

1954 IN REVIEW

Supreme Court Outlaw of School Segregation Takes Spotlight In Year Of Historical Events

Selassie Steals Show; 2 Governors Snub Tubman

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Crime

Human emotion ran true to form in 1954 as the nation was shocked by some of the most brutal slayings in crime annals.

As 1954 began to pass into history, the spotlight was turned on Cleveland, Ohio, where handsome, young Dr. Samuel Sheppard awaited the verdict of a jury picked to decide if he was guilty of the brutal July 4 slaying of his pregnant wife, Marilyn. Dr. Sam proclaimed his innocence to the end but the jury found him guilty and he was sentenced to from 20 years to life.

In Chicago, violent and sudden death ended the stormy but glittering career of Shirley McClure, 28, popular young Chicago tavern owner and playgirl. She was hacked to death in her buffet apartment by a 25-year-old rejected suitor.

One of the most discussed crimes was the romantic triangle slaying of Walter Broomfield, wealthy tavern owner in the all-Negro suburb of Robbins, Ill., last July 10. Broomfield was slain in East St. Louis, Ill., by Manuel Cowlings when Broomfield found Cowling and Broomfield's wife together.

Walter Lee Irvin, 26, convicted participating in the rape of a white woman, was granted a dramatic 11th hour stay of execution.

Pretty Lynn Williams, 28-year-old grip teaser and interpretive dancer, was stabbed fatally by an unknown killer in her apartment in Oakland, Calif.

And in Chicago, a jealous dad of 10 shot a wealthy real estate operator to death, Arthur O'Neal, 34, said he killed Nathan Brodsky, 45, after he caught Brodsky and O'Neal's wife in an "uncompromising" position.

Rothwell B. Floyd, former prisoner in prison for POW camp crimes. He was freed of charges of murdering a fellow prisoner.

Pretty Mrs. Diane Wells took her own life with an overdose of sleeping pills rather than face trial for the murder of her wealthy hus-

band, Cecil, 51, prominent Alaskan businessman. She and Johnny Warren, a Negro jazz drummer, have been charged with murder in Wells' death.

A reign of terror on Chicago's Southside ended New Years Day 1954, with the arrest of Charles Townsend, 19-year-old confirmed dope addict. Townsend was charged with the slaying of four men with brickbats.

A "legal lynching" was executed in Alabama when Sheriff Jenkins A. Hill, of Clarke county, shot and killed Moses Jones, of Bessemer, Ala., who testified against Hill in a trial involving a protection racket for persons who sold liquor in Grove Hill, Ala. Hill claimed self-defense.

After President Eisenhower turned deaf ears on their pleas for clemency, Herman T. Dennis, 25, and Robert W. Burns, 36, were hanged on Guam Island for the 1948 murder of Mrs. Ruth Farnsworth 27, of San Francisco.

A love nest, involving teen-age girls and soldiers from Ft. Bragg, N. C., was broken up with the raiding of three Danville, Va. houses.

It happened in Mississippi! Robert Jones, an Illinois Central railroad hand, charged with the slaying of his white railroad foreman to break up an interracial love affair between his boss and Jones' wife, was freed of a murder rap by a Tunicia grand jury.

Paul Crump, 23, doomed to die for the death of a plant guard, led a riot in Chicago's Cook County jail on the eve of his execution date. Crump didn't know a stay had been granted. He later failed a jail break attempt by four other prisoners because he felt it would hurt his chances for appeal.

James Landis, a laborer for the Bureau of Engraving, engineered he during theft of \$160,000 from the bureau. The loss was not discovered until early last January. Landis was later sentenced to from three to nine years and four others drew fines and jail sentences.

Politics And Government

Nineteen-hundred and fifty-four marked a political milestone in the progress of the Negro. The country's powerful minority vote helped the Democratic party win back control in both the United States House of Representatives and the Senate. Perhaps the most significant of 1954 political gains was the election of Charles J. Diggs, jr., of Detroit, as a representative to Congress. Diggs, son of a political veteran, soundly defeated Landon Knight jr., son of Publisher John Knight. Diggs joins Reps. William L. Dawson of Chicago and Adam Clayton Powell of New York in the House of Representatives.

Also worthy of note was the appointment by President Dwight Eisenhower of Charles A. Mahoney, Detroit lawyer and insurance executive, as a delegate to the United Nations, the first Negro to be named a full delegate.

The year was marked by major and minor appointments as the Eisenhower administration passed out rewards for loyalty.

J. Ernest Wilkins, 60, well-known Chicago attorney, was named to the post of assistant secretary of labor. He later became the first Negro to sit in on a cabinet meeting at the White House.

Brig. Gen. Richard "Dick" Jones Chicago department store executive, succeeded Dr. John P. Davis as director of the United States Foreign Operations Administration mission to Liberia.

The post of consultant to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles went to John W. Roxborough III, of Detroit, and Joseph H. Douglas, of Washington, D. C., former Howard university professor, was named an assistant in the department of Health Education and Welfare.

Alvin M. Rucker, of Chicago, a specialist in the labor field, was named labor standards consultant in the Philippines by the Foreign Operations Administration.

