

## LUNCH COUNTER STAND

# Serve All Or Close, Gov. Collins Says

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., March 20 (AP)—Gov. Leroy Collins declared tonight Florida variety stores ought to shut down their lunch counters unless they can serve white and Negro patrons alike.

He told a statewide radio and television audience in a prepared talk there is some basic fairness to demands of Southern Negroes to be served if the store caters to the general public and accepts their business in other departments.

Collins, who is known as a moderate on the race issue, conceded that his remarks would be unpopular in some sections. He said many would accuse him of political motives. But he added he feels he is right and should speak his convictions.

"Very frankly I think that if a business includes several departments and the general public is invited in to trade, the management is not being fair to discriminate against Negro customers, denying them the services of one department," he said.

"Any department the management does not wish to make available to all, I think the management should close down. He is not required to do this by law, but to me this is a matter of simple moral justice."

Collins' half-hour talk was designed to calm racial tensions in Florida cities resulting from sit-down demonstrations.

He announced he would appoint next week a statewide biracial advisory committee on racial relations and called upon communities throughout the state to take similar actions. The state committee will be headed by Cody Fowler, former president of the American Bar Association.

President Eisenhower last week suggested biracial groups should be set up on local levels to deal with the matter.

Purpose of the local committees, Collins said, would be to consider grievances and "find ways and means for our people to live and work in harmony and with progress."

A biracial committee already has been set up in St. Augustine, where violence flared last week after a sitdown demonstration. But in Tallahassee, where a near-riot developed a week ago, the City Commission and Chamber of Commerce directors already have rejected a biracial committee proposal as being a waste of time.

Collins declared, "we are going to have law and order in Florida regardless of where people sit or where they want to sit."