Klan Verdict Inspires UNC-Ch Rally

By David E. Griffith Carolina Journal Campus Affairs Editor

Student Body President Bob Saunders was in the crowd on Monday evening when a crowd of almost 1,000 students converged on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Saunders was among the hundreds of students who gathered on the Greensboro campus to protest the Klan-Nazi trial (6 Nazi party and Ku Klux Klan members were acquitted on charges stemming from the Nov. 3, 1979, shooting of five members of the Communist Workers Party during a march in Greensboro.)

A crowd of approximately 200 people gathered inside the Pit (a student meeting area just outside of the UNC Student Union), at 12:30 p.m. Petitions declaring the Greensboro verdict were distributed throughout the campus by representatives of the various sponsors. From the Pit the students marched to South Hall. Along the way the crowd swelled to nearly 1,000 students.

Mark Canady Chairperson of UNC’s Black Student Union spoke as he handed out the peti- tions, “We’ve organized this rally to enlighten other people.” Canady paused briefly before answering a question about current political events, “I’m not sure if there’s a correlation between the rise of racism and the rising tide of conservatism in the country. The country is a true melting pot, what we have to do is learn how to work with this.”

As the students tread their way to the site of the rally on the steps of South Hall, protest signs bobbled over their heads. “No Klan. No Nazis. No Dang- gerous to our health,” “There is No Justice in Greensboro.” All of the signs projected the verdict of the Greensboro trial. Some of the students marched not in a solemn procession but seemingly to a celebration. As one student who jokingly joined the surge said, “Let’s be radical and march against racism.”

There were different opinions in the crowd. Robert Thomason a journalism graduate said, “I’m protesting because a gross injustice occurred earlier this week.”

The students marched in front of an American UNC administrator who was against a center campus flag pole, across the leaf-splattered grounds of the old school. They moved at a steady pace, spreading into a boisterous enthusiasm standing above the step of South Hall.

Student Body President Bob Saunders was the first to the podium. He explained why the rally was being held and the procedure for circulating the petitions. Saunders introduced Black Student Union President Mark Canady as the first speaker.

Canady said, “I’d like to quote Dr. Martin Lu- ther King who said, “This country once wrote a check for equality of all people, but it has come back marked insufficient funds.” In Greensboro Monday that check came back and it was marked account closed.” The audience cheered Canady’s speech.

Petitions circulated constantly through the mass of people.

Vice-Chancellor Har- old Wallace was the only UNC administrator who spoke at Thursday’s rally. The administration did not officially sup- port the rally. Wallace said, “How far have we come? When is 1980 and there are 17 children missing or dead in this country, there’s some reason other than they are black. How far have we come?”

A member of the crowd yelled out, “Not very.”

Wallace responded, “Not very far, when NC government leader Harold Cov-ington says he wants to establish a racist nation composed of North and South Carolina.” Wal- lase warned the students against using violence to further their cause. “Racism thrives on violence,” Wallace said. Each of the speakers roused the audience at anything about it.”

Rosen added “I grew up in the forties and fifties and I was always told it (Nazi terror) cannot happen here. Well it did happen here.

Klan Nazis were an issue throughout the rally, when Mark Canady quoted the Declaration of Independence. Saund- ers said that all men were created equal. A female member of the audience spoke in a comment, and women, and Canady corrected what he had said to the approval of the audi- ence. Jay brought up this point in a manner saying, “The new cabinet is almost to a man, and I mean man, composed of millionaires and multi-millionaires who know nothing about the life of the average American.”

At the close of his speech Jay gave another warning against vio- lence, “if you do nothing about racism peacefully there is nothing left but violence, and believe me it’s violence you’ll get.” This is Jay said, “for a new movement.”

UNC medical school representative Harry Kaufman said “once again justice has been shot down in this coun- try. We will not stand by any longer with our mouths closed. We stand by the Klan and the Nazis to know that we will resist the last ounce of our strength, Kauf- man became very ani- mated as he brought his speech to a close. “We will stand idly by and watch while the con- stitution is thrown into a waste-basket to be substituted with a policy of supremacy where to oppose the Moral Majority means death at the end of a gun.”

The crowd cheered.

Slowly the sun’s path changed the shadow of the flag on the wall, the shadow flag held in a respectful manner from a second window. The shadow stood over the campus as UNC student poet Libby Hubbard received her recogni- tions. Hubbard said she was at the march that resulted in the shootout last November. Hub- bard said, “I sensed evil, so I left.” She advocated a “Romantic Revolution saying “if we lose romance we become neu- rotic. We must love.”

A heckler from the crowd screamed, “We don’t love the Klan.”

Hubbard spoke hand- ly reiterating that to love everybody meant to love the Nazis.

Dr. Charles Day was the final speaker from the stage and confirmed today that the first amendment still exists. Day declared, “No one in the country has justice, when some are deprived of justice. We are not allowed to demonstrate we might as well serve as the foot and promote the rights of all Americans.”

Saunders introduced UNC Student Body President Ron Olsen saying, “We are not alone in this protest.” Olsen stepped up to the podium, and said what justice came out of the Greensboro trial is that the answer came from the crowd, “None.” Some- one in the audience said, “What Olsen said, that when five people are murdered, one is guilty.” Olsen read a poem written by a friend of his, and encouraged the students to participate in a rally to be held at UNCC Monday at 12:30. The time for the rally has been changed to Tuesday at 1 p.m. in front of the Bell tower.

The executive president of N.C. State also spoke at the rally. It ended at 2:30 with the singing of “We Shall Not Be Moved.” Saunders said after the rally ended, “What happened here today was an ex- pression of shock and outrage. It was very differ- ent than a lot of the rallies we have on cam- pus because the students in attendance were representatives of the student body rather than the speeches.

Other protests against racism have occurred at the UNCC. A student who refused to be named said her sorority was immediately involved, and they were wearing yellow armbands similar to those worn in the Ger- man concentration camps to protest the Nazis.