Ralph Bunche, 1950 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, was promoted to the rank of deputy secretary general of the United Nations.

New York got its first depart-

Race Relations

In a year marked by strained race relations, Madame Marjorie Stewart Joyner, a leading beautician, led a contingent of almost 200 to Europe last summer to climax the beauticians convention. The trip did much to cement good race and international relations.

On the distaff side, the Howard University glee club was barred by police from the fourth annual Lincoln Day Box Supper and the only Negro contribution turned out to be a blackface routine by a white drummer. He later apologized for the blunder.

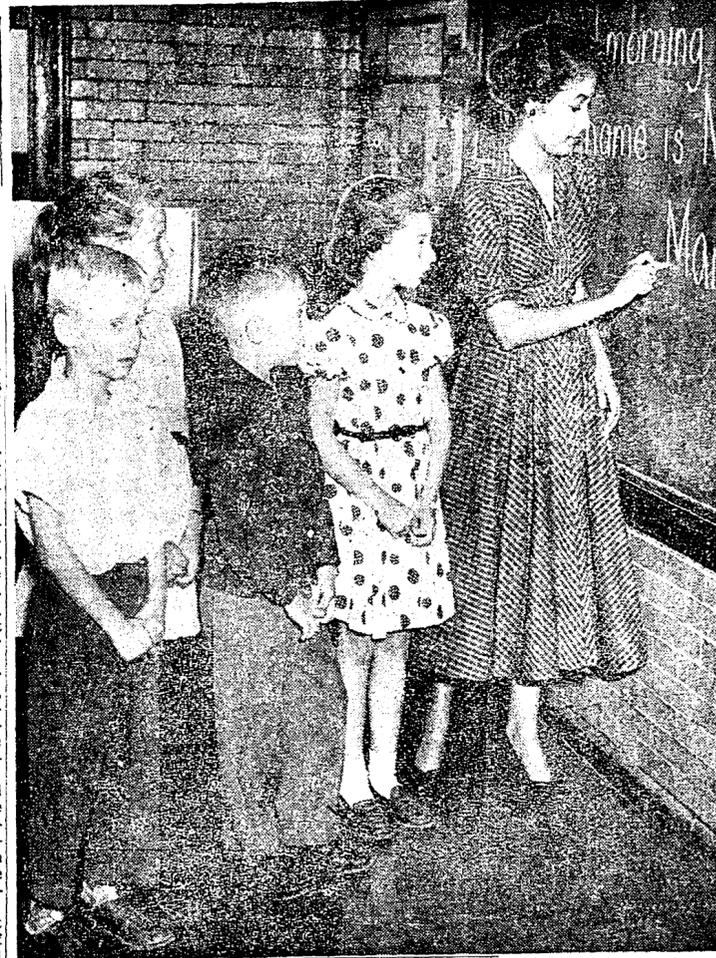
Paul I. Phillips, executive secretary of the Grand Rapids, Mich., Urban League, spurned a \$9,600 post in the department of Health, Education and Welfare because of the "rigid pattern of segregation" which exists in Washington.

Congressman Adam Clayton Powell demanded the ouster of Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby, secretary of Health Education and Welfare, charging she upholds racial bias.

Paul G. Hoffman, former administrator of the Economic Cooperation Administration, was presented the George Washington Carver Memorial Institute's annual Gold Medal award for "outstanding contributions to the betterment of race relations and human welfare."

Julius Thomas, of the National Urban League, charged United States Steel with discrimination against Negro employees and segregation at Fairless Homes, the company's housing project. The company later hired a Negro technician.

The Donald Howards, victims of vile words and bombs in the night, decided in May that they couldn't



MISS BETTY JANE Samuels introduces herself on the chalkboard to her all white class at the Wheatley school

in Washington, D. C., as public schools in the nation's capital were integrated in compliance with Supreme Court

edict declaring segregation in public schools unconstitutional. Date of the momentous ruling was May 17, 1954.

Education

The most momentous drama in human relations since the Emancipation Proclamation came to a climax May 17 when the U. S. Supreme Court unanimously outlawed racial segregation in the public schools as a violation of the Constitutional guarantee of equality to all. The decision was at outgrowth of the schools cases brought before the court by the NAACP.

Border states began the task of integration almost immediately. Southern states, reluctant to break with tradition, sought to devise means of circumventing the decision.

A Supreme Court hearing to weigh methods of carrying out the order was delayed after the death of one of the justices.

In some cities integration was effected with hardly a ruffle. In others the fires of hatred were fanned by Bryant Bowles, 34, a former marine and founder of the National Association for the Advancement of White People.

Under Bowles' cunning direction, rioting broke out in Baltimore, Milford, Del., and Washington, D. C. However officials refused to be stampeded into panic and brought the situation under control.

A revolt by 200 angry citizens in Phillippi Va., followed the assignment of a white teacher and a dozen white students to what had been an all-Negro school.

Amid all the confusion it was revealed that the eldest son of Gov. and Mrs. Allan Shivers of Texas had for two years been attending a school in which there is no racial segregation policy. Saint Edwards university school.

