

Loeb Accuses Union Of Non-cooperation, Pleads Fiscal Deficit



YOUNG MARCHERS FLEE from the havoc which has just erupted in last Thursday's march. Police moved in with billyclubs and gas to put an end to the destruction and looting. Many youngsters were participating in the demonstration, and were caught in the subsequent pandemonium which brought a city-wide curfew and left portions of downtown Memphis in ruins.

Photo By Lee James

"It is my firm opinion that city, state, and federal employees simply don't have a right to strike in the field of health or in the field of safety and in other fields of very limited right to strike," Memphis Mayor Henry Loeb told Southwestern students yesterday in Hardie Auditorium.

"But certainly nobody has the right to take a chance of bringing pestilence to Memphis."

Mayor Loeb described the "openness" of his office and the opportunity to see him about issues and grievances such as the labor dispute. "The men had the same opportunity," he said.

"Nobody came into the Mayor's office. The strike was called."

"After it was called, I suggested the representatives come in. I stay in the office all day on Monday. Nobody came in until on Tuesday when representatives of the union came in and we started talking."

"We talked for a long time, until I was called a liar, and told to shut my big, fat mouth by union representatives, and this kind of shut the discussions a little bit. I was called a liar by stating fact, that the men are on an illegal walkout, and we must deal with laws, and not with men."

"Nobody can set himself up as being above the law. And I pointed out—and this is what infuriated the gentlemen—that nobody has the right to strike against public health . . ."

bank for the raise of rapid money. We've got to walk before we run.

"We must get the city's finances in shape. This is not the federal government. We must have a balanced budget."

Loeb also cited other areas of agreement between the city and the union: fair provisions for promotions, adequate city provision for health, hospitalization and life insurance, uniform pension program, fringe benefits, and sick leave.

On the check-off the mayor said: "Come to reason. In the first place the city and the credit union, and the union each has separate responsibilities. Each answers to different people."

"Any time you mix up separate agencies that have no business being together you have trouble . . ."

"I was elected to represent not just the members of this union but the entire city. There are many people in this city who don't agree with the union . . ."

"The only way I can represent everybody is not have special treatment for one group. We have said to the union, if we respect the right of the men to join unions, if we recognize the union, that dues can be paid in any way the men and the union want to work it out . . ."

Must Deal In Legality

"We've got to see that the public's interests are served, and above all, we must deal in legality and not in illegality."

Loeb cited two other times when the union broke off negotiations.

"As far as I'm concerned, we're ready to talk some more," offered the mayor. "I'm not interested in beating the men that I've worked with for four years."

Loeb continued to cite instances where the city has attempted to offer possible solutions, only to meet union rejection.

The first point of contention between the union and city is on exclusive recognition of the union (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees AFL-CIO).

"From the day the men walked in with their representatives the answer was, 'the union is recognized.' This is the men's right. There is no argument about it." But, said the mayor, exclusive recognition cannot be granted.

Cites Financial Woes

Loeb said the city had already agreed to a five per cent increase in pay, but could do no more because "the city is in a desperate financial crisis. He cited a \$1.9 million operating deficit and inadequate taxing ability as some of the city's current financial stumbling blocks."

"The city simply can't afford to do more," the mayor said. "It doesn't have the money in the

Objects To Mis-use

"But as the union stated when they came to town, 'we intend to use the credit union to collect all the dues for everybody in the credit union and not in the credit union, for everybody in the union and not in the union.' To this there is objection."

Asked to comment on the racial issue, Loeb said the issue was not a racial but a labor issue.

"I say let's get it back where it belongs, in the field of labor relations. Let's have the labor relations. Certainly we ought to be able to sit down and work these things out."

Certainly there are injustices and things that need to be done. We went about doing them before this thing came up. Each is separate from the other. Each is being handled as a duty on both and each will be attempted to be carried out. Let's don't have a mixture of the two."

'We Will Win'

Hard Line Leader Heads City Strike

"We're waiting for the city to resume negotiations," declared P. J. Ciampa, field representative for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, when questioned about the current status of the sanitation strike.

Ciampa and the two other union

officials representing striking sanitation workers, William Lucy and T. O. Jones, walked out of negotiations with the city last Wednesday afternoon.

Problems Proliferate

"We are prepared to negotiate until we win," Ciampa said. "I'm looking for a solution to the problem here in Memphis as soon as possible. An honorable solution to the problems."

