

Southern Editors Ponder the Civil Rights Murders

In the wake of the rioting in Rochester and Harlem, the citizens of the North were faced with the necessity for abandoning their complacency about their home area's racial problems. Now that the three missing civil rights workers have been found, brutally murdered, in Neshoba County, many of us in Mississippi need to take a similar long hard look at ourselves. . . .

We could begin by altering the sorry record of interracial justice which we have made over the last decade. In celebrated case after case involving the murders of Negroes, from Emmet Till through Medgar Evers, we have been seemingly unable or unwilling to find the guilty parties, try them and convict them. The roll call of the dead is long. The list of those convicted is still a blank page.

Now there is going to be another opportunity for justice. The three civil rights workers

did not kill themselves. . . . Some one murdered them, and it is a safe bet that the FBI will in the near future make an arrest.

Thereafter the task will be up to our fellow Mississippians. Let us pray that this time, if the evidence is clear, a jury will find it in themselves to convict. It is irrelevant what passions stirred the men who shot down the three young men. What is relevant is that justice must prevail.

—The Delta Democrat-Times, Greenville, Miss.

. . . At this point it is regrettable to have to say that there are apparently citizens of this nation, now living in Mississippi, who have not learned that violence is not the answer to frustration, that hatred breeds nothing but trouble, and that crimes of this nature simply deepen the wounds that racial strife already has caused. At the same time, it also is regrettable that persons

such as the Negro entertainer who brandished a phony letter that claimed to have solved the mystery of the missing civil rights workers before the FBI did are still sucking blood from those same wounds. . . .

However much a populace may feel itself wronged by agitation, it must also feel shame when murder is the only outlet it can find for the relief of its frustration.

—The Commercial Appeal, Memphis

. . . The fact of tragedy has been dug out of an earthen dam near Philadelphia. It is imperative now that those responsible be brought to justice. . . .

However strongly any one might feel that the civil rights workers acted unwisely in coming to Mississippi in the first place, there can be no tolerance of terroristic activity on the part of any individual or group in any state or community. . . .

Terrorists, whatever their "cause," must be dealt with severely and made to understand that theirs is not an approach to our problems which the majority of law-abiding, peaceable citizens will countenance.

—The Birmingham News

There is no measuring degrees of horror; thus, the discovery of the bodies of three missing civil rights workers should be no more shocking than the earlier discovery in the same state of the water-logged bodies of the two Negro youths who hadn't even been listed as missing.

Yet the revulsion against the murder of the three civil rights workers is more widespread. This is so, perhaps, because two of them, were white. After all, the lynching of Negroes has been going on in Mississippi for so long that there is a tendency to accept this sort of behavior as one of the quaint folkways of the state.

But the murder of the two white men reveals that they will get you in Mississippi not only because your skin is dark but because you disagree with how they do things in Mississippi. . . .

Who are the guilty? They are numerous. They are the people who did the killing, those who conspired with them and those who helped create an atmosphere in which anything is preferable to change. . . . But those who committed the crime and those who conspired in its commission are answerable to the law.

And this time, if they are indicted and tried and a Mississippi jury frees them in the face of conclusive evidence, all the world will see what they really mean when they talk about states' rights down there.

They mean the right to commit murder and get away with it.

—The Courier-Journal, Louisville

(AGITATORS, from page 1)

sects to encourage violence in the eastern outbreaks.

"We don't expect any serious trouble here," said Janise, whose jurisdiction includes an area where about 4,000 Negroes live, "but we feel it best to be prepared for any contingency. The decent, law-abiding citizens of this area can be assured that we are prepared to protect them and their property."

Las Vegas Police Detective Herman Moody was named acting chairman of the Citizens-Police Committee at last week's meeting and Larry Powell, Sr., West Las Vegas distributor for the Las Vegas Sun, was selected as vice-chairman, both by acclamation.

Other officers elected were Mrs. James Anderson and Mrs. Johnny Crockett, who will divide the duties of recording and corresponding secretaries; Allan Sanders, treasurer, and Addelliar Guy, legal advisor. Next meeting of the group was scheduled for 7 p.m. on Sept. 17 at Kit Carson School, when by-laws will be submitted for approval and sub-committees formed.

LAST WEEK'S MEETING was described by grocer Harry Gilbert as "having more meaning than any I have ever attended in all my years in Las Vegas. . . . We must maintain moral integrity on the part of the people as well as the police."

Det. Moody, who was nominated as chairman by Clarence Ray, was strongly endorsed by Gilbert, Janise, Las Vegas Police Lt. Richard Dunn, Dr. George De Hay and others present. Those attending in addition to those already mentioned included Dr. Charles West, H.P. Fitzgerald, George Fortson, Joseph Alston, Nathaniel Collins, Almos Key, Johnny Crockett, Rev. Marion Bennett, Harvey Jones, Elbert Lyles, G.O. Keyes, Larry Barr, Fred Bates, Earl McDonald, Lorenzo Calhoun, Henry (Red) Williams and Mrs. James Bowie.

Det. Moody said it was important for parents to know where their children are at all times. "Too many children are raising themselves in the street," he said, thereby creating problems in law enforcement that sometimes lead to ugly incidents.

Bates thought adult education was the key to solutions of many West Las Vegas problems. McDonald, following up Det. Moody's suggestion, claimed that one of the major problems was lack of parental responsibility. "The police department has been handcuffed in doing anything with these unguided and undisciplined kids," he said. "We need strong parental responsibility laws. Punish the parents and they will keep the kids in line."

Anderson suggested that the assignment of police officers with strong Southern accents to West Las Vegas encourages "adverse reactions" because the Negro associates white persons using such accents with hostility.

Anderson also expressed "shock" at the "bold" activities of prostitutes in the West Las Vegas area and said he would like the committee to undertake a solution of the "entire explosive situation" along Jackson St. "that jeopardizes the tranquility of the entire city."

Janise claimed that "our laws on prostitution are too weak. . . . The Supreme Court has

emasculated the present laws. We must have new and stronger laws."

Lt. Dunn assured the meeting that as director of the Las Vegas Police Academy, "I intend to see that every one of our officers is thoroughly indoctrinated in human relations. There will be no discrimination tolerated in the department."

Guy, a law clerk in the Clark County District Attorney's office, revealed that he was particularly active in cases involving charges of police brutality in Chicago for seven months before coming to Las Vegas and offered to work closely with Lt. Dunn.

African "Martyr" Honored

MPESDUASE, Ghana--A new school in this central Ghana village has been named for a student from Syracuse, N.Y., who died while helping to build it.

Robert Beadle, Jr., who was majoring in history at Dartmouth College, died in July from an overdose of malaria tablets he took by mistake. He was one of 10 young Americans and one Canadian who came to Ghana in June under "Operation Crossroads Africa", a privately financed organization that has sent hundreds of North American students to Africa during the past five years.



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