

Clara Refuses Mixed Groups

The Claramont Restaurant, according to a news release issued by the "Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity" of Atlanta, has refused service to an interracial group of Episcopal clergymen for the third time in recent months. The restaurant, with the Sewanee Inn motel, are leased to Mrs. Clara Shoemate to be run "... in the best interests of the University." In the first of the series of sit-ins in August, Mrs. Shoemate refused service to two professors in the Graduate School of Theology and two Negro priests studying in the summer graduate school.

On Wednesday, October 18, three Negro priests and one white priest were denied entrance to the restaurant by Mrs. Shoemate, who met them at the door. The Negro clergy included the Rev. Robert Hunter of Chattanooga, the Rev. James Woodruff of Nashville, and the Rev. Warren Scott of Atlanta. They were accompanied by the Rev. Donald Bell, a white clergyman from Anna, Illinois. After being denied entrance to the facility the four clergymen sought out University officials to protest their treatment and inquire into the action taken by Sewanee's Board of Regents the previous week on the restaurant issue.

In September, seven Episcopal ministers, who were similarly denied service during their stop at Sewanee while on the "Prayer Pilgrimage" to the Church's General Convention in Detroit, had been virtually assured that the Regents would correct the situation at their meeting on October 12th. It was only with this assurance that the seven called off a hunger strike and threatened sit-in at the campus and proceeded on to Detroit.

It was revealed by University officials that the Regents on October 12th had passed a resolution asking the Vice-Chancellor and the Chairman of the Board of Regents to see whether a new policy could be effected. They are to report back to the next meeting of the Regents in February of 1962. The instructions embodied in the recent action of the Regents would only open the facilities on a restricted and selected basis. Presently any white tourists stopping at Sewanee can enjoy the motel and restaurant facilities. The Regents' action only seeks to open the facilities to "students, faculty, and official guests of the University" without regard to race.