology. Her increasingly visible role as a rising leader in the local CORE chapter, while seemingly a contradiction to her original

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<sup>111</sup> “Picketing Continues at K & W Cafeteria,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 21, 1963.

faith in the Goodwill Committee concept, may in fact have been an indication that Wilson was simply at the vanguard of a shift in thinking for many black leaders, in Winston-Salem and in numerous other cities in the South. The day after picketing resumed, Wilson in her role as CORE spokesperson, told the press that the CORE-NAACP survey of local businesses was still underway and, with a veiled threat that that further action was under consideration, said that an “official list” of businesses subject to boycott had not yet been produced.<sup>112</sup>

Despite placating rhetoric from white leaders, signs of discontent among other mainstream black leaders was also increasingly evident. Clarence Patrick, spokesman for the Goodwill Committee, told the press the committee had received “gratifying” responses to its own survey of a select group of the community’s largest employers. Thirteen major employers had responded and all reported, somewhat disingenuously, “Negro employees have the same rights and privileges as all other employees.” In a vague response to further questioning, Patrick stated “several companies said all positions in the company are open to Negroes” and a “number of companies” claimed to actually have blacks employed in “each type of position the company has.” Reverend Jesse Creel offered public criticism of the employers who did not respond to the survey, some of the actions of the Goodwill Committee, and of press coverage of the committee. Creel

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<sup>112</sup> “Picketing Continues at K & W Cafeteria,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 21, 1963; and Ladd, *Negro Political Leadership in the South*, 225-232. Although he does not name Wilson directly (he describes her as “a school teacher whose husband is a professional man), political scientist Carl Ladd discusses the shift from “conservative” to “militant” by certain civil rights leaders in both Winston-Salem and Greenville, South Carolina. See also: Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 777. Myrdal examined the contradictory roles of a civil rights leader in the South who was a leader in two organizations in his city—one perceived as radical, the other as conciliatory and conservative.



claimed the committee was often quick to adjourn when there was still important business to be discussed. He also criticized the press, implying that “no more than two thirds” of the issues at hand in the committee were actually discussed in media reporting. Louise Wilson raised an issue involving black firefighters. The North Carolina Fireman’s Association annual statewide meeting was underway in Winston-Salem, and Wilson wanted to know why black fireman were not allowed to attend and to receive the training offered there to the organization’s all-white membership. City manager John Gold noted that the city paid the dues of both black and white firemen for their respective organizations and that the Negro Fireman’s Association was having its meeting in Winston-Salem in October. Alfred Scott, a black member of the committee and an Urban League member, spoke up and told the committee that there was a big problem in securing “lodging and eating accommodations” for the large group of black firemen anticipated.<sup>113</sup>

Louis Wilson stepped up her personal involvement in the direct action protests at K & W and increasingly identified publicly as a CORE leader. She distanced herself from her former stance on having patience with the Goodwill Committee. Wilson and Thomas Smith devised a strategy of each supervising a line of protesters at each of the front doors of the cafeteria. A protester would enter after each white patron and when denied service, simply return to the end of the line and start the process over again. Wilson was overheard paraphrasing one of the famous responses of the sit-in movement. When told by a cafeteria spokesman, “I’m sorry we do not serve Negroes,” Wilson

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<sup>113</sup> Jack Trawick, “Biracial Unit Says Response Pleasing,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 22, 1963.

responded, “I did not come to eat Negroes, I came to eat lunch.” During the same protest, Wilson announced to the press that the local CORE chapter was sponsoring a bus to Washington, D.C. for the “Freedom March” scheduled for August 28.<sup>114</sup>

The proposed “March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom” was a hot topic in both national and local media in the final week leading up to the event. African American newspapers across the country were full of articles in support of the march. In a direct appeal for participation, Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote an op-ed piece challenging African Americans to participate. Citing the sacrifice of Medger Evers, and the bravery of teachers in South Carolina who proudly acknowledged their NAACP membership and then lost their jobs, King stated: “This kind of courage should put to shame some Negro civil service worker in Ohio or Pennsylvania or Washington, D.C., who says he is ‘afraid’ to be identified with the protest movement.” The Reverend Ralph D. Abernathy spoke in Los Angeles a week before the march, rallying support from famous show business personalities and sports stars. Hundreds of articles in the black media fervently supported the mission of the march and covered issues from rules of deportment for March attendees to critiques of organized labor for not showing enough solidarity with the cause. Reporting from the white-dominated mainstream press on both national and local levels was less enthusiastic, and along with government leaders appeared to do little to allay white fears and concerns. Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI) wire reports quoted former President Harry Truman calling the march “silly.” The southern branch of the Presbyterian Church issued a statement saying

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<sup>114</sup> Jack Trawick, “Picketing Resumes at Cafeteria Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 24, 1963

the “objectives of the march are not sufficiently defined and that it holds possibilities of harm to the church and to our democratic process.” White readers were no doubt made more anxious by government promises to have four thousand marines and soldiers ready to move if Washington police and National Guardsmen were to “unable to cope with any outbreak of violence.”<sup>115</sup>

On the morning of the march, the *Winston-Salem Journal* editorial staff offered its readers a dichotomous opinion piece that was full of the imagery of American freedom, while simultaneously offering warnings against “patronage diddlers and ward heelers” as well as the “Hollywood types” that were certain to be at the march to advance their own self-interest. The author or authors optimistically posed that Lincoln would look out from his memorial and see “old folks who never thought to see this day and the young folks impatient for a richer tomorrow.” Calling the March on Washington the “Big March,” the *Journal* referred to the rights movement in Winston-Salem as a “quiet march”—a march that occurred over a long period of time and that involved “the elected servants of the people, the leaders of industry and commerce, the school men, the preachers and all the other men and women of good will from both races and every creed.”<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> “Reveal Final Plans for March on Washington,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, August 21, 1963; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “March on Washington,” *New York Amsterdam News*, August 24, 1963; “AFL-CIO Views on March Scored,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, August 24, 1963; “Abernathy to Spark D.C. March Move Here,” *Los Angeles Sentinel*, August 22, 1963; “Truman Says March Is ‘Silly,’” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 24, 1963; “Church Group Won’t Back Rights March,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 22, 1963; “Military Standing by for March,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 22, 1963; “Massive Protest March at Washington is Wednesday,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, August 25, 1963; and “Capital Braces for Rights March,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 27, 1963.

<sup>116</sup> “The Big March,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 28, 1963

A.B. Reynolds and Mrs. Joy Jessup coordinated the Winston-Salem CORE chapter's efforts to send people to Washington. Reynolds was in charge of securing bus transportation and Jessup was in charge of coordinating with the North Carolina state CORE contingent led by Floyd McKissick. An estimated fifty-five people attended from Winston-Salem. Eighteen people went in private vehicles, and the other thirty-seven rode together by bus, leaving from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church about 1 a.m. the morning of August 28. The group was led by Reverend Thomas Smith, Jr. and consisted mostly of high school and college students. One young person said: "My folks okayed the trip, but they told me I had to get my money the best way I could. So I cut grass, scrubbed floors, and earned money any way I could." Another student added: "I'm going because I've been working with CORE all summer, and I just had to go. I talked to my parents and they agreed to pay my way." All attendees were advised to bring food and water, although CORE provided funding for those in need of additional help with expenses. Five of the travelers were white, including James Watson, who had served a seminary-related internship at the all-black First Baptist Church during the summer. The interracial ministers' group called on all churches to open their doors for prayer during the day and a central prayer meeting was scheduled for noon at the all-white Centenary Methodist Church in downtown Winston-Salem.<sup>117</sup>

News of the march filled the front page of the *Journal* on the morning after. Calling the event "Part Carnival—Part Revival," press coverage emphasized the peaceful

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<sup>117</sup> "55 Leave Twin City to March in Capital," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 28, 1963; and "Prayer Meeting Scheduled Here," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 28, 1963.

and orderly nature of people at the event. The now iconic “I Have a Dream” message from Martin Luther King, Jr. was the only speech quoted at length in the newspaper. Floyd McKissick read a message from CORE national director James Farmer. Sent from jail in Donaldson, Louisiana, where he was held on public disturbance charges, Farmer’s message emphasized “violence is outmoded as a solution to the problems of men.” The day’s youngest speaker, John Lewis of SNCC, delivered an address promoting a youthful sense of urgency. “To those who have said ‘be patient and wait,’ we must say that patience is a dirty and nasty word. We cannot be patient, we do not want to be free gradually, we want our freedom now,” Lewis said. Twenty-four-year-old George Maize of Winston-Salem stood out in the crowd, wearing a red, white, and blue vest, monogrammed with the words “Freedom,” “Jobs,” “Housing,” and “Education.” Maize told a reporter from the *Baltimore Afro-American*: “It means that America belongs to us and we belong to America. It is time for the world to know it.”<sup>118</sup>

Although local movement leaders briefly suspended protest activities because of the March, the images and rhetoric from Washington seemed to spawn both a heightened sense of urgency for the rights movement, as well as a more intense resolve to support direct action protests. Hythia D. Evans stated blacks had been “put in jail, laughed at, beaten,” and that soon whites “are going to feel a little bit of what we have felt for years.” She noted this retribution was not for all whites but for those “who think you are too good for the Negro race.” Evans called for protests and prayers to continue as well as a

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<sup>118</sup> “200,000 Protesters Join in March at Washington; Demonstration Is Orderly,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 29, 1963; Arthur Edson, “Part Carnival—Part Revival,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 29, 1963; “Kennedy, Leaders Confer,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 29, 1963; and “TV Cameraman Turns Ace First-aid Hand as Heat Fells 150,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 7, 1963.

massive boycott against white-owned stores. Building on Martin Luther King's vision of a better society, Eugene Robinson argued vehemently that the rights of private property must be superseded by "the right of social expediency based on the needs of society." He narrowed his argument further by addressing the views of K & W owner Grady Allred. Robinson speculated that if Allred was running a tavern "in the immediate vicinity of a place of worship," or if he were selling alcohol to minors, the citizens of Winston-Salem would unite to shut Allred down for "harming the good of the general public."<sup>119</sup>

The visual images of hundreds of thousands of black protesters gathered on the National Mall were quite disturbing to a large number of whites. Pictures of a "mass rally" further connected Cold War fears of socialism and communism to the civil rights movement. Richard M. Flanders expressed "fear and protest concerning the recent 'march on Washington.'" He continued: "All summer the American Negro has been filled with a spirit of revolution which is leading him down a road he should not follow. This spirit of revolution is surprisingly similar to Communist-agitated action overseas." Flanders was especially concerned with the remarks of A. Philip Randolph and his call for federal support for rights enforcement and increased funding for education, which Flanders saw as an extension of federal power over the individual. Flanders offered a scathing attack on the Kennedy administration's proposed civil rights legislation: "Why not tell private businesses who to hire, or where to build a branch office? Why not take away the right of a man to invite into his home whoever he desires? Why not ban

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<sup>119</sup> Miss Hythia D. Evans, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 1, 1963; and Eugene Robinson, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 1, 1963.

exclusive clubs and golf courses? For that matter, why not end the right of private property and free enterprise altogether?" He went on to ask like minds: "But is this SOCIALISM, you say. Yes it is. That is exactly what Kennedy's power drive is aimed at!" Henry L. Yarbrough of the suburb of Pfafftown said that Martin Luther King's speech was a challenge to "the dream" and hard work of white business owners. Larry Key expressed a belief that civil rights leaders were all communists and were "using mob pressure to succeed in their attempts to bury us by this revolution in the loving name of freedom." Like Richard Flanders, Key believed the Kennedy administration was somehow bowing to a pro-Communist agenda.<sup>120</sup>

Other whites continued to press the argument that mandatory integration was a violation of individual freedom and property rights. Thomas F. Myers, Jr., a housepainter who lived on Poplar Street, argued against "all the talk about giving Negroes more rights and letting them rule over the white. Well, I think white people would like to have their rights too." Myers expressed his views of the Kennedy administration: "I don't think Mr. Kennedy or anyone has the right to pass laws that makes a man have to serve Negroes or close up. I thought that a man has his rights to serve who he wanted or work who he wanted to." He rhetorically asked if these rights were not the reasons that "white men died for in the last three wars" and wondered out loud "if all the [white] men died for no good at all?" Myers received an angry reaction from John L. McCoy, an African American disabled World War I veteran. McCoy scathingly responded to Myers: "It is

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<sup>120</sup>Richard M. Flanders, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 2, 1963; Henry L. Yarbrough, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 10, 1963; and Larry Key, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 5, 1963.

no secret sir that I bear in my body the marks of a war, and I cannot begin to tell how the colored man suffered and died for this country too. The white and colored man suffered side by side in the fox holes and ate soup made from the same bone. Have I lived to see the day when the white man will take all the credit?"<sup>121</sup>

After a quiet week in the wake of the March on Washington, protests and the threat of protests resumed on September 3. The downtown K & W was the only site with protesters. Louise Wilson addressed the Goodwill Committee with a warning that it "was very urgent" for the committee to start producing results from restaurants that were not yet integrated, adding that protests would soon expand beyond just the K & W locations. African American leaders also challenged the committee to produce results in education and in the integration of the fire department. Wilson and Dr. F.W. Jackson charged that white schools had considerable advantages over black schools both in terms of equipment and facilities. Wilson suggested school officials prepare a survey and then report the data back to the committee. Following the argument by City Manager John Gold that the fire department was already integrated, Wilson and Reverend J.H. Miller countered that while it was true the department had black firemen, the department maintained a policy of keeping black fireman assigned to firehouses in black neighborhoods. Miller may have best summarized the overall position of African Americans in Winston-Salem when he defined integration as the right to "free movement." "We want to be able to move in every facet of community life," he told the committee and city officials, "I want to feel,

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<sup>121</sup>Thomas F. Myers, Jr., "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 28, 1963; *1963 City Directory*, 565; and John L. McCoy, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 7, 1963.



as a Negro, that wherever I go I will not be tabooed because I am brown-skinned or black.” One day later, the response of the Goodwill Committee was to create a subcommittee headed by Rabbi David Rose and including Reverend Miller, charged with evaluating the performance of the overall committee over the past four months and also charged with presenting recommendations for the next courses of action. Within the matter of a few days, school officials reported back to the subcommittee that there was no inequality within the system.<sup>122</sup>

As white and black in Winston-Salem continued to grapple with the effectiveness of the Goodwill Committee, news from elsewhere again seemed to give a heightened sense of urgency to those wishing to avoid larger demonstrations or even violence. Twenty miles away in High Point, 355 African Americans were jailed on the night of September 9. Protesters marched peacefully to jail after being threatened with the possibility of fire hoses and tear gas. Two nights later in High Point, five hundred black demonstrators marched through a barrage of “rocks, eggs, and tomatoes” from an estimated crowd of three thousand whites. Police then used tear gas on the black protesters. In Birmingham, President Kennedy federalized the National Guard in an attempt to protect the twenty black children participating in a token effort to integrate the violent city’s schools and to trump efforts by Governor George Wallace to prevent integration from occurring. Black students were taunted and threatened with violence, and many white students stayed home to boycott integration. Bombs were thrown into

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<sup>122</sup> Jack Trawick, “Biracial Committee to Evaluate Work,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 5, 1963; Jack Trawick, “Biracial Committee Names Rose to Post,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 6, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “Goodwill Committee Proves Effective,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 8, 1963.

the homes of civil rights leaders Arthur Shores and A.G. Gaston. The most shocking and horrific news of all from Birmingham came on Sunday, September 15, 1963, as four adolescent African American girls were killed in a morning bomb explosion at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. Despite a call for calm and nonviolence from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other black leaders, on the afternoon of the bombing, police in Birmingham shot and killed a sixteen-year-old African American boy who was venting his sorrow, anger, and frustration by throwing rocks, and white teenagers sporting Confederate battle flags on their motor scooter shot a thirteen-year-old African American boy in the head and chest with a pistol.<sup>123</sup>

The cowardly and tragic bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church again brought Birmingham to the forefront of the nation's news. If images of police dogs and fire dogs had elevated public discourses about racial equality earlier that summer, the images of a dynamited house of worship and the school pictures of four dead little girls served to remind America of the entrenched and ugly nature of white racial hatred. The images reminded people in the North that racial equality was more than just a "southern problem." In cities and towns across the South, including Winston-Salem, both black and white could only wonder if such an event was possible in their own communities.

Reginald J. Cooke, the associate pastor at the white Burkehead United Methodist Church, said he had known the feeling of horror he felt over the Birmingham bombing only one

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<sup>123</sup> "355 Arrested in High Point," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 10, 1963; Roy Thompson, "Tear Gas Used at High Point," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 12, 1963; "One Is Killed, 8 Hurt in Birmingham Riot," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 5, 1963; "Negro Students Enter Schools in Alabama: Guard Is Federalized," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 11, 1963; "Alabama Church Bombed; 4 Negro Girls Are Killed; 2 Boys Are Shot to Death," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 16, 1963; and Eskew, 318-321.

other time in his life—after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Cooke spoke of the four young girls “learning about Jesus, the Bible, and Love, when suddenly there was a blinding flash of light and a loud thundering noise! Then nothing. Silence. They heard no more singing.” Doris Richardson, an African American and the wife of a woodworker, called the bombing, “Sunday’s holocaust in Birmingham.” “Wake up citizens of Winston-Salem,” Richardson warned, “before we have a repeat performance of Sunday’s tragedy here in our town.” The *Journal* editorial staff noted the repeated failure of the Alabama courts to convict whites for previous bombings and murders. Speaking in a broader sense that was clearly intended as a warning for Winston-Salem, the authors posited, “The temptation for the Negroes to resort to lawless acts is strong and will remain strong unless there is some assurance that the law will protect them against violence. Somehow, out of the broken windows and the blood-stained floors of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, that assurance must come.”<sup>124</sup>

In the wake of the funeral for the four little girls, Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders called for an increased commitment to the cause. In Winston-Salem, CORE-led protests continued and the number of participants increased. On the Monday night after the bombing, over 150 CORE members marched to City Hall to present demands to the meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Key among these demands was for the city to pass an ordinance mandating the integration of all businesses that were required to have city business licenses. Protesters also demanded progress on

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<sup>124</sup> Reginald J. Cooke, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 18, 1963; Mrs. Doris Richardson, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 20, 1963; and “Alabama Is on the Spot,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 17, 1963.

longstanding issues like school integration, equitable resources within the schools, access to recreational facilities, along with integration and fair hiring and promotion practices within city departments.<sup>125</sup>

It might seem logical that the tragedy in Birmingham would have softened some of the white resistance to change in Winston-Salem. Instead, Mayor Benton was visibly irritated by the more demanding tone of the protesters and their leaders, perhaps also reflecting the political pressures still emanating from a substantial segment of white voters. In a statement that clearly illustrates how entrenched in the social fabric white paternalism really was, Benton admonished the demonstrators to “stop and take inventory of what has been done for them and begin to show some maturity and reasoning ability.” Benton argued attorneys had assured him that a local desegregation ordinance would violate the North Carolina Constitution and that a national civil rights act would carry much more legal weight. The mayor stated he was “unaware” of any discriminatory practices regarding city employment, although he conceded that city firehouses were separated by race. He argued that the men had trained together as teams and breaking them up would be inefficient.<sup>126</sup>

A more disturbing reflection of the attitudes of the most conservative among whites in Winston-Salem happened just one day after the mayor’s harsher than normal reaction to black protesters. Approximately sixty-five whites gathered at the Forsyth County Courthouse on the night of Wednesday, September 18, for the express purpose of

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<sup>125</sup> Jack Trawick, “Board Urged by CORE to Enact Anti-bias Law,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 17, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “Mayor Benton Hits Demonstrations,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 18, 1963.

<sup>126</sup> Jack Trawick, “Mayor Benton Hits Demonstrations,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 18, 1963.

forming a local chapter of the White Citizens' Councils of America. The guest speaker was none other than Louis W. Hollis of Jackson, Mississippi, the national executive director of the organization. Hollis compared John F. Kennedy to Adolf Hitler and asked the enthusiastic crowd, "Shall the future North Carolinian be an Anglo-Saxon or a mulatto?" He also argued that racial violence only occurred in cities that were integrated and posited that his organization prevented integration and thus prevented violence. "Be alert to appeals for sympathy and fairness which in themselves seem innocuous, but in reality enhance the integration movement," Hollis said. "Remember, this is the 'bologna technique' of slicing off a little at a time." Boyd Hanes, leader of the counter-protests at K & W Cafeteria, and local realtor Paul Bennett stepped forward as leaders of the new chapter. Six women were also present. One unnamed woman told the press she wanted to join, but communists were after her, and she was "too busy just trying to stay alive." At one point threats were made against WSJS News cameraman Jack Combs who was filming those in attendance. Despite more threats, the WSJS team refused to leave, citing that the courthouse was public property. Deputy Sheriffs remained on site and made certain there was no actual violence. In an interview for WSJS television, Boyd Hanes inferred that blacks had contributed little to civilization except for in the field of entertainment, and even there mostly with "shouting and dancing."<sup>127</sup>

Winston-Salem and Forsyth County had for some time been spared activity by extremist groups like the Ku Klux Klan, in no small part due to the efforts of Sheriff

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<sup>127</sup> Jack Trawick, "Mayor Benton Hits Demonstrations," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 18, 1963; and Steve Leshner, "Citizens' Council Organized Here," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 18, 1963

Ernie Shore to make them feel unwelcome. The White Citizens' Council had provided the façade of respectability for racial extremism in other places in the South and now seemed poised to try the same in Winston-Salem. William Spafford, assistant manager of the downtown K & W, echoed this new strain of public white resistance with a warning to other whites: "White citizens of Winston-Salem, if you don't start doing something now, stand up for your rights, which you are losing, I would hate to see what color our grandchildren will be. Spafford continued: "No, the sooner we realize what's happening to this city, this state, this nation and do something to gain back our self-respect, state rights, and private businesses, the sooner our children will be safe to live as they choose." Daisy Bodenheimer of Walkertown praised Spafford, wishing there were "more men like you." She called for the "white race" to "start marching for our rights." She praised George Wallace as "the number one good governor in Alabama," while speculating that perhaps the Sixteenth Street bombing was done by someone of color to garner sympathy for their cause. Mrs. Eleanor T. Shermer, a resident of the Ogburn Station neighborhood and the wife of a railroad clerk, suggested that "cleanliness, morals, and manners" were not racial traits but instead signs of a proper upbringing. She called on the NAACP and CORE to provide scholarship money and business investments to the "most deserving," and to "cut out all these shenanigans."<sup>128</sup>

African Americans, along with moderate and liberal whites, were visibly concerned with the creation of a White Citizens' Council chapter and its potential to

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<sup>128</sup> Steve Leshner, "Citizens' Council Organized Here," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 18, 1963; William Spafford, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 20, 1963; Daisy Bodenheimer, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 9, 1963; Eleanor T. Shermer, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 18, 1963; and *1963 City Directory*, 695.

undermine progress. Efforts by the Goodwill Committee to maintain Winston-Salem's image as a peaceful and pleasant place to live and do business were threatened by rhetoric that mimicked the worst of the Deep South. Further compounding the problem, in late September hundreds of Winston-Salem citizens found 3x5 inch index cards with "KKKK, Box 4072, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27105" stamped in red letters, tucked under their windshield wipers. R.L. Mabe, a self-employed builder who lived on West End Boulevard, announced that he was the Grand Cyclops of the new Winston-Salem klavern (chapter) of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Mabe indicated the chapter was affiliated with a national organization out of Tuscaloosa, Alabama and with the growing North Carolina organization headed by Grand Dragon James Robert "Bob" Jones of Granite Quarry. Calling the Klan "a fraternal organization," Mabe stated: "We're not trouble-makers or bombers. I can honestly say that it's a fine organization and we don't go for violence. You have to believe in white supremacy to be a Klansman, but you don't beat the colored race with a stick anymore." Calling his group "in harmony" with the White Citizens' Council, Mabe differentiated between the groups by insisting, "we're a little more careful about who we take in as members. We screen our members." Sheriff Ernie Shore and Police Chief Justus Tucker were both aware of this new group and were genuinely committed to limiting visible Klan activities in Winston-Salem.<sup>129</sup>

Mayor Benton's bristling over the actions of CORE demonstrations, and his silence on the White Citizens' Council and Ku Klux Klan developments, indicate he was

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<sup>129</sup> "Twin City KKK Unit Organized," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 3, 1963; and Ashley B. Carter, "Racial Harmony in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: North Carolinian Myth of Racial Progressiveness versus Civil Rights, 1954-1980," MA Thesis, Morgan State University, May 20, 2010, 66-67.

feeling political pressure from the very substantial conservative white population of the city. The normally progressive editorial staff of the *Journal* suggested “ill-considered parades and demands may alienate people of good will and hurt those very men and women in the community who have taken the initiative in advancing good race relations.” The interracial Forsyth Ministers’ Fellowship may also have felt similar pressures from elements within the white church congregations. A lack of support from white pastors led to the failure to adopt a resolution by Jerry Drayton of New Bethel Baptist, which simply stated opposition to the core principles of the White Citizens’ Council. Perhaps in an effort to preserve the spirit of the ministers’ group, John Miller, pastor of Goler Metropolitan AME Zion noted that at least no clergyman had been willing to give a prayer at the White Citizens’ Council meeting. Thomas Smith of CORE seemed to be aware of the mayor’s predicament. Smith called any inference that CORE was the cause of the appearance of the White Citizens’ Council “unfair” but also offered an olive branch to Mayor Benton. “I think we can get our heads together,” Smith said. “Basically there is not too much difference in our positions. I think this can very easily be worked out.” Smith then noted that unlike over one hundred other CORE branches, the Winston-Salem chapter would not have a memorial march for the Birmingham church bombing<sup>130</sup>

Black and white leaders in Winston-Salem seemed to sense that recent events called for a re-examination of goals and methods and perhaps also for a recommitment to negotiating in good faith with each other. The visible presence of white supremacy

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<sup>130</sup> Jack Trawick, “Mayor Benton Hits Demonstrations,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 18, 1963; “A Time for Thinking,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 19, 1963; Virtie Stroup, “Ministers Decline to Denounce Citizens Council,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 20, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “CORE Official Says Mayor’s Statement Unfair,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 19, 1963.



extremists, along with continued violence in Birmingham and closer to home in Lexington and Danville, may have sparked a return to the more traditional, gradualist, Winston-Salem way. From early October until the end of the year, the number of direct action protests from blacks dwindled, while whites offered a number of potentially positive steps forward for racial equality. By mid-October, 1963, although an unspecified number of small independent cafes and diners, like K & W, remained segregated, the committee was generally pleased to have “between 45 and 50” restaurants integrated. Most hotels and motels, including all of the national chains, had integrated, as had all of the theaters and drive-ins. The Goodwill Committee announced publicly a shift from a main focus on restaurant desegregation to placing more emphasis on the issues of employment and education.<sup>131</sup>

On September 30, Governor Terry Sanford formally announced the creation of the North Carolina Fund (NCF), with the specific goal of breaking the “cycle of poverty” in North Carolina. Fourteen million dollars were secured from private funding sources including the Ford Foundation in New York, along with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, both of which were based in Winston-Salem. Babcock Foundation president and Winston-Salem resident Charles H. Babcock, Sr. commented on why the NCF was attractive to his board of directors: “This appears to be an effort to get at the roots of peoples’ problems and to remove the causes rather than dispense palliatives which seems to be a better way of spending foundation

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<sup>131</sup> “Two Men Held at Birmingham in Unspecified Bombings,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 1, 1963; “Negroes Threaten Protests at Danville,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 1, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “Biracial Committee Outlines New Goals,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 11, 1963.

money.” The initial plan called for setting up pilot projects in ten to fifteen areas of North Carolina, with agencies in a mix of rural and urban areas with concentrated poverty. Winston-Salem was among the first areas in the state to submit a proposal to the NCF. Ironically, weeks later when the seven initial project areas were announced, Winston-Salem was not among them. After receiving some pressure from the Babcock and Reynolds funding sources, it was soon thereafter announced that Winston-Salem would indeed receive an agency under the NCF.<sup>132</sup>

The creation of the NCF along with other local initiatives gave cause for cautious optimism within the black community. President Kennedy increased his rhetoric in favor of comprehensive national civil rights legislation, providing increased hope that formal segregation might finally be outlawed. City government increased its commitment to urban renewal calling for a citizens’ advisory committee to help create strategies for eliminating slums and improving public housing options. This was also in response to criticism from the federal Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA) which had criticized the city for having over twenty percent of its housing within the defining parameters of “deteriorating and dilapidated.” The Winston-Salem Committee for a Model Community pledged to continue the successful summer youth work program. The Redevelopment Commission of Winston-Salem announced plans for a two million dollar shopping center project to stimulate the economy in the predominantly black East

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<sup>132</sup> Bill Connelly, “Fund Secures \$14 Million for Projects to Help Rid North Carolina of Poverty,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 1, 1963; “Plan Appealed to Foundations’ Leaders,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 1, 1963; Steve Leshner, “Twin City’s Participation in Project Held Likely,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 1, 1963; Jack Trawick, “City Seeks N.C. Fund Role,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 12, 1963; and Korstad and Leloudis, *To Right These Wrongs*.

