

# In Greensboro: Public Opinion On Trial

The statement issued Saturday by the A. & T. Students Executive Committee for Justice puts public opinion in Greensboro on trial.

Whatever "spirit of ultimatum" had been created by the sit-down protests of two weeks ago has been removed. In an act of maturity the students have expressed a desire to attain their goal "through the peaceful channels of negotiations" rather than through further mass demonstrations.

This is commendable. It removes lingering doubt that their objective was circus and publicity rather than fairness of treatment. The move toward reconciliation has been made by the group which initiated the protests. That should make accommodation easier for the Woolworth and Kress management; they are no longer under the gun.

But ultimate responsibility, indeed, lies

with the community. Greensboro has a deep reservoir of faith, understanding and good will. It has risen to the occasion many times in the past; it can rise again. The student group has placed its case "before the reasonable local bar of public opinion." It solicits a judgment.

What will that judgment be?

In the aftermath of the latest student action, is it clearer that the community had been sanctioning inequitable treatment in the guise of "local custom"? Have eyes been opened to the feelings of others, invited to trade at nine counters in certain stores but rudely thrust aside at the tenth?

Greensboro public opinion is indeed on trial. The sentiment it makes known to store managers will doubtless have great impact on how their decision is made.

Public opinion is on trial. What will the verdict be?