

# Justice to Screen Aid Requests Closely

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The Justice Department, insisting that it played a minor and entirely proper role in the handling of black student demonstrators at Mississippi Valley State College last month, has issued orders aimed at closely supervising future requests from states for "technical" law enforcement assistance.

Orders issued last week to the seven regional directors of the department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration state that requests for advice on how to handle "specific cases require clearance from Washington before being granted," the department said yesterday.

Charles H. Rogovin, administrator of the LEAA, said the purpose of the directive was

to guard against the danger of letting regional employees cross the line that separates "technical assistance" authorized by law from "operational" work, which he said is strictly prohibited.

Rogovin said the directive was prompted by the Mississippi episode and the controversy surrounding it, but he asserted that in his view the line was not crossed at the all-black state institution.

"We have nothing to apologize for in this case," Rogovin said, adding that a tense campus situation was handled by a recruited band of Negro policemen "without bloodshed." Nearly 900 black students were rounded up on Feb. 11 in mass arrests, conducted after Justice Department officials had given advice and left the scene, in an action that broke up a campus boycott.

The controversy was aired yesterday as a House Judiciary subcommittee ended two months of hearings on the funding and management of LEAA's program of federal aid to improve local law enforcement.

Committee members agreed with Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.) and Jonathan B. Bingham (D-N.Y.) that a further investigation of the episode was needed. They said Attorney General John N. Mitchell had not supplied sufficient details in testimony on the subject last week.

Mitchell denied that the LEAA had become "operational" or had any intention of doing so. He said the agency gave general advice on principles of crowd control and had agreed with Mississippi officials that black policemen should handle the situation.

Other officials said the agency had drawn the line at general advice that did not concern the wisdom of making arrests or the specifics of whom to arrest. The top state official in the case was Kenneth Fairly, director of Mississippi's State Planning Agency. The agency, which administers grants from LEAA, is supported by federal funds.