Winston area. Plans for the shopping center included an eight-story office building for the black-owned Winston Mutual Life Insurance Company, a Sears, Roebuck, and Company store, a Wachovia Bank branch, a theater, and a bowling alley. African American leaders had long sought a modern shopping facility to be centrally located within their community.<sup>133</sup>

The assassination of President John F. Kennedy sent emotional shockwaves throughout North Carolina, the nation, and the world. North Carolina governor Terry Sanford was in Winston-Salem Friday morning, November 22, to attend a luncheon meeting with journalist James Reston of the *New York Times* and an all-white contingent of business and civic leaders from Winston-Salem. As the prominent men ate in a private room of the elite Twin City Club, word came from Dallas that President Kennedy had been shot. A radio was brought into the room so the men could receive updates from Dallas and a phone was made available for Governor Sanford to communicate with Raleigh. No one finished their lunch. Just before 2:30 p.m., the group received word that President Kennedy was dead. The only comment the visibly shaken Governor Sanford could muster was, “I don’t have any words right now for such a tragedy.”<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Anthony Lewis, “In Washington: The Administration Moves to Reduce Opposition to the Civil Rights Bill,” *New York Times*, October 20, 1963; “Kennedy, Lawmakers Discuss Rights Bill; Compromise Is Sought,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 24, 1963; “Funds Are Granted for Renewal Study,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 2, 1963; Jack Trawick, “Plan to Eliminate Slums Is Unveiled,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 12, 1963; “Youth Work Plan Attracts Attention,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 17, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “\$2-Million Shopping Center Is Planned for East Winston,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 17, 1963.

<sup>134</sup> “Kennedy Killed; Texan Charged; Johnson Sworn in as President,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 23, 1963; and Jack Trawick, “Sanford Is Obviously Shaken,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 23, 1963.

Local reaction to Kennedy's death was generally a mix of shock and disbelief that such a horrible thing could happen in modern America. Eldon D. Nielson, Forsyth County GOP chairman, said, "like everyone else I was stunned." Eunice Ayers, Forsyth County Register of Deeds and a former Democratic county chair, was crying as she said, "This is a terrible thing." Reaction was strong in the African American community, a community that generally saw Kennedy as a friend and as the first president to genuinely take the interests of black citizens to heart. Alderman Carl Russell expressed the emotions of many in his community: "I don't want to believe it. This despicable act brings me grief, then indignation to know that someone could take the life of a man who means so much to this nation and to the world." "The world has lost a great leader," said former alderman, the Rev. William R. Crawford. "Negroes have lost a dedicated friend. The cause for which he lived will triumph in the end." Lillian B. Lewis, the first African American woman on the Board of Education and a professor at Winston-Salem State College (WSSC), had met both John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. She learned the tragic news as she left her classroom. "I'm shocked beyond words," Lewis said. Clark S. Brown, Grand Master of the Prince Hall Masons of North Carolina and a Democratic Party leader, stated: "The greatest tribute that all Americans can make to his memory is to work harder to achieve the ideals and concepts for which he worked." Maxine M. Phifer, like Clark S. Brown, seemed to realize that Kennedy's death should not be used as an

excuse to slow down the struggle. “We are continually looking forward to a day of complete freedom,” Phifer said. “I pray, I believe, and I trust that that day will come.”<sup>135</sup>

Winston-Salem joined with the rest of the nation in mourning the death of the president. City Government closed on Monday, November 25, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., to allow city employees to either attend local memorials or to watch the funeral from Washington. Schools were opened all day and all “age appropriate” grades watched television coverage from the capital. Wake Forest cancelled classes during the middle of the day and WSSC closed at noon. Students from WSSC marched from their campus to downtown and placed a wreath on a monument at the courthouse. Churches throughout the city held memorials on both Sunday and Monday. The only interracial service was downtown at the usually white First Presbyterian church in an effort sponsored by the Forsyth Ministers’ Fellowship.<sup>136</sup>

Despite deep sorrow over the death of President Kennedy, African Americans in Winston-Salem and elsewhere were somewhat encouraged by the promises coming from President Lyndon Johnson. In his first address to Congress, just five days after Kennedy’s assassination, Johnson called for the passing of a “strong civil rights bill” as a memorial to Kennedy. Assistant Senate majority Leader Hubert H. Humphrey approved of Johnson’s position on civil rights legislation: “This is a message calling for action, a

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<sup>135</sup> “Twin Citians Take News with Dismay,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 23, 1963; and Luix Overbea, “Negro Community Stunned,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 23, 1963.

<sup>136</sup> Virtie Stroup, “Churches Here to Pay Homage Today, Tomorrow to Kennedy,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 24, 1963; “Period of Mourning Set for Twin Citians,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 24, 1963; “Twin City to Honor Kennedy,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 25, 1963; and Jesse Poindexter, “Twin City Pays Last Respects to Slain President,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 26, 1963.

message which condones no delay.” Senate Republican Leader Everette M. Dirksen called the president’s address, “a very reassuring message to the country.” Republicans vowed to remain as non-partisan as possible at least until the end of the year out of respect for the slain president. Southern Democrats, however, made it clear that they would have no part of a moratorium on opposition to civil rights legislation. Senator Richard B. Russell of Georgia said of Johnson’s proposed legislation: “This is not a civil rights bill, it is a special privilege bill—it will destroy more rights than it will establish.” In the House of Representatives, Virginia Congressman Howard W. Smith, Chair of the Rules Committee promised blocking action against civil rights legislation. Other Democrats, including Richard Bolling of Missouri, the second-ranking Democrat on the Rules Committee, proposed parliamentary moves to temporarily remove Smith from his position during hearings on civil rights legislation. Speaker of the House, Democrat John W. McCormack of Massachusetts, a proponent of the civil rights bill, pledged that the House would stay in session right up until Christmas, with the hope of forcing a vote early in 1964.<sup>137</sup>

For the remainder of 1963, Winston-Salem stayed calm with only a handful of protests. There was considerable satisfaction with the accomplishments of 1963 among both black and white mainstream leaders. The Goodwill Committee reported at year’s end that “all major hotels and motels have lowered racial bars, all major eating

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<sup>137</sup> “Transcript of President Johnson’s Thanksgiving Day Address to the Nation Urging ‘New Dedication,’” *New York Times*, November 29, 1963; “Rights Bill Attitudes Unchanged,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 28, 1963; “Johnson Reminds U.S. Nation Must Move On; He Asks for Prayers,” *Winston-Salem Journal* November 29, 1963; and “Civil Rights Strategy Is Planned: Parliamentary Moves Begun,” *Winston-Salem Journal* November 29, 1963.

establishments (about 50), except three cafeterias, have removed racial barriers,” and “all theaters, downtown as well as drive-ins, accept patrons without regard to race.” The committee also reported that seventeen out of eighteen major employers in Winston-Salem pledged, “Negro employees have the same rights and privileges as other employees.” The number of blacks working in the police department, fire department, and other city departments was increasing, as was the number of black federal postal workers. Drive-ins and indoor theaters accepted “patrons without regard to race.”<sup>138</sup>

The reality in Winston-Salem was that the number of black jobs in government and in private industry were slowly increasing. The notion that inequality was simply erased was, of course, not at all the case. Many public facilities did open their doors to people of color but by no means did that insure equal or even polite service. The deeply entrenched nature of white racism was evident in muted tones in public discourses and was manifest in not-so-muted tones in private conversations. Racism transcended all levels of social and economic class within the white community, and higher education was no guarantee of a progressive outlook on racial issues.

African Americans had good reason to be proud of their accomplishments and good reason to feel encouraged for the future. 1963 was a cathartic and transformational year in Winston-Salem and in the civil rights movement writ large. The responses of African Americans in Winston-Salem to events elsewhere proves that a collective consciousness had developed, which increasingly linked almost all African Americans in some way to the larger cause. The gracious manners of the Winston-Salem “way” might

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<sup>138</sup> Patrick, “Desegregation in a Southern City,” 263-269.

never completely die, but the notion of graciously accepting tediously slow progress was waning.



**CHAPTER V**  
**THE GREAT SOCIETY, 1964-1967**

Let us close the springs of racial poison.

The middle years of the 1960s brought dramatic change to the racial dynamics of Winston-Salem. The victories over segregation gained in 1963 were largely untested heading into 1964, and both black and white citizens faced a lengthy period of adjustment to new interpersonal social behaviors. By the time of the federal legal mandate for desegregation in the summer of 1964, the majority of restaurants and hotels in Winston-Salem had voluntarily agreed to serve African Americans, a major step forward but not necessarily a guarantee of a sincere welcome. Favorable results from the local Goodwill Committee, promises of federal legislation and subsequent enforcement on civil rights and economic justice, and the establishment of a North Carolina Fund antipoverty agency in Winston-Salem all gave hope to the black community and served to keep civil rights protests relegated to an occasional small demonstration. Issues like school integration, housing quality and segregation, and job equality were discussed and negotiated, mostly in the traditionally civil and patient tones of Winston-Salem.

Civic leaders continued their mission to portray Winston-Salem in the best light possible, effectively enough, in fact, to win the city a second coveted All-America City award. The elites continued to let segregationists let off steam in the discourses of letters

to the newspaper, especially until the passage of the federal Civil Rights Act in July of 1964. Once public access was federally mandated, there was less need for shelter for local politicians, and the number of letters diminished. Whites in the mainstream, even those with strong conservative beliefs, generally appeared resigned to accepting change and moving forward. Formal opposition to the integration of most public facilities was minimal, although a de facto form of segregation continued based on long-held social habits and the extreme pattern of segregation in the city's neighborhoods. Stalling tactics continued to be the order of the day even as blacks pushed harder and harder for equitable and desegregated schools.

The formation of a comprehensive antipoverty agency, first under the umbrella of the North Carolina Fund (NCF) and later as a part of the larger federal War on Poverty (WOP), gave poor African American women an unprecedented opportunity to access resources and in many cases allowed families to escape poverty and enjoy some of the benefits of the broadly defined American middle class. Elite black women spearheaded the efforts and at least partially bridged the class gap that had long existed in the black community. Even as a substantial number of black families made it into the middle classes, there were thousands of impoverished black people whose plight was only slightly ameliorated by organized antipoverty efforts. Their frustrations had been manifest in minor incidents in the past--and those same frustrations continued to foster a simmering resentment against the establishment.

Writing in a tone that somewhat resembled a Chamber of Commerce brochure, Wake Forest sociology professor and Goodwill Committee member Clarence Patrick

published his study on the efforts to desegregate restaurants and theaters in Winston-Salem in the journal *Phylon*, a publication concerned with African American issues founded by W.E.B. Du Bois at Clark Atlanta University. Patrick recapped post-World War II race relations in Winston-Salem and included data from his study about the period of the 1960 sit-in movement. He gave an overview of the events of 1963, noting that “major” hotels and motels, along with “major eating establishments (except for the K & W cafeterias),” had “removed racial barriers.” Patrick concluded that while he could not completely back his claims quantitatively, it appeared Winston-Salem had experienced success in desegregation at a rate “more rapid in this community than most others.” Patrick credited both black and white leadership within the city for creating “a marked degree of racial harmony and a considerable amount of both idealism and realism.” He also stated: “The mayor, the city manager, and the chief of police, have demonstrated that they believe in justice, fair play, and the protection of the rights of all citizens.”<sup>1</sup>

Winston-Salem was not as violent, nor did it experience the level of protest turmoil found in many other southern cities. Conversely, the city was not necessarily the idyllic oasis of racial harmony that city leaders wished to portray, nor for that matter was Winston-Salem exactly the mecca of political accord that Professor Patrick described in his article. African Americans dwelled within a reality that did not necessarily live up to the grand proclamations of politicians and Goodwill Committee members. Henry S. Lewis, Jr., an African American, recounted a Saturday afternoon outing with his wife and

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<sup>1</sup> Clarence H. Patrick, “Desegregation in a Southern City: A Descriptive Report,” *Phylon* 25, no. 3 (Third Quarter 1964): 263-269.

children in mid-June of 1964. Lewis and his family stopped for hamburgers at a restaurant that was on the Goodwill Committee's list of establishments agreeing to serve all without regard to race. This informal restaurant had windows to place and receive orders and outdoor seating only. Lewis placed the order for all in his party, paid for the food, and returned with the food to an outdoor table where his family awaited him. "All of the other tables were occupied by white customers," Lewis recalled. "None of them seemed annoyed at our presence." Suddenly a white male employee of the restaurant appeared at Lewis's table and ordered the family to leave, telling Lewis that it was take-out only for blacks and the tables were reserved strictly for white customers. Despite threats from the employee to call the police, the Lewis family finished their meal sitting at the table. Lewis's children were ages two and four, and he noted that they were spared understanding of "the burning fire of racial hatred." Lewis acknowledged, "Sooner or later they are going to be awakened to this ugly fact and will demand of me some explanation." Lewis lamented further: "What can I tell them? What can any Negro parent say?"<sup>2</sup>

Stories like those of the Lewis family were fairly common for African Americans in Winston-Salem. Consensus among leaders of both races increasingly pointed towards the need for federal regulations that could instantly remove issues of integration from subjective local interpretation. African Americans had pushed for this type of legislation for decades, and by early 1964, progressive whites appeared to better understand why. Despite good intentions, however, progressive whites still had to deal with the realities of

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<sup>2</sup> Henry S. Lewis, Jr., "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 20, 1964.

co-existing with whites who continued to resist change. Peter Melitis, who had spearheaded the Goodwill Committee effort to desegregate hotels, motels, and restaurants, found his own career affected by the lack of teeth in local negotiations. Melitis was hired as the general manager of the new attractive and state-of-the-art Sheraton Motor Inn at Interstate 40 and Knollwood Street. A deal had been signed between Sheraton and the Allred family of K & W Cafeterias to build a new cafeteria attached to the inn. Despite his passionate public position in favor of restaurant desegregation over the past several years, Melitis was forced to backpedal in order to preserve the lucrative contract for his employer. Melitis stated publicly: "This is a private enterprise situation. The K & W is leasing from the Sheraton. If and when they integrate that is his (Allred's) decision."<sup>3</sup>

Lyndon Johnson set the tone with his State of the Union Address that he fully intended to follow through on John Kennedy's vision of federal civil rights bill, and as the negotiations with Congress played out over the first half of the year, Johnson's resolve for an even stronger bill than Kennedy envisioned emerged. Even without a formal civil rights bill in place, the federal government found ways to pressure local politicians in the South to accept the reality of integration. White leadership in Winston-Salem had already strategically used mandates from the federal government as a means of avoiding direct blame from segregationists over the hospital integration issue. In order to secure five million dollars' worth of federal money, the Board of Trustees of Forsyth Memorial Hospital had to formally agree to open the hospital as an integrated facility.

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<sup>3</sup> "Melitis Clarifies Statement on K & W," *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 11, 1964.

This promise also applied to the Nurses Residence facility and the School of Nursing. The board had to commit to full access for black doctors and to the hiring of black nurses.<sup>4</sup> Not many segregationists were willing to propose a huge local tax increase to offset a potential refusal of federal money.

The creation of an antipoverty agency, the Experiment in Self-Reliance (ESR), under the North Carolina Fund gave Winston-Salem an early push into the War on Poverty, ahead of the Civil Rights Act and the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA), which were finally enacted in the summer of 1964. In short order, the ESR became the starting point for numerous programs funded under the EOA and became a key force in growing the African American middle class. The agency not only managed resources normally associated with the fight against poverty, it influenced racial dynamics in local politics, provided job opportunities in government, and helped increase opportunities for African Americans in the private sector. Progress for African Americans was occurring at a faster pace than at any other time in the city's history, but it was still slow and continued to leave large numbers of people feeling disconnected from the change. White leaders generally supported change leading towards racial equality but continued to feel that equality needed to be meted out at a rate that was palatable to a white population still steeped in the traditions of the Old South. Whites continued to fear the type of violent ugliness still very much evident in almost every day's news from the Deep South.

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<sup>4</sup> "Text of the President's Speech to Congress," *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 9, 1964; and Jesse Poindexter, "New Forsyth Hospital Will Admit All Races," *Winston-Salem Journal*, December 20, 1963.

The leadership of the ESR branch of the North Carolina Fund mirrored the Goodwill Committee in that its first board was comprised of a mix of prominent white and black leaders. Perhaps since “charity work” was traditionally seen within the domain of womanly work, the leadership contained a large number of women, white and black. In addition to the inclusion of women on the board, educator and political activist Louise Wilson was hired by the agency as its Assistant Executive Director. Her fiery confrontation with the mayor in 1963 notwithstanding, Wilson was a deft and generally well-liked negotiator, with a great deal of personal charm. Wilson’s unofficial role as Winston-Salem’s most influential black woman in dealing with whites in power was effectively legitimized in an official capacity.<sup>5</sup>

The fact that Wilson and other African American women were included in the startup of the ESR signified that African American women were committed to public civil rights activity in some numbers, and that upper and middle-class black women were committed to fight for the rights and benefits of poor and working class black women. Florence Creque, Wilson's close friend and one of the first accredited black social workers in North Carolina, joined the cause and provided much-needed professional insight. Francis L. Ross Coble, the registrar at Winston-Salem State College and former assistant to Charlotte Hawkins Brown, offered her considerable organizational skills. The goal of the ESR, as proposed in its mission statement, was to "encourage the growth of people toward dignity, self-reliance, and competence...to develop a sense of community in which neighbors recognize common problems and work together as

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<sup>5</sup> Robert Law, interview with the author, March 14, 2013, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

responsible, self-respecting members of society to solve them...improving the social, economic, and cultural conditions of their neighborhoods and the nation."<sup>6</sup>

The emergence of broader participatory grassroots civil rights and anti-poverty efforts within the black community did not mean that Winston-Salem's tradition of white corporate and civic paternalism had simply gone away. Nor did it mean that all elements of black leadership that were comfortable with a more gradual approach had made radical shifts to adapt to changes within their own perceived constituencies. Paternalism in some ways transcended racial lines as the businessmen of both races seemed somewhat compelled to provide guidance for women. Much of the male leadership of the Goodwill Committee, white and black, continued to function together as a "boys club" under the auspices of the local branch of the Urban League. White leaders of the Urban League included James G. Hanes and Gordon Hanes (top executives of Hanes Hosiery Mills, the city's second-largest employer), Charles B. Wade (a vice president from R.J. Reynolds Tobacco, the city's largest employer), William S. Yeager of Western Electric, Joe S. Rice of Northwest Beverage, and Dr. R. Kenneth Goodson (pastor of Centenary Methodist Church). Black leaders included Dr. Kenneth R. Williams (president of Winston-Salem State College), Clark S. Brown (owner of Brown and Sons Funeral Home), and Dr. Jerry Drayton (pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church). In May 1964, the publicly stated goal of

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<sup>6</sup> "The Experiment in Self-Reliance, Inc.," Francis L. Ross Coble Papers, 1900-1997, Box 1, WSSU Archives, C.G. O'Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University. (Hereinafter cited as ESR Report). For an overview of the history and ongoing work of the ESR, also see [www.eisr.org](http://www.eisr.org); Leah Creque, telephone interview with the author, November 15, 2010; and Interview with Francis Ross Coble, interviewer and date of interview unknown, digital sound file, WSSU Oral History Project, O'Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University. Dr. Leah Creque is a Professor of English at Morehouse University and the eldest daughter of Florence Creque



the Urban League was to "build up a reservoir of qualified Negroes" who might eventually prove worthy of filling jobs traditionally only open to whites.<sup>7</sup> The word "qualified" was subject to a variety of interpretations by potential employers.

This continued pattern of patient negotiation and gradual change was still the predominant method of achieving change on racial issues, but more and more voices within the black community expressed the need for a sense of urgency. Some in the black community, called the Urban League a "tool of the white community." Others harshly criticized the organization for "failing to support street demonstrations." The Urban League stepped in during the Christmas season in 1963 to quell a grassroots effort by black citizens to boycott downtown merchants that did not hire black employees. White civic leaders and black civic leaders like Sam Harvey (the director of the Urban League) sincerely believed that quelling the boycott was in the best long-term interests of the black community.<sup>8</sup>

The Experiment in Self-Reliance began its existence with an immediate need to negotiate between powerful existing structural forces in the city and an as yet unorganized lower-class constituency that both needed and increasingly demanded a new approach. Bridging the divides between races and classes was not a simple task. White

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<sup>7</sup> Roy Thompson, "The Real Role of Winston-Salem's Urban League," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 24, 1964. Originally called the "Community Relations Project," the Winston-Salem branch of the Urban League was started at the end of World War II, arguably as a response to the tobacco workers' attempt to organize at R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. It formally changed its name to the Winston-Salem Urban League in 1953. In the view of Robert Rogers Korstad: "By improving opportunities and conditions for African Americans and developing an alternative leadership cadre in the black community, white leaders maneuvered to maintain white supremacy." See: Robert Rogers Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 378-380.

<sup>8</sup> Roy Thompson, "The Real Role of Winston-Salem's Urban League," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 24, 1964.

elites initially had a disproportionate amount of power on the ESR board, reflecting the tradition of white paternal guidance that even white liberals still deemed critical to progressive change. William F. Womble, a prominent white civic leader and head of the city's most prestigious legal firm, was named the ESR's first chairman of the Board of Directors. According to Womble, the ESR's "main objectives" were to include "dealing with the problems of overpopulation and the reproduction of the mentally deficient, lack of education, health and unemployment."<sup>9</sup> The language of addressing education, healthcare, and unemployment problems is consistent with the goals of the ESR (then and now), while the concerns regarding the reproduction habits of "mentally deficient" [black] people has a resonance with the rhetoric of eugenics programs in Winston-Salem and throughout North Carolina.<sup>10</sup>

William Womble proved over time to be a dedicated supporter of the work of the ESR. In a 2010 interview at the age of ninety-three, Womble gave considerable insight into the mindset of white elites in Winston-Salem prior to the 1960s. Womble recalled that for many years charity for the poor was administered through a "Community Chest" approach that depended on donations from corporations and individuals. The ESR concept, in Womble's words, "to have people find ways to help themselves rather than just to take a handout of money," appears to have been much more palatable to many

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<sup>9</sup> Joe Goodman, "Use of N.C. Volunteers Planned," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 20, 1964.

<sup>10</sup> The eugenics movement was a nationwide phenomenon that advocated forced sterilization of poor and "mentally deficient" subjects. The vast majority of those sterilized were black. Increasingly, the targets for sterilization included single-mother welfare recipients. Between 1929 and 1974 approximately 7600 North Carolinians were sterilized under this program, a substantial number of whom were in Winston-Salem. For an excellent historical overview of the eugenics program and modern-day attempts at redress for the victims see "Against Their Will: North Carolina's Sterilization Program," [againsttheirwill.journalnow.com](http://againsttheirwill.journalnow.com). (Accessed June 6, 2013).

whites than the language of "welfare." His long-term view of the ESR was that it "has operated in a very quiet way that was good."<sup>11</sup> The ability of ESR leadership, both black and white, to walk the linguistic tightrope of welfare and anti-poverty rhetoric has arguably been a key component to the agency's ability to survive for almost half a century--when many similar agencies have simply been defunded and faded away.

For the first full year of its existence (1964), the Experiment in Self-Reliance was dominated by white leadership in terms of funding and to a large extent in setting the local agenda. Governor Terry Sanford's North Carolina Fund chose R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company executive James A. Gray to appoint the first Board of Directors. Ironically, the presence of a Community Action Agency (CAA) in Winston-Salem was an afterthought for the powers-that-be of the North Carolina Fund. Seventy percent of the funding for the NCF came from the Ford Foundation--but thirty percent came from the Z. Smith Reynolds and Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundations, both of which were located in Winston-Salem. Seven of the eleven initial projects had been chosen before George Esser and Terry Sanford realized in Robert Law's words that "one of them better be Winston-Salem."<sup>12</sup>

The Womble-led board chose white California native Russell Rosene to be the first executive director. According to Robert Law, Rosene had experience in Friends

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<sup>11</sup> William F. Womble, interview with Beth Ann Williams, July 15, 2010, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Transcript given to the author by Ms. Williams.

<sup>12</sup> Law interview with Williams. For an excellent account of the formative principles and actions of the North Carolina Fund see: Robert R. Korstad and James L. Leloudis, *To Right These Wrongs: The North Carolina Fund and the Battle to End Poverty and Inequality in 1960s America*, (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2010). Korstad and Leloudis provide a detailed account of the rise of grassroots activism in Durham which includes a more radicalized element than appears in the ESR. The dramatic events in Durham may have led the authors away from exploring the ESR in Winston-Salem in more detail.

Church-related charities in Guatemala but apparently lacked the intangibles necessary to function within the hierarchy of Winston-Salem, and after a brief period, "he was more or less encouraged to leave." Robert Law, fresh from a Peace Corps assignment in the Dominican Republic, was attracted to the NCF concept and completed a training session in Durham in the late spring of 1964. He was assigned to his hometown of Winston-Salem as a Community Action Technician. Law would spend the rest of his career at ESR, succeeding Louise Wilson as executive director in 1985. Louise Wilson also came on board in the same approximate time period as Director of Community Development and as Deputy Director.<sup>13</sup>

Wilson's appointment was apparently not without some internal controversy at the ESR. Russell Rosene expressed concern that because of Wilson's Goodwill Committee experience she might be a "tool" of mainstream civil rights leaders. William Womble feared that she might be too radical based on her involvement with CORE and the demonstrations of 1963.<sup>14</sup> In both cases the elements of paternalism were thinly veiled.

Effective antipoverty efforts, along with the implementation of local agreements regarding desegregation, both needed the strength of federal legislation behind them. The people of Winston-Salem closely followed the heated congressional debate over Lyndon Johnson's proposed civil rights bill. Southern senators held the legislation hostage for an unprecedented seventy-five days of filibuster during the spring of 1964. Bipartisan

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<sup>13</sup> Roland S. Watts, *Experiment in Self-Reliance 1977*, (promotional magazine for the ESR--publisher unknown). Robert Law interview with the author.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Law interview with the author; and Christopher J. Fregiato, "Police, Poverty, and the 'Free Agent': Winston-Salem's Police Community Services Unit and the North Carolina Fund," Seminar Paper for the Sanford School of Public Policy (Duke University, 2002), 16. Accessed online at: [torightthesewrongs.com](http://torightthesewrongs.com), the companion website for Korstad and Leloudis's book, *To Right These Wrongs*.

efforts by Republican senator Everett Dirksen and Democratic senator Mike Mansfield successfully invoked cloture on June 10, 1964, paving the way for the landmark bill to move forward. Ironically, by not accepting an earlier version of the bill from President Kennedy, southern legislators found themselves forced to accept a much stronger bill from President Johnson. On July 2, Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law, stating, “Let us close the springs of racial poison.”<sup>15</sup>

African Americans and progressive whites in Winston-Salem were joyful over the signing of the bill. For many, it validated the long struggle for desegregation, and as predicted, served to take some of the burden off of local efforts for voluntarily compliance. As the president spoke in conciliatory tones in favor of voluntary compliance, events in the Deep South, including the search for three missing young student volunteers in Mississippi, ominously warned that full compliance with the law might not come easily. Race riots had occurred that summer in the North, and at the time of the passage of the bill, Rochester, New York, a city that resembled Winston-Salem in size and perceived peacefulness, was engulfed in rioting and looting and was under lockdown by the National Guard—a situation that did not go unnoticed by leaders in Winston-Salem.<sup>16</sup>

Conservative whites saw the bill as the unraveling of a social order that was as natural as breathing. The addition of funding bills for enforcement of the Civil Rights

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<sup>15</sup>“Senate Invokes Cloture on Civil Rights Bill; Act Is Unprecedented,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 11 1964; “The Civil Rights Act,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 3, 1964; and “Civil Rights Act Now Law; Johnson Asks All to Comply,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 3, 1964.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2009), 325; and “It Could Happen,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 28, 1964.

Act and antipoverty programs further incensed segregationists and also angered fiscal conservatives who claimed this level of government intrusion was unconstitutional. The stage was being set for a mass exodus of southerners from the Democratic Party, all because of civil rights. The Republican National Convention nominated Barry Goldwater, considered an extremist by many in his own party for his conservative views. Goldwater insisted that his votes against civil rights legislation were based on constitutional principles and that race was not a factor. There was a tangible shift to the Republican Party and Goldwater in Winston-Salem as reflected in the “venting” letters of conservatives to the newspapers. Jerry H. Fuqua argued against the judgment of people “willing to give up their freedom for the so-called ‘security’ of an all-knowing central government.” Esther J. Williams paraphrased Goldwater as saying, ‘Extremism in the cause of liberty is no vice; moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.’ She then posited that Goldwater was in fact the “friend of Negroes” and would help them by making them stay within the laws. Terry Jessup pledged support for Goldwater and worried that “if something isn’t done now, America will become another Germany with Johnson playing the roll [*sic*] of Hitler.” Lifelong Democrat and community leader in the suburban Tobacoville community, Fred Kreeger, suggested that Johnson was “being advised by Communists,” and noted, “The way things are going in Washington now, I will have to vote for somebody else instead of these people who call themselves Democrats.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Jerry H. Fuqua, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 29, 1964; Esther J. Williams, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 20, 1964; Terry Jessup, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 20, 1964; and F.L. Kreeger, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*,

African Americans and white progressives gave their responses to conservative outrage, although the number of progressive letters printed was substantially smaller than the number of conservative ones. This supports the argument that the elites were using avenues of peaceful public discourse to diffuse the possibility of more demonstrative displays of political passion. Minnie Morris Huggins, a documents librarian at Wake Forest College, found a different meaning to Goldwater's "extremism" quote than did Esther J. Williams. Huggins argued, "There is a very thin line between extremism and fanaticism and between fanaticism and hysteria. Let us not forget McCarthyism and Dallas." William C. Whit, Student Interracial Minister at the First Baptist Church of East Winston, pondered why whites seemed so fearful of black equality. Whit said that "white domination looks rather peculiar in the posture of a field rabbit." He took to task whites in Winston-Salem who pulled their children out of integrated schools and who move out of neighborhoods that were integrating. "A frightened rabbit is a pathetic site [*sic*]," Whit posited, "how much more tragic the petrified exodus of the scampering white!"<sup>18</sup>

The summer of 1964 brought Winston-Salem its own miniature (and much less violent) version of the famous Freedom Summer movement, which was taking place concurrently in Mississippi. Part of the NCF concept involved sending interracial teams of college student volunteers into poor communities to help with educational and recreational programs for children, along with construction, neighborhood clean-up, and education programs for adults. Jessica Henderson, nineteen, a student at historically-

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July 31, 1964. Kreeger was the maternal grandfather of the author of this dissertation. The author is grateful that his mother did not share her father's views on race.

