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LOUISIANAN ASKS PRESS RESTRAINT

Morrison Seeks Moratorium on Coverage of Protests on School Integration

Special to The New York Times.

NEW ORLEANS, Dec. 3—Mayor de Lesseps S. Morrison has suggested a three-day moratorium on news coverage of this city's school desegregation controversy.

The suggestion came today in a special delivery letter dated Dec. 2. He asked news media representatives to meet with him tomorrow at City Hall to discuss the proposal.

"I know this is a rather unusual request," he wrote, "but believe me, it comes from the heart of a public official who has spent most of his life trying to build the economy and the good name of New Orleans."

Mayor Morrison said that only two public schools out of 171 had been affected by desegregation and that only one-tenth of one per cent of the population had been involved in the demonstrations.

"Yet, because of the tremendous amount of news coverage, the general impression nationwide is that New Orleans is a sea of turmoil and violence," he said. "This is very bad for business, tourist trade and it is a damage that we are suffering completely without fault on our part."

Newsmen Held Responsible

Mr. Morrison said in a statement issued Nov. 14, when four Negro girls were admitted to two white schools, that segregationists had a right to protest as long as they did not disturb the peace.

In his letter, he argued that newsmen were responsible for the jeering, cursing demonstrators who have congregated daily at William Frantz elementary school.

He said he had discussed the situation with news representatives, whom he did not name, "and they are all convinced that if they were not on the scene each day, the demonstrators would not be there."

"In many cases, these people go to the area to get themselves on television and hurry home for the afternoon and evening telecasts to see the show."

The demonstrations have been directed chiefly against two parents who have refused to honor a white boycott of the schools.

After several days had passed at McDonogh No. 19 school without any white pupils reporting for classes, the demonstrators deserted the area. Only a handful of policemen and a few newsmen remained.

Louisiana School Clash Continues



Associated Press Wirephoto

The Rev. Lloyd A. Foreman, right, leaves church in New Orleans, carrying his Bible and clerical robe. Down the street segregationists yelled insults at the minister.



United Press International

Mayor deLesseps S. Morrison of New Orleans. He requested three-day moratorium on news of the city's school desegregation fight.

Mr. Morrison noted that the disturbances had been going on intermittently for three weeks. His letter to newsmen covering the disturbances marked the first approach made to them on the subject.

During similar controversies in Little Rock, Ark., and Front Royal, Va., in 1959, the police and city officials met with newsmen prior to the opening of school and agreed upon ground rules for coverage.

Neutral Territory Used

In both cities, newsmen were confined to neutral territory away from spectators to prevent incidents.

Mayor Morrison suggested that during the news holiday the police photographers or a press pool would supply film and reports. The letter implied that the demonstrators would be allowed to remain at Frantz if they chose to do so.

During last week, these segregationists attacked a mother walking her child home from school, two reporters, a cameraman and several bystanders. The police broke up the scuffles involving the mother but no arrests were made.

Mayor Morrison said he did not mean to accuse newsmen of "doing anything wrong," but he said, "I did see with my own eyes on Wednesday, the sixteenth of November, a camera crew in the Civic Center actually setting up a scene."

The cameramen, he said, persuaded a group of demonstrating students to respond "like a cheering section" after setting up cameras, adjusting sound levels and giving a signal.

On the day to which the Mayor referred, high school youths and a sprinkling of adults surged through the streets after an attempt to march on the school board offices was thwarted by fire hoses.

Mayor Morrison contended that during recent sit-in demonstrations against segregated lunch counters, "when the news media lost interest and failed to go to the location, the 'sit-ins' ended. Obviously, there was a direct connection between the amount of publicity and the amount of trouble."

The cessation of the lunch counter demonstrations followed numerous arrests made under a new state antitrespass law.