

# Probe Sought In Beating of Man In Courthouse In Alabama While Police Looked On As Observers

NEW YORK — The American Civil Liberties Union today called on the federal government to investigate the beating of a Negro civil leader of Bessemer, Ala. by a mob inside the Bessemer City

hall while local police made no effort to help him. The civil liberties organization urged the Justice Department to probe the incident to determine if federal civil rights laws had been violated and "to take all steps necessary to see that the offenders are properly and promptly dealt with."

At a press conference here, ACLU executive director Patrick Murphy Malin made public a letter sent on February 19 to Attorney General Rogers, urging a federal inquiry into the Asbury Howard case.

Howard, head of the Bessemer Voters League, a Negro organization which seek to advance the right of Negroes to vote, was convicted on January 24 for seeking to reproduce a newspaper cartoon expressing the desire of Negro citizens for equal treatment under law.

Following the conviction, Howard was assaulted by a mob of more than 40 men in the City Hall and received severe head injuries. A group of 15 local policemen in the building did not intervene. Howard's son, Asbury, Jr., who came to his father's aid, was also injured. He was then arrested for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest.

Informing the Attorney General that the ACLU is supporting the Howard case because of the "serious invasion of civil liberties," Malin wrote, "The beating of an American citizen by a mob in the presence of the local police is not only of importance to the citizen under attack, but to all Americans who believe in the sanctity of the law and fair treatment by law-enforcement officials. Whenever necessary, the federal government should act to safeguard these principles."

# Peaceful Desegregation of Virginia Schools Said Tribute To Both Races

PORTSMOUTH, Va. — Citizens of Virginia can back up the NAACP fight for school desegregation and civil rights by paying their poll taxes and voting, Roy Wilkins, NAACP executive secretary, declared here at a rally sponsored by the Portsmouth NAACP branch.

"In the last analysis," the NAACP leader said, "political strength plays, perhaps, the deciding role. If you don't vote, you can still protest but few will listen and registration now will have an effect will act. In addition, a large effect on the planning and strategy of the major political parties in 1960. It will have an effect on the fate of civil rights bills in the present Congress."

The address, the first which Mr. Wilkins had made in Virginia since the collapse of the state's "massive resistance" program, was delivered on Feb. 15, before an audience of 2,500 which packed the Ebenezer Baptist Church. "Massive resistance," he told the Virginians, "is dead. Negro citizens of Virginia helped it to its grave by pressing ever forward, by holding to their courage, and by exercising their rights and their skills, in and out of the courtroom. Their children helped, too, by their determination and by their exemplary behavior. Now that the funeral is over, it is to be hoped that the Governor's lily-white commission, in fashioning a substitute, will use more wisdom than that shown by the first architects

"We can rejoice today in the peaceful vindication of the fight. No violence has marred desegregation in Norfolk, Arlington, an Alexandria. These peaceful transitions are a tribute to the communities involved, to white and Negro parents, to church leaders and their congregations, and to school officials. Over the state individual white members of the NAACP and other white people who favor obedience to the Supreme Court stood up and were

## Agent's School

LYNCHBURG, Va.—A school in Lynchburg, Virginia at Virginia Theological Seminary and College. This school is sponsored by North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. The instructors were Mr. Maceo A. Sloan, CLU Associate Agency Director of N. C. Mutual Life Insurance Company, Mr. A. P. Dumas, Assistant to the Agency Director and Mr. E. W. Green, District Manager of the Roanoke area served as Dean. Class officers were President Mr. E. W. Mosby, President, Sheriff Mr. Morris Bryant, Treasurer Mr. W. Woodbury, and Class Reporter Mr. C. Alexander Rogers.

The school is for the entire agency force of the Roanoke District, which embraces South Boston, Lynchburg, Lexington, Covington, Staunton, Farnville, Danville and Roanoke, Va. This school began February 9 and continued through February 13, 1959. Classes were held daily at the Virginia Theological Seminary and College.

Areas being covered by this school are as follows: "This I Believe" Prospecting, Life Insurance Knowledge, Self Organization Psychology of Selling, Interview Preparations, Package Sales Presentation, Closing the Sales and Delivery of the Policy.



This is the cartoon which Howard had reproduced for use in a vote-registration campaign in Bessemer. The cartoon was drawn by Howard Smith in a series released to Negro newspapers throughout the country by Religious Drawings, Inc. of Waco Texas, an organization of southern whites.

# Man Had Tried To Display Poster In Vote Drive

walls of the lobby . . . I was rear which landed upon the right side of my head. It landed with great force and knocked me off my feet. The crowd of men around the wall rushed towards me. They closed in and pounced on me. They lashed out with their feet in an effort to stomp and mutilate my face, head and body. I struggled the best I knew how even though my back was on the floor. I finally managed to reach a corner.

"In the meantime my son . . . was struggling down the stairway to my rescue. The mob turned on him. My son put up a furious battle . . . After he refused to give up but kept on fighting back, they gave ground and began to scatter. There were about 15 or more policemen in and about the courtroom. The on-

ly arrest they were able to make was that of my son. My son was charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. He was placed under a \$600 bond. His trial is scheduled for February 21 before Judge Hammonds."

Howard operates a gas station in Bessemer and is also employed by the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers of which he is Eastern vice-president. His son is a Korean War veteran and graduated from Morehouse College. Howard's daughter, Cleopatra, is a student at Howard University in Washington, D. C. In addition to his work with the Bessemer Voters League, which he has headed for eight years, Howard serves on the Deacon Board of the Starlight Baptist Church. He has been a member of the church for 41 years and was superintendent of the Church School for 27 years.

# Youth Petition On Schools

NEW YORK — A call for a "massive petition campaign and youth march on Washington, D.C.," was issued today by 15 national Negro and white leaders. Signers of the appeal include Harry Belafonte, Jackie Robinson, the Rev. Edwin T. Dabbers, Rabbi Joachim Prinz, president of the American Jewish Congress, A. Philip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Roy Wilkins and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Petition Campaign and March, scheduled for April 18th, was also endorsed by AFL-CIO President George Meany. Thousands of Petitions, calling for speedy integration of the schools, are now being distributed throughout the country, according to a committee spokesman, and will be presented to President Eisenhower and Congress during the March. Individuals and organizations wishing to participate in the Petition Campaign and March were urged to contact their local committees or write to Youth March for Integrated Schools, 312 West 125th Street, New York 27, N. Y.



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