<sup>18</sup> Minnie Morris Huggins, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 20, 1964; and William C. Whit, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 1, 1964.

black Fayetteville State College said that she intended "to gain experience in working with people and to become more broad-minded." Henderson added: "We know that we're not going to eradicate slums and poverty, that's only an ideal for right now. But this summer we're going to try our best." Stephen Dennis, twenty, and a senior at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill noted that "anyone who has lived in the South and has driven from one southern town to another knows what poverty looks like."<sup>19</sup> The students were supervised and chaperoned by Mr. and Mrs. Grafton Cockrell, a married couple from Duke University, and stayed in Colson Hall on the campus of Winston-Salem State University.<sup>20</sup> White student Hollis Miller noted that the volunteers were treated with "indifference" by city leaders but were "warmly received" by students and staff at Winston-Salem State. Volunteers made friends with summer school students at Winston-Salem State and there apparently was at least some experimentation with interracial dating.<sup>21</sup> Rumors of white female students staying in the same dormitory and intermingling socially with black male students would have been quite provocative to many in Winston-Salem. Local media kept any knowledge of such affairs quiet.

Discursive exchanges in the newspapers over racial issues continued sporadically throughout the mid-1960s. In a highly popular theme, whites continued to link civil rights activity to communism. Marie Nunn insisted there was a communist conspiracy

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<sup>19</sup> Joe Goodman, "N.C. Volunteers Arrive in Winston-Salem Filled with High Ideals," *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 19, 1964.

<sup>20</sup> "More Volunteers Are Here for Work," *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 27, 1964.

<sup>21</sup> "More Volunteers Are Here for Work," *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 27, 1964; and Korstad and Leloudis, *To Right These Wrongs*, 142, 148. Utilizing sources from NCF reports, Korstad and Leloudis provide enlightening details about the class and racial dynamics at play among student volunteers. Interracial socializing caused enough concern that the Winston-Salem team director felt the need to discuss the problem with Winston-Salem State University officials and with NCF officials in Durham.



dating back to the 1920s and cited FBI director J. Edgar Hoover as the source for much of her material. She posited that Martin Luther King's association with the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF) was full proof that he was a communist. According to Nunn, there was a "rising spirit which defends, ignores, and even glamorizes those who collaborate with the enemies of America. Unless there is a halt, this spirit will help create a Frankenstein monster that will not perfect our society, but destroy it." P.A. Marshall argued, "Communists have to such an extent infiltrated the ranks of the Christian church it is hard to know just who to believe, but Christ has left us a way. He said, 'By their deeds ye shall know them.'" Calling ministers in favor of civil rights, "ministers of the Devil," Marshall further warned, "Let us beware of these wolves in sheep clothing or Mr. K in Moscow will see his boast come true."<sup>22</sup>

Many whites also opposed the growth of government under Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" and specifically opposed the local efforts of the ESR. Fiscal conservative William H. Weeks of Bethania criticized ESR director Russell Rosene and his wife Juanita for their public appeals for support of the agency. According to Weeks: "Most of us have found it necessary to earn our privileges—not receive them as a result of excessive taxation designed to finance ethereal experiments conjured up to self-perpetuate politicians and to ever increase our federal payroll." Clifford B. Banther, a driver for McLean Trucking, sarcastically agreed with Weeks, stating, "The right of free

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<sup>22</sup> Marie Nunn, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 3, 1965; and P.A. Marshall, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 8, 1965.

speech belongs to every citizen, even whites, but not at the expense of other citizens by living on relief paid by taxing the property and salaries of other citizens.”<sup>23</sup>

African Americans continued to be willing to confront conservative white views directly within the realm of public discourse. Herman C. Johnson, a factory worker at Reynolds Tobacco, said he was “more than a little tired of all this flagrant criticism of the federal government.” Johnson asserted that many of the conservative whites who criticized the government received social security checks and other benefits from the government. Johnson stated of these critics of federal programs: “It is a little like the ass not knowing his master that puts corn in the trough for him to eat.”<sup>24</sup>

Some African Americans offered unique perspectives with their own criticisms of government. Prince A. Simmons, an agent with the black-owned Winston Mutual Insurance Company, criticized the American government and the press for being more concerned with “South Viet Nam’s freedom” than with the “freedom of movement of a United States citizen in Alabama.” After giving statistics on the number of deaths to date in the civil rights movement, Simmons quoted Lyndon Johnson’s analogy in his 1965 State of the Union Address that if Americans could die side-by-side in Europe, Korea, and Vietnam, surely they could learn to eat together in America. Simmons then asked simply, “Can they?”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> William H. Weeks, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 3, 1965; Clifford B. Banther, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 8, 1965; and *Hill’s Winston-Salem City Directory 1963* (Richmond, Virginia: Hill Directory Company, 1963), 37.

<sup>24</sup> Herman C. Johnson, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 2, 1965; and *1963 City Directory*, 411.

<sup>25</sup> Prince A. Simmons, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 5 1965; and *1963 City Directory*, 705.

As desegregation appeared much closer to becoming reality with the passage of sweeping federal regulations in the summer of 1964, North Carolina became a hotbed of white supremacist activity. Despite the efforts of Sheriff Ernie Shore and Police Chief Justus Tucker, elements of radical white supremacy increased their activity in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. In 1963 a group of sixty-five people met to form a White Citizens' Council chapter in Winston-Salem. In August 1964, a group of ninety people met ten miles away in Kernersville to form a Forsyth County chapter of the organization. The meeting was led by Donald W. Poteat who claimed that the "mendacity of the media" had given North Carolina a false reputation for liberalism. The crowd applauded calling the *Winston-Salem Journal* and the *Sentinel*, "nigger newspapers." Poteat referred to biracial committees as "biracial soviets," and stated that "Southern people have known all the time that ignorance is north of the Mason-Dixie [*sic*] line and west of the Mississippi." In November 1964, W.H. Davis complained in the *Journal* that the newspaper "preaches tolerance towards the exponents of civil rights," yet supported the actions of the Sheriff's Department and the Highway Patrol to shut down a KKK meeting on "private property."<sup>26</sup>

Most people, white and black, living in the mainstream of life in Winston-Salem, probably had little idea of the depth of racial extremism within the community. Few would have been conscious of the ideological severity of contemporary white supremacy, and few would have been aware of the substantial numbers of their neighbors who

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<sup>26</sup> "Citizens Council Organizes," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 21, 1964; Jack Trawick, "Forsyth Citizens Council Organized at Kernersville," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 28, 1964; and W.H. Davis, "Opinions of Readers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 7, 1964.

believed in this cause. Causing much greater concern than the White Citizens' Council group, in the spring of 1965 the Ku Klux Klan held a mass rally just ten miles west of Winston-Salem, near the Tobaccolville community. A crowd estimated at one thousand people gathered to hear J.R. "Bob" Jones of Granite Quarry, the Grand Dragon of North Carolina's division of the United Klan of America. Jones was the leader behind a massive statewide resurgence of the Klan, brought about mainly as a white response to the civil rights movement. By the time of the 1965 Forsyth County rally, the United Klan in North Carolina was the largest Klan group in the nation.<sup>27</sup>

In his speech, Jones read from *Another Country* by James Baldwin, calling the book "lewd and filthy." Jones repeatedly referred to Martin Luther King, Jr. as "Martin Luther Coon" and called Lyndon Johnson a dictator. R.L. Mabe, head of the Forsyth Klavern of the KKK and a Citizens' Council member as well, appeared in a white robe and hood and bragged of increased membership in Forsyth County. Another Klansman exhorted the crowd with a speech about "the adulterous race of niggers" and their "95 per-cent rate of venereal disease." Security was tight at the event and armed security guards forced unauthorized photographers to expose the film in their cameras. Goldwater bumper stickers were sold for fifty cents each. To close the rally a group of roughly one hundred robed Klansmen set a sixty-five foot high cross on fire.<sup>28</sup> Probably due to the

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<sup>27</sup> Jeffrey J. Crow, Paul D. Escott, and Flora J. Hatley Wadelington, *A History of African Americans in North Carolina*, Second Edition (Raleigh: North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2011), 202-204; and Jeffrey Dick, "Klan Stresses Americanism," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1965.

<sup>28</sup> Jeffrey J. Crow, Paul D. Escott, and Flora J. Hatley Wadelington, *A History of African Americans in North Carolina*, Second Edition (Raleigh: North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2011), 202-204; Jeffrey Dick, "Klan Stresses Americanism," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1965.

small size of his department, for the first time Sheriff Ernie Shore was unable to prevent the Klan from having a large-scale rally in Forsyth County.

While there apparently was little actual racial violence during the first years of antipoverty work in Winston-Salem, Robert Law recalled some tense moments. He remembered that people were "just hostile" and recalled getting a threatening phone call early one Saturday morning from "a really ignorant sounding white voice" wanting to know: "Are you the Bob Law that works with dem Niggers?" Law had a meeting scheduled one evening in the Cityview neighborhood, which was inhabited by predominantly poor white and working class people. He was surprised to arrive and find that no one was there. Louise Wilson informed Law later that the Ku Klux Klan had threatened to appear with shotguns and shoot anyone that chose to participate in the ESR program. Ironically, the Ku Klux Klan threats served to block ESR efforts to help poor *white* people. Despite any number of obstacles and no small amount of white community resistance, Law, Wilson, and other staff and volunteers worked diligently to get the nascent operation working for its target communities.<sup>29</sup>

The first major project of the ESR during the summer of 1964 was the Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC), a program designed to find work for impoverished youth during the summer and then continue into further job training during the school year. Students learned skills like commercial painting under the tutelage of industrial education teachers and county maintenance workers. William F. Miller, an industrial arts

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<sup>29</sup> Robert Law interview with the author.

teacher at the all-black Atkins High School, led the first group in learning to paint schools and buildings on school properties. They were provided transportation to the jobsites and paid seventy-five cents an hour. The basic premise was that by teaching useable job skills and providing income, students would stay in school instead of dropping out. The agency also created an "Out-of-School Program" for unemployed youths, aged sixteen through twenty-one, who had already dropped out of school. The goal was to provide employment and to encourage returning to school. There was also a "Special Program" for twenty-five "hard-core youths" that were on court-ordered probation. The NYC program served 248 students in the summer of 1964 and 220 in the fall. The Out-of-School Program served 100 students in the summer and 117 in the fall.<sup>30</sup>

In August 1964 Congress passed the Equal Opportunity Act as an economic extension of the Civil Rights Act, which had passed a month earlier. The Equal Opportunity Act created the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), which in turn became the active arm of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. For the period from 1964-1968, the NCF became "the primary conduit for the flow of antipoverty dollars into North Carolina." Historians Robert Korstad and James Leloudis have asserted that this combination of private funding with an influx of federal dollars was critical in allowing "Sanford and his allies to bypass conservative state lawmakers and challenge the entrenched local interests that nourished Jim Crow...and perpetuated an economy built on cheap labor and racial antagonism." The OEO and its related revenue

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<sup>30</sup>"Project Youth Is Planned," *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 17, 1964; "School Youth Corps Works on First Job," *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 16, 1964; ESR Report, WSSU Archives; and Robert Law interview with the author.

stream propelled the Experiment in Self-Reliance forward in both size and scope in ways no one could have forecast in the spring of 1964.<sup>31</sup> The actions of the OEO sometimes served to create relatively radical and swift changes in class and racial hierarchies that often simply bypassed the entrenched structures of gradualists. Problems arose, however, when those selective changes left a huge segment of the population feeling nothing had significantly changed in their lives.

A mandate from the federal Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) in late 1964 required at least one-third of funded agencies' boards come from the poor constituencies that were the agencies' targets. According to Robert Law: "You had to show how the poor people were instrumental in the planning process, planning, and implementation." In OEO terminology this mandate was referred to as "Maximum Feasible Participation." During the 1964 start-up phase of ESR the board followed a typical pattern of naming token black leadership. The arrival of Louise Wilson and the requirements of the OEO were pivotal events in bringing on board legitimate black leadership. "There were no shenanigans once we got involved with OEO," Law stated.<sup>32</sup> In 1965, the names of

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<sup>31</sup> Korstad and Leloudis, 2. See also: Thomas F. Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Struggle for Economic Justice* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). Jackson argues that civil rights and economic justice are intrinsically linked and that King and other movement leaders were advocating for anti-poverty efforts with increasing force by 1965. According to Jackson: "King tried to fill Johnson's gap between promise and program, advocating jobs, income support, and self-help" (247).

<sup>32</sup> Robert Law interview with the author. The concept of Maximum Feasible Participation was challenged by Democratic Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York in his book *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding, Community Action in the War on Poverty* (New York: McMillan Company Free Press, 1969). An early supporter of community action programs, Moynihan argued that politicians and social scientists wasted time and resources trying to achieve an impossible goal of eradicating poverty. His argument would be co-opted by conservatives in their battle to limit funding for antipoverty programs. For other important works on the subject of the War on Poverty see: Michael B. Katz, *The Undeserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), 68-69, 74, 138-139, 195; Thomas F. Jackson, "The State, the Movement, and the Urban Poor: The War on Poverty and Political Mobilization in the 1960s," in *The Underclass Debate: Views from History*, edited by Michael B. Katz

fourteen African American women appear on the list of the Board of Directors of the ESR. The post of Executive Director was vacant in these documents, but Wilson was listed as Assistant Director (she served as Executive Director from 1968-1985). With the exception of the accountant, and Robert Law as Volunteer Projects Director, the full-time staff positions in the ESR were filled by black women.<sup>33</sup>

Among the stated goals of the early ESR was ending the concept of an elite few African American men exclusively representing the interests of all classes and genders of the community. A survey was conducted of the residents of the Kimberley Park neighborhood, most of whom lived in public housing. The survey was conducted by the student volunteers of the North Carolina Fund. The compilation of results of this survey was titled, "The People Speak Their Needs." The purpose of the survey was to determine not only the residents' awareness of services available to them, but also, to ask them specifically what services they needed. The survey indicated that high on the list of concerns were jobs and job-training for "heads of household" and "for young mothers." Respondents needed daycare facilities, especially for "children under 2 years of age." Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) recipients specifically put "school or job training" and daycare at the top of their list. Healthcare was a major issue, with over 75 percent of respondents stating that either they or a family member had "health problems not being

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(Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 403-408, 411-424; Kent B. Germany, *New Orleans After the Promise: Poverty, Citizenship, and the Search for the Great Society* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007), 14-16, 123-125; Thomas J. Sugrue, "The Structures of Urban Poverty: The Reorganization of Space and Work in Three Periods of American History," Michael B. Katz ed., *The Underclass Debate: Views from History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 85-88, 95-96, 99-109, 116-117; and Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009, 1984), 248-252.

<sup>33</sup> "The Experiment in Self-Reliance, Inc.," WSSU Archives.



treated by a physician."<sup>34</sup> It could be concluded from this data that impoverished women, and welfare recipients in particular, were most concerned with services (jobs, job-training, and daycare) that might provide the means to get off of public assistance. Like mothers from any socioeconomic class, they were also highly concerned about the quality of their children's educations, access to recreational facilities, crime, and access to decent and affordable healthcare.

The ESR responded to the survey by spelling out existing programs and future plans designed to address the issues of Winston-Salem's impoverished communities. ESR leaders explained the structure and successes of programs for 1965 and also gave indication of plans in the works for 1966. The Project Head Start Program was created in 1965 as an "enrichment program for culturally deprived pre-school children." The ESR operated four daycare centers in 1965 with a total enrollment of 201 children. The YWCA "campership" program provided funding for eighty girls to attend summer camp. A "Neighborhood Service Center" was located in the Kimberley Park neighborhood as the pilot program for a "multi-service center" that could coordinate the activities of various social agencies in a location closer to those that they served. A health clinic was located within the Neighborhood Service Center to provide basic check-ups, pre-natal

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<sup>34</sup> ESR Report, WSSU Archives. For studies on the activities of women within the War on Poverty, see: Nancy A. Naples, *Grassroots Warriors: Activist Mothering, Community Work, and the War on Poverty* (New York and London: Routledge, 1998); Lisa Levenstein, *A Movement Without Marches: African American Women and the Politics of Poverty in Postwar Philadelphia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 4, 27-29, 194, 258; Rhonda Y. Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women's Struggles Against Urban Inequality* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 7, 12-15, 164, 240-241; Annelise Orleck, *Storming Caesar's Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005); Christina Greene, *Our Separate Ways: Women and the Black Freedom Movement in Durham, North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2005); and Susan Youngblood Ashmore, *Carry It On: The War on Poverty and the Civil Rights Movement in Alabama 1964-1972* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2008), 13-15, 107-108, 117.

counseling, inoculations, and TB skin tests. At the Neighborhood Service Center, six of the seven management positions (including the Director position) were held by women. In addition to government-funded agencies, the ESR also promoted volunteer-driven groups like a Small Business Development Center and the Neighborhood Youth Corps.<sup>35</sup> White and black paternalism was by no means eliminated from the civil rights equation and the structural hierarchies of the ESR, but the increased "on the ground" activism of black women within the organization did signal the possibility of change to come.

The Kimberley Park Neighborhood Service Center became a central locus for interaction between ESR operatives and the community they were there to serve. Fulfilling its charter, the ESR brought the various service agencies "into closer relationships with each other on an operational level," and it also brought "services and programs closer to the people of the poverty areas." Florence Creque was named Director of the Center. Creque had already served the Kimberley Park housing project as a social worker for Forsyth County and was well-known and highly respected by the residents. Ivey McDaniel served as Neighborhood Developer with the responsibility for training Neighborhood Aides to actively bring information about programs into the Kimberley Park community. The initial cadre of Neighborhood Aides consisted of ten middle-class married black women. Their job was to physically get out into the community and to communicate to people of the housing project the services that were now available to them. Martha J. Bassett was assigned the role of Intake Specialist, a position necessary to determine the "fundamental needs of the person who comes seeking

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<sup>35</sup> ESR Report, WSSU Archives; Leah Creque interview.

aid." Rebecca Graves and Peggy Hicks were the first Public Health nurses at the Center and answered to Florence Creque, "with the advice of the Director of Public Health of Forsyth County."<sup>36</sup>

Having a place to gather together increasingly became a central element in building cross-class coalitions as well as enabling public housing residents to individually and collectively voice their needs and concerns. In addition to services under the ESR, the Kimberley Park Neighborhood Service Center was also used to host other activities. Just prior to the primary election of 1964, the center held a precinct meeting for a "Get out the Vote" campaign. It also hosted meetings of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. For many residents of public housing, these events were their first openly political actions. Even if leadership still primarily came from more-polished middle-class spokespersons, for the first time since the tobacco workers' strike, lower-class voices had an opportunity to regularly be heard in a public forum. It was not lost on Republican politicians that this type of activity served to increase the number of Democratic voters. The issue of using public funds for partisan organizing arose in Winston-Salem and elsewhere and was used as an argument by conservatives against the War on Poverty.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> ESR Report, WSSU Archives. Although the initial Neighborhood Aides in Winston-Salem were middle-class women, their activities are in somewhat consistent with the concept of "activist mothering" explored in depth by Patricia Hill Collins and Nancy A. Naples. See Patricia Hill Collins, "Shifting the Center: Race, Class, and Feminist Theorizing about Motherhood," Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Grace Chang, and Linda Rennie Forcey, eds., *Mothering, Ideology, Experience, and Agency* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 45-65; and Naples, *Grassroots Warriors*, 18-22, 101-102.

<sup>37</sup> Robert Miller, "Around East Winston," *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 6, 1964; and Law interview with the author. White Republican backlash to the registration of mostly-Democratic black voters directly or indirectly through antipoverty organizations is documented in many studies including Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 135-136, 224-226; Ashmore, *Carry It On*, 130-134; and Greene, *Our Separate Ways*, 190.

Although the Kimberley Park neighborhood received a great deal of attention from the ESR, the agency's goal was to service impoverished people throughout Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. In the summer of 1965, Neighborhood Community Councils were created in other poor neighborhoods and along with Kimberley Park elected their own representatives to the ESR Board. The ESR also created a Rural Farm program, in conjunction with the Forsyth County Agricultural Extension Office, to help low-income farm families improve production and learn modern methods of farming and record-keeping. The ESR also teamed with the Extension Office with a goal to teach: "Consumer Education, Budgets, Management and homemaking skills in the area of clothing foods, nutrition, and home furnishings." The Small Business Development Center was created to provide loans to help low-income people start their own businesses. The Winston-Salem Police Department, with funding from the NCF through the ESR, created a "Police Community Services Unit" (CSU) designed to add "prevention and referral services to the traditional police functions." The CSU was targeted for areas "undergoing racial and economic transition."<sup>38</sup> With funding from both the North Carolina Fund and the Economic Opportunity Act, the first three years of the ESR allowed the organization an unparalleled creativity for experimenting with different types of programs.

The original philosophy for community action agencies (CAA) under the North Carolina Fund was for agencies to identify needs in poor communities and propose

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<sup>38</sup> Roland S. Watts, "Highlights of the First 13 Years of The Experiment in Self-Reliance, Inc.," *Experiment in Self-Reliance 1977*, 25; and ESR Report, WSSU Archives; and Christopher J. Fregiato, "Police, Poverty, and the 'Free Agent,'" 16.

innovative solutions. This concept continued under the federal War on Poverty, but as the scope of services widened, so too did an increase in scrutiny from bureaucratic forces. Almost as quickly as the ESR (and the other North Carolina CAAs under the NCF) was given its mandate to create new local solutions, it was thrust into the position of also managing the needs of the OEO and its steadily increasing and ever-changing agenda of programs. As the ESR staff became overwhelmed at times with the sheer scope of what it was attempting to accomplish, leadership adopted a strategy of starting programs with the goal of eventually turning the programs over to other agencies. The Head Start program for pre-school children began as a series of what Robert Law called "tot-lots," small daycare centers set up in local black churches. Without professional leadership, problems arose in a number of these locations. One of the daycare centers was set up in the basement of a church whose pastor was the local NAACP chapter president. Just as the government Head Start inspector walked in, she saw the pastor's wife "pick up a small child and shake him." A major controversy erupted when the Head Start inspector insisted on firing the pastor's wife--and the pastor refused. According to Law, "That's when Louise [Wilson] had to handle it." By the end of 1965, the management of the Head Start program was turned over to the Family Services, Inc. agency. The ESR still controlled funding, but day-to-day management of facilities was placed in the hands of specialized daycare professionals.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> John H. Strange, "Community Action in North Carolina: Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding? Mistake? Or Magic Formula? *Publius* 2, no. 2 (autumn, 1972): 63; and Robert Law interview.

Even as programs like Head Start were turned over to outside agencies, the ESR received mandates and funding for new programs. In April 1966 the Small Business Development Center was expanded into a more formal program and Operation Medicare Alert was added. The Wider Job Opportunities Program and Legal Services were added later that summer. In November 1966, a federal mandate under the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 created the Model Cities Program (the word "Demonstration" was changed to "Model" due to perceived "unsavory connotations in the White House"). This legislation was in part a response to urban unrest and rioting and was also, in part, a conservative response to the concept of large amounts of money being controlled by citizens' action groups that were often deemed not "responsible" enough to handle the task. Model Cities legislation maintained the requirement for representation by the poor and minorities--but added requirements for representation from local government and the business community. Another clause of the Model Cities legislation stipulated that "nonprofit organizations such as those which administered community action organizations were not allowed." Any number of studies indicate that the reactions to shifts within federal policy were distinctly different and dependent upon unique local factors.<sup>40</sup>

The ESR staff helped to write the grant proposal for Model Cities funding in Winston-Salem, and when funding came through, Florence Creque moved from her post

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<sup>40</sup> John H. Strange, "Citizen Participation in Community Action and Model Cities Programs," *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 32, Special Issue: Curriculum Essays on Citizens, Politics, and Administration in Urban Neighborhoods (October, 1972): 655-657. See also Melvin B Mogulof, *Citizen Participation: A Review and Commentary on Federal Policies and Practices* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1970).

at ESR to become the director of the Model Cities Program. Despite the caveat against CAA participation in Model Cities, the friendship between Creque and Louise Wilson allowed the ESR and Model Cities to complement each other. Often the ESR staff handled "intake-counseling" and then referred clients to the appropriate programs, whether under ESR, Model Cities, or other agencies as they were either spun-off or created independently.<sup>41</sup> It is arguable whether Wilson, Creque, Law and other leaders in Winston-Salem were forced to some extent to bow to paternalistic pressures--or that conversely they were quite adept at manipulating all sides (particularly in terms of funding) for the ultimate benefit of their clients.

Social scientists argued the over merits and effectiveness of citizen participation (most notably over Maximum Feasible Participation) in the 1960s and have continued to argue as the War on Poverty is debated in a historical context. Operation Breakthrough (the NCF agency in Durham) provided a dramatic example of poor citizens truly participating in the political process. Under the skillful organizing leadership of Howard Fuller the Durham movement created the United Organizations for Community Involvement (UOCI) from among the neighborhood associations. The UOCI demonstrated often and loudly to institutions like the school board and the housing authority without officially using the NCF sanctioned Operation Breakthrough name. Women like Ann Atwater and Rubye Gattis rose from the ranks of poor, black women to become major forces for social and political change.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Watts, *Experiment in Self-Reliance* 1977, 25-26.

<sup>42</sup> Korstad and Leloudis, *To Right These Wrongs*, 188-195; and Rebecca Cerese, Producer, "Change Comes Knocking: The Story of the NC Fund," Video Dialog, Inc. 2009.

Evidence indicates that in 1967 and 1968, the last two years of the North Carolina Fund, leadership at the NCF had bravely made a stand in support of the more radical techniques used in the Durham movement. Conservatives preyed on white fears of urban rioting (Durham had a minor outbreak in July 1967) and on fears of perceived as radical terminology like "Black Power." Despite pressure on the OEO from Rocky Mount's powerful conservative Republican Congressman Jim Gardner, the NCF leadership made a firm decision not to oust Howard Fuller from his leadership role in Durham. Across the state of North Carolina, and certainly in Winston-Salem, conservative whites were concerned with the rise of Black Power rhetoric and the methods of protest associated with more militant Howard Fuller "types."<sup>43</sup>

In October 1968, in its final assessment of the eleven original CAAs, the NCF concluded that the ESR "has been dominated from the start by the social and economic elite." This internal report concluded that the ESR was "generally resistant to the principles of community action and maximum feasible participation" and further criticized the ESR for "following a paternalistic concept." The ESR, the report claimed, preferred providing "services over community mobilization."<sup>44</sup> The NCF assessment of paternalism issues in Winston-Salem was at least somewhat grounded in fact. Entrenched male power, white and black, did not give up the field lightly.

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<sup>43</sup> Korstad and Leloudis, *To Right These Wrongs*, 188-195; and Rebecca Cerese, Producer, "Change Comes Knocking: The Story of the NC Fund," Video Dialog, Inc. 2009. For a more detailed account of the Durham movements see: Christina Greene, *Our Separate Ways: Women and the Black Freedom Movement in Durham, North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

<sup>44</sup> Fregiato, "Police, Poverty, and the 'Free Agent,'" 7-8, 26, citing *North Carolina Fund, Process Analysis Report, Part 1* (North Carolina Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).



Poorer African American women in Winston-Salem did not develop the type of large-scale activism under the ESR that women in the NCF agency in Durham demonstrated in their direct protests and community activism. The assessment of overt paternalism in Winston-Salem by the NCF was not without merit, but the opinions stated in the assessment overlooked efforts by poor women in Winston-Salem, including efforts that were documented within NCF files. The largest and most active of the organizations, the Kimberley Park Neighborhood Association, was started with help from elite women in the ESR but over time created its own leadership from among residents of the public housing complex. In August 1966, angered at the arrest of a young alleged shoplifter and over a list of long-term grievances, the women of the Kimberley Park group began picketing a white-owned grocery market in the neighborhood. Photos from the Billy E. Barnes Collection (Barnes was in Winston-Salem working with ESR at the time) and the local newspapers show women demonstrators outside of white-owned Sellars' Grocery holding signs that read "Unsanitary Meats"; "Alcoholic Beverages brought here consumed behind store"; "Sanitary Container Has the Odor of a Skunk"; and "Why TRADE AT A STORE WHERE THEY CALL US Niggers?" In addition to the complaints written on their signs, the women accused the store owners of using electric-shock devices on black children, searching customers, angry dogs, and brandishing firearms.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Billy E. Barnes Collection, (North Carolina Fund Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill); Roy Thompson, "Marchers Protest at Neighborhood Store," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 21, 1966; and Luix Overbea, "Picketing of Store to Resume," *Twin City Sentinel*, August 29, 1966.

Protests by the women of Kimberley Park continued for several days and reminded the people of Winston-Salem that racial tension was still a very real part of the social fabric. Howard Sellars, one of the store owners, initially responded by saying he was “doing everything I can to correct what they want.” He claimed the electrical shocks came from a short in the cash register and said that he only visibly showed his gun on “check cashing days.” Sellars cleaned up the trash cans and insisted he “had never used the word ‘nigger’ in his life.” Eula J. Bailey, president of the Kimberley Park Neighborhood Association, said Sellars had made no effort to speak to her group directly and that she “did not know when picketing might end.” Just as it appeared the incident might be resolved, comments made, or allegedly made by Sellars’ brother-in-law, sparked the most controversial and widespread racial conflict since the protests of 1963.<sup>46</sup>

Rather than inspire fear, threats only served to bolster the resolve of the Kimberley Park women. According to several women at a Kimberley Park group meeting, they had heard Sellars’ brother-in-law and business partner, Jesse Sizemore, say that he could “have the KKK there in three minutes.” Sizemore claimed that he had heard the KKK was on their way to the store, and the ladies had overheard him warn a police officer about potential trouble (the police officer later confirmed that the ladies’ version, not Sizemore’s, was accurate). When word of the possible Ku Klux Klan threat spread through the black community, the situation quickly escalated. The NAACP under Charles McLean and J.T. McMillan became involved as did the mayor and the Goodwill

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<sup>46</sup>Roy Thompson, “Marchers Protest at Neighborhood Store,” *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel*, August 21, 1966; Pickets March Third Day at Food Store Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 22, 1966; and Steve Mitchell, “Negroes Vow to Force Store Closing,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 23, 1966.

