

Charlotte's Counters To Open

CHARLOTTE, July 8 (AP)—Seven Charlotte stores agreed to open their lunch counters Saturday to all customers, regardless of race.

But two of the seven reserved racial barriers at their cafeterias.

Mayor James Smith announced the decision tonight. It followed a recommendation of the bi-racial Mayor's Friendly Relations Committee named to seek a solution to Negro student demonstrations for equal service.

Principle Accepted

"Our community has already accepted as just and equitable the basic principle of fair and equal use of such facilities as the library, the schools, the buses, the auditorium and the coliseum," the committee reported.

"It is the concerted judgment of the committee that our community is now ready to accept the opening of the lunch counters. . . ."

A Negro leader hailed the decision as an extension of democracy, following the example of "other progressive cities in the South."

Optional Plan

An optional desegregation plan was announced in May by a Winston-Salem mayor's committee studying the lunch-counter movement and was accepted by some merchants of that city. But most North Carolina cities which were early targets of quickly and widely spreading student movement held fast to the color line.

Mayor Smith's announcement noted that two large department stores, Belk's and Ivey's, are opening only their lunch counters to Negroes, not their cafeterias. Also opening lunch counters are Grant's, Kress', McLellan's and Woolworth's variety stores and drug store.

Agreement Reached

Dr. John R. Cunningham, former Davidson College president who heads the Charlotte committee, said the seven stores and Negro students of Johnson C. Smith University had agreed to accept the committee recommendations.

A statement by the Smith University students said:

"We have felt confident from the beginning that this situation would be resolved in a manner which would be palatable to all concerned, and it has been. . . . It is fitting that Charlotte, as the Queen City, should be known throughout the country as a leader in human relations, as well as in other areas."

Negro students began demonstrations here in February aimed

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Lunch Counters Open In Charlotte Today

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at desegregating lunch counters. The sit-ins began Feb. 1 in Greensboro and spread across the South.

Truce Ends

On June 23, Negroes ended a two-month truce and demonstrated again. The demonstrators earlier had announced their plans to end the truce.

Kelly Alexander, state president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, commented, "We in the NAACP are very happy to learn that the City of Charlotte has joined other progressive cities in the South by extending democracy to lunch counters in variety stores.

"We feel that a word of commendation should certainly be given the mayor's committee and the patience of the students for their orderly, non-violent conduct during the crisis.

Exceptions Noted

"We notice, however, that according to the release that two of the major department stores in Charlotte are not among the variety stores that have opened their doors. We hope that they will also join other stores throughout North Carolina and truly make Charlotte a liberal city."

Winston-Salem, another early target of the sit-in demonstrations, was the first North Carolina city to desegregate lunch counters, with some stores going along with a mayor's committee recommendation for counter desegregation on an optional basis.

Alexander said he also understood that one store in Salisbury and a drug store in Concord had opened their lunch counters to Negroes, but he did not know the names of the stores.

"They don't like to make too much noise about it," Alexander explained, "because they are afraid it would excite the more radical segregationist element."

Dr. John R. Cunningham, chair-

man of the Friendly Relations Committee and former president of Davidson College, released this statement, addressed to Mayor Smith:

"Since its appointment in the month of April, the Mayor's Committee on Friendly Relations has spent much time and effort in studying the problem posed by Negro student demonstrations against lunch counters in downtown department and variety stores.

"From the beginning, the five officers and 10 members of the committee representing responsible persons from both races have sought earnestly and prayerfully to be of help in establishing better communications in an effort to resolve the common community problem.

Several Meetings

"The committee has held a number of meetings, it has discussed all phases of the problems openly and candidly, and in a remarkable spirit of mutual sympathy and understanding. The committee, either as a whole or through representatives, has also had numerous conferences with the merchants and with the Negro students.

"Our community has already accepted as just and equitable the basic principle of fair and equal use of such facilities as the library, the schools, the buses, the auditorium and the coliseum.

French women want their food fresh, not frozen, a survey in the Paris area showed.