

South's Major Rights Paper Folds, Blaming Indifference

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MONTGOMERY, Dec. 8—

The South's major civil rights newspaper suspended publication with yesterday's issue, blaming "official and nationwide indifference."

The Southern Courier, published weekly in Montgomery since July, 1965, ended with a press run of 28,000. About 1200 were subscribers outside the South but prime circulation was aimed at the area from Georgia to Louisiana.

The immediate problems are financial, editor Michael Lottman, 27, wrote in a farewell editorial.

"We are faced with the fact that our money is almost gone, and that we have not been able to line up adequate support for the coming years," he wrote.

The annual budget has been about \$115,000 of which the paper makes about \$30,000, the

rest coming from various private grants. The Ford Foundation made up a deficit of about \$60,000 for each of the past two years.

But Lottman cited stiffening official resistance to more social change as the chief reason for quitting now.

"A newspaper is powerless against this official and Nationwide indifference," he wrote.

In an Associated Press statement, Lottman added:

"It just doesn't really appear that we're getting much done. You can expose things until you are blue in the face and it hardly makes any difference. People are just getting hardened to the problems of poverty and discrimination.

Ignored by Others
Courier stories generally aimed at all aspects of Negro life in the South usually ignored by the rest of the press.

The typical front page of the final edition included a top headline story of a 22-year-old Negro killed by a Birmingham policeman whom he allegedly attacked while fleeing from a store break-in. The Courier gave also the detailed eyewitness account of Levi Brown, a Negro passerby, who said the victim apparently surrendered and raised his hands before the gun was fired.

Other stories included a speech by a Negro woman in Meridian, Miss., who told a mostly white audience the civil rights movement was entirely Communist inspired.

In another, Negro woman living near the city dump in Union Springs, Ala., claimed she and her son are often driven from their farmwork by police practice bullets coming from a newly-designated shooting range at the dump.