Committee. Sellars appealed to the Goodwill Committee to intercede, fearing that he would be forced to close the business. Some black leaders vowed to continue protests until the store was put out of business. Robert Moorman, who had lead youth protests in 1963, was out of school and working as a community organizer for the NCF, with the specific task of helping the women of Kimberley Park. Moorman challenged the protesters to “avoid the influence of middle-class Negroes who were only trying to emulate the white man.” Moorman described the movement as a grassroots effort by poor people. “They call it black power,” Moorman said, “but you could call it poor power and it would be the same thing. Anytime you organize you’ve got power.”<sup>47</sup>

Moorman’s comments exposed a longstanding rift between leadership factions within Winston-Salem’s black community. Joseph Richardson, chairman of the local NAACP membership committee, sent a letter of complaint to branch president C.L. Montgomery, calling NAACP support for the Kimberley Park pickets “unwise and ill-advised.” Richardson further charged: “You allowed the conniving of two doctors and one minister on your executive board to cause you to act unwisely and ill-advisedly in the Sellars grocery store incident.” Richardson feared the store owners had legitimate grounds for a lawsuit if NAACP actions helped put them out of business and wanted to act in conjunction with the Goodwill Committee. Eula Bailey, with support from J.T. McMillan, countered that threatening Klan incursions into “a neighborhood made up

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<sup>47</sup> Steve Mitchell, “Negroes Vow to Force Store Closing,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 23, 1966; “End to Picketing at Store Is Sought,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 24, 1966; and Joe Goodman, “Mediation about Store Fails; Statement on Klan Is Issue,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 25, 1966.

primarily of mothers without husbands,” gave credibility to the women’s desire to no longer have the store in their community.<sup>48</sup>

The ESR also landed in the middle of the controversy, in large part due to the controversial nature of the words and actions of Robert Moorman. Agency leadership was split on the issue as they weighed fundraising effectiveness against principle. Louise Wilson, who was serving as acting director, was aware of the negative effect of controversy in a period of growing conservative backlash against government spending for antipoverty efforts. War on Poverty and NCF funding was still flowing in 1966 but the ESR’s ambitious slate of programs also depended on corporate donations and the support of politicians. When asked about the Kimberley Park controversy, Wilson responded: “This is strictly a civil rights issue and the Experiment in Self-Reliance is not in the civil rights business. We’re in the poverty business.” Billy Barnes, the public information director for the NCF, took a more supportive stance towards Moorman. Barnes bluntly acknowledged that Moorman was there to help the Kimberley Park group organize. “The ladies of the association decided that the thing bugging them most in life was the grocery store,” Barnes said. “Usually these councils are organized on issues; they’re not organized to play cards.”<sup>49</sup>

Moorman’s use of the term “black power” and the arrival of an “outside agitator” served to provoke new discursive exchanges about class among the diverse factions within the city. The grocery store demonstrations attracted the attention of the Southern

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<sup>48</sup> “Effort to End Store Protest Fails,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 25, 1966; and “NAACP’s Role in March Disputed,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 26, 1966.

<sup>49</sup> Joe Goodman and Thomas Pepper, “Protest Began after Poverty Survey,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 26, 1966.

Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the organization headed by Martin Luther King Jr. Golden Frinks, the North Carolina field secretary, was sent to Winston-Salem from his home in Edenton. While most SCLC leaders were ministers, the flamboyant and outspoken Frinks was a former nightclub owner. Frinks charged that Winston-Salem was a “racial powder keg.” “I know Winston-Salem seems calm on the surface, but it’s touchy underneath,” Frinks said. If a riot were to occur in Winston-Salem, Frinks posited, “it would make Watts look like a picnic.” When asked how he knew so much about these angry undercurrents, Frinks answered that he had spent several days talking with “the man on the street and the boys in the pool room.” He added: “The little Negro is left out of the decision making. Winston-Salem has a large Negro middle class which has taken over.” Frinks commented on black attitudes towards whites, noting blacks in Winston-Salem did not use derogatory terms like “whitey,” yet he had also heard comments “about killing babies before they could grow up to be klansmen.”<sup>50</sup>

Frinks allegations provoked a variety of responses from both races in Winston-Salem. The longstanding method of handling problems peacefully and quietly was receiving challenges from militant black leaders, poor people, and even the KKK. Charles McClean expressed a view that racial complaints in Winston-Salem were not “explosive” because civil rights leaders “won’t tolerate an explosion.” McClean noted that “Negroes disagree among themselves who the actual leaders are.” J.T. McMillan said there were not any leaders in the city promoting militancy: “But if there is a

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<sup>50</sup>David S. Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County North Carolina, and the Fate of Black Schools in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 78-82; and Joe Goodman, “Rights Officer Says City Ripe for Riot; Answer Here, ‘No,’” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 28, 1966. Frinks was an important figure in the Hyde County movement and is described in detail by Cecelski.

continued stirring of dissension, a Watts could happen here. Gangs are available to resort to a Watts-like situation.” An unnamed black truck driver said: “We’re not going to be throwing fire bombs and burning down what we’ve accomplished. But we’re going to protect ourselves.” Mayor Benton continued to emphasize the importance of restraint and negotiation through the Goodwill Committee. The mayor proactively made two visits to speak to meetings of the Kimberley Park Neighborhood Association.<sup>51</sup>

After ten days of protests, the women of the Kimberley Park Neighborhood Association appeared willing to work with the mayor and agreed to temporarily suspend picketing. The day after the group made its announcement to suspend protests, C.T. Ivester, the “exalted cyclops” of the Forsyth County chapter of the KKK, and Lee Culler, the group’s “cludd” or chaplain, made a shopping trip to Sellars Grocery Market. The two announced that the local Klan group intended to support the market by shopping there. Culler was wearing a visible pistol in plain sight and a lever-action rifle was seen in the backseat of their Volkswagen. Ivester made a statement about store co-owner Jesse Sizemore: “He is not a Klansman, not even a sympathizer. This is not a Klan issue, but an issue of black power.” One night later a cross was burned a block from the store. Approximately 150 people gathered at the site afterwards. Several witnesses claimed they saw two black teenagers set and burn the cross. The store was closed early that night and remained closed the next day. Howard Sellars was reported to be at home on doctor’s orders and Sizemore claimed that he sent his family out of town because of

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<sup>51</sup> Joe Goodman, “Rights Officer Says City Ripe for Riot; Answer Here, ‘No,’” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 28, 1966; “Mediation about Store Issue Fails; Statement on Klan Is Issue,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 25, 1966; and Ken Duffer, “Lawsuit Termed Possible in Grocery Store Dispute,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 26, 1966.

threats from the Kimberley Park community. The Kimberley Park Neighborhood Association vowed to end picketing but distributed one thousand handbills throughout the community calling for “selective buying,” effectively a boycott against any store with discriminatory practices.<sup>52</sup>

Sellars Grocery Market stayed closed after the cross-burning incident. It was auctioned off to Arthur J. Lawson for \$3,900 on November 2, 1966. Lawson, who was white, ran the store with good relations with the Kimberley Park community for many years, although there would be random damage to the store during later urban rioting. In January 1967, Howard Sellars and Jesse Sizemore filed a lawsuit for \$206,000 in losses and damages against the NAACP, the Kimberley Park Neighborhood Association, J.T. McMillan, R.L. Jackson, Esther Hill, and Eula Bailey. The case was referred to the NAACP legal department in New York. The NAACP issued a statement denying knowledge of the incident in Winston-Salem, although a memo from Charles McLean dated August 28, 1966, included “clippings and a letter from the storekeeper’s lawyer.”<sup>53</sup>

The Sellars Grocery incident demonstrated that despite all of the “goodwill” emanating from the efforts of elite leaders, there was seething dissatisfaction within the poor of the black community. Louise Wilson and other ESR workers continued to

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<sup>52</sup> Loyd Little, “Picketing Halts Temporarily at Store in Kimberley Park,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 30, 1966; “Klansmen Help Store by Buying Groceries,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 30, 1966; “Cross Is Burned; Teen-Agers Blamed,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 31 1966; “Picketed Grocery Store Is Closed,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 31, 1966; and Loyd Little, “Selective Buying Campaign in East Winston Is Urged,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 31, 1966.

<sup>53</sup> Ken Duffer, “Grocers Charge Conspiracy,” *Twin City Sentinel*, January 18, 1967; “Picketed Grocery Store Is Hit Hard by Rioting,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967; and “Legal Department Case Files: *Sellars v. NAACP* 1966-1967,” Papers of the NAACP, *Proquest Vault*, O’Kelly Library, Winston-Salem State University, <http://www.wssu.edu/cg-okelly-library/default.aspx>, accessed on June 22, 2014.

develop programs fighting poverty and for delivering services to the poor. Their philosophy of truly empowering the poor meant that the poor needed to feel invested in the program and needed to see tangible results. Although much was accomplished, with continued high levels of poverty the underlying resentment continued to fester. Securing the resources needed to accomplish goals and fund projects was often dependent on maintaining good relationships with the elites controlling business and politics—elites that were very uncomfortable with the radical rhetoric emerging in segments of the black community. The Sellars Grocery incident highlighted the difficulties for leaders like Louise Wilson who had to sometimes suppress their own opinions for the sake of keeping the ESR functional and funded.

ESR continued to be a clearinghouse and a laboratory for social programs. An experimental program to create bonds between poor women across racial lines produced mixed results. The "New Careers" program brought poor women, white and black, together for training for entry-level jobs in the public sector. For many women it was their first opportunity for candid conversations with members of the other race. In one of the meetings, Libby Wood, who was white and impoverished, attempted to explain "why people live in poverty." Wood and other white women were shocked to come under fire from black women who argued that "whites have more job and educational opportunities" than blacks. Larry Dendy, who witnessed the exchange, noted that "nothing was



resolved...But both white and Negro understood more fully each other's--and their own--feelings."<sup>54</sup>

Substantial interaction between the races on a broad scale would not happen until full school integration in 1971. In the meantime, Louise Wilson continued to promote racial harmony (and fundraising) in addresses to women from all backgrounds. She easily might have used accusatory language against whites and pointed out their culpability in the huge disparity of resources in Winston-Salem, but instead deftly tried to enlist their help and their donations. At a gathering of the elite, white Winston-Salem's Woman's Club, the club women viewed a Chamber of Commerce film, titled "To Build a City," which glorified the accomplishments of Winston-Salem. Wilson promised in her speech to present "the other side of the tracks, the side not shown on the film," an obvious reference to the inequality present in the city. She discussed the ESR programs for job training. Wilson emphasized the importance of providing child care if poor women were to work and provide for their families and how some assistance might keep people from becoming fully dependent on government programs.<sup>55</sup>

Using rhetoric that was premeditated and intended to put her audience at ease, Wilson acknowledged that "motivation" could sometimes be an issue for the poor and that the focus of ESR was persuading clients "to do something about it for themselves." Confronting the stereotype of welfare recipients having "color TVs," Wilson described a case study of a specific ESR client, who in her intake interview "confessed" that she had

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<sup>54</sup> Larry Dendy, "She Almost Gave Up---Before New Careers Job," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 8, 1967.

<sup>55</sup> "Job Program Offers Chance to Improve," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 8, 1967; and Jeanette Reid, "Experiment Brings Changes," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 2, 1967.

always wanted a color television set, but knew that she could not have one "without having her check cut off." ESR provided job training and day care for the woman's children, making possible her eventual hiring by Western Electric Company. Wilson finished the story by telling her audience that "today, the woman is off the welfare rolls, and has her color TV."<sup>56</sup> Wilson was confronting racism and stereotypes but in a way that was more thought-provoking than confrontational--and that left room to ask for help with funding anti-poverty efforts. Her ability to bridge both racial and class-based divides was to prove critical to the progress and peace of Winston-Salem in the racial turmoil of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and through to her death in the 1980s.

Issues involving integration within public education for the most part fell outside of the broad reach of the ESR. After the Sellars Grocery incident, Wilson and other leaders were keen on keeping the ESR out of politics. The local chapter of the NAACP spearheaded a number of efforts to advance the causes of equal education resources and desegregation. White Winston-Salem resisted rapid change and continued to utilize a number of stalling techniques that appeared to show genuine concern for black interests but effectually did little to pave the way for progress. At the close of the 1963-1964 school year, there were a total of twenty-five black students, at three schools, attending classes with white students. Two black students were enrolled at Hill Junior High, three at Brunson Elementary, and twenty at Easton Elementary. No black students were enrolled full-time in the traditionally white high schools, although five students attended

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<sup>56</sup> Law interview. "Job Program Offers Chance to Improve," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 8, 1967; and Jeanette Reid, "Experiment Brings Changes," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 2, 1967.

advanced placement courses for one period at Reynolds High School. Gwendolyn Bailey, who graduated from Reynolds in 1959, and Lois Coleman who graduated from Reynolds in 1960, remained the only two black students to attend a white high school. The assignment plan for the 1964-1965 school year included allowing all first graders to begin school in the school closest to their home, regardless of whether that school was traditionally black or white. Dr. Lillian Lewis correctly predicted a “mass exodus” of white students the next fall to avoid attending not only an integrated school but also a majority black school. As a rare encouraging note on education, Edward Reynolds, the first full-time African American student at Wake Forest College, graduated in the spring of 1964, completing his degree with honors in only three years.<sup>57</sup>

Ostensibly to prepare the way for eventual full school integration, in 1964 school administrators began experimental programs to place black teachers in all-white schools. The first group of seven black teachers were assigned to Hanes Junior High in 1964, in anticipation of the arrival of black students for 1965. Most white students transferred out. In 1966, Elizabeth Martin, an African American teacher recognized for her exemplary work at the all-black Diggs Elementary, was transferred to the all-white Moore Elementary in the white working class Ardmore neighborhood for the 1966-1967 school year. Martin had at least a half dozen students transfer out of her class after the first day of school. The students who remained, and their parents, found Martin to be a highly skilled educator and a warm and loving presence in the classroom. Occasionally,

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<sup>57</sup>Roy Thompson, “Forsyth Desegregation: 25 Negroes in 3 Schools,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 17, 1964; Arlene Edwards, “Board Votes to Assign First Grade Students to School Near Home,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 4, 1964; and Russell Brantley, “WF’s First Negro Student Will Graduate Tomorrow,” *Old Gold and Black*, June 5, 1964.

Martin's son was dropped off after his classes at an all-black school so he could wait for his mother to finish work at a school that was not yet ready to accept her son as a student. Even as the token effort to introduce black teachers to white students began, there was often talk from school board members that "forced desegregation" could lead to the loss of jobs for black teachers and principals. There was also concern in the black community that parents who transferred their children into all-white schools might also face economic retaliation from their white employers.<sup>58</sup>

Despite the attempts by school administration to pacify African Americans over integration with words and token programs, hard data was irrefutable. The school board reported a 28 percent decrease in desegregation from the 1966-1967 school year to the 1967-1968 school year. "Freedom of choice" plans throughout the South, and in Winston-Salem, were designed to give the appearance of compliance with the *Brown* ruling and with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, but in almost all cases did little to achieve anything beyond superficial desegregation. Alderman Carl Russell, who also served as the chair of the NAACP Education Committee, became a vocal critic of school board policy. After numerous threats, the NAACP filed suit against the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board in October, 1968. Over the next several years, the NAACP waged war against the board policy of allowing white students to transfer out of partially

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<sup>58</sup>Arlene Edwards, "Negroes to Teach at Hanes," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 11, 1964. Martin was the author's third grade teacher. He transferred into her class in October 1966 when his family moved to Winston-Salem. On the day of enrollment, the principal asked the author's mother if she would object to her son having a "colored" teacher. His mother replied, "She's a good teacher isn't she? Why would I mind?" Elizabeth Martin is remembered fondly by not only the author but by other students from those years as well. For an excellent study of a local movement in North Carolina that included controversy over the loss of African American teacher and administrative jobs in the wake of integration, see David S. Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road*.

integrated schools.<sup>59</sup> Full integration of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools finally occurred during the 1971-1972 school year and involved a major restructuring of the schools, personnel reassignments, and forced busing.

Winston-Salem State College, whose students had provided the spark for the 1960 lunch counter protests and much of the leadership and participation for the 1963 protests, continued to provide a center for African American intellectual growth and political leadership for the remainder of the 1960s. In 1965, historian John Hope Franklin visited the campus from the University of Chicago, addressing students, faculty, and community members with a stern critique of the failure of professional historians on issues of race. Franklin said the omission of “colored people’s contributions is a crime and is disgusting, dishonest, and immoral.” “The new role of history writers,” Franklin stated, “will be that of revisionists. They will have to weave race history into general history and correct the works of the earlier historians.” Franklin went on to credit the civil rights movement with creating a push for more accurate textbooks for public schools but warned: “This was a job for professionals. Not anybody can put something together about the race.”<sup>60</sup>

SNCC National Chairman, John Lewis, spoke to an audience at WSSC in 1966 at the behest of the Student Government Association. Lewis spoke out against the war in

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<sup>59</sup> “Freedom of Choice” Plans Delay Pace of Dixie School Desegregation,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 26, 1966; “NAACP Unit Here Asks School Probe,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 16, 1967; and Aingred G. Dunston, “The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: 1947-1977” (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1981), 66. For an excellent discussion on the use of “Freedom of Choice” as a stalling technique and as a method to perpetuate inequitable distribution of resources, see Charles C. Bolton, *The Hardest Deal of All: The Battle over School Integration in Mississippi, 1870-1980* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), 141-161.

<sup>60</sup> “Blackout of Race Role in History Termed Act of Crime by Franklin,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 27, 1965.

Vietnam while also answering allegations that the civil rights movement was tied to communism. “Oppressed people do not have to have any foreign agent to tell them they are hurting,” Lewis said. “All is not well in this country when thousands are forced to live in abject poverty in slums and ghettos and we pretend we cannot see the madness of the war in Viet Nam.” Lewis emphasized the role of SNCC in grassroots organizing and encouraged students to join the effort of what he called a “domestic peace corps.” Lewis gave indication of the growing impatience within SNCC leadership with the mainstream movement efforts: “We have come to the point where we are saying we have had enough. To say ‘wait, compromise’ is meaningless to those who have nothing to compromise.”<sup>61</sup>

Winston-Salem, at least superficially, appeared to handle the turmoil of the period from the sit-ins to the arrival of Black Power with much less friction than most of the South. Noises from the Ku Klux Klan and the White Citizens’ Council resonated with a substantial number of whites but never gained the type of political traction seen elsewhere in the South. Winston-Salem did not develop any black leaders that might legitimately be described as consistently “militant” until the arrival of the Black Panthers in 1969. Although African Americans could clearly sense not being welcome in some white-owned establishments, at least legally they had the right to patronize any public venue. Corporate employers slowly opened the door to middle-class jobs, a trend that continued as the congenial negotiating ability of black leadership coupled with the teeth of federal enforcement. Jobs in government agencies also offered blacks entry into the

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<sup>61</sup> “Rights Movement Must Use Spiritual Weapons: Lewis,” *Chicago Defender*, February 19, 1966. For a well-illustrated history of Winston-Salem State University, see Carter B. Cue and Lenwood G. Davis, *Winston-Salem State University* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2000).

middle class and provided a higher level of security against on-the-job white discrimination. Although many African Americans enjoyed increased purchasing power, housing remained very segregated. Blacks entering the middle class either moved into neighborhoods being abandoned by whites or moved to new all-black suburban developments on the borders of existing black neighborhoods.

Despite the genuinely altruistic efforts of many and despite the many signs of social and economic progress, a large set of race-based problems lingered. Disproportionately high unemployment, inferior education and job training, substandard housing, and institutionalized prejudice kept a large number of black citizens trapped in a chronic cycle of poverty. Escalation of the war in Vietnam prevented proper federal funding of the War on Poverty. Improved and expanded public housing, while ostensibly a positive achievement, also contributed to the increased ghettoization of African Americans. Feeling even more disaffected as they watched other blacks escape the cycle of poverty, the anger and frustration of the many in the black community who felt excluded from progress was destined to affect the highly touted peace of the All-America City.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**THE PEACE BREAKS, 1967-1969**

Winston-Salem is getting what it deserves.

For most of the 1960s, city patriarchs, working in conjunction with their hired editors, had used the “Letters to the Editor” or “Readers’ Opinions” sections of the newspapers to let citizens express their views on racial issues. The strategy of letting extremist whites vent their frustrations over desegregation had apparently worked for the most part. Even with the rise of an increased White Citizens’ Council and Ku Klux Klan presence, Winston-Salem had remained relatively free of direct racial conflict. Black citizens had been allowed to challenge the views of whites within these channels of public discourse in ways unheard of in most of the South. This approach probably contributed to making blacks feel more included in the process of solving racial issues, and may have served to lessen outrage that could have potentially led to many more direct forms of confrontation. In the almost eight years since the sit-ins began in Winston-Salem, the concerted efforts of leaders of both races to avoid the types of harsh racial incidents seen elsewhere seemed to have paid off. By the fall of 1967, however, mainstream leaders were on the verge of discovering they had underestimated the dissatisfaction of those at the bottom of the city’s socioeconomic ladder.

Violent expressions from frustration over racial injustice were not a totally new phenomenon heading into the Black Power period of the 1960s. Minor acts of vandalism,



and even larger displays like the after-NASCAR race incident at Bowman Gray Stadium in 1960, signaled genuine disaffection among African Americans, especially among the most economically disadvantaged and among young people. Minor incidents were routine news throughout the mid-1960s in Winston-Salem. Most of these incidents were dismissed by civic leaders and police as isolated criminal events or attributed to small “gangs.” A series of events beginning in October 1967 brought evidence of much deeper pent-up anger within Winston-Salem's African American community. Most of this anger was manifested in the actions of younger and poorer people, those whose families were perhaps left behind in the jump to the middle class. This new generation’s racial consciousness was created in civil rights rhetoric along with modern media reports and images. Perhaps influenced by stories of urban rioting around the nation that summer, or influenced by Black Power rhetoric from influential leaders like the late Malcolm X, Stokeley Carmichael, or young men in the new Black Panther Party, or perhaps just as a culmination of frustration over local racial issues like substandard housing and police brutality, many young black people in Winston-Salem were on the verge of expressing themselves in ways that fractured the treasured facade of racial peace.

Mainstream black leadership could no doubt understand the source of frustration for black youth, while at the same time fearing that violence and radical rhetoric might jeopardize the existing channels for progress and even potentially undo some of the hard-fought gains of the past seven years. Most whites, even those sympathetic to civil rights and economic justice issues, were simply not amenable to black rhetoric that challenged core beliefs about order and government. It remained to be seen if more intense actions

and rhetoric from blacks would inspire whites to speed up positive change—or would galvanize whites into using tools of power, like the police force, to maintain control.

The first spark to intensified racial trouble came over issues involving high school athletics. Atkins High School was the pride of the black community and had a long history of producing great athletes and winning teams. It remained all-black, even as a handful of black students had started to attend each of the traditionally all-white high schools. On Thursday, October 12, 1967, Atkins High and North Forsyth High played a football game at the neutral site of Bowman Gray Stadium. North Forsyth was traditionally an all-white school that only recently enrolled a few African Americans. It was also a rural school with many children from farm and working-class families. Atkins was losing 25-13 in the fourth quarter and, apparently as an expression of frustration over perceived unfair officiating, Atkins players committed infractions leading to several penalties. Two Atkins players were ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. Kenneth Parks, an African American halfback for North Forsyth, was the victim of an "after the whistle" late hit by Atkins defenders. Multiple fights then broke out on the field between North and Atkins players. It took coaches, referees, and policemen going out onto the field to break up the fights. Once the players were separated, the North Forsyth team was put on its buses to go home. The Atkins players were kept on the bench while the stadium was cleared of spectators. There was also some shoving and fighting among spectators.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Fight Erupts at Game Here; At Least Five Teens Injured," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 13, 1967. Bowman Gray Stadium was built as a NASCAR racetrack. It is currently used as a NASCAR track and as the home football field for Winston-Salem State University. For many years it was the home field for Wake Forest University and Reynolds High School, as well. Bowman Gray Stadium was often used as a neutral

Outside the stadium, the rival spectators became more expressive. Rocks and bottles were thrown in the parking lot and on the busy thoroughfare of Stadium Drive. The buses carrying the North Forsyth football team and band were pelted with rocks. Cars had to swerve to miss people who had spilled out into the street. Small pockets of people kept popping up even as police worked frantically to break them up. Many young people "taunted and jeered at the police." Johnny Ross and his wife were driving home from church when, at the intersection of Stadium Drive and Reynolds Park Road, the back window of their 1966 Plymouth was broken by a thrown object. Other cars were allegedly hit by rocks, but Ross was the only person to file a police report. Eighteen-year-old Winston-Salem State College student James H. Jackson was arrested and charged with carrying a concealed weapon and obstructing traffic. White teenagers Ronnie Oates, Bruce Posey, Gary Strickland, and Greg Sharpe were treated later that night at Forsyth Memorial Hospital, and white teenager Stephen Hull was treated at Baptist Hospital. Their injuries included a bruised ear, a cut ear, chest pains, and a cut forehead. A black teenager, Harold Stitt, was treated at Forsyth Hospital, apparently for game-related injuries.<sup>2</sup>

Next-day reaction from school administrators seemed to downplay the incident. Marvin Ward, the Superintendent of Schools and his assistant Ned Smith were both present at the game. Ward called the incident "regrettable," and although he witnessed the fighting in person, he stated, "I would not want to say anything until I learn more

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site for games expecting high attendance. The stadium was (and currently is) located close to a predominantly black neighborhood.

<sup>2</sup> Fight Erupts at Game Here; At Least Five Teens Injured," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 13, 1967; and "School Officials Call Outbreak Regrettable," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 13, 1967.

about it." Smith promised a full investigation was forthcoming. Colon Nifong, the football coach at North Forsyth, commented: "We are all sorry this happened, the game just got out of hand." David L. Lash, the Atkins football coach, who kept his players on the field and away from the post-game violence, said: "I thought we were ready to play ball. We outplayed North in every department until the boys got excited over the penalties. I am really sorry this happened." Two days after the incident William M. Knott, the city-county school board chairman, announced that all play at Bowman Gray Stadium was suspended pending further investigation. Knott announced an investigative committee that included Winston-Salem State College athletic director and basketball coach Clarence E. "Bighouse" Gaines, Wake Forest University athletic director Dr. Eugene Hooks, and an assortment of coaches and principals from local high schools. The committee was to be chaired by prominent African American attorney, Richard Erwin.<sup>3</sup>

By the Friday following the game it was clear that all of the white teenagers seen at local hospitals were North Forsyth students. Eight other North students reported injuries that did not require professional medical treatment. Julian Gibson, the North Forsyth principal, stated he was unaware of any of his students having been involved in the fighting "except to be the recipients." Atkins students were not in school on the day following the game because their school had a scheduled day off. Black teachers from Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools were attending the district meeting of the North Carolina Teachers Association in Salisbury. Atkins students did attend what was supposed to be a "victory dance" at the school gymnasium right after the Thursday night

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<sup>3</sup> "Games in Stadium Halted Pending Fight Investigation," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 14, 1967.

game. Coach Lash stated that he had spoken with more than one hundred Atkins students and none were involved in the fighting. He observed that at the dance "all of ours were there and nobody was hurt." Lash went on to lay the blame on "hoods and hoodlums" who he claimed threw rocks at team buses after all games at Bowman Gray Stadium. According to Lash: "I don't know who they are, but they are apparently some of the Negro people who live near the stadium."<sup>4</sup>

By the following Tuesday, as rumor and acrimony spread between different factions in the city, Alderman Carl H. Russell called for "harmony" in the city. Russell stated that he had heard "many versions" of what actually happened, ranging from excessively hard play on the football field to unfair refereeing. Russell surmised that the "community would not have been stirred if the contest had been between members of the same race." Russell noted that he and other leaders were "alarmed" because of the racial component of the controversy. He called on the mayor's Goodwill Committee and other groups to help find a "solution to the trouble."<sup>5</sup>

Some whites saw the incident as yet another reason why full school integration could never work. Many blacks saw the placing of blame squarely on black players as yet another blatant example of injustice. The investigative committee headed by attorney Richard Erwin delivered its report to the community on Wednesday, October 18. As noted in a front-page headline the following day, the committee concluded, "Atkins Blamed for Melee." The committee determined that Atkins players did indeed use

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<sup>4</sup> "Games in Stadium Halted Pending Fight Investigation," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 14, 1967; and "Prep Games Ruled Out at Stadium," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 14, 1967.

<sup>5</sup> "Russell Asks For Harmony in Community," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 17, 1967.

excessive force during the game. Three players, William Gunn, Walter Jackson, and Calvin Williams, were suspended for the remainder of the 1967 season for "flagrant and unsportsmanlike conduct." Johnny Carthcart, Michael Copeland, James Lowery, and Future Williams were all placed on probation for the rest of the season for "conduct unbecoming an athlete." Head coach David Lash, along with his assistants, Robert Moore, Elijah Stewart, and James Chambers were placed on probation for one year with a condition that "any future negligence in player control" could end their jobs. Despite the efforts to calm all sides down and get back to normal, the football incident remained a hot topic of conversation for both blacks and whites.