In at least one instance segregation went into reverse. A dozen white persons who applied for admission to Virginia State were denied admittance. Dr. Robert P. Daniel, president, explained it was because of segregation laws in the state.

This action, however, was balanced by Lincoln University (Mo.) which opened its doors and welcomed several white students.

Mississippians voted 2-1 to abolish their public school system rather than yield to a Supreme Court decision calling for an end to racially segregated schools. The legislatures of South Carolina and Georgia had already taken action to prevent mixing in their schools.

Defense Secretary Charles Wilson fixed Sept. 1, 1955, as the specific date for termination of segregation in schools on 21 military

Foreign

Far-away places ceased to have strange sounding names as many of them were daily on the lips of awakening Americans.

Col. John C. Robinson, a Chicagoan who won fame as the "Brown Condor" and Emperor Haile Selassie's number one pilot, died in March of injuries sustained in a plane crash near Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Colonel Robinson met his death a few months before Selassie, the "Conquering Lion of Judah," embarked on a tour of the United States, Mexico and Canada. The Emperor's visit did much to boost the stock of Ethiopia over the world.

Another visitor from across the sea was William V. S. Tubman, president of Liberia, Africa's only Negro republic. He toured the United States at the personal invitation of President Eisenhower. Gova. Herman Talmadge of Georgia and Gordon Persons of Alabama were conspicuously among the missing when Tubman visited their states.

The former Peggy Cripps and her husband, Joseph Appiah, Gold Coast prince, announced the birth of a son.

Dr. Namdi Azikiwe, Lincoln University (Pa.) educated, was elected prime minister of Eastern Nigeria.

Hurricane Hazel, the year's most destructive storm, ripped through Haiti in October leaving death and destruction in its wake before roaring on to cause millions of more dollars damage in the United States and take more lives.

Human Relations

A veteran fighter for human rights passed from the scene in 1954. Dr. Mary Church Terrell, 90, died in an Annapolis, Md., hospital. She was active to the end.

The 1953 Spingarn Medal for distinguished achievement was presented to Dr. T. K. Lawless, noted Chicago dermatologist.

Thurgood Marshall, NAACP chief legal counsel, won the Emerald Cross of Malta, top award of the Philadelphia Cotillion Society.

Dr. Percy Julian, noted scientist, defied new threats warning him to give up his home in the exclusive Chicago suburb of Oak Park. Julian's three children were threatened.

General

Names made news in 1954.

Charles P. Browning, advertising director of the Chicago Defender and vice president of Defender publications, died in January of injuries sustained when he was hit by an airplane propeller at Little Rock, Ark. Browning was also connected with the National Baptist Convention, Inc., U. S. A.

Clement Vandage, 51, insurance company official, took his life by jumping from the Huey Long bridge in New Orleans. It spans the Mississippi.

Jay Jackson, nationally known syndicated Defender publications cartoonist, died at his studio home of a heart attack. Jackson was 49.

The Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, was declared a "separate and distinct" organization from the Prince Hall Masons in a 35-page report by Daniel D. Carmell, special master in chancery, to the U. S. District Court in Chicago. The court battle was set off when Raymond E. Jackson, imperial potentate of the Shrine, asked the court to issue an injunction restraining all Illinois masons from obeying an edict issued by F. Curtis Rogan, grand master of the Illinois Prince Hall grand lodge.

Raymond E. Jackson, imperial potentate of the Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, was unanimously re-elected at the 53rd annual convention in Atlantic City.

Dr. Rivers Frederick, 80, eminent physician, surgeon and businessman, was buried in New Orleans. He succumbed after a brief illness.

Rivers Frederick II, 14-year-old son of the late Dr. Rivers Frederick, was elected a director of the Louisiana Life Insurance company.

Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., a graduate of West Point, was promoted to the temporary rank of general in the army force.

Labor

Thousands felt the job pinch in 1954 but as the year drew to a close things were almost back to normal.

The 16th Constitutional Convention of the CIO, meeting in Los Angeles, voted unanimously to merge with the AFL.

Walter Reuther and the CIO demanded that the 84th Congress pass a federal Fair Employment Practices code to "end the basic problem of America"—racial discrimination. The convention also passed a strong resolution on civil rights.

An all-out war to end racial discrimination in the Big-Four railroad brotherhoods was launched in November with the filing of a suit in the Federal court in Cleveland. The Provisional Committee Organize Colored Locomotive Firemen is headed by A. Phillip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

The Pullman company agreed to a plan which would place Negro conductors and white porters on Pullman trains, to change a 90-year-old hiring policy.

James B. Carey, secretary-treasurer of the CIO, told the national convention of the N. A. A. C. P. meeting in Dallas, Texas, in June, that the practical effect of eliminating public school segregation will be negated so long as non-white families are denied residence in any neighborhood in which they can afford to live.

And James P. Mitchell, U. S. secretary of Labor, speaking at the 44th annual convention of the Urban League in Pittsburgh, declared that "Job discrimination not only results in the loss of manpower but also in the loss of national morale and character."