Faculty, Students Comment

**Thresher Surveys Negro Strikers**

By BOB DURST
Thresher Columnist

During the last two months a movement of passive resistance mainly involving Negro college students, mainly protesting segregated lunch counters has spread through the South.

The movement has elicited varying degrees of support from President Eisenhower (for the right of protest and local bioracial committees), Gov. Leroy Collins (lunch counter segregation is "morally wrong"), Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt (full support so that "the meaning of our Constitution shall become a reality and not mere words"), and the 14 state Conference of Mid-Western Democrats (for federal guarantee of "equal and non-segregated access to commercial places of public accommodation").

Student groups have also responded to the demonstrations: students at Harvard, Yale, Radcliffe, Brandeis, M.I.T., Brown, Oberlin, Chicago, Columbia, Bennington, Vassar, and Wisconsin have formed groups to aid the demonstrators through resolutions, money, or sympathetic picketing. Official supportive action has been taken by the student governments at Duke, Smith, and Michigan.

Canvassing student opinion two weeks ago in regard to the student protest demonstrations, the Thresher found Rice students "generally ignorant." We tried again this week and collected the following comments:

KATHRYN PULLEY, Jr. English major: "The sit-downs show that students are ready to leave off talking about The Negro Question and start co-operating with them as individuals."

JIM BRAWNER, Sr.: "I think the sit-downs are unnecessary. But if the colored man thinks he's being prosecuted, I do think it ought to be looked into."

DR. JOHN PARISH: "I was glad to see in the morning papers that a large number of lunch counters in Galveston are discontinuing segregation. This decision seems to have been considerably affected by recent sit-down demonstrations."

GEORGE MILLER, Philosophy grad: "The Negroes are going about it in a very orderly manner. There seems to be a question of legal rights — whether a man who runs a business is forced to serve them. Although certain proprietors have no qualms about selling merchandise to Negroes, they refuse to serve them food. I don't think a man should be discriminated against simply because of his race or religion."

DR. LOUIS MACKEY: "I think anyone has the right to demonstrate against such a manifest injustice as segregation. I am a hundred per cent in favor of these demonstrations. This seems to me a clear case in which conscience must in some instances come even above the law, provided the means are peaceful. These demonstrations don't invite violence half as much as this plan to start integration in the public schools in the twelfth grade. The conduct of the demonstrators here in Houston has been particularly admirable."

GLISSY MILLS, Sr. History major: "I think it's rotten for people to be prejudiced, but I think they have a right to be."

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major: “I think that everybody who agrees with the demonstrations should be out doing something about it instead if just sitting around like I am.”

JIM BOB DOTY: Soph, History major: “The sit down strikes have underlined the real tension in race relations in Houston. These demonstrations do antagonize some people, they’re a real power move, like Ghandi’s passive resistance. The adjustment that’s going to have to be made here in Houston is going to be painful. The people of Houston are going to have to realize that the time has come when a commitment’s going to have to be made either to Faubus’s tactics or to those of the rest of the country.”

DR. W. S. DOWDEN: “The students who have been conducting these demonstrations throughout the South are to be commended for consistently maintaining their policy of non-violence. This situation contains the potential of unfortunate incidents, which hinder rather than help race relations. The fact that these demonstrations have been conducted without such incidents speaks well for the participants and attests a mature concept of the problem. Regardless of whether or not it was appointed as a result of these demonstrations, the Mayor’s committee to study the question is a big step in the right direction, and we look to it with hope.”