

# NAACP may resume boycott of chain, says official

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ting strongly that the newspaper bowed to economic pressure from the grocery chain and accusing the *Chronicle's* assistant editor, Robin Adams, of intentionally seeking to injure the 75-year-old civil rights organization.

The remarks came in a session billed as an explanation of the NAACP's Economic Development and Fair Share Program and an interview following the session.

Rasheed told the assembly that Adams had written a story stating that Food Lion's management had not signed an agreement of any kind with the NAACP. But the record shows Adams wrote that Food Lion officials had not signed what they considered to be a Fair Share agreement.

"It was obvious to me that she had made up her mind that she was going to write a pro-Food Lion, anti-NAACP article," Rasheed told the assembly, describing a telephone interview he had with Adams. He said he was particularly disturbed that the article appeared in a black newspaper, adding that big corporations exert a powerful influence, but that "I'm not saying it happened in that case."

During the interview which followed, Rasheed said Adams "should attempt to get the facts before she writes the story. In her case, I feel she was less interested in getting the facts than with attacking the NAACP...."

"I thought the article was one-sided. I thought from my phone conversation with her that she was very critical of the agreement and the article wasn't going to be fair to us.

"I will not speak to her again about anything. I think she acted unprofessionally and unfairly."

Adams wrote two stories about the Food Lion agreement following the NAACP's declaration that it had achieved a "victory" in ending the boycott which demonstrated the NAACP "means business."

Seeking specific details about the agreement, Adams contacted Eugene McKinley, a Food Lion vice president, who said the food chain signed a non-binding statement of principles and not a Fair Share agreement. Adams tried to contact Rasheed, but he was unavailable for comment and the story ran on Sept. 27. Rasheed disputed McKinley's statements in a story published the following week. Rasheed said Adams acted unprofessionally by writing the first story without including his response.

"It wouldn't have hurt from a journalistic standpoint and an accuracy standpoint to have waited until the following issue," he said.

Rasheed said he never saw a copy of the second article because Adams didn't send him one, although Adams said she did.

Rasheed also said staff members at the NAACP's New York headquarters receive copies of the newspaper weekly.

After reading McKinley's denial that Food Lion had signed a Fair Share agreement, Rasheed said he understood why "Food Lion didn't push to keep a statement of confidentiality" in the document it signed.

"It appears to me that they have no intention to live by this document in good faith," he said.

The *Chronicle* has tried unsuccessfully to obtain for verification any copies of the 23 Fair Share agreements which the NAACP says it has signed with various corporations.

Rasheed said the NAACP keeps statistical information to determine whether the signatories -- like Food Lion -- are meeting goals and commitments detailed in the secret documents, but that the organization will not release them and is not accountable to anyone except its board of directors.

"I think it would be unproductive to what we are trying to do," Rasheed said of the organization's refusal to submit the agreements to public inspection. "These are moral covenants, not binding legal agreements. We know that if these things are going to work, there has to be a spirit of cooperation between these companies and the NAACP."

"I do not report to the public," Rasheed said. "I report to the chairman and he reports to the board of directors."

Rasheed insisted that the NAACP wrested concessions from Food Lion which led to the boycott's conclusion.

The NAACP originally had requested a total of 202 black store managers in the Food Lion chain by 1986. Under the agreement it signed, Food Lion's management said it would try to increase the number of black managers from 79 to 158 by 1987. The NAACP also sought specific commitments for increased purchases of goods and services from minority suppliers, but apparently failed to obtain any such commitments.

Asked to cite one specific concession which the grocery chain made during the negotiations, Rasheed said the NAACP managed to include a "signature line" on Food Lion's statement of principles.

He said the NAACP's effectiveness as an economic negotiator would be evident in the number of new jobs provided for blacks and the amount of business given to minority vendors and contractors, but repeated that only the NAACP has the statistical information which could verify that effectiveness and that it would not release the information.

Even if the statistical information were available

to the public, Rasheed said, it could be difficult to interpret because some companies are committed to meeting specific quotas and others are not.

"It depends on the nature of the companies and the nature of the industries," he said. "Some companies have no reservations about specific goals and usually they can explain why they are not meeting a specific goal."

