

Public Pulse

What "Achievement"?

Editor of the Daily News:

In response to Mr. Carter's attack (Public Pulse, Feb. 9) on the position of the A. and T. and Bennett College students and the white supporters from Woman's College, we offer the following exposition, untainted, we hope, by the Southern aristocratic idealism reflected in his opinions.

Mr. Carter's first point, that the Negro is "forcing himself on the white man," seems, to us, if not erroneous in theory, at least a logical outcome of many generations of inhibitions of the Negroes' rights as American citizens. Neither can we agree with the second point on "outsiders," in view of the fact that any college students involved are, by right of temporary residence, citizens of this community; and we should be glad that there are still people who uphold idealistic and humanitarian principles enough to take a positive stand in situations which they feel are injurious to the democratic way. Were we to concede, even that the white students involved are outsiders to the community, this would not preclude their being outsiders to the problem at issue.

It should be remembered that Miss Dearsley is not only a member of the British Commonwealth, but an individual, and should not be personally accused of the actions of her state.

Mr. Carter seems to be setting up the Southern white as an ideal. Where value judgments are concerned, he brings fact judgments to bear, implying that the situation in the South is static and that Southern standards and customs are so right and good that they should not be destroyed.

Socio-economic brackets in the white population are just as diverse as the socio-economic brackets in the Negro population.

One never notices, however, overt public discrimination against the lower class whites, but anyone whose skin is dark, regardless of socio-economic position, is discriminated against in public places. Serving Negroes standing up but not sitting down seems, to us, to be a petty point.

Mr. Carter's statement as to the "diminishing of racial distinctions" as soon as the Negro has attained the "socio-economic level of the Southern white citizen" seems quite invalid, since in Greensboro we are privileged to have among our Negro population perhaps more than the usual number of Negroes who have attained this arbitrary level of the Southern white—namely, the students in question—and they are still being discriminated against with no indication of a letup in sight.

"Social status and likewise acceptance are only gained through achievement." Being in ignorance of Mr. Carter's definition of achievement, we can only assert that, in our opinion, no more positive steps toward "achievement" can be made beyond the possibilities that education offers these young people.

TWO STUDENTS—WHITE
Greensboro.