



**BEULAH LAND PROTESTORS** James Raplin, Lee Tucker, Rev. Tom McCray and Reverend Charles Belcher are not so proud of NBC-TV's use of blacks on television programs. Ironically Channel 3 has by far the largest compliment of black employees of any local television station.

## **Blacks Picket WKYC-TV Protesting Beulah Land**

Members of the NAACP Executive Board lead by Rev. Charles Belcher, Rev. Thomas McCray, Lee Tucker and James Raplin picketed the studios of WKYC TV-3 last Wednesday and Thursday in protest of the program Beulah Land.

Raplin, a coordinator for Partners In Ecumenism,

said that "NBC and all the rest of TV does not depict blacks in meaningful roles and the only time you see more than two blacks on TV together is when you have a show like Roots or Beulah Land."

Accoding to the pickets there is total discontnt with TV programming and the way blacks are selected

to fill meaningless roles.

For Beulah Land the reviews were less than flattering and the viewing audience was vast.

The new television mini-series "Beulah Land" is a pointless melodrama about life on a huge cotton plantation in the ante-bellum

(Continued On Page 4A)

# Protesting Blacks Picket WKYC

(Continued from Page 1A)

The title, "Beulah Land," a blatant misnomer for this sleazy production, is taken from a Biblical reference to

Israel as written in the Book of Isaiah 62:4. The passage reads ironically: "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed

Desolate; but thy shalt be called Hephzibah and thy land Beulah for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."

As a relevant 19th century depiction of life down amongst the old magnolias, "Beulah Land's" Peyton Place interpretation is more accurately described as a pre-Civil War Sodom And Gomorrah.

At best, "Beulah Land" is a bawdy simple-minded adult entertainment, which I do not recommend for the indiscriminate viewing of youngsters. At worst, it's a harmless bore.

The film's bizarre pre-occupatio with sex, violence and questionable treatment of black-white (master-slave) relationships, cloaked the production in heated controversy months before shooting was completed on location in Natchez, Miss.

In March, a sizable group of respected black entertainers, after screening several unfinished episodes of the drama branded it as "intensely offensive and degrading to black people."

An ad hoc coalition of several Los Angeles-based social concerns organizations was soon formed to protest the fall telecast.

In the forefront of the west coast fight was television actor, Hal Williams. The former Columbus resident and East High School student joined other black entertainers, charging that the series "perpetuates the image of the slave as ignor-

ant, oversexed, sloven, dependent on the whim of his master and filled with love for the master and the master's land."

Area viewers were put on notice that something might be rotten in the cotton when **Ebony Magazine** published a provocative account of the racist overtones of the production in its September issue.

It is unfortunate that the flimsy story doesn't merit serious mature attention.

It is even more distressing to realize that those well-meaning west coast actors selected such a juvenile and insignificant vehicle to use as a forum to decry the social and economic plight of their black brothers and sisters.

Black union actors are seriously unemployed throughout the nation and need steady work to live modest and dignified lives. And, of course, stereotypical black roles still prevail in the film and television industry. But nevertheless, it would seem that the more direct and constructive way to revolutionize the entertainment field would be by exercising their civil rights under federal law.

The group recently decided to seek legal redress for their grievances

through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Los Angeles Human Rights Commission, the U.S.

Dept. of Labor and the Human Rights Commission of the District of Columbia.

Representatives from the religious community and press found the production's pre-occupation with sexual promiscuousness of its central (white) characters to be a more laughable situation than a serious affront to black people. To be sure, the black community can be comforted by the fact that in this Dixieland saga, the tables are turned with the white slave master being depicted this time as a decadent, sex-starved animal who is easily manipulated and controlled by his strong-willed mistress.

Heading the large cast of "Beulah Land" is Lestley Ann Warren and Paul Rudd as the mismatched lovers and plantation owners.