Even as racial tensions were elevated over the football incident, a much more divisive and explosive event happened that was destined to shake the city's ideas of good race relations to the core—laying bare the resentment of white authority and police brutality by the city's poor and working-class young African Americans. Just a few days after the stadium fight, Winston-Salem police officers W.E. Owens and B.L. Reed arrested thirty-two-year-old James Eller for public drunkenness. Eller allegedly resisted arrest. He was sprayed with mace and struck on the head by Owens's blackjack.<sup>6</sup> After he was released the following morning, Eller's wife took him to North Carolina Baptist Hospital and to Forsyth Memorial Hospital [both marginally integrated at this point] for treatment and x-rays. Each of the predominantly white hospitals released Eller without finding any sign of a fracture. As his pain continued, in desperation Eller's wife took him to the traditionally all-black Kate Bitting Reynolds Hospital. At Reynolds Hospital it was

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<sup>6</sup> "Injured Man Dies; Officer is Charged," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, October 29, 1967.

discovered that Eller indeed had a fractured skull and a serious blood clot in his brain. Five days after his arrest, James Eller had surgery for the blood clot in his brain. Thirteen days after his arrest, James Eller died. An internal police department investigation determined that Officer Owens should be relieved of his duties. Chief of Police Justus M. Tucker consulted with both Eller's family and the NAACP and kept them informed of the department's decision. Three days after Owens was suspended, Eller's wife signed a warrant accusing Owens of the murder of her husband. When Owens was brought into Municipal Court for a hearing, the judge quickly ruled that "force was necessary" in trying to detain James Eller, and dismissed the charges—ignoring that the internal police investigation was still open. On Tuesday, October 31, Superior Court Solicitor Thomas W. Moore reactivated the case and sent it on the grand jury.<sup>7</sup>

Eller's funeral was scheduled for Thursday, November 2. The president of the Winston-Salem chapter of the NAACP, Reverend J. T. McMillan, called for a peaceful protest march after the funeral, and then perhaps bowing to pressure from city officials, cancelled the march. Despite the cancellation, numerous people were waiting at the cemetery and another group assembled downtown to greet the mourners. McMillan announced to the crowd that Thomas Moore with the District Attorney's office was considering whether the Eller case warranted a grand jury investigation. His words were apparently not enough to satisfy growing anger and frustration within the black

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<sup>7</sup> Aingred G. Dunston, "The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: 1947-1977" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1981), 229; "Injured Man Dies; Officer is Charged," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, October 29, 1967; "Policeman is Cleared by Judge," *Winston-Salem Journal*, October 31, 1967; Joe Goodman, "NAACP Recommends Study of City's Police Department," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967; and "Time to Suspend Judgment," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 8, 1967.

community. A group of about thirty young black people gathered at Third and Church streets and someone set fire to a trash can. The crowd began to grow in size and additional small fires were started, rocks were thrown, and some windows were broken. Police arrived and broke up the main crowd, which dispersed into smaller groups, all the while adding new rioters to the groups. Police reinforcements arrived with gas masks, tear gas guns, and riot sticks.<sup>8</sup>

Early that evening, Mayor M.C. Benton, along with Police Chief Justus M. Tucker and Fire Chief C.L. Williams, assembled in the Civil Defense Emergency Operations Center control room at City Hall. As the riots continued, Benton requested help from both the North Carolina Highway Patrol and from the National Guard. By eight p.m. Thursday night, 30 highway patrol officers arrived. By 10:20 p.m., 125 National Guardsmen arrived and an additional 75 Guardsmen arrived later that night. Sixty Guardsmen were positioned to guard City Hall, while the remainder, with fixed bayonets, worked with city police and state troopers to seal off the core of the downtown business district.<sup>9</sup>

Black anger within the lower classes could no longer be explained away as random acts of mischief by small “gangs” of youths. Word spread within poorer black

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<sup>8</sup> Steve Burns, "Crowd, Gathered Downtown; Shouting, Fireworks Started," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 3, 1967.

<sup>9</sup> Steve Burns, "Crowd, Gathered Downtown; Shouting, Fireworks Started," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 3, 1967; and David L. Paletz and Robert Dunn, "Press Coverage of Civil Disorders: A Case Study of Winston-Salem, 1967," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 33, (Autumn 1969): 331-332. Paletz and Dunn asserted that during riots in both Winston-Salem and in Durham the local newspaper coverage was controlled for the most part by the white power structure within the cities. While Winston-Salem did not have a black-run newspaper until 1979, the presence of black reporter Luix Overbea (which Paletz and Dunn overlooked) did bring an occasional black perspective, however subtly, into the reporting.



neighborhoods like wildfire and young people hurried to downtown. Police estimates placed the crowd of Thursday night rioters at approximately five hundred. Roughly one hundred fires were started, plate glass storefront windows were broken, and a number of downtown stores were looted. Rocks were thrown at police and firemen as well as some passing motorists. Small fires were set at both the Lafayette and Lincoln theaters. A fire was set at Hinkle's Book Store and a bus owned by Hinkle's was overturned. Two cars were overturned on Chestnut Street and set on fire. Storefront plate glass windows were broken out at Western Auto and Pep Boys stores on Liberty Street and the stores were then looted. Over the course of Thursday night and Friday morning, dozens of people were injured and over one hundred people were arrested--mostly on charges of looting and disorderly conduct. Three blacks were treated for gunshot wounds and four policemen were treated at the hospital for minor injuries. Although the vast majority of those arrested were young men, there were a number of young women on the arrest lists as well. Among those injured in the riots were fifteen-year-old Marta Gentry for "multiple gunshot wounds in the hip," twelve-year-old Marlene Chambers for a "gunshot wound in chest," and twenty-two year-old Virginia Whitlow for "glass in the eye."<sup>10</sup>

Judge Clifton Harper of Municipal Court heard cases against all of those arrested beginning at nine o'clock Friday morning and continuing into late afternoon. Some

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<sup>10</sup> Steve Burns, "Crowd, Gathered Downtown; Shouting, Fireworks Started," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 3, 1967; Roy Thompson and Steve Burns, "Gangs Riot, Loot, Set Fires Downtown; Police, Patrol and Guard Check Rioters," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 3, 1967; "Racial Outbreak in Winston-Salem," *The New York Times*, November 3, 1967; Harry Stapleton, "Relative Order Is Established in Winston-Salem," *The Lexington Dispatch*, November 4, 1967; "Members of Local Guard Reported in Winston-Salem," *The Lexington Dispatch*, November 4, 1967; "Weird Friday Night," *The Lexington Dispatch*, November 4, 1967; "Over 100 Arrested in Riot Incidents," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967; and "At Least 21 Are Hurt in Rioting," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 3, 1967.

defendants appealed and others with more serious offenses were bound over to Forsyth County Superior Court. Among those bound over to the higher court were three women, Jean E. Baker, Deborah J. Tart, and Carrie Payne--all charged with "storebreaking." There were a number of drunkenness charges and carrying a concealed weapon charges. Larceny charges and resisting arrest charges were also recorded. Some cases were dismissed and in others fines in the twenty-five to fifty dollar range were common. Jail sentences tended to be for thirty or sixty days with suspensions for one to three year periods.<sup>11</sup> There appears to have been an interest on the part of the court not to fill the jails, perhaps in the hope of helping to diffuse hostile attitudes within the black community. However "just" or not the court may have been, there can be little doubt that it imparted its rulings swiftly.

On Friday, November 3, more National Guardsmen streamed into the city, bringing their total number to around eight hundred soldiers. With the addition of more local and state police, the total number of enforcement personnel was close to twelve hundred men. Convoys of trucks and jeeps moved down Stratford Road, eventually staging in the parking lot of Thruway Shopping Center. City officials received bomb threats and white Winston-Salem was abuzz with rumors of massive violence yet to come. Many whites were afraid that the violence would spread from downtown into residential areas. Mayor Benton was given "emergency powers" by the Board of Aldermen and called for a city-wide curfew from 11 p.m. until dawn. North Carolina governor Dan Moore stopped by Winston-Salem for thirty minutes on his way to the

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<sup>11</sup> "Over 100 Arrested in Riot Incidents," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967.

Vance-Aycock dinner in Asheville, and took a quick tour of the previous night's damages with Mayor Benton. Benton, along with local and state Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) officials, ordered that no beer, wine, or liquor sales occur after 6 p.m. in the downtown area or in the "fringe areas." The hours were extended to 8 p.m. in other [all-white] neighborhoods. Public libraries closed at 4:30 p.m. and downtown banks at 4 p.m. Benton also cancelled high school football games scheduled for the night. Police intelligence had informed Benton of an unusually high number of cars spotted with out-of-town and out-of-state license plates. There was concern that whites, possibly Ku Klux Klan members or their sympathizers, were in town to bring violent activity of their own into the existing crisis.<sup>12</sup>

By 5 p.m. Friday evening a crowd of black people began to gather downtown. At 6 p.m., National Guardsmen sealed off a ten-block area of downtown, commanding that only those with clearance from "ranking officers" could enter. Law enforcement officers and National Guardsmen reported coming under sniper fire. Four armored troop carriers arrived from Fort Bragg and were deployed to areas receiving sniper fire. Guardsmen were issued live ammunition. Over the course of the night over sixty arrests were made. At least forty-four people, including eight law enforcement personnel, were injured. Fire Chief C.L. Williams reported to the press that "about 55 calls" were handled on Friday night and that "fire damage alone would amount to more than half a million dollars." According to the newspaper in nearby Lexington, one unnamed National Guard official

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<sup>12</sup> "Governor Moore and Benton Inspect Damage," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967; Roy Thompson, "Mayor Imposes Curfew in City," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967; Brad Rochester, "Liquor, Beer Sales Are Halted," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967; and "Mayor Gives Reason For Invoking Curfew," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967.

attributed the sniper fire to guns and ammunition stolen from downtown stores by looters. A *Lexington Dispatch* reporter also described a car full of black youths being surrounded by twenty Winston-Salem policemen with drawn "pistols and sawed-off riot shotguns." After searching the car, police allowed the youths to leave. The same newspaper reported that a bullet fired from another rioter "passed through the clothes of a guardsman." Although there were numerous injuries, including fourteen policemen, no one on either side was killed.<sup>13</sup>

Detective lieutenant Tom Reavis, along with police sergeants Ken Yountz and Bob Reid, reported a close call at the Southern Furniture Store at Twelfth and Liberty Streets. According to the officers, they found one man inside the store and two outside. Someone threw a Molotov cocktail that barely missed their heads and then smashed into the wall. All three were soaked in kerosene, which fortunately for them failed to ignite. Officers responding to a call at another store found looters with a truck backed up to a busted storefront window. Despite the heavy police presence, a number of business owners armed themselves and stayed overnight inside their businesses. One store owner said of himself and the others with him in his business: "We're not heroes. We're just here to put out fires."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> "Rioting Resumes in Winston-Salem," *The New York Times*, November 4, 1967; "A Rifle Shot...And Mixed Feeling," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967; "Snipers Fire at Guardsmen; Burning, Looting Continue," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967; Harry Stapleton, "Relative Order Is Established in Winston-Salem," *The Lexington Dispatch*, November 4, 1967; "Members of Local Guard Reported in Winston-Salem," *The Lexington Dispatch*, November 4, 1967; "Weird Friday Night," *The Lexington Dispatch*, November 4, 1967; and "Governor Moore and Benton Inspect Damage," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967.

<sup>14</sup> "Burning, Looting Continue; Curfew Is Imposed on City," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967

The Derry Street Market near the Kimberley Park Housing Project was also the target of looters. Earlier in the summer, while under different ownership and named Sellars Grocery, Kimberley Park residents had picketed the store for selling inferior products (like rotted meat) and for racist attitudes towards customers. The new owner, Arthur J. Lawson, pledged to return in spite of losing most of his inventory, which was uninsured. Lawson was encouraged by the support of some residents who apparently kept looters from burning down his building: "A lot of them down there have confidence in me," Lawson said. "Some of them told me that people were getting ready to burn the place...the ones who lived here stamped out the fire before it could get started." Lawson, unlike the previous owners, had apparently made a sincere effort to provide quality products and to treat his customers with respect.<sup>15</sup>

In an attempt to diffuse the situation, three prominent black leaders appeared on WSJS-Channel 12 News at 6 p.m. Friday evening. J.T. McMillan, president of the Winston-Salem NAACP, condemned the riot as "adding injury to the city, to the race and to racial understanding." Alderman Carl Russell called for calm, but also sent a message to whites, when he said that the riot could "be a lesson to us all and that we could profit from the truth that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Dr. F.W. Jackson, a prominent optometrist and vice president of the Experiment in Self-Reliance, urged citizens to "remain calm." Black leaders committed themselves to the idea of continued outreach to the community through the media to help end the violence.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> "Picketed Grocery Store Is Hit Hard by Rioting," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967.

<sup>16</sup> "Rioting Here is Deplored by NAACP," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 3, 1967; "Board of Aldermen Praises Law Officers," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967; and Paletz and Dunn, "Press Coverage of Civil Disorders," 337.

Not all black citizens concurred with the peacemakers' approach. Reflecting a level candor he may not have used with a white reporter, an unnamed black citizen, told the *Winston-Salem Journal's* black reporter, Luix V. Overbea, "Winston-Salem is getting what it deserves." Overbea apparently made it back to help with riot coverage despite being assigned by the *Journal* to cover the Simon and Garfunkel concert at Wake Forest University on Friday evening. Overbea noted in his concert article that the artists performed "He Was My Brother," their tribute to Paul Simon's friend Andrew Goodman, one of the three civil rights workers murdered at the start of Freedom Summer in Mississippi in 1964.<sup>17</sup>

*Winston-Salem Journal* City Editor Dick Creed, who was white, provided a personal account of his experience with some of the most frustrated of Winston-Salem's black youth. Creed had apparently arrived at the site of a trash fire at the corner of Church and Third Streets right after police had dispersed a small crowd. Creed had gone inside the black-owned Hairston's Drug Store to ask eyewitnesses what they might have seen. Store employees told Creed that a "local wino" had started the fire and that the fire truck arrived, put the fire out, and left. A "tall young man" opened the door and said to Creed with a friendly grin while pointing at white *Journal* photographer Larry Martin across the street, "'Hey Sherlock, is that Mr. Watson across the street?'" Creed cheerfully replied, "'I guess so.'" The young man closed the door and returned a few minutes later. He asked Creed if he could talk to him outside. When Creed went outside the store, the

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<sup>17</sup> Luix Overbea, "Negro Reaction to Riot Varies," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 3, 1967; and Luix Overbea, "Simon, Garfunkel Give WF Concert," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4, 1967.

young man asked him who he was, where he worked, and what he thought of the way James Eller had been treated. Even as Creed responded that "no reasonable man liked to see pain and death," the young man hit Creed in the back of the head, then the jaw, in the eye, and on his back. Creed said that he was pushed into a small crowd of onlookers and that, "Nobody helped him--or me." His assailant took off running. Another young black man approached Creed and told him: "I want to give you some advice. You had better get away from here. Tonight's the night, and you are on the wrong side of town." When Creed thanked the man for his advice and extended his hand, the man responded, "I don't shake hands."<sup>18</sup>

Larry Little was a star basketball player at the “symbolically integrated” R.J. Reynolds High School. The handful of black students at Reynolds were either gifted athletes or the sons and daughters of black elites. Little, whose mother was a member of Local 22 and participated in the tobacco workers’ protests of the 1940s and early 1950s, joined in with the rioters. Little shared food and other items taken in the riots with his family and friends in the Kimberley Park housing projects. In a 1981 interview, Little told historian Aingred Dunston: “I was swooped up by the moment. It was pay-back time for all the exploitation, all the rage.” Dunston noted that Little and others she talked with “make no apologies for their involvement and simply term the explosion—‘frustration

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<sup>18</sup> Dick Creed, "Thursday Night at Third and Church Streets--Why?" *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 5, 1967.

coming out.’”<sup>19</sup> Within two years, Larry Little channeled his anger into helping found the Winston-Salem chapter of the Black Panther Party.

Antipoverty workers with the Experiment in Self-Reliance (ESR) were especially motivated to end violence. Louise Wilson and other ESR workers under her command went out into the black community to encourage people to not participate in the riots. Staff workers focused on the various youth groups under the ESR umbrella, most notably the two hundred member Neighborhood Youth Corps. The majority of ESR workers donated their own time to work nights and during the weekend to help calm emotions and to staff community centers. ESR leaders were certainly focused on diffusing violence in their city--but they were also quite aware of the need for positive public relations for anti-poverty efforts. Federal funding for the War on Poverty was under attack in Congress and there was legitimate concern that federal funding could disappear. Louise Wilson, Robert Law, and other ESR leaders were also concerned about preserving their positive relations with local sources of funding. Robert Law recalled meeting with a dozen or so black workers within ESR to plan strategy for going out in the community to help quiet the anger. One of the leaders in the ESR group asked who "was packing," and Law was shocked to see everyone at the table except he produce a handgun. Law quickly agreed when it was suggested that after dark it would be best for Law to leave the community “outreach” work to the black staff members.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Larry Little, “Remarks Commemorating Local 22,” First Calvary Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, April 20, 2013, attended by the author. Dunston, “The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem,” 234.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Law, Interview with the author, March 14, 2013, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; "Antipoverty Workers Seek to Soothe Anger in Negro Neighborhoods Here," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 4,



On Saturday, November 4, colder weather and no early-evening incidents brought a sense of optimism within City Hall and the offices of the Winston-Salem Police Department. Downtown businesses had a fairly normal morning, although shoppers began to disappear by mid-afternoon. Supermarkets around the city were busier than usual despite the continued ban on alcohol sales in many neighborhoods. Only about five hundred fans attended the Winston-Salem State-St. Paul's football game at Bowman Gray Stadium but Wake Forest drew a packed house of thirteen thousand later in the afternoon to the same venue for its homecoming showdown with South Carolina. As reports came into police of rocks and bottles being thrown at cars heading to the Wake Forest game, the cause for optimism for ending the riots quickly evaporated. For the Wake Forest faithful the threat of racial violence was not enough to cancel homecoming activities. On Saturday night, twenty-five hundred people packed Wait Chapel on the campus for a performance by Smokey Robinson and the Miracles. Robinson, whose father was injured in Detroit rioting during the past summer, had threatened to cancel the show after hearing of the violence in Winston-Salem. Wake Forest's Dean Mark Reece went to Columbia, South Carolina Friday night and persuaded Robinson to still come to Winston-Salem.<sup>21</sup>

Within a couple of hours of nightfall, reports of gunfire came into police headquarters. Sniper fire was heard at Ninth and Chestnut Streets, although the gunman got away. Two hours later, around 9 p.m., shots were fired again at Ninth and Chestnut.

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1967; and "ESR Staff Stays on Job On Own Time," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 5, 1967.

<sup>21</sup> Roy Thompson, "Sniping Starts Again; Curfew Is Reinstated: Guard Is Still On Duty," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 5, 1967; and "Downtown Shopping Throng Vacates City Streets Early," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 5, 1967.

A "small army" of police and Guardsmen arrived and took David Copell McIntyre into custody. He was charged with "discharging firearms within the city." At approximately the same time that McIntyre was placed under arrest, Mayor Benton decreed that the curfew would continue for yet another night. Garfield Moore, twenty-eight, was allegedly caught in the act of looting. When others in the neighborhood tried to impede the police, scuffling broke out and some shots were fired. Moore was arrested and later reports from Kate Biting Reynolds Memorial Hospital indicated that he suffered from "a fractured skull and some cuts on the head." Whether due to cold, the more systematic positioning of law enforcement personnel, or the arrival of the Sabbath morning, Saturday night was much calmer than the previous two nights. Out of approximately forty arrests, seventeen were for simply violating the curfew and another eleven were for public drunkenness. After midnight Saturday and into early Sunday, morning there were no reports of any violence in the heart of downtown, except for a small arson incident at Easton school, which caused about twenty-five hundred dollars' worth of damage.<sup>22</sup>

Beginning around 1 a.m. Sunday morning, there was a much bigger fire set at Snyder Lumber Company and also allegedly some gunshots fired while firemen were fighting the fire. Even though three employees were spending the night as guards, someone was able to sneak in and set the main lumber storage building on fire. When firemen first arrived, they heard gunshots coming from the Columbia Terrace housing project across the street, and fearing for their safety, firemen were unable to fully engage

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<sup>22</sup> "Curfew Reinstated After Sniping," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 5, 1967. Roy Thompson, "Sniping Starts Again; Curfew Is Reinstated: Guard Is Still On Duty," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 5, 1967. "Downtown Shopping Throng Vacates City Streets Early," *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 5, 1967.

the fire. Within minutes, more than a dozen police and Highway Patrol cars arrived and secured the area. With the help of volunteer firemen from surrounding rural departments, the fire was eventually contained and kept from spreading to nearby private homes and public housing units.<sup>23</sup>

The lead editorial in the Sunday *Journal and Sentinel* gave evidence that white elites in Winston-Salem, while maybe not ready to share equal power with black people, were becoming conscious that black anger over injustices from the police and legal system reached deeper than “hoodlums” in the streets. The editorial compared 1967 Winston-Salem to pre-World War I Europe, dramatically stating that, “The atmosphere in many of the important centers of influence in Winston-Salem was rather like the chancelleries in Europe in 1914, when history seemed to move them along toward tragedy despite every impulse they had to avoid it.” The rioters were dismissively described as “simply waiting for an opportunity to make trouble” and as an “element,” of whom “a good percentage of it is likely to find its way to the police station on any given Friday or Saturday night on one charge or another.” The “vast majority of our Negro citizens drew back in horror at where the emotions of the week had led.” Police Chief Justus Tucker was praised for being “uncommonly sensitive” towards issues of police brutality even though the Eller case “left him and his department vulnerable to suspicion and criticism.” The editorial supported hiring more black officers and more officers in

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<sup>23</sup> Lloyd Brinson, "Snyder Lumber Co. Razed By Early Morning Fire," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967.

general with the hope of reducing “strain” on individual officers and thus, future incidents.<sup>24</sup>

While the view of the newspaper rather benignly referred to police brutality incidents as “error—or even seeming error,” there was an awareness that the unified concern of the black community over brutality was not going away any time soon. It was made clear that the newspaper supported “punishment and swift suppression” for rioters, but also that “fairness and respect” should be shown to all law-abiding citizens (including blacks). The editorial supported the efforts of Solicitor Thomas Moore to continue the investigation of the Eller case and to provide a “full and fair” account of what actually happened.<sup>25</sup>

Sunday, November 5, seemingly brought the promise of peace, quiet, and perhaps reflection on the events of the previous three days and nights. Many African Americans attended an event that was scheduled before the rioting broke out. The Effort Club at New Bethel Baptist Church hosted the sixteenth annual "Race Progress Day," with Dr. Hugh M. Gloster, president of Morehouse College, as the keynote speaker. "Race Progress Day" had been started as an annual event for the first Sunday of every November to discuss the state of race relations (and hopefully progress) in Winston-Salem. Gloster built his theme around "The Three Ordeals of the American Negro,"

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<sup>24</sup> “Breaking a Tragic Chain,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 5, 1967. The editor and publisher of the newspaper in November of 1967 was Wallace Carroll. The editorial page editor was Joe Stroud. The Chairman of the Board of Piedmont Publishing Company, the owners of the newspaper, was Gordon Gray, with family connections to Wachovia Bank and the Reynolds Tobacco dynasty. Gray was also an important national defense expert in both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. It is unclear who was the exact author or authors of the editorial.

<sup>25</sup> “Breaking a Tragic Chain,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 5, 1967.

specifically divided into periods of slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and the "current ordeal" of prejudice. Gloster stated: "Prejudice is the last and most difficult trial for the Negro to endure and overcome after the fight against segregation has ended." Gloster predicted that the end to prejudice would not come in his lifetime and called for religion, democracy, and "moral revolution" as pathways towards a better society. The Effort Club also presented payment for a five hundred dollar Life Membership in the NAACP and additionally donated one hundred dollars to the James Eller Fund.<sup>26</sup>

Sunday afternoon, a biracial and interdenominational prayer service was held at Fries Auditorium on the campus of Winston-Salem State College "to express concern for, and to search for answers to events of the last few hours." Ten local ministers, members of the interracial Forsyth Ministers' Fellowship, by design kept the program limited to prayers and scripture readings of each individual pastor's choosing. The Reverend Henry S. Lewis, chaplain at Winston-Salem State, Reverend Kelly O.P. Goodwin of Mount Zion Baptist, Reverend Thomas Smith of the Experiment in Self-Reliance staff, and Reverend Melton M. Bonner, Jr. of Bon Air Christian Church represented the black community. The Reverend Ralph Underwood of Clemmons Presbyterian, Dr. W. Randall Lolley of First Baptist, Reverend Orion N. Hutchinson of Ardmore Methodist, and Reverend Roderick Reinecke of St. Timothy's Episcopal represented the white community. A group of approximately one hundred people gathered and the crowd was described as "about half white, half Negro." At the conclusion of the service, one lady

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<sup>26</sup> Luix Overbea, "Prejudice Is Called Last Negro Trial," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967.

noted that she was especially moved by the part of the final prayer that said: "Help us to see we are our brother's brother and not our brother's keeper."<sup>27</sup>

Even as black leaders called for peace, it was increasingly evident that the issue of police tactics and brutality was at the forefront of concerns within the black community. Over four hundred people attended an NAACP-sponsored mass meeting Sunday evening at North Elementary School. The meeting was for the stated purposes of raising money for James Eller's family and for increasing NAACP memberships. James Eller's mother and widow were present at the meeting. His mother "wept violently." Eller's widow said to the crowd: "I would like to say to everyone to please stop the rioting." Much of the meeting focused on presenting suggestions and demands to the city concerning the policies and behavior of the police department. The executive committee of the NAACP resolved to recommend that the city fully investigate Chief Justus M. Tucker's procedures on the "discipline, recruitment, training, promotion and assignment of police officers." It was suggested that the department start a policy of racially mixing its patrol cars--to provide one white and one black officer in each car as far as manpower permitted. It was recommended that a citizen's review board be set up "with punitive power to review

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<sup>27</sup>"Interracial Meetings Are Today," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 5, 1967; and "Prayer Service Held To Express Concern," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967. Dr. W. Randall Lolley was the author's pastor as a child and baptized him in 1970. He would later head the Southeastern Baptist Seminary in a day when moderate Baptists were still welcome in the leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Rev. Roderick Reinecke was the father of one of the author's childhood friends. In retrospect it makes sense that both of these men were proactive and progressive in terms of race relations.

complaints of police brutality exceeding police authority" and that all new officers receive psychological testing "to determine if they have racial prejudice."<sup>28</sup>

Dr. P.M. Brandon, a member of the NAACP executive committee called James Eller, "a symbol of what can happen to you or me any time a trigger happy or blackjack happy cop wants to swing at your head." In an especially dramatic portion of the meeting, a white man, Thomas E. Wooten, was asked to address the assembly. Wooten told of how he had had been shot three times in the abdomen for resisting arrest for public drunkenness. Wooten said: "It's not altogether that your skin is dark or that my skin is white that gets you killed. It's the kind of men they're sticking in those uniforms." Wooten called for people in Winston-Salem to band together and "carry their grievances" to the courts.<sup>29</sup>

The combination of church services and mass meetings appeared to calm raw emotions. Law enforcement commanders along with state and city officials decided Sunday to lift the curfew and to send some of the National Guardsmen home. Two rifle companies of Guardsmen, roughly five hundred men, returned to their homes in the nearby towns of Mt. Airy, Boone, Elkin, and Wilkesboro. The biggest task for law enforcement Sunday afternoon was turning away sightseers hoping for a glimpse of the

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<sup>28</sup> "Prayer Service Held To Express Concern," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967; and Joe Goodman, "NAACP Recommends Study of City's Police Department," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967.

<sup>29</sup> Joe Goodman, "NAACP Recommends Study of City's Police Department," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967.

site of the Snyder Lumber fire. Sunday night brought more fear from rumors than from any actual violence. Police reported a few minor fires but no riot-related violence.<sup>30</sup>

The lingering effects of media coverage of Klan activity were felt in the black community. Multiple calls came into police from African Americans living in the Lakeside and Carver Road neighborhoods, who reported sightings of white vigilantes riding around in cars. Rumors spread that the Ku Klux Klan was riding towards Winston-Salem looking for trouble. One caller said that they had seen white men at a gas station with a backseat full of Molotov cocktails. After many calls, the police command post finally ordered patrol cars to systematically ride through the black neighborhoods to help assure people that they were protected.<sup>31</sup>

As the violence and the drama of the riots ended, the vast majority of Winston-Salem residents, white and black, still felt some level of apprehension about where the future of race relations was headed. For black people in Winston-Salem, the vast majority of whom were against any form of violence or law-breaking, the riots may have taken the lid off of some long-bottled anger and perhaps opened a new era for more demonstrative negotiations with whites. As did the protests of 1963, the riots of 1967 brought out the reality of class divisions within the black community and the fact that not all were sharing equally in the strides forward for civil and economic empowerment.

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<sup>30</sup> Roy Thompson, "National Guardsmen Begin to Leave City; Curfew Is Removed: Traffic Permitted Downtown," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967.

<sup>31</sup> Roy Thompson, "National Guardsmen Begin to Leave City; Curfew Is Removed: Traffic Permitted Downtown," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967; and Roy Thompson, "City Hall--Armed Fortress at Dusk," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967.



