

5B) Protest Intensifies, But Hope Continues

Rights Group Blocked In Traffic Light Quest, *Newsday*, October 27, 1967

Manhasset--Engineers of the State Highway Department met in public last night with the Invincible Black Militia, but at the end of the session the Negro civil rights group appeared no closer to its goal of a traffic light at the Spinney Hill section on Northern Boulevard. The group has been pressing for a traffic light at Allen Drive and Northern Boulevard where there have been several fatalities. The meeting was set up by the highway department after receiving a letter from the group. The group's vice president, Benny Beck, said, "We are black people. They don't intend to give us nothing unless we show we demand it." As some in the group shook their fists and one waved a white plastic skull, Beck continued, "Tonight this community is waking up. We are sick and tired of all this foolishness. We aren't going to take 'no' for an answer."

LI Negroes Recall JFK, Mourn King, *Newsday*, April 5, 1968

Mrs. Josie Ward, a Negro, sat in a front pew of the Holy Spirit Baptist Church in North Amityville, and her voice seemed to crack as she talked and tears were visible in her eyes. "It shook me up, it's terrible," she said. "It's like when President Kennedy died, yes like President Kennedy." John Head, 23, a Hofstra University student, said: "King had a lot planned for the summer. I would look to him when I felt I was being wronged and he would hold me back from violence. The same thing was true of Kennedy. They were killed because they did not believe in white supremacy." Mel Jackson, Chairman of the Long Island Chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality called for a general work stoppage by both the black and white communities on Long Island starting tomorrow and lasting until the Rev. Dr. King's funeral. Jackson also called for the closing of all schools on the day of the funeral and for special memorial services in churches of all faiths this weekend.

LI Pupils Remember King, *Newsday*, Jan. 16, 1969

Vivian Washington, a senior at Manhasset High School, walked slowly down the aisle of Mount Olive Baptist Church in Manhasset yesterday carrying a large basket of white funeral flowers and softly reciting the 23rd Psalm. When she reached the front of the church, she placed the flowers at the foot of a rostrum and turned away. There were tears on her cheeks. On the campus of Hofstra University, students dressed in colorful robes performed African dances while others beat out rhythms on large drums. And at the Martin Luther King Youth Center in Long Beach, a Negro girl who attends Long Beach High School gave a 30 minute lecture as about 400 students of whom at least two-thirds were white, listened attentively.

Many schools excused students from classes to attend special observances for the Rev. Dr. King held outside school. But in two districts, Manhasset and Long Beach, students walked out of classes without permission from school officials. The walkout in Long Beach was staged by about 200 white students who were angered by a school board decision that only Negro students could be excused to attend memorial services at the youth center. The students later went to the youth center where black students put on a two hour memorial program honoring the Rev. Dr. King. In Manhasset, 220 students, about half of them white, walked out of the high school's planned 40-minute ceremony honoring the Rev. Dr. King yesterday morning. Louis Washington, a 16 year old junior who said he spoke for the black students, said that the black students were unhappy because they had not been given enough of a role in planning the memorial program. The Manhasset students marched down Northern Boulevard to Community Drive, linking up with about 100 Great Neck South High School students, most of whom were white, who had left classes with permission to attend the services at Mount Olive Baptist Church.

Questions:

- 1- Why did demonstrators believe the State Highway Department refused to install a street light? 2- Why did mourners compare Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. with President John F. Kennedy?
- 3- Do you agree or disagree with the decision by students to walk out of school on Rev. Martin Luther King's birthday? Why?