That answer raised more questions in the interview about why some companies are held to quota commitments and others are not -- and what process the NAACP uses to determine how many blacks a company should employ and how much business it should conduct with minority suppliers and contractors.

"You cannot apply a scientific formula to this process," Rasheed said. "You cannot apply a formula across the board."

He denied that the process created a double standard -- one standard calling for specific quota commitments from some companies and another standard calling for only general statements of principles which they will try to follow.

"We are not holding them to double standards," Rasheed said. "We are just seeking a commitment."

During the session before the NAACP's rank and file Saturday morning, Rasheed said, "Anyone can

sign a piece of paper and it doesn't mean anything unless there is a commitment behind it."

Some of the state chapters were criticized during the session for their failure to support the boycott.

"Some of you supported us on that (the boycott), but I was expecting a lot more support," Rasheed said. "I believe a lot of you don't understand what was involved or that you would have supported us more strongly."

That statement was echoed by Earl Shinhoster, the NAACP's regional director. "Some of us gave assinine, ludicrous reasons for not doing it," he said. "We're the national NAACP. We're not Joe Jones' NAACP."

Shinhoster also called for better dissemination of information in the local branches. "I find that, in many branches, we operate as if we were a secret society," he said. "We act like, if this information gets out, it's going to destroy everything we're trying to do."

And, said Kelly Alexander Jr. shortly before he was elected the new state conference president, if the NAACP can't pull off a successful boycott, it can't be effective.

"This organization functions on the theory of the credible threat," he said. "We cannot be about the business of bluffing. We have to be about the business of sure 'nuffing. I just want to let that percolate."

## Crosswinds

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clear that the questions today are not merely whether we are better off, but who is not better off and will any of us be better off in the future.

"Astute" is the correct description of how Mr. Mondale handled himself, devastatingly knocking the "great communicator" off his pedestal. Mr. Reagan, on Sunday, engaged in a debate without the benefit of "a script," made clear that he was abysmally incapable of running the country; a fact we had long believed to be the case.

It is either true that the usually smooth, articulate President Reagan lied outright or that he simply knew no better when he tried to dispute at least two of

Mr. Mondale's contentions: that he, in order to accomplish his phony prosperity, attempted to destroy Medicare and Social Security.

In point of fact, Mr. Reagan, almost immediately upon assuming his office, made recommendations to substantially denude the two programs. (Thank God, we say again, that even some Republicans joined Democrats in Congress to deny Mr. Reagan all that he requested, although,

regrettably, much too much of what he wanted was given him by a sickeningly malleable House and Senate back then.)

So, Mr. Reagan mumbled, stumbled, misstepped and misspoke, and, once again, made clear that what America needs is a real president, not a puppet actor who reads rather well but whose every move is directed by rich old men who sit behind the curtains seeking only to replenish the coffers of those in this country like themselves.

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## Commitment To A Progressive Future

- ✓ **THE CABINET:**  
I am committed to appointing blacks to cabinet and sub-cabinet level positions.
- ✓ **THE GOVERNOR'S STAFF:**  
Blacks on my staff will have meaningful positions. There will be no "window dressing."
- ✓ **BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:**  
Through the appointment process, I will increase black representation on State boards and commissions with an emphasis on major policy making bodies.
- ✓ **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION:**  
~~There will be no retreat from progress made under the current administration.~~  
Recognizing that meaningful and substantive affirmative action efforts provide avenues of entry and career progression, I am committed to implementing a strong affirmative action program for all branches of State government.
- ✓ **INCREASING BLACK BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES:**  
At the State level, I will direct all State departments, agencies, boards and commissions to substantially increase the amount of business with black firms. Further, particular attention will be devoted to strengthening the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce in its efforts to promote assistance and training for minorities in small businesses.

I intend to support legislation designed to permit local government to create a minority business enterprise program which allows minority businesses to participate in city and county contracts. I will also encourage local units of government to trade with minority businesses in a meaningful manner.

- ✓ **PRESERVATION OF HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES:**

In view of the significant contributions made to our society by North Carolina Black colleges and universities in producing an abundance of talented citizens, I am committed to working for the preservation and improvement of these institutions. As Governor, I will do everything in my power to insure that these institutions remain viable and identifiable as black schools.