When asked if "an honorable solution" included union recognition and a dues check-off, he replied, "That's part of the problem. . . . I don't want to identify anything as being uncompromisable. Union recognition and dues check-off are a subject for discussion, as part of the problem."

Ciampa said he did not know what effect Thursday's disorder would have upon the progress of the strike. "We won't be able to draw any permanent conclusion until the strike is ended."

No Comment

When asked for comment upon a proposed compromise method of handling dues through the City's credit union, Ciampa said that he had never seen the proposal. When asked again if he thought such an arrangement might be agreeable to the workers, he repeated, "I haven't seen the proposal. Until I see the proposal, I don't want to comment on it."

Councilman Thomas Todd has charged the union leaders with disreputable behavior during the negotiations, maintaining that they staged the walkout, and even arranged television coverage in advance. Ciampa dismissed the charge as "folly."

"The morale of the workers is very good," he said. "We will resume negotiations, whenever the city offers a reasonable attitude."



Photo By Rut Tufts

DIGNITY IS THE PLEA of this man sitting with his dog prior to the start of Thursday's march. Despite the thwarting of the effort by violence, nonviolent Negro leaders plan to continue the massive demonstrations.

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Councilmen Vent Viewpoints About Riots And Check-off

"We are not ducking the issue," Downing Pryor, Chairman of the City Council, told *The Sou'wester* Monday night in commenting upon the part the council has played in strike negotiations.

"I think if we had tried to take the initiative and the mayor had not liked this action, the mayor could have easily taken the matter very quickly to court and gotten the court to declare that this was an administrative matter, that the council could not participate in it."

"We considered it from both a theoretical standpoint and a practical standpoint that if the mayor didn't want us in it, he could block us. So we have had no official role in the matter."

Sits On Fence

Asked his opinion of the dues check-off (the deduction of dues from city employee paychecks and their payment, by the city, to the union), Pryor said, "I'm not for or against it, but I think we are providing them a great convenience whereas most of the union members in this city personally pay their own dues."

Taught By Media

Lawson Lambasts Way Of Violence

The Rev. James Lawson, minister of Centenary Methodist Church and recognized leader of the Memphis Negroes supporting the garbage strike, spoke to a congregation of some 300 demonstrators before the peaceful march Friday afternoon.

At the gathering in Clayborn Temple, he told of meetings with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other Memphis ministers involved in the strike efforts. They had been meeting almost constantly since the Thursday morning disturbance.

Police Over-react

Concerning the riot, he mentioned the coverage in newspapers outside of Memphis, stating that "The police over-reacted and showed more force than necessary."

"Outside people caused the violence," he said from his own observations.

"The American attitude that violence is the way to accomplish something," Lawson opined, "is what many young people believe, too."

"They have been taught this by television, radio and newspaper. Just as I will not buy the white man's racism, I will not buy his violence."

He pointed out that it is easier for the union to collect its dues through the city rather than from individual workers.

Pryor said union representatives at one time had agreed to Mayor Loeb's position: use of the credit union to grant dues check-off.

Hung Up On Nothing

"I've seen the thing 99% resolved four times only to have it bog down . . . when it got hung up on a really nothing point. We should have had this thing over months ago."

"I tell you what happened, is third-partyism. . . . You just cannot get matters resolved in as sensitive situation as this without people who have to make the agreements looking at each other in the face . . ."

Pryor said, "I don't know where the union stands today. They have stiffer backing than they had a few weeks ago."

Asked if the dues check-off was not tantamount to recognition of the union, Pryor said recognition had already been agreed upon.

Another Union Exists

"We do not give them exclusive recognition, because in the case of

the sanitation workers there is already another union in there that we recognize and we deal with regularly and that's the operating engineers . . ."

"Those people belong to a union and the city has been dealing with them. They are also sanitation workers and that in itself would be contrary to what they are talking about—it's exclusive recognition when there is already a union in that department."

The council member said there was a "very restrictive" Tennessee court ruling (upheld by the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court) that states that a municipality cannot negotiate or contract with municipal workers.

James L. Netters

Rev. James L. Netters, Negro Member of the City Council, said no one side or person could be blamed for Thursday's outbreak of violence. He predicted further disturbances if the city fails to make a conciliatory offer to the union and if Martin Luther King returns to Memphis for more marches.

"I'm not totally bitter toward the mayor," Netters said. The Negro Councilman, one of three on the council, emphasized his support of Loeb's across-the-board pay increase and budget.

But he again charged the mayor with refusing to make his policies known to the public or to the striking workers.

