

Editorials

Protest or Demonstration The Aim Is The Same

Whatever name you like to call it, college students are taking seems to be giving way to the therapy of demonstrations and protest.

Since the beginning of this year, four institutions of higher education here in the State have witnessed student related protests in one way or the other. And more seem to be in the making.

It is probably a sign of what will follow that within a space of one week two Universities in the State were the scenes of student protests.

Students bottled youthful energy has gotten more and more frustrated and less and less able to find other avenues of expression outside the world of academic environment.

Environmental crusade for some students seems to be losing the charm it once held. Grades of A and B seem to be easier now than they were some years back. There is no war to hold the attention of some students. Black Studies programs are now yours for the asking even in the programs look better on paper than they do in practice. At least the programs have taken the heat out of many black students. And the cult of hippism among some college students is becoming a thing of yesteryear.

So, many students are without a challenge outside the classroom world. Their energy looks in vain for action. Hence it is likely that this bottled energy will find some escape in minor and major college student protest and demonstration in the not too distant future. (college administrator must do something to utilize this energy that seems to have no challenge facing it outside the classroom.

Civil Rights Group Still Need Support

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has been a freedom fighter for black folk for many years. W.E.B. DuBois and a group of white liberals founded the organization in 1910. DuBois envisioned the group fighting for the civil rights and equality of opportunity for blacks.

The Winston-Salem Chapter of the NAACP is doing that... we are sure. Except that there are some people in this town who know very little about the activities of this noble organization... not even the address of its office.

Organizations like the Congress Of Racial Equality (CORE), the NAACP, and the Urban League, are worthwhile and need the support of all the community. These groups have always served as a power base in the interest of blacks and minorities. But, without community sanction they will lose their effectiveness.

These groups have tended through the years to unify the community on certain issues. Tragically, however, when there is no clear-cut issue or impending threat we tend to feel safe and neglect to continue our support. We can ill-afford to abandon these groups. There is always an issue... a cause that needs the attention of these groups.

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FREE AT LAST!

TO BE EQUAL By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

Who will be laid off? That's a question on a lot of people's minds these days as the economy continues to deteriorate and unemployment continues to climb.

It's also a question that could be an explosive one, deepening the already troublesome fissures in our society.

And it is a question of immediate significance to employers, unions, minority employees, federal officials and the courts, because of the conflicting claims of seniority and affirmative action.

Most large employers are bound by union contracts that say layoffs must be in order of seniority -- first hired, last fired. They are also bound by the law, in this case the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which forbids discriminatory employment practices.

It was due to this law that many blacks, women and minorities got their first crack at jobs previously reserved for white males. To make up for past discrimination, many companies have agreed with federal authorities to undertake affirmative action programs designed to increase the numbers of minority employees.

Now a recession-struck company is caught in a dilemma: who to lay off? If

they lay off older white workers, they violate seniority provisions of their union contracts. If they lay off blacks who have less seniority thanks to the earlier refusal to hire, the company reverts back to its lily-white work force and violates affirmative action agreements with the government, as well as the Civil Rights Act.

Caught in the middle are workers of both races who face layoffs in a job market that offers no opportunity for alternative employment there are already some signs of deepening racial bitterness as some workers are victims of layoffs that don't affect the other race as much. If this situation continues, we would see a lethal combination of racial conflict and economic hardship, an explosive mix.

Several cases have already come before the courts, but with contradictory rulings. In one case, the court ruled that a company could not lay off its black workers because such action would perpetuate the effects of past discrimination. In another case, the judge ruled that the seniority system should predominate and it's just too bad if that works disproportionate hardship on black workers.

Ultimately, these and other cases will come before the

Supreme Court which may hand down a definitive ruling that sets clear guidelines for employers. But by then it may be too late -- and there is always the chance that this Court will issue a ruling that rebuilds the discriminatory walls that excluded black people from equal employment opportunities.

In the Griggs case, which dealt with the pre-hiring tests, the Court ruled that employment practices "neutral on their face, and even neutral in terms of intent, cannot be maintained if they operate to 'freeze' the status quo of prior discriminatory employment practices..."

I read that to mean the "neutral" operation of a seniority system that operates to freeze blacks into a last-hired, first fired situation, has to give way to the higher conflicting right of continued black employment opportunity.

Managers, workers, and government officials ought to recognize that the ultimate solution lies not with the courts but with adoption of enlightened policies that share the burdens of this sick economy. If a company is in such bad straits as to have to lay off workers, there are ways to spread the effects.

(See JORDON Page 9)