

# With All Deliberate Speed: The AP in Little Rock

An Exhibit from The AP Corporate Archives

## Exhibit Checklist

Second Night Lead Segregation, by Douglas B. Cornell, 7 December 1953. Associated Press Corporate Archives (APCA).

R.M. Hitt, Jr., Editor, *The Charleston Evening Post*, to Alan J. Gould, AP Executive Editor, 14 December 1953. APCA.

"Southern Letter Writers on Segregation: A Survey by The Associated Press," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 June 1954. APCA.

AP Atlanta COB Lewis E. Hawkins to AP Executive Editor Alan J. Gould, 1 July 1955. APCA.

AP Executive Editor Alan J. Gould. AP Photo by Nick Carter, ca. 1955. AP Photo Library.

Arkansas Gov. Orval E. Faubus shows his television audience a local black newspaper predicting racial violence in its headline, 3 September 1957. AP Photo. AP Photo Library.

Profile of Gov. Orval E. Faubus by AP Little Rock Correspondent Adren Cooper, 4 September 1957. APCA.

AP Special Correspondent Relman Morin and AP Little Rock COB Keith Fuller prepare to enter the mansion of Gov. Orval E. Faubus for a press conference, 10 September 1957. AP Photo. AP Photo Library.

AP Montgomery Correspondent Rex Thomas to AP Atlanta COB Lewis E. Hawkins, 11 September 1957. APCA.

*Alabama Journal* columnist W. J. Mahoney, Jr., "Mahoney --As I See It," 10 September 1957. APCA.

*The Tennessean* Editor Coleman A. Harwell to AP Executive Editor Alan J. Gould, 8 September 1957. APCA.

AP Little Rock COB Keith Fuller to AP General News Editor Paul R. Mickelson, ca. 3 September 1957. APCA.

Moses J. Newson, a reporter for the Baltimore *Afro-American*, is escorted by the Arkansas National Guard from the scene of integration at Central High School, 10 September 1957. AP Wirephoto. AP Photo Library.

*Chicago Sun-Times*, 22 September 1957, "3 Little Rock Negroes Going To Class Monday." APCA.

Sixth Lead, Little Rock Integration, by Relman Morin, 23 September 1957 (facsimile). APCA.

Eight of the nine black students who attended Central High School in Little Rock leave school, 2 October 1957. AP Photo by Fred Kaufman. AP Photo Library.

*The AP Log*, September 19-25, 1957. APCA.

AP Special Correspondent Relman Morin to an unidentified New York staffer, [30 October 1957]. APCA.

AP Atlanta COB Lewis E. Hawkins to AP Executive Editor Alan J. Gould, 8 November 1957. APCA.

*Chicago Sun-Times*, "How Everyday Crowd Exploded Into Fierce Mob," by Relman Morin, 24 September 1957. APCA.

*Richmond Times-Dispatch* Managing Editor John H. Colburn to AP Executive Editor Alan J. Gould, 15 November 1957. APCA.

"Bayonets Move Laughing Girls," 25 September 1957. AP Wirephoto. AP Photo Library.

*Norfolk Virginian-Pilot* Associate Editor Harold Sugg to AP General Manager Frank J. Starzel, 30 September 1957. APCA.

*Morin in Little Rock...Earned Front Page Displays Like These.* AP promotional booklet, 1957. APCA.

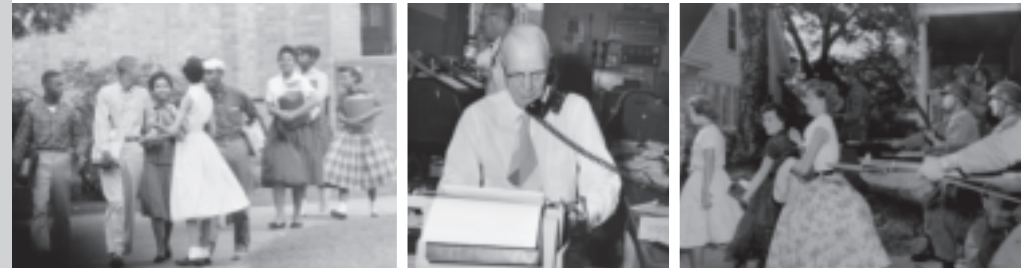
*The Sherman (Texas) Democrat* Managing Editor Dana A. Blocker to AP General Manager Frank J. Starzel, 16 October 1957. APCA.

AP Special Correspondent Relman Morin to AP Executive Editor Alan J. Gould, ca. 21 October 1957. APCA.

Informational graphic, "Federal Troops Intervening in American History," by Stan Kohler, AP Newsfeatures, 10 October 1957. APCA.

*Asheville Citizen-Times* Executive Editor Claude S. Ramsey to AP Executive Editor Alan J. Gould, 1 October 1957. APCA.

