

Grim, Tired and 'All Business'

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# Governor Faces Gravest Crisis

By JACK WARDLAW  
States-Item Staff Writer

BATON ROUGE—Gov. Edwin W. Edwards was businesslike but visibly shaken as he dealt with the gravest crisis in his seven-month-old administration.

The governor appeared tired and his eyes revealed the strain as he faced newsmen some six hours after two Southern University students were killed in a confrontation with police yesterday on the vast riverfront campus.

Two different themes, possibly conflicting ones, emerged as Edwards recounted the day's events and fielded questions from reporters:

1. Shock and dismay at the blood-

shed, apparently heartfelt.

2. A new resolve that no more flouting of campus authority will be tolerated.

NEITHER FITS the Edwards style. It is his custom to handle newsmen with a mixture of banter and verbal footwork, keeping himself, not his questioners, in control. There was none of this yesterday.

Another Edwards trademark is his handling of disagreements with delay and compromise, avoiding direct conflicts where possible. But yesterday he clearly had decided this policy was not working in the Southern situation and has been abandoned.

That shift put Dr. Emmett Bashful

back in his post as dean at Southern's New Orleans campus. Bashful had been allowed, if not pressed, to resign in an effort to cool the situation there. That action was reversed yesterday, with emphasis.

The governor laid down a clear choice to the rebellious students: Come back and behave while we work things out, or suffer the consequences.

HE SAID he hopes the rest of the country will not interpret the trouble as a racial incident. "I would hope that somehow we could find it in ourselves to let people in other parts of the country know that we're not in-

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involved in any kind of a race confrontation," he said.

"There aren't white people involved against black people. It's a situation which involves a black administration and a black university, and involves black students."

He also said, without making much of a point of it, he has been informed of 10 students at Southern-B.R. who "have banded themselves together and have determined to kill me." He said he doesn't take it seriously.

"I think it's boastful chatter."

Edwards also was facing, for the first time, the politics of crisis. Sitting silent in the audience was state Rep. Dorothy Mae Taylor of New Orleans,

Edwards' leading black supporter in his election campaign. She left before the news conference was over.

BY YESTERDAY afternoon, the event was taking on the proportions of a major worldwide news story. Reporters from the New York Times, The Los Angeles Times and the major television networks arrived in time for the news conference. The Washington Post got in a little later.

These were not the circumstances Edwards would have chosen to get into the national limelight. Southern governors have made national reputations, one way or the other, in situations such as these, but Edwards plainly was not enjoying the attention.

Pesterday was not a pleasant day for Gov. Edwin W. Edwards.