For whites in Winston-Salem, the era of naively ignoring the inequalities of daily life and rationalizing injustice away with antiquated platitudes was also waning if not yet ending. In a press conference on Monday, November 6, Mayor Benton proved surprisingly receptive to most of the suggestions made by the executive committee of the local NAACP chapter. This was a dramatic change from his usual deliberative approach to racial issues. Scrutiny of the police chief's office, racially mixed patrol teams, and psychological testing for racism all met with the mayor's approval for implementation. Benton also supported ordering that police officer W.E. Owens remain suspended without pay until final disposition of the case against him for the murder of James Eller. The only proposal that met resistance from the mayor was the one calling for a citizen's review board for police brutality. Benton argued that review boards had "failed miserably" in other communities, and although he offered no alternative plan, he felt there was "a better answer to this problem."<sup>32</sup>

The remaining National Guardsmen were probably quite bored on Monday night. Only one call to the police was possibly riot-related, a fire at the Meat House on East Fifth Street (damage estimate twenty dollars); the rest turned out to be false alarms from unknown sources. An occasional car wreck or domestic disturbance call came in—the usual types of police calls—with the most exciting event being the arrest of bootleggers bringing in a carload of moonshine. The decision was made Monday to send home all but fifty of the remaining National Guard troops. The rationale for keeping fifty soldiers was to provide an extra sense of security through Tuesday's elections with the hope of

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<sup>32</sup> Benton Backs Study of Review Board," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 7, 1967.

voters feeling safe enough to turn out. It is unclear if the riot had any meaningful effect on the election, but voters turned down an increase in property taxes, with all of the increase slated to improve the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System. This was in spite of unified support from the school board, county commissioners, city aldermen, and the mayor.<sup>33</sup>

By Wednesday all of the outside military and law enforcement had left. The city faced the aftermath of arguably the most dramatic single event in its modern history. There were a variety of reactions from whites but there seemed to be a general softening of tones. At the behest of Experiment in Self-Reliance leaders, Mayor Benton wrote letters to senators and house members asking for their support in breaking the stalemate over refunding the War on Poverty. Conservative whites who may have previously framed the riots in terms of innate poor behavior by blacks, offered instead the demon of alcohol as a rationale for unrest. White North Carolina Baptists, in their weekly publication, *Charity and Children*, called for “exploring with the Negro Baptists of our state ways that we can cooperate in alleviating the conditions that encourage civil disobedience and hoodlumism” and called for unified prayers for Winston-Salem. Noting the number of those arrested for drunkenness during the rioting, North Carolina Baptist State Convention official Marse Grant noted in the organization’s official journal, *The Biblical Recorder*: “As in Newark and Detroit, liquor was a contributing factor to the

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<sup>33</sup> “Monday Night in the City Is Quiet,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 7, 1967; “Winston-Salem Quiet after Two Riot Nights,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 11, 1967; Roy Thompson, “Last of Guardsmen To Pull Out Today,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 8, 1967; and Larry Dendy, “Hunt to Continue for School Funds,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 8, 1967.

beginning and the continuance of the riot.” Grant went on to comment that “it’s too late to close the liquor stores and beer joints after a riot has torn a city asunder.”<sup>34</sup>

Ted H. Key of Winston-Salem placed the blame for the riot on the problems of alcohol and did not absolve his fellow whites of sin. According to Key, “James Eller was drunk, the man who set the first fire was drunk, but neither man helped white Christians establish the local ABC pharmacies.” With perhaps a less judgmental approach, a growing group of local white Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish clergymen joined together with black ministers in a call to expand the role of the Goodwill Committee and to make creating better race relations a goal of the broader community.<sup>35</sup>

It is not clear how receptive to change the culture inside of the Winston-Salem Police Department was. A young patrolman named B.N. Walsworth circulated a memorandum throughout the department stating that he found it “regrettable” that James Eller’s family felt animosity towards the police. He suggested starting a “James Eller Family Fund” with donations from members of the police department. Walsworth stated that there would not be active solicitations, just a simple container placed at the Complaint Desk. Conversely, a fund was started at a popular police hangout, Mert’s Grill, at Hawthorne and First Streets, to help the family of Patrolman W.E. Owens.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> “Clergy and Mayor Will Meet on Race,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 8, 1967; “Prayers For City Are Asked,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 10, 1967; “ESR Is Believed to Have Funds Enough to Wait Out Poverty Bill,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 10, 1967; and “Baptists Should Restore Peace Here, Editor Says,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*.

<sup>35</sup> Ted H. Key, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 15, 1967; and “Prayers For City Are Asked,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 10, 1967.

<sup>36</sup> Roy Thompson, “Could It Have Been Different?” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 7, 1967; and “Fund Begun To Help Policeman,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 9, 1967.

White political leadership urgently felt the need to provide responses to the heightened black frustration manifested in the riots. On November 10, “a massive communitywide attack on unemployment” was announced by Mayor Benton’s Employment Resources Committee. Declaring an urgency to remedy “the consequences of old social injustice,” the committee put forth a number of proposals. Among the proposals was the naming of a “top executive” as a special assistant to the mayor on job issues. A “Job Day” was to be created to provide “instant matches” between employers and potential employees. A Comprehensive Area Manpower Planning System (CAMPS) would be established to coordinate the efforts of the various agencies concerned with employment—with the hope of eliminating duplicative services and maximizing available funding. Key to the CAMPS structure was the idea of better communication between antipoverty workers out in the communities and company representatives. A subcommittee also reported to the larger body the results of their study of the specific problems of local unemployed people. Most of the people the study interviewed were black and expressed experiences with discrimination in hiring practices. The report noted that a “significant number” of businesses simply “refuse to hire Negroes.” Transportation issues were also cited as well as competition from rural whites who came to Winston-Salem seeking jobs right out of high school. Other issues that black job applicants felt might be holding them back were appearance issues like obesity and poor dental care.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Larry Dendy, “Project Will Match Unemployed, Jobs,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 11, 1967; and “15% of Jobless May Be Too Fat,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 11, 1967.

The court system was also aware that emotions in the black community were still running high over justice in the Eller case. Perhaps stalling to let emotions wane, on November 10, Assistant Solicitor D. Blake Yokley reported that Solicitor Thomas Moore had not completed his investigation, and that the case of police officer W.E. Owens would not be ready to send to the grand jury during its scheduled November session. The next scheduled meeting of the grand jury was set for December 4.<sup>38</sup>

At an interracial symposium hosted by Wake Forest University on November 14, there was clearly a shift in the tone of discourse from leaders in the black community. The panel consisted of Curtis Todd, vice chairman of the state Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights; the Reverend J.T. McMillan; and Dr. F.W. Jackson. The moderator was Wake Forest professor of religion Dr. George McLeod Bryan. In his opening remarks, Jackson described black housing conditions in Winston-Salem as “deplorable” and said that “urban renewal is really only Negro removal.” He went on to denounce a lack of job training that relegated blacks to “the most menial tasks” and left them “social rejects in the economic underworld.” Jackson went on to say that while only a “tiny portion” of the city’s black population actually participated in the riots, “the majority of the community was in sympathy.” Jackson called on whites to go out into the black community and work, and he called on Wake Forest students specifically to volunteer with tutoring, daycare, and other programs at the Experiment in Self-Reliance. Jackson praised efforts by Mayor Benton’s committees on

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<sup>38</sup> “Grand Jury Won’t Get Owens Case Monday,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 11, 1967.

housing and employment, saying that they “show a real effort on the mayor’s part” in the battle against poverty.<sup>39</sup>

McMillan, who had often straddled the line between agitator and negotiator, stated that “Winston-Salem and Forsyth County believe in tokenism. They believe you can hand down a little bit and keep the crowd quiet.” Curtis Todd spoke of “irritants” to the black community that angered and frustrated people, and led ultimately to violence. He observed that there “was not a single Negro” in Winston-Salem’s court system, a system in which many of the jobs were appointed. Regarding the experience of court for blacks, Todd asked: “How can they help feeling friendless and helpless when they are surrounded by the people who are historically their oppressors?” He charged that there was no sense of “good faith” in the system for blacks, and that a quick remedy would be to appoint blacks as judges, clerks, and deputies. Todd also criticized the mayor’s housing initiatives for “not going far enough” and for refusing to address the politically sensitive issue of open housing. The packed- house audience of mostly whites, with some young blacks, gave the panel a “long and loud ovation” when the program ended.<sup>40</sup>

The voices of the leadership class of Winston-Salem’s African American community became louder and more unified in the aftermath of the 1967 Riot. The rhetoric of former gradualist leaders almost overnight seemed to reflect a new sense of urgency. The voices of the lower classes within the African American community were not, however, limited to whatever type of self-expression was demonstrated in the rioting.

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<sup>39</sup> Larry Dendy, “White Community Blamed in Violence,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 15, 1967.

<sup>40</sup> Larry Dendy, “White Community Blamed in Violence,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 15, 1967.

It was important to many poor African Americans to emphasize that they were working hard to better themselves and to become productive, mainstream citizens. The first Tuesday after the riots ended marked the first anniversary of the Underwood Willing Workers Club, a community volunteer group from low-income neighborhoods initially organized by the ESR. About fifty people gathered at Antioch Christian Church to hear speakers from ESR and Legal-Aid. The group celebrated their work over the past year when they conducted neighborhood cleanup campaigns, planted flowers and improved landscapes, worked to help ESR with summer recreation programs for youth, and lobbied politically for things like lower speed limits and better housing code enforcement. A young African American lawyer from Legal Aid, Laura Sawyer, spoke to the group with praise for their accomplishments and with challenges to keep fighting for change. Known affectionately in the community as “Lawyer Sawyer,” she noted how she was “worried about the explosive nature of impoverished people. People are frustrated all over the country.”<sup>41</sup>

In the wake of the riot, voices from the African American community in Winston-Salem demonstrated substantial differences across class and generational lines, while also indicating a developing sense of solidarity that appeared collectively to put the onus of racial problems squarely back upon white people. Elite voices within the black community began to frame their public comments with an increased awareness of the interests of the lower classes of blacks. Jasper Alston “Jack” Atkins, a nationally

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<sup>41</sup> “Club in Low-Income Area Told To Work for Better Community,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 7, 1967.

recognized civil rights attorney and the son of WSSU founder Simon G. Atkins, offered his insights into the current difficulties. Atkins analyzed the catalytic aspects of Atkins-North Forsyth football incident and pointed out how giving whites “carte blanche to determine what fighting at this game was punishable and what not punishable, and to fix whatever punishment it pleased,” was clearly an analogy for the overall feelings of resentment in the black community. Atkins condemned the injustice of “depriving citizens of their civil rights and inflicting damages upon them, without benefit of the elemental conditions and procedures of due process of law.”<sup>42</sup>

Dentist and civil rights activist, J. Raymond Oliver, said that for race relations to actually improve, “The white community should listen to Negro militants as well as conservatives, and stop playing politics with the Biracial Goodwill Committee by calling meetings only when it is politically advantageous to do so.” Oliver stated that it should no longer be expected for the black middle class or the NAACP to “control the Negro poor, because they feel out of touch with everything middle class including the Negro church.” He further argued that only by “breaking up the ghetto,” and making Winston-Salem a truly open city in terms of employment and housing would racial problems end. Oliver praised the efforts of the Experiment in Self-Reliance in “helping people help themselves” but again insisted that the agency could never do enough until people could “buy, rent, build, and live where they choose.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Jack Atkins, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 9, 1967. Jasper Alston Atkins graduated from Yale Law School in 1922, argued at least two case before the Supreme Court of the United States, was the first African American editor of the Yale Law Journal, and was the first African American member of the Order of the Coif. See J. Clay Smith, *Emancipation: The Making of the Black Lawyer, 1844-1944* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 39.

<sup>43</sup> J. Raymond Oliver Jr., “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 18, 1967.



Black perceptions of whites after the riot varied based on personal experience. Alecia G. Peak described shopping downtown after the riot and being “insulted very badly” by a white salesgirl. Peak said that if the clerk was “angry about the race riot or angry about Eller, she should have closed up her store. I didn’t have a part in the riot but I disapprove of the way Eller was treated.” Describing himself as, “a Negro who would like to inject some thoughts on the disturbance in our city,” D.R. Jones praised Aldermen Ross and Russell, as well as Mayor Benton, for trying “in vain to extinguish the sparks.” Jones also praised the police for a “quick response” to minimize injuries and property damage. He suggested that had the legal system “tactfully prolonged the investigation” of Eller’s death until at least after his funeral, and not issued the dismissal of charges against Officer Owens, then perhaps the issue could have been negotiated peacefully.<sup>44</sup>

Others in the black community were not so tolerant of police brutality, nor were they accepting of whites who they perceived as attempting to downplay the importance of the issue. If for most of the 1960s the strategy of the white elites had been to let aggrieved whites vent in the discursive forums of the newspapers, for the first time the same elites may have felt a genuine need to let aggrieved blacks speak. In an indictment of the use of paddy wagons to round up multiple rioters, Elizabeth Mason accused Forsyth County Sheriff Ernie Shore of “chaining human beings and making a public display of them,” in a manner reminiscent of slave auctions. Mason commented that chains were “for cattle and equipment for heavy work, not human beings. Those chains

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<sup>44</sup> Alecia G. Peak, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 11, 1967; and D.R. Jones, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 6, 1967

will surely put scars on people that will not heal.” R.J. Reynolds Tobacco factory worker Leroy Williams stated: “There were many of us who knew James Eller personally who did not appreciate this so-called riot in our city. But in the same sense we do not appreciate white citizens trying to whitewash this thing.” Williams called for the removal as “law officials” of Police Chief Justus Tucker and Judge Leroy Sams, “not in bitterness but as a means of a better relationship between law agencies and the people as a whole, and especially the Negro people of Winston-Salem.”<sup>45</sup>

Within public discourses, the sense of African American awareness of class concerns within the black community had never been higher. James O. Chatham brought together the notion that blacks across all class lines ultimately shared similar fears and concerns about the actions of the police. He stated that the frustrations of the “hoodlum element” also existed “within many of the most respectable and conscientious citizens of this city.” Chatham gave police department leadership credit for trying to improve the department but noted that there was “still a considerable gap between the ideal and the actual performance of those ‘on the beat,’ a gap which can be graphically documented by most residents of East Winston.” Chatham complained about “prejudicial and degrading” social customs in the city, noting that “an elderly Negro man is addressed by his first name by the young white girl who receives his rent payment.” Chatham called the newspapers to task for printing ads for low-income housing under a heading of “for colored.” He questioned why authorities allowed the “economic exploitation of East

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<sup>45</sup> Elizabeth Mason, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 10, 1967; Leroy Williams, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 21, 1967; and *1963 City Directory*, 501, 861.

Winston” by “door-to-door salesmen, furniture and appliance dealers, loan sharks, real estate companies, landlords, and a host of other operatives.”<sup>46</sup>

Rosalyn Woodward’s comments demonstrated that although the issues that caused the riot may have brought some solidarity to the black community, divisions based on economic class did not suddenly disappear. Woodward called the NAACP meeting of Sunday, November 5, “a farce.” She asked the question: “Does the NAACP really work toward the advancement of all Negroes? Or is this advancement confined only to the realms of the black bourgeoisie?” Woodward felt that “indigent” people who tried to speak at the meeting were ignored and that their problems were considered “irrelevant” by mainstream black leaders. Woodward insisted that “no questions should have gone unanswered in a time of racial turmoil or any other time” and that the NAACP was insincere in their treatment of the people “hurt most by overt racism and laws which were not designed for their own protection.”<sup>47</sup>

White citizens also offered numerous opinions regarding the status of race relations and the effectiveness and mission of the criminal justice system in the aftermath of the riot. Progressive whites were generally quiet, as most found the violent and destructive nature of the event counterproductive to challenging the racism of other whites. Most whites came out in support of law enforcement and called for calm to prevail. Racist and staunch segregationist whites seized upon an opportunity to use the riot as an indictment of general black behavior.

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<sup>46</sup> James O. Chatham, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 9, 1967

<sup>47</sup> Rosalyn Woodward, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 10, 1967.

White support for the police department reflected a different experience with law enforcement than the experience of many in the black community. Robert W. Leonard noted that thanks to the police and fire departments “thousands of city residents slept peacefully unaware of the prevailing turmoil.” Mrs. B.G. Church said that concerning the Eller case, “Regardless of how the Negro may try to make it appear, this is not a race situation—it was not at the time it happened, and it never will be.” Church asserted that the same result would have occurred had James Eller been “a drunken white man.” She pointed to an incident on November 1, when white rescue workers apparently saved the life of a black man trapped in a construction site cave-in, as proof that the white man was “not full of hatred for his Negro brother.” Calling the police department the “only protection against lawlessness, violence, and mob rule,” and “all that stands between us and destruction of our city,” Church emphatically stated: “STAND IN BACK OF YOUR POLICE DEPARTMENT!”<sup>48</sup>

Sadie R. Goodwin expressed gratitude to the mayor, police chief, and fire chief, and also praised the black leaders who called for peace on television. Goodwin felt that Winston-Salem had a “commendable record in the past regarding race relations” and called for “all types of citizens” to make the city better. Vicki M. Jones supported the efforts of Chief Justus Tucker and the police department with emphasis on the routine dangers that all police officers faced. Jones suggested that police policy should require a physician to examine any prisoner struck by a law enforcement officer in order to verify

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<sup>48</sup> Robert W. Leonard, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 8, 1967; and Mrs. B.G. Church, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 8, 1967.

and document the extent of any injury. As a rationale, Jones suggested that “a man released on bail could walk out and run into a telephone pole, inflicting further injuries on himself.” Policeman’s wife, Mrs. F.M. Golice, thanked Jones for her positive comments about the police. Golice praised many officers for working the cold nights of the riot, even though they were sick, because otherwise, “they would be letting their fellow officers down and further endangering their lives.”<sup>49</sup>

A number of whites proposed conspiracy theories that placed the NAACP and mainstream black leaders as masterminds behind the rioting. Edward Harper, Jr., suggested that the Reverend J.T. McMillan’s “intoxicating paralysis of the long ceremony” at James Eller’s funeral helped spark the riots. Harper said that Eller “aggravated” what happened to him and that Officer Owens should not be used as a scapegoat for the mistakes of others. In a critique of the NAACP, Reynolds Tobacco draftsman, James S. Sutphin asked why, if there was “no organized plan to the criminal acts,” the organization suddenly presented “certain demands.” Sutphin asked further: “With a city of 150,000 people and no one wanting to take the blame, just who is being discriminated against? The criminal element, the poverty stricken, or the Negro Community?” He went on to suggest a conspiracy to rob liquor stores that indicated the riots had to be something more than just spontaneous acts. Sutphin then demanded that if concessions were made to the NAACP, then in exchange there should be a guarantee that “this will not happen again.” Jennie Brewer called the riot “vandalism which pretended

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<sup>49</sup> Sadie R. Goodwin, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 12, 1967; Vicki B. Jones, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 10, 1967; and Mrs. F.M. Golice, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 16, 1967.

to be grieving for the late Mr. Eller.” Brewer argued that “some of the people involved in the looting and burning of the stores probably did not even know the deceased.”<sup>50</sup>

Whites blamed the riots on Eller for causing his own death, the rhetoric of radical civil rights ministers, and a general depravity brought about by the president’s Great Society brand of liberalism. John D. Duane echoed the feelings of many whites saying that had Eller been white no one would have noticed his death. M.B. Folb, not speaking officially in his job as a county health investigator, suggested that since Eller was drunk, he may have fallen earlier and fractured his skull, and that the “one blow” from the policeman’s blackjack “may have been the straw that broke the proverbial camel’s back.” Folb also spoke out in support of Judge Sams’s dismissal of the initial charges against Officer Owens, claiming that “Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence regards a man innocent until proven guilty.” M.C. Johnson blamed a “militant clergy” that “get in the pulpits to preach hate and then go into the streets and incite riots.” According to Johnson: “The Great Society has created a monster which is made up of a collective group of rioters, draft dodgers, draft card burners, militant clergy, so called intelligentsia and drug addicts none of which should be punished because they are sick or deprived or victims of some excuse for breaking the law.”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Edward Harper, Jr., “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 14, 1967; James S. Sutphin, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 12, 1967; Jennie Brewer, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 12, 1967; and *1963 City Directory*, 699.

<sup>51</sup> John D. Duane, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 13, 1967; M.B. Folb, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 13, 1967; M.C. Johnson, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, December 2, 1967; and *1963 City Directory*, 255.

Many middle-class whites in this time period, and arguably since, held views that in their minds were not at all racist, instead judging people based on a value system that assumed the playing field was level and that placed a high value on individual responsibility. Mrs. George Dillard, the wife of a car salesman, saw the type of racial unrest exhibited in the rioting as a reflection of class as well as race, with little sympathy for bad behavior based on economic or environmental issues. “As a whole,” Dillard said, “the Negro race, as the white race, wants what’s best for their country and children.” Acknowledging that “white forefathers made plenty of mistakes,” Dillard stated, “Doors are now opened to the white and colored. These doors are now opened but our low-class white and colored citizens want no responsibility that goes with these open doors. They had rather steal, burn, and destroy what others have had guts enough to work for rather than get their own.” Dillard continued by saying that had rioters been able to read, “They could learn how they are helping the Communists. The Communists get a country fighting with each other, then come in and take over.”<sup>52</sup>

Perhaps in an effort to soothe hard feelings and ratchet down some of the rhetoric, the family of James Eller wrote a letter to the *Journal* that was published on November 26. The family thanked the “citizens of Winston-Salem” for their sympathy and for giving the family a ‘sense of belonging.’ They also expressed gratitude to the NAACP, the Goodwill Committee, and to the churches. They expressed their hope for “calm” in the community after the riots and stated: “We are confident that justice will rule in due

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<sup>52</sup> Mrs. George Dillard, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 18, 1967, *1963 City Directory*, 207.

time, and our family will depend upon the courts to take the proper course. We seek no revenge against anyone. For the good of the community...we ask for justice, but never shall we take the law in our own hands.”<sup>53</sup>

Eight months after the riots of 1967, sociologist Charles H. Moore of Wayne State University conducted a study of how riots had affected racial attitudes in Winston-Salem. Moore sampled the views of 65 elites which he defined as “governmental” and “informed individuals,” including 51 white and 14 black subjects. The second group of the study consisted of 125 adult black people, all of whom resided in the six predominantly-black central city census tracts. The black “district” was divided into sixty blocks with the intent of getting a broad cross-section with the black community. When asked the direct question, “What did the Riot accomplish,” 31 percent of elites felt that there were positive “symbolic rewards” and 12 percent felt there were positive “material rewards.” Only 25 percent felt there were no material rewards and only 6 percent felt that the Riot led to better law enforcement. Among elites, 15 percent felt that the Riot had “negative symbolic rewards” and that the Riot “hurt race relations.” Among the sampling of all black citizens, 23 percent felt there were positive symbolic rewards and only 7 percent felt there were positive material rewards. The majority, 57 percent, of black people felt that there were no material rewards after the Riot. Only 2 percent responded that the Riot had negative symbolic rewards. In other polling questions to black citizens there was clearly a disconnection between political action and possible personal benefits from such

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<sup>53</sup> Mrs. James Eller and Mrs. Hattie Frost, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, November 26, 1967.



action. When asked if they were satisfied with “police protection,” 86 percent of black respondents said that were satisfied. Only 55 percent expressed satisfaction with the condition of city streets. Oddly, only 44 percent of elites thought that blacks were satisfied with police protection. This data, and other information collected by Moore, showed that the elites attached greater significance to the riots than did the average black person.<sup>54</sup>

The conclusions that Charles Moore reached in his study are worthy of consideration when examining the racial attitudes of Winston-Salem over time. Despite the drama of rioting, Moore concluded that blacks in Winston-Salem were “generally politically passive.” The polling indicated that blacks were bound by “moral code of behavior” that rejected violence and that did not expect government to provide the main solutions for their problems. The majority of blacks in Winston-Salem believed in an integrationist path towards progress (only 15 percent responded that they favored “Black Power”). Moore in essence concluded that the rioting made elites more aware of issues that upset the black community but also concluded that the “benevolent dictatorship” of Winston-Salem leadership (including some of the black leaders according to Moore) would continue forth indefinitely.<sup>55</sup> The arguable fault with Moore’s conclusion that blacks were “politically passive,” is the high probability that African Americans in this time period would have been much less likely to speak openly and freely with their criticism, especially when speaking to an unknown interviewer. Moore’s strongest

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<sup>54</sup> Charles H. Moore, “The Politics of Urban Violence: Policy Outcomes in Winston-Salem,” *Social Science Quarterly* 51, vol. 2 (September 1970): 375-376.

<sup>55</sup> Charles H. Moore, “The Politics of Urban Violence,” 384-388.

argument appears to be his assertion that the riots served to stimulate the elites, of both races, into less gradualist and more proactive behavior.

In the months following the riots, there appears to have been a tangible increase in efforts from white leaders to bridge the gap in racial equality. City government at least attempted to find solutions to employment issues, even if issues like open housing were politely stonewalled. There was also an increase in grassroots black activism, perhaps disputing Charles H. Moore's notion that Winston-Salem blacks were "politically passive."

The use of funds by the Model Cities program was of high concern to many in the black community during the spring of 1968. John Gallaher, who was white and the mayor's handpicked choice for Model Cities Committee Chairman, had led a successful (second) effort to get federal money to improve North Winston neighborhoods. Approximately fourteen thousand people lived in the affected area, 98 percent of whom were black. Over two hundred people attended a public meeting on April 2, 1968, to voice their opinions. Led by Mrs. Lee Faye Mack, residents questioned how they would fit into the planning process. Among their demands were that the majority of people serving on the Model Cities Committee should actually come from the affected area (not the current five out of fourteen) and that the determination of what areas qualified for neighborhood council representation should be determined democratically by the actual residents—not arbitrarily by city officials. Former Local 22 leader and community activist Willie E. Smith urged that Gallaher be replaced with a black director.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Ed Shanahan, "Division Evident At Renewal Talks," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 3, 1968.

In the early spring of 1968, white citizens were still adjusting their long-held notions of race to a more assertive black population. White downtown shoppers were made nervous by the presence of groups of young black males who “hung out” in the Trade and Liberty Streets area. Some of the youths were downtown to work or to ride the bus and others were probably just there to socialize. In the era before shopping malls, downtown was the hub of commercial activity. Downtown store managers complained of congestion from the nearby bus stops outside their stores and complained that young people were clogging up the aisles inside the store. Store managers claimed to be “short many thousands of dollars because of shoplifting.” Even the relatively progressive newspapers were not exempt from stereotypes. One young black man was described in the *Journal* as “about 18 with bushy hair, tight trousers, and a snappy walk.” Store managers claimed that female shoppers and employees had been “harassed” by young men, and one female employee claimed to have been threatened by a young man “toying with an ice pick.” According to *Journal* reporters, merchants “welcomed as liberators the policemen who walk the area.”<sup>57</sup> Old fears and old stereotypes appeared to simply mutate rather than simply fade away.

As people in Winston-Salem adjusted to life socially and politically in the new era of integration, and as the lingering tensions of the riots of November 1967 were still felt throughout the city, another dramatic news event quickly assured that race would remain front and center in everyone’s lives. On April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee, the

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<sup>57</sup> Steve Burns and Lloyd Brinson, “Merchants Want Action against Idlers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 3, 1968; and “Jammed Store Aisles Promote Shoplifting,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 3, 1968.

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. Those closest to Martin Luther King, Jr., Coretta Scott King, Ralph Abernathy, Andrew Young, and Bernard Lee called for carrying on King's commitment to nonviolent protest. Abernathy spoke of violence as a "dishonor" to King, "for he sought redemption of man, not vengeance." In a Washington news conference, Stokeley Carmichael called for black Americans to arm themselves and to "kill off the real enemy." Carmichael added: "When white America killed Dr. King she opened the eyes of every black man in this country."<sup>58</sup>

As was the rest of the nation, Winston-Salem was stunned by the news—and felt the full gamut of human emotions. Leaders of both races were aware of the potential for racial friction and new riots. J.T. McMillan, who was attending a church meeting in Washington, issued a statement: "We would the people to avoid any assembly for dangerous and inflammatory participation. At some appropriate time, the proper ceremonies will be conducted and justice will find its place for the death of this martyr." Mayor Benton called the death of King a "deplorable act," and said: "This represents a very serious setback in national race relations. I'm simply hopeful that members of both races will do some serious thinking and meditation before doing anything hasty or in the spirit of revenge that will only serve to worsen the situation."<sup>59</sup>

Fearing a reprise of the riots of five months earlier, the mayor mobilized the Winston-Salem Police Department. Shortly after 9 p.m., on the night of April 4,

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<sup>58</sup> Murray Schumach, "To Many He Was a Prophet," *New York Times*, April 5, 1968; Earl Caldwell, "Ex-King Aide Takes Charge of Nonviolent Rights Work," *New York Times*, April 6, 1968; and "Riot Toll Is Rising Across U.S.," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 6, 1968;

<sup>59</sup> "J.T. McMillan Issues Plea for Calmness," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 5, 1968; and "Benton Deplores Slaying of King," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 5, 1968.

approximately three hundred students from Winston-Salem State College marched from the campus to the downtown business district. “Heavily armed policemen” were waiting for students as they gathered near the main post office. There was “some singing and then some shouting,” according to newspaper reports. Dr. Kenneth R. Williams, president of the college, arrived on the scene and was able to persuade the students to return to campus. Elsewhere in the downtown area, small groups began to gather. The burglar alarm went off at the Army-Navy Store on Liberty Street and at Towne Jewelers on Fourth Street, windows were broken at Rominger Furniture and in the Wachovia Building. A crowd began to move out of the Eleventh Street “bottom” towards downtown. Police were sent to turn them around. Just after midnight a fire was reported at the De Luxe Grocery at Thirtieth Street and Glenn Avenue, and shortly thereafter, another fire call came from the A & P Grocery Store on Bowen Boulevard. There was one report of sniper fire at Seventeenth Street and Patterson Avenue, but responding police officers found nothing.<sup>60</sup>

Despite fears of another major riot, Winston-Salem remained relatively calm. By late night Thursday, police felt that “the worst was over” and that the small number of incidents were “manageable.” At breakfast on Friday morning, a number of Winston-Salem State students protested by breaking glasses from the cafeteria. Following a 10 a.m. memorial service, Chancellor Kenneth R. Williams announced that the college would begin Spring Break five days early. By late afternoon most students had left for home. Friday night was even calmer, with no specific race-related incidents reported.

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<sup>60</sup> “Winston Has Minor Vandalism, *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 5, 1968.

