

Bowie College Boycott Continues Despite Pact

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Negro students today continued to boycott classes for the second straight day at Bowie State College even though they reached an accord with the administration late yesterday on steps to resolve certain disputes.

Teachers showed up for classes, but as far as could be learned very few students attended them.

Dr. Samuel Myers, president of the college located in Prince Georges County, said that the college was open and classes would be held for the benefit of those students who wanted to attend. He had no immediate report of the attendance, although it appeared that very few were in class. Most of the students were marching around the campus, singing songs.

Most of the complaints at the mainly Negro college are in reference to the dining hall, dormitory conditions and administrative handling of records.

But the incident that appears to have led to the boycott by most of the college's 600 full-time undergraduates is the refusal of Bowie State's president to recommend tenure for a popular history instructor, Virginius Thornton III.

Myers, who declined to reveal the specific reasons why Thornton has not been recommended for tenure, predicted that the boycott would end today.

To Meet Agnew

However, Roland Smith, president of the Student Government Association and spokesman for the students, said the boycott would continue indefinitely until the students are satisfied their complaints are being settled.

Both the administration and the students agreed yesterday that the college has been neglected. Myers and Smith said they planned to meet today with Gov. Spiro T. Agnew.

After conferring with Myers about the complaints, Smith commented, "The students at Bowie College find it necessary to dramatize the need to remedy the effects."

Also taking part in yesterday's demonstration were students from Howard University, many of whom helped to shut down their campus last week.

List Complaints

The students charged that their campus is known as "the cesspool of the state college system," and listed four mimeographed sheets of complaints.

These include such wide-ranging allegations as mishandled records, poor heating, a gossiping dormitory matron, roaches in the food and an inadequate library.

Two years ago, Bowie State students boycotted classes to protest a number of grievances.

"I think for years that the college has been deprived," said Myers, who became president last July.

But he also listed what he considered a number of accomplishments in an effort to transform Bowie State from primarily a teachers college to a liberal arts college.

Myers said there will be no disciplinary action against the students for missing class. Indeed, he congratulated them for how they conducted their boycott, which he considered a chance for an "educational experience."

The student government seemed to be in complete control and there were no violent incidents reported yesterday.

Student security guards with white armbands prevented newsmen from entering a series of mass meetings in the student union building, but there was none of the hostility that white newsmen have felt from Negro students elsewhere.

While the meetings took place yesterday, some classes continued but attendance was light. Most of the students who did not observe the boycotts were white adults.

White students constitute about one-fifth of the daytime enrollment.

The college also has a graduate and evening program, which was not expected to be affected substantially by the boycott.

During meetings between the administration and student leaders, Myers and Smith reported agreement on steps to give students more say in settling their grievances.

But Myers was uncertain what effect the agreement would have in Thornton's case.