Mayor Has Good Points

"There needs to be a sit-down and talk-out," Netters urged. "The mayor will not explain his position. Actually he has some good points for the workers and a sound budget."

"But he won't explain these to the public. . . . The public does not know his policy." He felt the public would be more "conciliatory" to the problem if the mayor would articulate his policies.

Netters said he supports an across the board pay raise of five cents for all city employees, a policy the mayor supports, the official said. He noted, however, that all employees must be brought up to the minimum wage.

Sanitation workers, he said, receive minimum wage, but hospital employees do not. Netters is chairman of the Hospital Workers Committee.

Council At Impasse

Netters said the council failed to act on several proposals that would have offered "various points of agreement" between the administration and the union—the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, member of AFL-CIO.

Chief among these, Netters noted, was to allow the credit union to handle the dues check-off without interference from city officials. Netters said the council

was deadlocked at a 6-6 impasse, with one member absent.

Netters did feel gains had been made however. Previous to the Thursday outbreak, the Negro leader said, the council was usually divided 10-3 on the strike issue.

He said that the violence had a definite effect on "quite a few" of the councilmen, but he pointed out that it produced a "counter point" with other councilmen.

Thomas Todd Jr.

"I don't want you to feel like the white community is at fault or the Council is at fault. I'm going to put the fault where I think it belongs and that's on the Negro ministers."

This is the view of City Council member Thomas H. Todd Jr. on the racial crisis currently embroiling Memphis.

Todd said, "You are going to get all kinds of reports from the Negro community. I don't believe much of what they have to say because I've been sitting with three of them for three days, and they have never told the truth yet . . ."

Faith Questioned

"That is right. This is on this bargaining deal they say we broke up. Call Channel Three. Call Channel Five. Ask them who called to

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Todd Scores Negro Clerics; Blanchard Strikes City Hall

(Continued from Page 1)
"come photograph the union walking out." The union called them. If this wasn't premeditated, I don't know what was . . . Do you call this bargaining in good faith?"

WREC-TV's Russell Hodge told The Sou'wester Monday that someone called him at about 4:15 Wednesday, but it was not a union official. He said he knew the person's identity, but would not reveal it "because Todd did not." The person said that something was going on and he expected the union would walk out before five.

Todd maintained that the city could not legally bargain with the union. "We do not bargain. We are not to bargain with labor unions per se. We are restricted, we are prohibited, we don't want to bargain with them. The law says it is not our business."

Blasts Union

Todd said the union "is breaking the law by calling these men out on strike. They have an injunction against them that was issued in 1966."

Todd said the four union representatives had walked out three

different times during the negotiations.

Asked if earlier settlement of the strike would have averted Thursday's violence, Todd said, "I doubt that. Mr. Lawson right in the City Council chamber told us when we settle this, 'We have got many other issues that we can bring before you.'"

"We are trying to improve working conditions, the grievances, the wages. These are the things we have agreed to, and these men can go back to work and get these things . . . So that if the people in this union are really interested in helping these men, they can say 'we'll go back to work.' Let them go back to work and we can sit down and talk more about the check-off, about the signed contract."

"All these things have been decided. This isn't the hold-up. It's the union looking after their own selfish interests. As far as the men are concerned, they can go back and get every grievance they ever had."

No Check-off

"But the union can't get its

check-off. This is the big stumbling block, other than the signed contract, which we are unable by law ever to give them."

Todd said, "The leaders of these people have been down to city hall and told us in session that if they don't get what they want they are going to burn the town down. Told us this right to our face, not on one occasion but on several occasions."

He said several ministers had told the council this, but he could recall the names of only Rev. Dick Moon, chaplain at Memphis State, and Rev. Ezekiel Bell, pastor of Parkway Gardens Presbyterian Church.

Asked what the city was doing to help the Memphis Negro economically, Todd said, "There is much we can do if there was time to get out from under the problems that these Negroes have dumped on us unjustifiably."

"The city is trying to protect these people. We also have problems. We can't just go and break the law because the union does. We have to respect the law, which is sometimes difficult. Lots of these

people don't seem to think we should keep the laws."

Jerred Blanchard

City Councilman Jerred Blanchard said the situation in Memphis had "boiled down to one issue — whether or not city employees may have unions. So far the City Council backs the mayor."

The councilman said that the Council has made no thorough investigation of the strike or the working conditions of the sanitation employees. "We do not know the real basis of the strikers," he said.

Commenting on the Council's position on the strike, Blanchard said, "Anything can change. This can change. After all, we've run it up to half way, haven't we?"

