

Strength Dwindles In Sit-Down Effort

The Negro student sit-down protest to force lunch counter service at F. W. Woolworth Co. and S. H. Kress Co. stores today was at a stalemate as white students countermoved to occupy all but seven seats in Woolworth, and the numbers of Negro protesting participants was cut sharply.

Three Woman's College students who joined the Negro groups from A&T and Bennett Colleges yesterday, did not participate this morning, as far as could be determined.

No more than 30 to 40 Negro students were in the area of the stores at any one time. Twelve were seated much of the morning at Kress where there were plenty of seats, and only seven managed to get seats at Woolworth.

Young white youths, numbering up to 40 to 50, arrived at Woolworth around 10 a.m. and took over most seats. They kept these, alternating with white customers, except for seven seats which Negro youths occupied soon after entering the store.

At Kress no effort was made to hold the seats, but only a dozen Negro students occupied seats in the half of the lunch area unoccupied by whites.

For the first time since the sit-down protest started Monday afternoon, the Negro protest group lost numbers.

Today's crowd was orderly and quiet. The beginning of any loud conversation or loud activity was quieted by one of a large number of policemen and plainclothesmen on the

scene at Woolworth. Officers were posted at Kress, but all was quiet there anyway.

The movement began Monday when Negro college students protested the fact that they could buy at the store counters adjacent to the lunch counters but could not get food service.

The three Woman's College students who joined with the Negroes in their move yesterday identified themselves as Genie Seaman, sophomore from Altamonte Spring, Fla.; Marilyn Lott, junior from Falls Church, Va., and Ann Dearsley, senior, of Raleigh.

Woman's College chancellor Gordon Blackwell said today the role of students is "under very careful study and that we are extremely concerned about the situation." He added, "We hope that an area for negotiation can be found."

Blackwell said his reference to the "area of negotiation" was for an understanding "between all students and the stores."

It was learned today that a slight scuffle occurred about noon yesterday at the Woolworth lunch counter over who would occupy a seat at the counter.

Constable M. Thomas Bell escorted two Negro youths and a white boy from the store after some pushing and words had been exchanged. Bell was reported to have discussed the matter with Magistrate Winford E. Carter and it was decided it was not necessary to issue warrants over the matter.