

Racial Clashes in Suburbs Shut Many Schools and Some Bars

4-6-68
N.Y.

By PETER MILLONES

Scattered violence and widespread fear spread through suburban areas of New York yesterday as an aftermath of the killing of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

No major outbreaks were reported in the suburbs last night, although in New Jersey a shot was fired into a car driven by Linden's Mayor, John T. Gregorio, shattering glass but missing the Mayor.

In areas where the racial violence of last summer is still a vivid memory—such as Newark—immediate steps were taken to forestall possible street disturbances.

Some workers in New York State, New Jersey and Connecticut left their jobs early because of fear that trouble might erupt.

Many schools closed at the slightest hint of racial trouble, but many more conducted quiet memorial services for Dr. King or held school-wide discussions on racial understanding.

In Newark, where 52 per cent of the 400,000 people are Negroes, schools were closed and bars and liquor stores were shut during the day, until 6 P.M. The police were placed on partial alert and wore helmets in the streets.

Police Wear Black

Under orders from Mayor Hugh J. Addonizio, the police also placed one-inch black bands over their shields. The bands, in some cases, covered the shield identification numbers, although they were designed, the Mayor said, to express the city's mourning. Mr. Addonizio, who toured the Negro area, wore a black arm band.

He also met with Negro leaders, including LeRoi Jones, the playwright, who is appealing a jail sentence for possession of a weapon in the Newark riots of last summer. There were no reports of major trouble in the city, but early last night the Fire Department reported that it had responded to six fires of "suspicious origin."

In Trenton's Central High School, which has 3,000 students, 50 per cent of them Negro, about 200 Negro students caused commotions in the hallways and a few scuffled with white students. Classes were dismissed by school officials.

Some Looting Reported

Some of the Negro youths were then reported by the police to have streamed into the downtown area and to have broken windows and looted some stores. The police said that a 28-year-old Negro, iden-

tified as Tommie Brown, was accidentally shot in the thigh by a patrolman who was chasing the youths who had looted a store.

Mayor Gregorio was driving alone on Curtis Street in Linden shortly after 10 P. M. when a shot shattered two windows, according to the police.

Mr. Gregorio, who suffered minor cuts from broken glass, said that he noticed the other car following him before it drew alongside and that he ducked just as the unidentified assailant fired the shot.

In several Connecticut towns, schools were closed at noon, sometimes after outbreaks of racial violence had disrupted morning classes.

Negro students at the Richard C. Lee High School in New Haven broke several windows before classes were dismissed, and a white student at Weaver High School in Hartford suffered minor injuries when two Negroes threw a chair at him.

New Haven Schools Closed

Public schools in New Haven, where Negroes make up about one-third of the city's population, will be closed until Tuesday. The New Haven schools were the scene of several racial outbreaks last winter. Most other schools in Connecticut are scheduled to reopen Monday.

In neighboring Westchester County, Ossining's public schools were closed in the afternoon. The schools in Ossining, a community where Negroes form 16 per cent of the population, were closed after students had thrown silverware on the cafeteria floor and had scuffled during discussions of the death of Dr. King.

Along Greenburgh's Tarrytown Road, near White Plains, the windows of 23 stores were smashed Thursday night and yesterday. The stores are in a slum area where 90 per cent of the residents are Negroes. Four stores were looted.

In White Plains, which is about 14 per cent Negro, classes were held without incident. Racial incidents had caused the high schools to be closed in the city last Wednesday.

In Mount Vernon scattered scuffles at the high school 30 minutes after it had opened led to its immediate closing for all 2,600 students, 35 per cent of whom are Negro.

On Long Island, Freeport High School was closed after a small group of students had broken a window and burned an American flag to protest the death of Dr. King.