

Public Pulse

Police Protection

Editor of the Daily News:

The mayor and the police have been derelict in their sworn duties.

In the past it has been true that a man could establish a business and offer to sell to or refuse to sell to whomsoever he pleased. That was the law here in Greensboro until a few days ago when the police calmly stood by and watched while a group of Negroes proceeded to conduct themselves in a manner that everyone knows was and is calculated to destroy the businesses these Negroes were operating illegally against.

The Negroes have a right to refuse to patronize any business they dislike, but they have no right, moral or legal, to conduct themselves on the business premises of another in such way as to do harm to the business itself. They have no right to remain on the premises against the wishes of the owner or manager.

If the police, with the consent apparently of the mayor and the city administration, calmly sit by and allow the Woolworth and Kress businesses to be ruined, what is to prevent this same group of Negroes from branching out and doing the same thing to our two large cafeterias and to other restaurants? What is to prevent them from going into the several shopping centers and expanding their illegal operations to other types of establishments?

The conduct of the Negroes constituted a breach of the peace, in the presence of police officers. It was as much the duty of the police department to arrest every Negro involved just as much as it was and is their duty to make arrests for breach of the peace on the public streets.

The Negroes also committed unlawful trespass in the presence of the police officers which made it the duty of the officers to make arrests. The conduct of the Negroes also constituted unlawful assembly; yet the police stood by and took no action.

The failure of the Police Department, city manager and City Council to protect these stores and the public is a demonstration of complete stupidity. Or was it a case of ignorance or fear?

These stores are licensed to do business, which entitles them to police protection. Instead of protecting these merchants and the public, the city government gave aid and comfort to the Negroes in promoting a conspiracy instead of fulfilling their sworn duties in protecting the welfare of merchants and the public.

I am not a lawyer, but I understand that the general police power authorizes enforcement of law and order. Instead of enforcing the law they have instead utterly failed in the performance of their duties.

Our business and professional and labor leaders should get together quickly and see what can be done against this abdication of responsibility by our Police Department and city administration.

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Greensboro.