Stores that usually stayed open Friday evenings closed early, but both the Carolina and Winston theatres remained open. Store managers reported a much slower day than normal.<sup>61</sup>

Elsewhere in North Carolina and around the nation, urban centers were not so calm. The National Guard was deployed in both Raleigh and Greensboro, and units were put on alert in a dozen other areas of North Carolina. In Greensboro over two thousand students from Bennett College and North Carolina A & T University marched peacefully during the day on Friday. At night, a policeman was injured by sniper fire. Over the weekend, Greensboro reported fires being set, rock-throwing incidents, and some gunfire. In Raleigh, Guardsmen moved on students with fixed bayonets and tear gas after a police officer was hit by a brick while riding his motorcycle. Governor Dan K. Moore sent National Guard units to both Wilmington and Goldsboro in the wake of substantial looting and property damage. Wilmington was described by a city official as in a state of “guerilla warfare” with “pure destruction.” A group of seventy-five African Americans in Wilmington attacked a squad of soldiers and got away with two M-1 rifles. Fires were set in High Point, and in Lexington a “predominantly Negro” school was destroyed by fire. Also in Lexington, numerous cars were damaged by rocks, stores were looted, and a Molotov cocktail was thrown on Raleigh Road.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> “Downtown City Areas Are Quiet,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 6, 1968; and “WSSC Gives an Early Vacation,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 6, 1968.

<sup>62</sup> “Greensboro Police Fire Upon Snipers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 6, 1968; “North Carolina Negroes March; Raleigh Still Tense,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 6, 1968; “Moore Sends Guardsmen to Wilmington, Goldsboro,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 7, 1968; “Flames Rip High Point Warehouse,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 9, 1968; “Lexington’s Mayor Puts City Under Curfew After Violence,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 9, 1968; and “Guard Clamps Grip On Seething State,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 8, 1968.

President Johnson ordered five thousand regular army troops to Chicago to bolster the efforts of police and National Guardsmen, as they faced thousands of angry rioters and sniper fire that emulated wartime conditions. Over ten thousand troops were sent to Baltimore at the request of Maryland governor Spiro Agnew. Government workers scrambled to leave Washington Friday afternoon as black smoke from riot fires hovered over the city. Detroit, site of the nation's deadliest racial violence during the previous summer, again erupted into flames and violence. Pittsburgh and Boston also saw substantial violence. The *New York Times* described the situation in New York as "relatively mild" despite hundreds of incidents in multiple boroughs. In the Deep South, students at Tuskegee Institute held twelve members of the Board of Trustees hostage, prompting the National Guard to come to campus. The students backed down after talking with Lucius Amerson, Alabama's only black sheriff. Protesters in the Jackson State College area of Jackson, Mississippi, threw bottles at cars with white drivers and burned a news reporter's car.<sup>63</sup>

The concerted effort by both black and white leaders in Winston-Salem seems to have kept violent protest to much lower levels than in many cities in the state and nation. As they had done during the riots of the previous fall, Experiment in Self-Reliance staffers used grassroots outreach methods to help calm anger—especially among young people. Neighborhood community houses were kept open and dances were held for

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<sup>63</sup> Michael Stern, "Violence Eases in Pittsburgh; Dr. King Mourned in the Nation," *New York Times*, April 8, 1968; John A. Hamilton, "The Typical Rioter and Dr. King," *New York Times*, April 8, 1968; Sylvan Fox, "Outbreaks Here Are Relatively Mild," *New York Times*, April 6, 1968; "18 People Dead As Negro Riots Still Rack U.S.," *Winston Salem Sunday Journal and Sentinel*, April 7, 1968; Donald Mosby, "Chicago Peaceful, But Troops Still in Riot Sections," *Chicago Daily Defender*, April 9, 1968; and "Tuskegee Students Lock Up Trustees," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 8, 1968.

teenagers. Led by Alderman Carl Russell, the Board of Alderman voted on April 5 to designate April 6 “Voter Registration Emphasis Day” and declared the day to be in memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. J.T. McMillan requested the tribute, saying: “We feel this is one of the best memorials that can be attributed to this saint and martyr.” On April 6, approximately 150 black and white volunteers gathered at the First Baptist Church on Highland Avenue for a memorial service. The Reverend Kelly O.P. Goodwin of Mt. Zion Baptist Church asked for “a fuller commitment to, and a deeper sense of participation in the democratic way of life.” The service included the singing of “Precious Lord Take My Hand,” the hymn King had requested for the meeting scheduled on the night of his assassination. The volunteers then rode black-owned Safe Bus Company buses into predominantly black neighborhoods to register voters. Over six hundred voters were registered among the cards turned in to election officials on April 6, with several hundred more expected to follow. By April 12, McMillan claimed that the voter registration drives spearheaded by the King memorial resulted in over thirty-four hundred new registered voters.<sup>64</sup>

On Sunday, April 7, an estimated crowd of fifteen hundred people, equally divided in terms of white and black, attended a memorial service at Centenary Methodist Church (Winston-Salem’s largest Methodist congregation, predominantly white). Brooks

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<sup>64</sup> “East Winston Community Events Held,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 6, 1968; Ed Shanahan, “King’s Death Spurs Voter Drive in City,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 6, 1968; “Over 600 Register During Voter Drive,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 7, 1968; and “446 Register in Last Minute Push,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 13, 1968. Forsyth County Board of Elections numbers confirmed a substantial increase in new black voters, especially new Democrats. Among white voters there were 196 voters who switched from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party while only 21 white voters switched from Republican to Democrat.



Hays, a former Congressman from Arkansas, and then current head of the Ecumenical Institute at Wake Forest, was the keynote speaker. Hays called on white Americans to act in order that “every man of Martin Luther King’s race may know that the forces of love aboundeth and the forces of hatred are being pushed back.”<sup>65</sup> Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools announced that “almost all” schools had made provision for televisions in classrooms to view the King funeral service on Tuesday, April 9. The predominantly black high schools, Atkins and Carver, held school assemblies in tribute, while predominantly white Parkland High School planned a memorial service over the school’s public address system. School Superintendent Marvin Ward left it up to individual principals to determine their school’s activities.<sup>66</sup>

Alderman Carl Russell, Dr. F.W. Jackson of the Goodwill Committee, and Reverend J.T. McMillan all went to Atlanta to attend the funeral of Martin Luther King, Jr. On the day of the funeral, Mayor Benton announced that he was hiring Winston-Salem native, Atkins High School football star Carl Eller, as a special assistant for race relations. Eller was an All-American defensive tackle at the University of Minnesota and an All-Pro star in the National Football League with the Minnesota Vikings. Eller said that many young African Americans felt “alienated from city hall” and don’t feel as though “their interests are even considered by city officials.” Eller’s duties included going out into the black community, especially among youth, and trying to establish a

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<sup>65</sup> “King Eulogy Delivered at Centenary Methodist,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 8, 1968.

<sup>66</sup> “Schools in City Plan King Tribute,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 9, 1968.

better feeling about their relationship with city government. Eller was to have an office in City Hall and be paid a salary of five hundred dollars per month.<sup>67</sup>

While it was not being said publicly, the white population of Winston-Salem had a broadly felt fear that the black population might erupt in some unimaginable fashion over the King assassination. These concerns dominated private discussions within all classes, political leanings, and age groups of white Winston-Salem. On the evening of April 10, 1968, Mayor Benton went on local television and radio to address racial issues and to make a dramatic announcement. Benton praised Winston-Salem and its people for not plunging into the type of violence that occurred across the nation and in a number of North Carolina communities. Benton said: “It is my firm conviction that the sole reason for this community’s stability is because all of our people have developed a confidence in each other and our sincere dedication to the principle of working together in solving our problems.” The mayor called for a “rededication” to addressing race-based issues and for “working even harder” towards maintaining peace between the races. He pledged to increase efforts to improve housing in poor neighborhoods, to increase job opportunities for African Americans within city government, to continue adding recreational facilities in eastern and northern parts of the city, and to increase city efforts to clean up refuse and

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<sup>67</sup> “Russell, Jackson Go to Rites,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 9, 1968; and “City Hires Top Sportsman To Help in Race Efforts,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 9, 1968. Carl Eller was a two-time All-American at Minnesota. He elected to the College Football Hall of Fame (2006) and to the Pro Football Hall of Fame (2004).

Eller currently lives in Minneapolis but visits Winston-Salem often and has continued to do charity work in his hometown.

control rodent populations in some neighborhoods. Benton closed his core address by saying: “Much has been done, but more must be done. We will do this now.”<sup>68</sup>

Benton then issued a surprise announcement that R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company was donating one million dollars to directly fight poverty in Winston-Salem. The money was to be allocated through a new community organization, the Winston-Salem Urban Coalition. The organization was to be based on the model of the national Urban Coalition, headed by former Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) Secretary John W. Gardner, founded largely in response to the urban riots in Detroit and Newark in 1967. According to Benton, the organization would be headed by “the best leadership, white and Negro, that we can muster in this community.” The mayor would serve as chairman with other leadership to be named later.<sup>69</sup>

Reaction to the gift from Reynolds Tobacco and the formation of the Urban Coalition was positive and enthusiastic. Carl Russell thanked Reynolds Tobacco and noted that the funding would help put forward the ideas proposed by Mayor Benton: “Good housing leads to good citizenship and gives people a new outlook on life. The recreation program indicates a concern for youth. Through this medium we can cut down on juvenile delinquency.” Mark Freeman of the Experiment in Self-Reliance said that tying together public and private funding for antipoverty efforts could “effect maximum impact” and could lead to “significant breakthroughs in the areas of housing jobs and

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<sup>68</sup> “We Will Do This Now,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968; and Ed Shanahan, “Reynolds Gives \$1 Million To Fight Poverty in City; Coordinating Agency in Plan,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968.

<sup>69</sup> Ed Shanahan, “Reynolds Gives \$1 Million to Fight Poverty in City; Coordinating Agency in Plan,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968; and “Winston’s Coalition Is First in Carolinas,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968.

education.” Norwood Robinson, chair of the mayor’s committee on housing, said that he had “never been more encouraged than I am tonight. The speech makes me doubly proud to live in this city.” The Reverend Jerry Drayton, pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church [long a center of civil rights activity, New Bethel is often referred to as “Mother Bethel” in the black community] felt that the new developments indicated “sincerity on the part of the city to help solve the problems of housing and unemployment on the local level. Cities have too long depended on federal aid to solve problems. I have high hopes the community can now actually move toward equal employment and better housing.” Goodwill Committee member J.R. Oliver said that new approaches “will serve to better race relations by diminishing the motivation for violence. I feel this program is a very helpful and needed program to lift the lives and the ambitions of the poor people.”<sup>70</sup>

John Gallaher, chairman of the Model Cities Committee, “expressed hope” that other major industries would follow Reynolds Tobacco Company’s lead and contribute to solving urban problems: “I feel leading industries should have done this long ago.” Thinly veiling his paternalistic instincts, Gallaher also commented that he was “a little disappointed” in Benton for not specifically challenging local black leadership: “I feel that until Negroes can unite and work together, then all programs will fail regardless of what of what the city or the citizens do in a financial way or through their leadership.” Perhaps Gallaher was still sensitive over Willie E. Smith’s April 2 call for a black director of Model Cities or over federal official H. Ralph Taylor calling city government

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<sup>70</sup> Larry Dendy, “Leaders Applaud Move to Aid Poor,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968.

“too dictatorial.”<sup>71</sup> The contribution from Reynolds Tobacco signaled a new era of corporate attention to racial issues. Other major corporations in the city would follow the lead of the tobacco giant. This may have happened without the Riot of 1967 or the assassination of Martin Luther King, just not as quickly. Antipoverty workers, notably Experiment in Self-Reliance leaders, were already working towards a goal of more private funding. The events of the period from November 1967 to April 1968 had forced a leap forward in the attitudes of city officials, notably a sense of urgency to deal with black leaders more as equals and to placate to some extent the obvious unrest seething within the lower classes of black Winston-Salem.

As reflected in city political leadership and in the grand gesture of the Reynolds donation to antipoverty efforts, many whites in Winston-Salem were opening to the idea of racial equality and even the possibility of real integration. The changed attitudes of white political and corporate leadership did not magically diminish the reality of entrenched racist attitudes within the broad spectrum of white Winston-Salem. The word “nigger” was used conversationally in many white homes and with few, if any, repercussions in white schools. Many adults proudly taught their children the same words and prejudices their parents had taught them. It was considered humorous by many whites to refer to Martin Luther King, Jr. as “Martin Luther Coon,” or after his death to say things like, “they need to find his killer to give him his medal.” In a slow-moving process, it did become less and less socially acceptable, at least in “respectable”

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<sup>71</sup> “Model Cities Slowdown Urged to Calm Fearful,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 10, 1968; Larry Dendy, “Leaders Applaud Move to Aid Poor,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968; and Ed Shanahan, “Division Evident At Renewal Talks,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 3, 1968.

white society, to use racial slurs. Historian Jason Sokol summed up the white southern experience with the civil rights movement as “two stories.” “One,” he said “of how southerners experienced those phenomenal moments of the civil rights years; and the other of how, over a period of time, they absorbed the transformation, encouraged it, rejected it, or lived with it.”<sup>72</sup>

Fear was often a driving force in white attitudes. The Saturday morning after the King assassination, and after the minor looting incidents in downtown, one store owner sold seventy-one guns in a three-hour period. Stores throughout the city reported dramatic increases both in the sale of guns and in the sale of ammunition. The majority of the guns sold in Winston-Salem were rifles and shotguns. One store owner noted that because North Carolina required a permit to buy a handgun, many other sales were being carried out just over the state line in Virginia. One gun dealer in Winston-Salem said that people “have really been buying heavily for the last two or three years, ever since Watts.”<sup>73</sup>

The white community reflected a wide variety of thoughts and attitudes in the wake of the King assassination. There was a heartfelt and concerted effort by a substantial number of whites to confront the ignorance and ugliness of racism. Representing progressive Winston-Salem whites, the Reverend Frederick Hege, pastor of Fries Memorial Moravian Church, criticized Governor Moore for appealing for “peace

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<sup>72</sup> Jason Sokol, *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights, 1945-1975* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006), 8, 333-335. Sokol discusses how whites were trapped in their own racism and how difficult it was for many to “let go.” The author of this dissertation, like most whites in the South, grew up hearing many of these standard derogatory racial terms applied to blacks.

<sup>73</sup> Steve Burns, “Ammo Sales Increase Here,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968.

and order” without pleading for “JUSTICE.” Hege stated: “This is typical of the spirit that is producing the trauma in our cities today. In peace and order we denied even a cup of water at a lunch counter, a quiet afternoon at a city park, or a night of rest in a motel to our Negro brothers.” Continuing with a theme of emphatic “JUSTICE,” Hege said that there could be no peace without “JUSTICE,” and that the “finances of the nation” and “the will of the people” must be dedicated to “the creation of a climate of self-respect and mutual respect for all our citizens.” G. Logan Bowman, vice president of the large construction concern J.W. Burrell, Inc., said that, “The spokesman for non-violence from Georgia is now a martyr. Undoubtedly this was not the intention of the assassin and his bullet.” Bowman expressed hope that reflection on the meaning of King’s death would “stimulate the white community to a much more active and personal involvement in the pursuit of liberty, equality, and justice for all.”<sup>74</sup>

Progressive whites maintained their commitment to civil rights for African Americans, and moderate whites continued to evolve, if slowly, on racial issues. Almost all whites in Winston-Salem lacked an understanding of the feelings behind growing black radicalism. Margaret P. Arey exemplified this attitude as she praised Martin Luther King, Jr. for believing “through intelligence and the due process of law, Negroes would eventually have the opportunities and selections promised all citizens in the Constitution of the United States.” Despite her positive stance towards King and mainstream civil rights concepts, Arey was very concerned about a void in African American leadership

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<sup>74</sup> Rev. Frederick Hege, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 9 1968; G. Logan Bowman, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968; and *1963 City Directory*, 77.

and the radicalization of African Americans, as she stated: “Young, malleable Negroes are left with the Stokely [*sic*] Carmichaels and Rap Browns. The country is left with guilt and dishonor. God help us all.”<sup>75</sup>

Despite overall efforts in the white community to ramp down inflammatory rhetoric, public discourse still contained some less-than-enthusiastic white support for civil rights. Evan W. Norwood, an apartment dweller on South Main Street, blamed racial issues on “sensuality,” with an emphasis on the consumption of liquor as a sensual act and on idleness. Perhaps in a nod to old racist attitudes concerning black work ethics, he praised the Great Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps camps for “taking loiterers off the street.” Norwood invoked the words of West Virginia senator and former Klansman Robert C. Byrd, quoting Byrd as having said: “One cannot preach non-violence and advocate defiance of the law.” W.A. Combs, a plumbing supply salesman, asked readers why there was violence after King’s death and not after the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Combs stated: “Some people seize upon a situation only to make their grievances known. This is wrong.”<sup>76</sup>

Although there were many changes in the nature of public discourse regarding race, the patriarchal leaders were still controlling controversy as much as possible. A group of Winston-Salem’s most progressive white people, led by Wake Forest professor McLeod Bryan, met with Mayor Benton a week after the King assassination to voice their plans for a public demonstration to align “the white conscience with the real

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<sup>75</sup> Margaret P. Arey, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968.

<sup>76</sup> Evan W. Norwood, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968; W.A. Combs, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11 1968; *1963 City Directory*, 160, 579.



meaning of what King was all about.” In a two hour meeting at the Glade Street YWCA, protest leaders expressed their desire to “confess our shortcomings before God” in a public program that was to include recordings of King’s speeches, comments by Black Power leaders, poetry readings, and folk songs. Benton requested that the protesters not hold their program on downtown streets as planned. He told the group: “A downtown meeting would not reach the people who should be reached and possibly would attract radicals from both sides.” Benton told the group to hold their meeting in a park, church, or auditorium and promised the city’s assistance in securing one of these types of venue.<sup>77</sup>

Benton promised the group that they would be subject to arrest if they took to downtown streets with loudspeakers. The possibility of arrest angered many in the group. Sue Van Doern, described as a young woman, “her voice faltering and her eyes filled with tears,” asked Benton: “Have you ever made a talk on a public platform and supported open housing, or supported letting Negro kids go to Tanglewood Park, or spoke in favor of Negro dignity?” Benton responded: “Youth is impetuous. You want to get this thing done overnight.” Van Doern countered: “If you were a Negro child and you wanted freedom and so often you butted your head against a wall, what would you do? Would you riot?” When asked again by McLeod Bryan what would happen if the group demonstrated with loudspeakers and without a permit from the Board of Alderman,

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<sup>77</sup> Larry Dendy, “Mayor Urges Group Not to Protest,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 12, 1968.

Benton replied: “You will be breaking the law. You will go to jail if you break the law.” The group decided to meet with Benton at a later date to plan a “city-sanctioned” event.<sup>78</sup>

Like the majority of black Americans, most black people in Winston-Salem would have described themselves as supporters of the “King method” of nonviolent civil rights and economic justice advocacy. Just as Martin Luther King himself acknowledged there was value in elements of “Black Power,” so too did older, more traditionally mainstream African Americans evolve politically. It also follows that in a community with a thriving black college, and a tradition of education and the exchange of ideas, that more militant and more radical black ideologies would emerge. The death of Martin Luther King, Jr. was certainly a tragic loss for all believers in nonviolent protest and the higher possibilities for decency in all men. In Winston-Salem, it was also, ironically, because of white fear of black retaliation, coupled with an increased awareness of lower-class black concerns by black elites, a catalyst for many of the changes for which King so ardently fought.

The death of King inspired reflection from many in Winston-Salem, reflections that offer insight into changing attitudes over race and race relations. Ruth Scales, an African American and the wife of a Reynolds Tobacco worker, expressed her feelings before King was yet buried. Scales said that the death of Dr. King had “stirred the writer from procrastination to enter the fight for freedom for the Negro in America. It is the right of every Negro to be a recipient of the full freedom from being born in the United States of America.” Scales added that it was unfortunate that someone had to get

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<sup>78</sup> Larry Dendy, “Mayor Urges Group Not to Protest,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 12, 1968.

murdered “to awaken the white world to the fact that Negroes are not going to stand by idly and let their fellow brothers and sisters be murdered by police and national guardsmen. Though the life of one has been taken in the fight for freedom, where one died a hundred have arisen.” Minnie B. Sockwell, also the wife of a Reynolds Tobacco worker, reflected: “It is true that he has been shot and his body and mind are at rest. But he will live on forever if we allow him to. If there is violence, then each one that takes part in it will be the guilty person who killed him.”<sup>79</sup>

Some African Americans reflected their own inner conflict over whether King’s nonviolent methodology or a more militant approach was best. Calvin Ijames stated: “Many of us question the tactics Dr. King used to help mankind, but thousands of people throughout the world have admitted that his motive was good.” Ijames also said that the assassination of King, “bombed the Negro race. All of us feel the effect in one way or another.” Perhaps leaning towards a “social gospel” standpoint, and with a message for both black and white, Ijames stated: “Men of all races who deliberately injure the civil, social, physical, or spiritual welfare of their fellow men—admit to the world that they have rejected the example of Him who was greater than Martin Luther King, Jr.”<sup>80</sup> Certainly there were many in the African American community who were angrier and more prone to a militant response to King’s assassination than was reflected in public discourse. Local television and print media intentionally avoided presenting views deemed too extreme, whether from radical blacks or reactionary whites.

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<sup>79</sup> Ruth Scales, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 9 1968; Mrs. Minnie B. Sockwell, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 11, 1968; and *1963 City Directory*, 680, 730.

<sup>80</sup> Calvin Ijames, “Letters to the Journal,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 15, 1968.

After the major riot event of November 1967 and the smaller event following the death of King in April 1968, Winston-Salem effectually maintained a lid on militant protest from the disaffected lower classes in the black community for roughly a year. On Sunday April 27, 1969, during a traffic stop on Glenn Avenue near Derry Street, African American police officer D.R. Williams called in to the dispatch desk for a record check on James Beasley, a twenty-two-year-old black man. Beasley apparently heard the response back to Williams, stating that Beasley had escaped from a county jail work detail the previous November. In Williams's account of the event, Beasley then ran and Williams pursued on foot. At some point in the chase, Beasley "crouched and whirled about with one hand hidden and his other hand in the air," prompting the officer to shoot Beasley once in the chest. Other witnesses claimed that Beasley stopped and turned around as if giving himself up. After waiting several minutes for an ambulance, Williams and another officer decided it would be quicker to take Beasley to the hospital in their squad car. Although in serious condition, Beasley survived the shooting.<sup>81</sup>

In weeks prior to the shooting of Beasley, several small rallies had been held in East Winston neighborhoods by those described by police as "black militants." A rally just after the Beasley incident, in an apartment complex parking lot in the area of Fifth Street and the North-South Expressway (U.S. Highway 52), was described as consisting of "about 50 youths, many dressed in Black Panther uniforms." Later in the afternoon, another rally was held at Glenn Avenue and Derry Street, near the actual site of the

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<sup>81</sup> Lloyd Brinson and Jim Shertzer, "Police Move to Break Up Vandals in East Winston," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 28, 1969; and "Police Await Trial In Shooting Incident," *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 29, 1969.

Beasley incident. According to police, the rally lasted from about 2 p.m. until dark and then the crowd dispersed. About 9:30 p.m. there was a car accident near Derry Street, which according to police chief Tucker “attracted attention” and the “gangs reassembled.” Eventually a crowd of “several hundred youths” gathered and began breaking windows. Both the Kimberley Park Grocery and the Stop ‘N’ Go Food Store were badly damaged, and the Bantam Food Market (all in the Kimberley Park general area) was burglarized. Police moved into the area in squad cars and the crowd broke up into smaller gangs. Most of the damage was contained within the one neighborhood as police set up checkpoints entering the downtown business district. Later that night, the large crowd reassembled on Derry Street and constructed their own barricades to keep police cars out. Police patrolled the perimeter but did not enter the area where the large crowd was concentrated.<sup>82</sup>

Police announced that they would wait for the results of James Beasley’s trial on outstanding charges before finalizing a decision concerning the actions of Officer Williams during the incident. Chief Tucker stated that because of conflicting statements from witnesses, he feared that a decision could possibly be inflammatory, “in light of the events presently occurring in our city.” Monday night produced a number of looting and vandalism incidents. Numerous “gangs” of black youth were reported but none were confirmed as larger than about fifty people. The most serious arson incident was a fire set at Sheppard Veneer Company on North Main Street. According to a night watchmen,

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<sup>82</sup> Lloyd Brinson and Jim Shertzer, “Police Move to Break Up Vandals in East Winston,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 28, 1969.

the fire was set by “four young men with automatic shotguns.” Some groups attempted to buy gasoline in “small containers” but were refused service by station attendants at the request of police. There were still a number of small fires reported, mostly burning garbage to block streets. Police were able to put out small fires on Derry Street and at Kirby’s Market on Glenn Avenue before fire trucks arrived. Firemen left a fire to burn out on its own at Dunleith Avenue and Eleventh Street after coming under sniper fire. A police car and a fire truck were damaged trying to respond to another fire on Derry Street. Two ABC stores were burglarized, one on Old Lexington Road and the other at East Fifth Street. An estimated total of fourteen stores were damaged and three cars were set on fire over the course of the night. According to Chief Tucker, black youths in Winston-Salem were “riled up” by “between 15 and 25 Negro militants from out of town,” some of whom were allegedly Black Panthers from Greensboro.<sup>83</sup>

On Tuesday, Mayor Benton requested and received a contingent of 150 National Guard troops from Governor Robert Scott. The mayor also declared a citywide curfew from 10 p.m. until 6 a.m. The mayor was clearly troubled by the threat, real or perceived, of the Black Panthers. Benton had a copy of the April 27 issue of “Black Panther” on his desk, which included text calling Communist China the “mother country.” Benton met with Alderman Russell, Alderman Ross, Reverend J.T. McMillan, and Reverend F.W. Jackson just prior to a late afternoon press conference. At his press conference, the mayor described the Black Panthers as “able to get their story across in an exciting way,

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<sup>83</sup>“Police Await Trial In Shooting Incident,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 29, 1969; Lloyd Brinson, “Gangs Start Looting Again,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 29, 1969; and Federal Bureau of Investigation, *The Black Panther Party: North Carolina*. <http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/bpanther.htm> (accessed November, 20, 2014).

misleading young people here.” Benton said that police knew some of the “principle organizers” by name and that police had run license tag checks on cars at the Sunday rallies. Implying the use of police informants, Benton said that the Winston-Salem Police Department “has pretty good information about the Black Panthers through the usual means. It takes a little money and people willing to run risks.”<sup>84</sup>

The frustration and disaffection of the poorer classes within the black community had not gone away with the passing of time. Disproportionate rates of unemployment and poverty, coupled with systemic racism and classism, continued to feed the seething resentment just under the surface. Reporter Larry Dendy visited the Kimberley Park-Derry Street neighborhood and talked to residents. According to Dendy, the feeling that the shooting of Beasley was unnecessary was “one unanimous opinion.” “They could have avoided shooting that man,” one man told Dendy, and a young mother said “I feel they could have taken him into custody without shooting him.” An elderly man commented on the recent unrest: “The majority of the people don’t like this. I don’t think it’s the right way to go about it.” Some expressed the opinion that the curfew would only encourage young people to further defy authority. The young mother spoke again, expressing the opinion that talking and negotiation with city leaders would not accomplish anything: “We’ve talked too long, it takes rioting to make them know we will riot.”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Lloyd Brinson, “National Guard, Curfew Keep City Areas Quiet,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 30, 1969; and Ed Shanahan, “Benton Calls Curfew ‘Preventive,’” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 30, 1969.

<sup>85</sup> Larry Dendy, “Derry Street: Calm, But...Fear, Restlessness and Militancy Are There,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 30, 1969.