Clipping, "Alexander Hamilton at Little Rock," editorial appearing in *The Dallas Morning News*, 3 October 1957. APCA.



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SIXTH LEAD LITTLE ROCK INTEGRATION  
BY RELMAN MORIN  
LITTLE ROCK, ARK., SEPT. 23 (AP)--EIGHT NEGRO STUDENTS WALKED QUIETLY, AND WITHOUT HURRYING, INTO CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL TODAY--WHILE THE CROWD'S ATTENTION WAS DIVERTED BY ANOTHER INCIDENT--AND THEN A SWIRL OF SHARLING MEN AND SCREAMING WOMEN TRIED TO BREAK THROUGH POLICE LINES.  
A HANDFUL OF POLICE FOUGHT THEM OFF, CLUBBING TWO MEN, AND APPARENTLY PULLING A GUN ON ANOTHER.  
NOBODY GOT THROUGH.  
IT WAS A FRIGHTENING SIGHT. WOMEN BURST INTO TEARS AND A MAN, HOISTED UP ON A WOODEN BARRICADE, ROARED, "WHO'S GOING THROUGH?" "WE ALL ARE," THE CROWD SHOUTED. BUT THEY DIDN'T.  
THE DRAMA-PACKED CLIMAX OF THREE WEEKS OF INTEGRATION STRUGGLE IN LITTLE ROCK CAME JUST AFTER THE BUZZER SOUNDED INSIDE THE BIG 2000-PUPIL HIGH SCHOOL AT 8:45, SIGNALLING THE START OF CLASSES.  
SUDDENLY, ON A STREET LEADING TOWARD THE SCHOOL, THE CROWD SPOTTED FOUR NEGRO ADULTS, MARCHING IN TWOS, DOWN THE CENTER OF THE STREET.

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On May 17, 1954, Mr. Chief Justice Warren delivered the long-awaited opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court in the matter of *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other “tangible” factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does.

Immediately, the Associated Press sought to gauge public opinion on segregation, based on letters to newspaper editors in 15 southern cities. This was clearly an effort by AP to anticipate the responses to *Brown* of its southern membership, which then comprised nearly ten percent of AP’s national membership of 1,748 newspapers. The survey, as published in the *Los Angeles Times* in June 1954, found that the “Vox Populi is not very worked up,” and noted that the heaviest letter-writing—not surprisingly in opposition to *Brown*—had occurred in four cities: Richmond, Louisville, Dallas, and Little Rock.

It was in Little Rock, however, that the school integration struggle intensified. AP had maintained a correspondent in Little Rock since 1920, and now it had a fully-staffed bureau there under Keith Fuller, with day and night offices downtown at the *Arkansas Democrat* and *Arkansas Gazette*. But the certain escalation of the story following the second *Brown* decision required coordination across bureaus. “The year 1956 undoubtedly will be an active one on the racial segregation front in the South,” wrote AP Atlanta Chief of Bureau Lewis E. Hawkins to AP Executive Editor Alan J. Gould in December 1955. Hawkins asked New York for a “roundup look backward and forward early in the year.” His request went to bureaus in 19 southern cities and state capitols.

Some editors freely expressed concern that the coverage, to that point, lacked depth. On September 8, 1957, Coleman A. Harwell, editor of *The Tennessean* in Nashville, cabled Gould, “[Believe] it extremely important to expedite Pat Morin or



some other top by liner to Little Rock. Situation building up to major show down we are not getting a helpful view of what is happening and why.” New York responded to Nashville’s urging. When violence marred the attempted enrollment of nine black students at Little Rock Central High School on September 23, 1957, Morin, a former war correspondent still at the top of his game, was on the scene and set a new standard for spot news reporting that earned him his second Pulitzer Prize. The same year, the *Arkansas Gazette* under Harry Ashmore won the Pulitzer for Public Service, “for demonstrating the highest qualities of civil leadership, journalistic responsibility and moral courage in the face of great public tension during the school integration crisis of 1957.” Ashmore also won a Pulitzer for his finely balanced editorials.

Assembled in this exhibit are materials drawn from the AP Corporate Archives that show how AP prepared for and covered Little Rock and its reverberations throughout the South. Also on view are letters from southern editors who opposed racial integration or at least its immediate implementation and found much to criticize in AP’s handling of the story. In measuring its response, AP faced a very difficult test of its mission to serve all members equally with objective, timely reporting. That it more than fulfilled its own expectations is evident from the documentary record. “Little Rock” has come to symbolize much more than civil strife in the cause of racial justice; it constitutes a touchstone and a legacy for journalists everywhere.

Valerie S. Komor  
Director, AP Corporate Archives

With grateful thanks to Chuck Zoeller, Director, AP Photo Library  
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