

# Writer Finds Hate Ruling Actions of Mansfield Mob

By IRWIN FRANK  
MANSFIELD, Texas (AP).—A mob and hate ruled this small farm community Friday.

The mob broke up after a 5-hour vigil at the Mansfield all white high school. But the hate remained on the faces of townspeople and showed in their actions.

They hated the "outsiders." They did not hate the dozen Negro children who were supposed to register at the school.

"It's the outsiders stirring up this trouble. It's the NAACP getting these little Nigger kids to register," men in the mob said.

The mob pushed, cursed, threatened and finally drove off Asst. Dist. Atty. Grady Hight of Fort Worth when he made some remarks.

They prevented television photographer Maurice Levy from taking a picture of the action against Hight.

When Gordon Yoder, another TV photographer, tried to take a picture of the incident involving Levy, his newsreel camera was pushed to the ground.

Both Levy and Yoder were considered "outsiders" by the mob. Both men are Texans who live within 25 miles of where the mob was gathered.

I was told once to "get out, we don't want no reporters here."

Later I was called to a pickup truck after having talked with three Negro boys.

"What you tell them Niggers," the men in the truck asked. They thought I was an "outsider" giving advice to the boys.

As I was leaving town, a red and white 1956 Oldsmobile forced my car off the road. Two men climbed out of the car and ordered me to prove who I was.

"We wanted to make sure you weren't some instigator from out of state."

Two effigies of Negroes hung over school property. One hung over the entrance of the school. The other took the place of the American flag on the flag pole.

"Yes, they might be there until Christmas. I'm not taking them down," said the principal of the school, Willie Pigg.

The superintendent of schools, R. L. Huffman, told me "why don't you take them down. I didn't put

them up—I'm not taking 'em down."

An 11-year-old boy, Ronnie Bolding, took a knife and cut down another effigy of a Negro that was hanging from a pole on the main street.

The mob was composed of the town's citizens. They were hard-working, honest God-fearing, church-going people like those found in any Texas town.

But one thing made them different. They were determined to keep their high school free of Negroes—by force if necessary.

When the school closed for the day at noon, and it became obvious that no Negroes would attempt to register, the crowd went home.

A 15-year-old girl and her friend stayed however. The girl, Margaret Nettles, was crying.

"They're all calling me a Nigger lover," she said. Her friends called her this, she said, because they had learned she said she "would accept it" if whites and Negroes went to school together.

She explained that what she meant was that "if the Negroes come to school here and there is nothing we can do about it—why then there isn't anything we can do about it and we would have to accept it."

No member of the teaching staff of the high school would comment about the day's activities.

Not a Negro was seen near the school during the day.

About 3 p.m. a dozen Negroes walked downtown, shopping and talking together.

Wilburn Lawson, a 65-year-old Negro who has lived on a farm near here all his life, said "I don't think things will get better."

He farms 70 acres of cotton and corn and "makes enough to support himself, his wife and one grandchild."

"Ever since I've been here they treat me nice," he said referring to the white population. "But we don't figure on getting the jobs and the kind of wages they get."

"But I get along with them and I just have to guess they will treat me nice from now on."