Blanchard said he had reversed his position on union recognition "because it is my guess that there is no alternative under the present circumstances than to allow these men to have a union and to assist in dues collection in some manner."

He said, "It took no genius to foresee that Thursday sooner or later would occur."

The city official said, "To the best of my knowledge he (the mayor) has not consulted any member of the City Council."

Guts Not Negotiable

"So far," Blanchard noted, "The city has publicly stated that it will negotiate everything except check-off and recognition. Those items apparently are not negotiable. So how can you have negotiations if the guts cannot be negotiated?"

Blanchard said the city was prepared to improve economic and social factors in the Negro community. "This the council is prepared to do, through jobs, housing and education."

A Blasted Shame

"It's a blasted shame that we, ready to go, can't stop the strike because we've got this damn hang-up on unions . . . We're so stupid."

Blanchard thought the ultimate cause of Thursday's violence could be directly attributed to economic and social factors. He cited "Black Power hoodlums," asking, "Why do they riot? They exist because of bad housing, inadequate education, inequality, injustice. That's why the Black Power boys came into being."

Chides White Ministers

Jackson Censures Curfews, Memphis' De Facto Racism

Dr. H. Ralph Jackson, director of the A.M.E. Church Department of Minimum Salary and a prominent leader of the supporters of the sanitation workers' strike, disclosed plans to continue the protest march, go back to the mass meetings when the curfew is lifted and continue raising money for the striking workers.

"Loeb can't starve them out," said Dr. Jackson, who plans to keep the effort nonviolent as summer and "stinking garbage" approach.

"White folks can go to the movies or dinner," he said concerning Mayor Loeb's orders to keep the public off the streets at night, "the curfew is on for black folks."

Violence Interferes

Concerning the instigators of Thursday's violence, Jackson regretted "that this element interfered with what we were doing."

As to the National Guard and their weapons, he indicated that "they probably won't need them."

"I feel President Johnson made a terrible mistake," he continued, "in taking the attitude that he has taken."

"As a matter of fact, the whole nation has taken the wrong attitude, in the way they are going to handle riots this summer, by a show of force."

He said the militant young people "are going to have more and more effect. I am not naming the Invaders as an accusation."

"You go over there (Hamilton

High School) and beat a couple of girls in the mouth with billysticks and Mace some of them, and then 2000 of them walk out of there; you don't have to have an Invader tell them to raise hell."

Dr. Jackson's main function in supporting the strike is raising money for workers; his efforts have been valuable to the tune of \$40,000 from the Negro community.

White Ministers Chided

He criticized the white preachers for their dying support. "The white preachers that tried to sell this thing at first, where are they now? They ran for the hole. They wouldn't even meet with the blacks. They got scared and had Rabbi Wax call it off."

"I think that the white church has failed its responsibility to relate itself to the community and to the problems."

"With little stores where every can of corn, peas or anything is marked up three, five or eight cents more; and the poor black doesn't have a car to get to the supermarkets; as high as food is, it is costing the little black woman who is on pension 30% more to eat than it costs somebody out on the east end with the great big supermarket."

"That's racism, and any city that licenses that kind of stuff is being unfair. All the money that comes in the black community goes back out, none of it stays to help, and the people are treated

like dogs at the same time.

Times Have Changed

"This is the thing that we are on the march against. There isn't anybody putting up today with what we put up with 50 years ago."

Concerning the labor issue, Jackson said, "Look at the money that this city is spending to try to keep from giving these people as much as a 10, 15 or 20-cent raise; and the Mayor offers them eight cents an hour and tells them to go back to work and maybe he'll negotiate."

"The International president is not the union to these men," he said, "they are the union. And when they say 'recognition of the union' they are talking about recognition of us (Negroes)."

Preachers Define Dialogue Problem

In response to Councilman Thomas Todd's accusation of militancy, Rev. Ezekiel Bell said, "If he says I'm a militant, then I hope I am. But he needs to define it."

"If he means telling the City Council," he continued, "that the sanitation workers have no place to urinate or wash their hands as they sit down to lunch outside when they work in the white community, because the whites won't let them in their cafes, and they have no lockerrooms, and have to go home with garbage on their hands; if he means using these words to tell the City Council about the indecent working conditions of the sanitation workers, then yes, I am a militant."

He noted, "I have not even mentioned their wages."

Doesn't Advocate Burning

Bell then pointed out a second definition, "But if he means burning the town, I have never advocated that, and I am not militant."

"This description of another is used to hide behind when you want to declare a person irrational, so you won't have to listen to him and reason with him."