Two unnamed ministers Dendy spoke with shared the opinion that the vast majority of black citizens were against violence and looting, but that many African Americans understood “the motives behind the action. They are angry and frustrated about not having jobs.” One minister went on to say that although most people would never riot themselves, “if they feel it is a way of rousing the power structure to do something, they would back it.” A young man, described as “26 years old and a chef,” freely admitted that he was out in the rioting on both Sunday and Monday nights. He said that white store owners in black neighborhoods “overcharge Negroes” and that if the practices didn’t end they would not have any stores left. He also said that much of the anger still stemmed from police brutality. Implying dissatisfaction with mainstream black leadership, the young man suggested that city leaders come talk to neighborhood leaders: “If the mayor and the police chief were interested, they would be out here instead of down at City Hall.”<sup>86</sup>

With the highly visible presence of National Guardsmen and police, Tuesday night was much quieter than Sunday and Monday nights. At dusk, National Guardsmen were positioned in twos and threes on strategic corners guarding the perimeter of downtown, which freed police squads to patrol into neighborhoods. Police ushered the fans out of the Wake Forest-University of North Carolina baseball game at Ernie Shore Field at 9:45 p.m.—in order to give them time to get home before curfew. The teams were allowed to finish the game with reporters (since they were working) as the only

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<sup>86</sup> Larry Dendy, “Derry Street: Calm, But...Fear, Restlessness and Militancy Are There,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 30, 1969.



spectators. City recreation softball leagues cancelled all games after 8 p.m. Restaurants and theaters also closed early, although the Krispy Kreme Doughnut Shop on Stratford Road was allowed to remain open. The Kimberley Park, Derry Street, Glenn Avenue area was “unusually quiet,” and lights were off in many homes. Around midnight, a few young people, including three women, were arrested for breaking curfew. The women charged were Berna Jean Ruth, nineteen; Barbara Ann Sinclair, twenty-four; and Patricia Ann Melton, twenty-one. Police chased small gangs on foot in a few sporadic incidents. A fire on Vargrave Street and a break-in at a dry-cleaners at Third Street and Claremont Avenue were the only serious crimes reported.<sup>87</sup>

For white Winston-Salem, the mayor’s news conference, along with newspaper and television coverage, signaled the arrival of organized black radicalism to the Twin City. The *Journal* conducted a telephone interview with Charles Dunn, Director of the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI), who told the reporter the SBI had been tracking Black Panther activity in the state “for quite a while.” Dunn believed that the movement was confined to urban areas and only had “a hard core of maybe 25 to 50.” An unnamed source, described as “having knowledge of Panther activities here,” told the *Journal* that organizers from Chicago and New York were in Winston-Salem the Sunday a week prior to the rallies speaking to various young black people, and that there were about thirty-five members of a local chapter. The *Journal* also printed in detail the Panthers “three main

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<sup>87</sup> Lloyd Brinson, “National Guard, Curfew Keep City Areas Quiet,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 30, 1969; and “Effects of Curfew: The Old Ball Game But Without Fans,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 30, 1969.

rules of discipline” as well as the “eight points of attention”—and then commented that “these tenets were rules of conduct in the Communist guerilla wars in China and Cuba.”<sup>88</sup>

Winston-Salem people had seen Black Panthers in the national media but for the first time, Black Panthers were visible in Winston-Salem. *Journal* reporter Joe Goodman met with Robert Greer on April 29, 1969, to get the Black Panthers’ side of the story. Greer, a thirty-one-year-old machine operator from Winston-Salem, claimed to be a spokesman for the Winston-Salem branch of the Black Panther Party. Goodman described Greer: “A quiet polite man, Greer wore desert boots, brown trousers and a blue dress shirt with a button-down collar. His receding hair is long, and he has a neatly trimmed beard.” Greer told Goodman that the Panthers were “neutral” and had no intention of starting “an armed uprising.” “You can’t find a Panther on the streets,” Greer said. “I don’t know if what is going on here is organized or not. I have not been out in it.” Greer declined to say who attended the Fifth Street at U.S. 52 rally on the previous Sunday, but acknowledged that he lived at the apartment complex. Greer said that a policeman tore down signs on Fourth and Fifth Streets publicizing the rally, signs with slogans like “We Love Freedom” and “Save Marie Hill” (a death row inmate), but said that the signs made no mention of the Black Panthers. The policeman allegedly told Greer: “I know what’s coming off here. We’re coming back with shotguns.” Greer claimed that after the rally ended, the policeman returned and rode slowly past: “He just laid his shotgun out the window of his car, and he waved and pointed the gun at me.”<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Joe Goodman, “‘Not Involved,’ Black Panthers Say,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 30, 1969.

<sup>89</sup> Joe Goodman, “‘Not Involved,’ Black Panthers Say,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 30, 1969

Greer was joined during the interview by twenty-six-year-old William Rice, who also identified himself as a Black Panther. Both Greer and Rice expressed a desire to make it clear that the Panthers were not involved in what Greer called, “these little incidents.” Greer continued, “It’s against our discipline. We’re for self-defense.” Once again, civil rights leaders and ESR workers went out into the community and were able to calm emotions. Outwardly, the city again returned to normal within a few days.<sup>90</sup>

On May 19, 1969, the birthday of Malcolm X, Robert Greer, Nelson Malloy, and Larry Little formed a local chapter of the Black Panther Party in the basement of Holmes Methodist Church. In the fall of 1969, Little went to Oakland for six weeks of training and spent time with Fred Hampton, David Hilliard, and other Black Panther leaders. Over the next several years, the group brought a new and radical element into the mix of Winston-Salem race relations. By brandishing weapons openly, and dressing in black with black berets, just their visual appearance had an effect on the people of Winston-Salem. They also attracted substantial attention from local law enforcement and eventually the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Joe Goodman, “‘Not Involved,’ Black Panthers Say,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 30, 1969; and Robert Law interview.

<sup>91</sup> Dunston, “The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem,” 241-242; Devin Fergus, *Liberalism, Black Power, and the Making of American Politics 1965-1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 102-103; and Federal Bureau of Investigation, *The Black Panther Party: North Carolina*. <http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/bpanther.htm> (accessed November, 20, 2014). Fergus focuses in part on the political transformation of Black Panther leaders in Winston-Salem. For further study on the roots of Black Power ideology and the Black Panthers see Manning Marable, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* (New York: Viking, 2011); Cleve Sellers, *The River of No Return: The Autobiography of a Black Militant and the Life and Death of SNCC* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1990); Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Hasan Kwame Jeffries, *Bloody Lowndes: Civil Rights and Black Power in Alabama’s Black Belt* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2009); and Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression: The FBI’s Secret Wars against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement* (Boston: South End Press, 1988).

In September 1969, another incident involving police brutality occurred, this time involving the sheriff's department. A young black man, Lee O. Kirby, was arrested for interfering with police officers who were attempting to arrest Kirby's brother. At the Forsyth County Jail, Kirby suffered numerous facial lacerations when his head went through a glass panel window. Sheriff Deputy Clinton G. Cline was arrested for assault, although he claimed that Kirby fell. Kirby claimed he was pushed through the glass forcibly. J.T. McMillan of the NAACP called for a meeting concerning the incident on Sunday, September 21. Black Panther members attended the meeting and some stood watch outside the church with shotguns. The Panthers emphatically stated that the only satisfactory outcome was for Deputy Cline to be convicted. When the Panthers walked out of the meeting, a substantial number of younger people walked out with them.<sup>92</sup>

In an effort to improve their image, the Panthers created a free ambulance program for East Winston, a free shoes program for poor children, and food programs, including a breakfast program for poor children. In November 1969, the Panthers called for a boycott of the Meat House, a store next-door to their headquarters. The owner of the Meat House had refused to donate to the breakfast program. The Meat House closed its doors, creating an unexpected backlash from some in the surrounding community that depended on the store. The incident also caused an investigation by the Winston-Salem Police Department into the Panthers' solicitation techniques. The Panthers also had a locally famous incident early in 1970 over the impending eviction of an elderly black

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<sup>92</sup> Ashley B. Carter, "Racial Harmony in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: North Carolina Myth of Racial Progressiveness versus Civil Rights, 1954-1980," M.A. Thesis, Morgan State University (2010), 82-83; and "Trials of Officer, Youth Continued," *Winston-Salem Journal*, September 22, 1969.

woman from her home. Armed Black Panthers lined the porch of her home, promising to stop any law enforcement officers attempting to carry out an eviction. In the middle of a tense standoff, ESR staffer Robert Law appeared with an envelope containing the woman's rent money, allowing the police and sheriffs to leave peacefully. Law had been sent by Louise Wilson, who had somehow gotten word of the crisis.<sup>93</sup>

As the decade of the 1960s closed and the 1970s began, the Black Panthers in Winston-Salem gained an enthusiastic following among mostly young black people in Winston-Salem, while continuing to be considered cautiously by older and middle-class black people. The perception of the potential for violence, along with the possible negative impact on negotiations with whites, made some mainstream blacks uncomfortable with the Black Panthers. In an early 1980s interview, mainstream leader Lillian Lewis said of the by then defunct local Black Panthers: "They tried to work for the good of black people. They had community support." Their presence certainly made whites uneasy. Arguably, their presence may also have contributed towards whites making political and economic concessions simply to avoid further trouble.<sup>94</sup>

Racial differences were still allowed to play out occasionally in the discursive space of the newspapers. Since North Carolina's colleges were slowly integrating ahead of the pace of primary and secondary schools, the colleges made attractive targets for those arguing for continued school segregation. A white writer named Deal complained about black students being allowed to attend white colleges, calling black students

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<sup>93</sup> Carter, 83-84; Lloyd Brinson and David DuBuisson, "Panthers Deny Intimidation in Soliciting for Donations," *Winston-Salem Journal*, November 15, 1969; and Robert Law interview.

<sup>94</sup> Dunston, "The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem," 243-244.

“nonthinking” and suggesting that athletics was the only reason blacks had been accepted to those colleges. Deal argued that the presence of blacks at traditionally white colleges would lower academic standards and turn those institutions into “diploma mills.” He received a scathing response from James C. McMillian that explained what black students really wanted and how they actually felt about the current situation. McMillian argued that students from underfunded and “ill-equipped black schools” wanted a “remedy.” Part of the remedy began with the inclusion of black history into the curricula of all schools. McMillian said of black students: “They abhor the belief of ‘white democratic society’ that only the fortunate deserve ‘life, liberty, and happiness.’”<sup>95</sup>

The number of whites in Winston-Salem sincerely concerned with better race relations was growing. Wake Forest professor Robert M. Burnside addressed the use of racial “labels” by society in general and by the local media specifically. Burnside argued that society and the media did not use terms for whites like “WASP,” “redneck,” or as “a white middle-class woman” when describing a group of people. He then asked why it was necessary for the media to always describe black people at an event as “Negroes.” Burnside noted the Journal had recently described a group of shoppers at a rummage sale and had pointedly described blacks by race when color had no bearing on the fact that were simply shopping and buying too.<sup>96</sup>

By the close of the 1960s, the integration of public spaces in Winston-Salem had at least forced whites to interact with blacks and to accept the reality that the Jim Crow

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<sup>95</sup> James C. McMillian, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 3, 1969.

<sup>96</sup> Robert M. Burnside, “Opinions of Readers,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, April 10, 1969.

era was legally over. When whites and blacks worked together in their places of employment and realized that the other side was mostly just like themselves, barriers came down and friendships began. The real beginning of a new society did not begin on a large scale until the full integration (with mandatory busing) of the school system for the 1971-1972 school year. When parents and students were forced, and subsequently motivated, to interact with each other, substantive change began.

The Winston-Salem that existed at the start of the 1960s was a far different city than the place that existed a decade later. In 1960, one lone black man sitting quietly and peacefully at the lunch counter in a Woolworth store was both provocative and revolutionary. In the eyes of most whites in Winston-Salem, Carl Matthews was attempting to upset a fundamental social order that was so ingrained in the culture, that most whites had never really even considered that the system might be truly unjust. Ten years later, even though the thought of radical, socialist, Black Panthers was not very palatable, most whites accepted public interaction with blacks as an acceptable social norm, and if somewhat begrudgingly, whites seemed to understand that blacks were capable of supervising whites in the workforce and that full school integration was right around the corner. Many whites embraced integration as the “right thing” and tried to live their lives without prejudice. Many other whites struggled to overcome the ingrained racial attitudes of their parents and grandparents and continued to perpetuate old ideas in their own children,

African Americans took pride in a growing middle class and became increasingly assertive in demanding equal rights and an end to discrimination. Somewhat ironically,

the strides forward by many blacks also seemed to amplify the disparities inflicted upon those left behind. Perhaps inspired by Harold Dunovant, by the women of Kimberly Park, and by angry youths who became radicalized, African Americans of the poorer classes at least lost much of their fear of speaking out against inequality. Some of those young radicals eventually would become leaders within the organized political structure. In the turmoil left by multiple assassinations, massive economic inequality, and a controversial war in Southeast Asia, Winston-Salem left the 1960s behind with much of the city holding a guarded optimism for better things to come, even as a still-alienated minority continued to struggle for a handhold to this improved world.



## CHAPTER VII

### EPILOGUE

Winston-Salem has been a legally integrated city for roughly fifty years in terms of public facilities and approximately forty years in terms of “full” school integration. Some black people live in previously all-white neighborhoods and a few churches have truly interracial congregations. For the most part, however, neighborhoods are still *de facto* segregated and marked with the same highway and parkway boundaries that existed in the early 1960s. Most churches are all-white or all-black. The school system operates on a “zone system,” that has increasingly created schools with great majorities of one race or the other. Overall, whites have higher incomes and a higher standard of living than do African Americans. The judicial system and the jails have a disproportionate percentage of blacks charged and convicted. Although there are still voices of protest over issues of civil rights and economic justice, the last truly radical movement in Winston-Salem was arguably the short-lived Black Panther Party chapter of the late 1960s into the mid-1970s.

Although the NAACP remained active and the Black Panthers were a viable entity in the first part of the 1970s, most black civil rights activity in the 1970s was expressed through the ballot box. A surprisingly high black voter turnout in the 1970 elections gave blacks two unexpected extra seats on the Board of Aldermen. With four of the eight seats held by blacks, Winston-Salem had the highest percentage of black

representation on a city council in the entire South. By the time of the 1974 election, whites had gerrymandered the districts to assure that blacks could only control three of the eight wards. In 1974, Black Panther head Larry Little ran in the Democratic primary against North Ward incumbent alderman Richard Davis, also black. Davis won by eight votes. Little contested the results in light of a recent purge of three hundred “improperly registered” voters, many of whom had registered during a Black Panther voter registration drive. Little lost in court, but surprisingly, received the support of the *Winston-Salem Journal* for a new election. In the 1977 Democratic mayoral primary, black alderman Carl Russell won a plurality of the votes cast. He lost in a runoff election with Wayne Corpening. Corpening ran against Republican Henry Lauerman, a staunch opponent of busing to achieve school integration, in the general election. Corpening barely held on to win the election, as eight thousand African Americans wrote-in their votes for Carl Russell. In the same election, Larry Little defeated Richard Davis in a rematch. Black alderman C.C. Ross lost his East Ward seat to WSSU professor, Virginia Newell, also black. Both Ross and Davis had conspired with white aldermen to remove Carl Russell from his Mayor Pro Tem position. Many in the black community labeled Ross and Davis pawns of Wachovia Bank, Reynolds Tobacco, and others in the white power structure. A new type of independent black leader, free from the old restraints of the patriarchy, had dramatically emerged.<sup>1</sup> For two hundred years, most black-to-white public discourse contained various levels of deference to white authority. In the mid-

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<sup>1</sup>Aingred G. Dunston, “The Black Struggle for Equality in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: 1947-1977” (Ph.D. Diss., Duke University, 1981), 260-271; and Devin Fergus, *Liberalism, Black Power, and the Making of American Politics 1965-1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 126-127. Fergus examined Winston-Salem as part of his study on the relationship between liberalism and Black Power.

1970s, black leaders speaking blunt truth to power, without fear of repercussions, became much more common.

The Experiment in Self-Reliance (ESR) faced many challenges as funding crises arose initially because of the expense of the war in Vietnam and later due to cuts in social programs by conservatives. The ESR continued the process of getting agencies started and then spinning them off into independent entities. As government funding decreased, Louise Wilson, Robert Law, and other antipoverty leaders sought alternative sources of funding. Corporate entities like Reynolds Tobacco, Hanes Knitwear, Westinghouse, and Wachovia Bank donated money, as did private foundations like the Kate Bitting Reynolds Foundation, the Winston-Salem Foundation, and United Way. Black and white church sponsors also proved to be generous givers of time and money.<sup>2</sup> The ESR is one of only a few original North Carolina Fund agencies to have survived until the present. In more recent times, as a concession to conservative political trends, the agency has learned to strongly emphasize the concept of “helping the poor help themselves” and generally has avoided any reference to terms like “welfare.”

The decline of American manufacturing and the outsourcing of jobs overseas had serious effects on the Winston-Salem economy, beginning in the 1980s. The various divisions of Hanes textile products began sending manufacturing elsewhere, gradually eliminating thousands of working-class and middle-class positions. Other textile employers as well as other labor-intensive industries like furniture also began to either

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<sup>2</sup> Roland S. Watts, *Experiment in Self-Reliance 1977*, (promotional magazine for the ESR--publisher unknown), 26-27; and Robert Law, interview with the author, March 14, 2013, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

move or close. Reynolds Tobacco kept substantial operations in the area but closed the downtown plants when it opened its state-of-the-art facility at Tobacoville in rural Forsyth County. Automation and consolidation eliminated many prized jobs. Eventually, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center replaced Reynolds Tobacco as the city's largest employer, and medical, banking, government, education, and service industry jobs supplanted manufacturing jobs. Working-class African Americans and whites lost the unique pathway to the middle class that Winston-Salem manufacturing had provided for so many years.

Overt racism in hiring and housing was at least superficially eliminated by both legal mandate and by an increase in the number of whites who did not believe in the old attitudes of the South. Winston-Salem desegregated most of its schools a year ahead of the forced busing brought about by the *Swann v. Mecklenburg* Supreme Court case and integrated all of its schools for the 1971-1972 school year. Integrated schools had a significant positive impact on race relations, as white and black children interacted on a broad basis for the first time in the city's history. By the middle of the 1980s, despite many continuing inequities, the majority of Twin Citians would have agreed that the city had made substantial progress on racial issues.

In 1984, a murder occurred in downtown Winston-Salem that was destined to force the city to reevaluate its actual progress on race issues. On the morning of August 10, 1984, Deborah Sykes, a pretty, white, newlywed, twenty-five-year-old copy editor for the *Winston-Salem Journal* uncharacteristically did not show up for work. Several coworkers walked outside to look for Sykes and became alarmed when they found her

car. Fred Flagler, Sykes's supervisor, called the police, who according to Flagler seemed disinterested. Police received a 911 call that same morning from someone who identified himself as "Sammy Mitchell." The caller said he had witnessed someone "jumping on a lady" near the downtown fire station. Just before 2 p.m. that afternoon, Sykes's body was discovered in a grassy ravine between the fire station and Crystal Towers senior-living apartments. The location was less than two blocks from Sykes's office at the *Winston-Salem Journal*. She was naked from the waist down and had been stabbed sixteen times. Tests showed semen on the body, indicating she had been raped. The city was in an uproar to think that such a graphic rape and murder could have been committed in broad daylight, in the middle of prominent downtown offices and churches, and next to a safe-haven residence for seniors.<sup>3</sup>

Johnny Gray, an African American, was presented by police as an eyewitness who saw Sykes in the presence of a young, black male on the morning of her disappearance. Gray also claimed to have made the 911 call, although he had no recollection of using the name Sammy Mitchell. Gray had a lengthy police record with outstanding charges. Police questioned the actual Sammy Mitchell and Mitchell's young friend Darryl Hunt. Feeling a great deal of pressure to solve the crime and arrest a suspect, on September 11, 1984, police arrested Darryl Hunt. Johnny Gray picked Hunt out of a lineup, and on September 14, Hunt was charged with the murder of Deborah Sykes. He was assigned Mark Rabil as his public defender, even though Rabil had never

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<sup>3</sup> Ricki Stern and Annie Sundberg, Producers, "The Trials of Darryl Hunt," DVD, 111 minutes, Image Entertainment, 2006; and Phoebe Zerwick, "For 18 Years, Grasping for Truth, Errors," *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 4, 2004. Zerwick covered the Hunt case for many years. Evidence she uncovered about a similar rape six months after the Sykes murder was instrumental in exonerating Darryl Hunt.

defended a murder suspect. Although inexperienced, Rabil was a hardworking advocate for his client and quickly came to believe in his innocence. Former Black Panther and then city alderman Larry Little, who knew Hunt from pickup basketball games, almost immediately sensed something was not right with the case. Little did not think Hunt was capable of such violence, and as information came in about Johnny Gray, both Rabil and Little knew something was suspicious in the actions of police and District Attorney Donald Tisdale. Rabil and Little understood Hunt was a “street kid” with no resources, making him an easy scapegoat for the police and district attorney to use to satisfy the public outcry. Little took Hunt’s case into the pulpits of black churches and rallied the black community’s support. Imam Khalid Griggs, who later became Hunt’s father-in-law, said that Hunt was a symbol for every black man in Winston-Salem, all of whom faced the same potential problem with the justice system. Griggs also called Hunt a symbol for every black mother who had ever worried about how police might treat her son. Although Hunt had support from a small group of whites, for the most part Winston-Salem became polarized, with a white community which mostly thought Hunt was guilty and a black community which mostly thought he was innocent.<sup>4</sup>

Darryl Hunt was tried and convicted of first-degree murder in 1985. One of the key witnesses for the prosecution, Thomas Murphy, was a known Ku Klux Klan sympathizer. He had originally claimed to have seen Sykes arm-in-arm with a black man and dismissed it with disgust as a “white woman gone wrong.” Only after two weeks of

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<sup>4</sup> Stern, “The Trials of Darryl Hunt”; Phoebe Zerwick, “For 18 Years, Grasping for Truth, Errors,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 4, 2004; and Michael Hewlett, “The State v. Darryl Hunt,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 16, 2014.

sitting in police cars with detectives watching the area where the crime was committed, did Murphy pick Hunt's picture out of a photo lineup. All of the evidence was either circumstantial or relied on questionable eyewitnesses, yet by all accounts Hunt was fortunate to receive a life sentence instead of the death penalty. In February 1985, a woman was abducted within two blocks of where Deborah Sykes was attacked six months earlier. The assailant forced the victim back to her car at gunpoint and made her drive to a secluded spot near the Flamingo Drive-In. He then raped her and slashed her face twelve times. In this case, the victim survived. She picked her attacker, Willard Brown, out of a lineup. Police excluded Brown from the Sykes case because their records showed he had been in jail on the date of her murder. Police and the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) refused to give Mark Rabil and the defense team any information on Willard Brown. Years later it was discovered that police had confused Willard Brown's parole date and his release date, meaning he was free and out on the streets on the date of the Sykes murder.<sup>5</sup>

After hearing Hunt's appeal, in 1989 the North Carolina Supreme Court overturned Hunt's conviction largely because prosecutors had used statements from Hunt's girlfriend, which she had recanted prior to the trial. He was released on bond. With a retrial pending, prosecutors offered Hunt a plea bargain. Plead guilty and they would release Hunt with credit for the time he had already served. Hunt rejected the offer, insisting on his innocence. He was retried sixty miles west of Winston-Salem in conservative and mostly-rural Catawba County, by an all-white jury. The same witnesses

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<sup>5</sup> Phoebe Zerwick, "For 18 Years, Grasping for Truth, Errors," *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 4, 2004.

from the first trial testified again, along with two “snitches” who claimed Hunt admitted his guilt to them while in prison. After eleven months of freedom on bail, Hunt was convicted and returned to prison with another life sentence.<sup>6</sup> The black community continued to hold protests and vigils supporting Hunt.

Hunt’s DNA was tested against the semen sample from Sykes’s body in both 1994 and 1995 and both tests indicated Hunt was not the rapist. Judge Melzer Morgan reviewed the details of the case and ruled against Hunt’s request for another trial. Morgan ruled that Hunt still could have been involved in the crime even if he was not the criminal who ejaculated. This time the North Carolina Supreme Court upheld Morgan’s ruling by a 4-3 vote. In 1995, a private investigator for Hunt secured DNA samples that excluded Sammy Mitchell as a rape suspect as well. Prosecutors continued to hold the official line that Hunt had to be involved somehow, and white Winston-Salem, for the most part, continued to believe Hunt was guilty as well. In 2003, reporter Phoebe Zerwick discovered the police error on Willard Brown’s release from jail back in 1984. Judge Anderson Cromer issued an order to compare semen evidence in the Sykes case against state and federal databases of convicted felons. The SBI resisted Cromer’s order until faced with the threat of a contempt citation. Database comparisons found a close match with one of Willard Brown’s brothers. When Willard Brown was tested, the DNA from Deborah Sykes’s body was a perfect match. Brown confessed the crime,

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<sup>6</sup>Stern, “The Trials of Darryl Hunt”; and Phoebe Zerwick, “For 18 Years, Grasping for Truth, Errors,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 4, 2004.



acknowledged Darryl Hunt was not involved in any way, and in 2004 Hunt was formally exonerated.<sup>7</sup>

The trials and imprisonment of Darryl Hunt brought out some ugly realities about the state of race relations and how the races view each other in Winston-Salem. Although there were many whites who actively supported the cause of Hunt's innocence, the majority of whites supported the position of the police and the prosecutors. Most whites insisted as well that race had no bearing on their view of the case. Over a decade after Hunt's release from prison, many whites, including the mother of Deborah Sykes, continued to insist that Hunt must have been involved, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Larry Little and his team of activists never let the community forget that Darryl Hunt was in prison. For African Americans in Winston-Salem, Hunt was a symbol for the entrenched racism within the local police department and the court system, as well as a constant reminder that the civil rights movement was far from finished with its work. More recently, Little and Mark Rabil have been joined by Darryl Hunt and many of the activists that worked to exonerate Hunt, in trying to prove the innocence of Calvin Michael Smith, whose case, like Hunt's, appears to involve a rush to judgment by police and prosecutors, along with the possible exclusion of exculpatory evidence.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Stern, "The Trials of Darryl Hunt"; Phoebe Zerwick, "For 18 Years, Grasping for Truth, Errors," *Winston-Salem Journal*, January 4, 2004; and Michael Hewlett, "The State v. Darryl Hunt," *Winston-Salem Journal*, August 16, 2014.

<sup>8</sup>Michael Hewlett and Arika Herron, "Federal Court Rejects Calvin Michael Smith's Appeal," *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 29, 2013.

In a 2007 study published in the *Journal of African American Studies*, Winston-Salem State University professor and sociologist Edward Opoku-Dapaah surveyed the racial attitudes of white Twin Citians. Although taken from a relatively small sample, the respondents to the survey questions came from diverse ages, education levels, and wealth. A slight majority of those questioned were women. In order to garner more honest answers, Opoku-Dapaah trained three white research assistants to conduct interviews. A majority of the respondents felt that African Americans had “contributed to the social, economic, and political life of America,” and a majority also felt that African Americans in Winston-Salem did not share equally in all resources. Roughly two-thirds of the survey subjects supported the principle of integrated neighborhoods, leaving a substantial percentage of whites who still believed in segregated housing. A substantial majority also thought that “African Americans often bring discrimination upon themselves by their own personal habits.” Almost two-thirds believed the police in Winston-Salem treated whites and blacks equally, with a number citing the diverse racial makeup of the police force as evidence of fairness in policing. A majority of whites surveyed believed that blacks received a disproportionate allocation of public assistance money and added comments like, “blacks don’t pay taxes,” and “black people do not work hard but blame it on racism.”<sup>9</sup> The rhetoric used by whites in Opoku-Dapaah’s early twenty-first-century study rings eerily similar to remarks from Winston-Salem whites in the discourses of the 1960s.

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<sup>9</sup> Edward Opoku-Dapaah, “Opinion of White Americans about African Americans: The Case of Winston-Salem, North Carolina,” *Journal of African American Studies* 11 (June 2007), 24-41. The author of this dissertation was a student and later a colleague of Dr. Opoku-Dapaah.

Many of the events in civil rights history provide clear protagonists and antagonists. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. battling Bull Connor provides most people with a distinct picture of a good side battling the forces of evil. Winston-Salem's civil rights history, while not without some true villains, is much more nuanced and much more layered in terms of how racism was manifested. The sources for "An Uneasy Peace" provided insight into some genuine white altruism towards black civil, social, and economic issues, while also exposing the many layers of white racism towards blacks. Winston-Salem was ruled by an elite group of white patriarchs who proved willing to make concessions on racial issues as long as it was "good for business." Civil rights events in the 1960s both challenged and inflamed the existing prejudices of some whites. Their voices from the period reflect fear and insecurity, as an established and reliable caste system was visibly challenged and then defeated. A substantial number of whites were able to clearly see injustice and inequality as fundamentally wrong. The editors of the newspapers in Winston-Salem, even if their good intentions were sometimes reined in by the patriarchs, took courageous stands that did not always reflect the majority view of the white community. A meaningful number of whites challenged their neighbors' racism and spoke out publicly against racial inequality—at the risk of being ostracized in the white community or even at the risk of potential physical retaliation. The majority of whites fell somewhere in the middle of the poles of overt racism and a belief in true racial equality. They kept some level of racism, as reflected in inappropriate humor, or in *de facto* discrimination when hiring for their small business, but they complied with the law and did not cause trouble. They sent their children to integrated schools and learned to be

pleasant with black co-workers. Openly quite civil, many whites quietly switched political party affiliation and supported political maneuvers to end busing to achieve integration, to end affirmative action, and to limit funding for economic assistance.

The methodology used in “An Uneasy Peace” called for utilizing the actual voices of as many actors from the period of study as possible, with a goal of discovering what people were thinking and subsequently how these thoughts may have influenced their actions. African Americans in Winston-Salem at times reflected the racial mores of the times as they challenged white power with subtlety and a prescribed amount of deference. Often their voices offered gently instructive lessons in morality and decency, with a common theme of Christian good will. Increasingly, the courageous actions or emboldened language of a key leader like Carl Matthews, Harold Dunovant, Louise Wilson, or Larry Little inspired others to follow and help create tangible change. When those leaders spoke out aggressively and directly in public to whites in power, the increased intensity from others in the black community became palpable. Sometimes a small group on the vanguard like the WSTC students in 1960 or the small group of CORE protesters that refused for months to let K & W Cafeterias rest in 1963, gradually inspired others to commit to something larger than themselves. A small group of protesters, who were arrested and refused to accept bail, inspired hundreds of protesters to gather outside in support. Evidence in this study also proved that people in Winston-Salem were motivated by the events and actions in movements in other places. The hurt and the anger reflected in the voices of Twin Citians over events in Birmingham or Selma, was channeled into activism in their own hometown. African Americans from the

classes most left behind by progress, demonstrated multiple times that there was always a level of seething resentment, just under the surface, waiting for a catalyst (like police brutality) to create an explosion. Their sometimes violent expressions served to spark changes from both white and black mainstream leaders.

From colonial Moravian slavery to modern issues with social, civil, and economic justice, the story of race in Winston-Salem was and is complex. The façade of racial harmony was created by white patriarchs almost from the very beginning. Determining whether those in power were sincere or disingenuous was often a difficult task. Disgraceful and unjust actions were sometimes begrudgingly accepted, just as they often were met with courage and a righteous resolve to confront the issues. Throughout the history of Winston-Salem, neither the white nor the black communities were monolithic in their ideologies, nor were they unified in their strategies regarding race relations. For two and one-half centuries, whites and blacks built a community together with much to point to with mutual pride. The city has often used the many-pointed Moravian “Star of Peace” as its symbol to the world. It remains to be seen if the optimism of that symbol of peace has been fulfilled, or if its brightness has been diminished by the uneasy peace created by racial ignorance and injustice.

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