Bell pinned the blame for the violence on the city officials, "As far as the city burning, the Mayor and the City Council have to take the blame. They should have dealt with these problems long ago. Like the rest of the country, they are concerned with controlling the riots, not with preventing them."

"At one time I thought the local church leaders could talk with the city fathers," he said about church leadership, "but now, unfortunately, we know that they won't listen to us. We have asked outside friends (Dr. King's aides) for help, professionals, who know how to put pressure on the City."

Moon Tries To Talk

Rev. Richard Moon responded to Todd's accusation, "Councilman Todd is not able to distinguish

between violent agitators and those who seek to communicate to the city fathers what is happening in our city."

"I communicated with the City Council as in the spirit of Jeremiah, who in his day told the kings that they had no sensitivity for the alien, the widowed, the hungry and the oppressed."

"This lack of sensitivity," he said, "would result in violence."

"Because I told him what would happen, he thought I advocated and strived for this."

Second Of Specials

This is the second of two Sou'wester special editions on the Memphis racial disturbance. Both were financed by individual contributions from students and members of the faculty.

Says Negro Marshal

Law Officers Lit Cauldron

Assigned as youth marshals at the head of last Thursday's march, Negroes Thomas Edison Nelson Jr., 23, and a native Memphian, and John Ferguson, 20, and a graduate of Hamilton High School, were to keep demonstrators off the sidewalks and proceeding in an orderly fashion to City Hall.

In an interview with The Sou'wester last Monday, Nelson related his version of how the rioting began. "The police made the first move. They said something to the kids in the streets; the kids answered them back; and then the Righteous Brothers (police) moved in."

This account of "back-talking" as the cause of police action parallels instances of Thursday's police



Photo by Cary Fowler

IN THE AFTERMATH of last Thursday's violence a group of Negroes load an injured "soul sister" into an automobile. At least 85 injuries were reported by city hospitals.

Head, Pupil Study Hamilton Friction

Hamilton High School principal Harry T. Cash said in a Sou'wester interview Monday that his office did not call the police to his school to deal with pre-march tension last Thursday.

He was inside the school throughout the morning.

The principal said that no one contacted him, or his students inside the school, to urge the pupils to leave school to participate in the march.

"I think it was someone on the corner," he said. "This is where the trouble was. I think there was someone standing at the corner down there, encouraging children not to go to their classes. . . . There were several people, adults, doing this."

Pressure At Buses

He said that he was told that several of these adults "and some of the people that came from other places tried to keep the children from getting off the buses as they entered the school grounds."

He said, "I have not heard anyone say that they had been shot by tear gas."

The principal also said, "I understand three people were hurt. How they got hurt, I don't know."

"I don't know if they were hurt by the police or hurt running or falling. I don't know, and I have not seen anyone who told me how they were hurt."

Injured Student Speaks

Hamilton sophomore Connie Johnson, injured in the confusion, discussed the events with The Sou'wester.

Miss Johnson said, "There were some NAACP men in front of the school telling the children not to go to school, but to go to the march."

"Some of the kids were going to the march, and some were not." Some left with the men, and some stayed at school."

She said her sister identified the men in front of the school as "Black Power people."

Teachers, Miss Johnson said, "had already told us the previous

week that if our parents wanted us to go on the march, we could go. But they advised us not to go without our parents' permission."

Police Urge Return

Following police efforts to have students return to the school, Miss Johnson said, "We went out to see what happened. And everybody started running; I was running myself, trying to get out of the way."

Use of gas at the school, unacknowledged by Principal Cash, was described by Miss Johnson: "I saw him use the tear gas on a boy named Harold Jenkins. I saw this with my own eyes."

The gas described by Miss Johnson is probably Mace, an irritant usually sprayed at an individual. The Sou'wester was unable to locate Harold Jenkins.

Miss Johnson was injured in a fall while running, and said that the police hit her.

Gas Reports Confirmed

The Rev. Harold Middlebrook, student organizer for the marches, said police sprayed Mace on the students, and Dr. H. Ralph Jackson, who led last Friday's march, charged that the police "put Mace on the students" at Hamilton.

THE SOUTHWESTER

ACP All-American

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Photo By Michael Patton

PLEADING WITH YOUNG NEGROES to obey the police directive prohibiting persons under 18 to participate in Friday's march downtown, Dr. H. Ralph Jackson succeeds in convincing the impatient youths not to march. Approximately 400 persons, primarily sanitation workers, marched without incident.