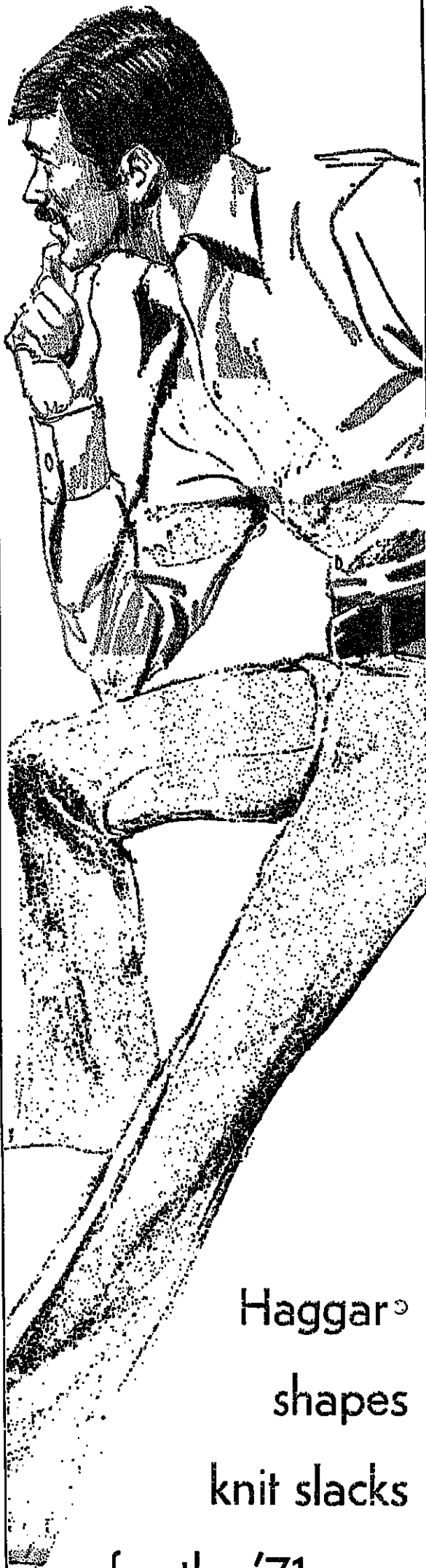


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NEWARK REGENCY DENIED BY JONES

Playwright Says He Is Not Power Behind Gibson

By RUDY JOHNSON

NEWARK, April 10 — LeRoi Jones, who helped Mayor Kenneth A. Gibson win election last year, sat opening his mail in his small, neat office as he scoffed at reports characterizing him as the power behind the city administration.

"I'm being painted as some kind of shadowy figure controlling the action behind the scenes, but this is not true," said the poet, playwright and political activist, who is also known as Imamu Amiri Baraka.

The bearded writer noted in the interview that his organization, the Committee for a Unified Newark, had favored the Newark Board of Education's rejection this week of a proposed contract to end the 10-week-old teachers strike by the Newark Teachers Union, while Mayor Gibson had expressed disappointment in the board's decision.

"Obviously some people in this city are not unsympathetic to us," Mr. Jones said. "Mayor Gibson cannot ignore us because we are one of the vocal forces of the black community — even white people don't ignore that."

Accountability Demanded

As a political organization, the Committee for a Unified Newark is far from traditional, Mr. Jones said. His political persuasion was implicit in the red, black and green the colors of black liberation — and decor of his headquarters, and explicit in a sign on the wall that listed the "five roles of a black politician." The primary role demanded accountability to black people.

Mr. Jones said his committee's activities were aimed at building a new way of life for black people. His followers are not employees or volunteers in the ordinary sense; with great displays of deference, they regard Mr. Jones as a spiritual leader, or, in Swahili — imamu.

Moreover, the two-story stone-front headquarters, which is situated at 522 High Street near the Essex County Courthouse, is respected as a temple. When members enter, they make sacramental gestures to an altar-like stage on which Mr. Jones conducts black theatrical performances.

On the floor in the center of the small auditorium, which takes up the entire length of the ground level, an Egyptian cross-like symbol, an ankh, stands out. On the walls are sayings and pictures of black heroes, including those of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Frederick Douglass.

Financing His Cause Previously, Mr. Jones worked from his residence a block away at 33 Sterling Street, which he calls the Spirit House. It is there that his theatrical group, the Spirit House Movers, began in a cramped first-floor theater. The three-story frame house has been freshly painted red, green and black.

Mr. Jones finances his operations from the sale of writings, production of plays, or from the profits of the Jihad publishing arm of the committee, which produces recordings, films and shows as well as printed matter. All these resources and efforts go toward one objective — the development of black nationalism, which is defined as a "group of people who have a common past, a common present and, hopefully, a common future based upon a common way of life."

Inside the headquarters there is little of the business that typifies other political organizations. Instead, the members hold classes on "African concepts and images" or physical training sessions for the young men, who are called "simbas" (lions).

Mr. Jones smiles with a trace of contempt at charges by the union and its supporters that his actions were aimed at destroying the union.

While calling the Newark Teachers Union an "exclusive, white-controlled institution," he said:

"We have no reason to bust any union. In fact, we wish the union would be more representative; that would be our ideal. Nobody is interested in union busting, except that it obstructs the community's needs."

Rolls of Nonpublic Schools Down 31,000 Pupils in Year

ALBANY, April 10 (UPI) — Nonpublic school enrollment declined by 31,000 pupils last year, the State Education Department reported this week.

The total of 841,378 was 19.6 per cent of the total school enrollment. Both figures were down from the 872,717 nonpublic students, or 20.4 per cent of all students, of the 1968-69 school year.

Text of Gibson's Letter Asking End to Newark School Strike

Special to The New York Times
NEWARK, April 10 — Following is the text of a letter sent by Mayor Kenneth A. Gibson to the Board of Education and the striking Newark Teachers Union:

The events of the last few days clearly indicate that the dispute between the Board of Education and the Teachers Union has developed into a grave and bitter crisis.

The original points of contention — management prerogatives and the terms and conditions of employment of teachers — have ceased to be the focus of discussion. Instead, both sides have resorted to the use of emotional inflammatory rhetoric, which serves no purpose except to divide the citizens of Newark along racial and political lines.

Demagoguery has replaced conciliation, and the energies which could otherwise be channeled into productive service are being spent on ac-



Kenneth A. Gibson

activities destined to bring about a confrontation of the most destructive and undesirable nature.

The 80,000 schoolchildren of our city, whose right to continuing education is a non-negotiable matter, are now being denied that very same right. Meanwhile, the everyday common man is

forced to wait silently by, and perhaps in vain, for reason to prevail.

As Mayor of this city, I must strongly condemn all tactics which are leading to division and polarization in our community, and urge that we resume a course of action which will again focus on the quality of education, which will eliminate rhetoric and put an end to the strike.

The history of this tragic contest for victory did not begin 10 weeks ago. Inferior education in this city has been a fact of life for all for many years. Blacks, Spanish-speaking persons and whites have for too long been denied equal educational opportunity.

The reversal of the decline of education must be the goal of our efforts. Yet the perpetuation of this build and staff a hospital there.

GIBSON CAUTIONS ON CONFRONTATION

Continued From Page 1, Col. 6

content that binding arbitration would give teachers too much power in setting school policy and that nonprofessional duties are the "more human aspects" of a teacher's job.

Alluding to these issues in his letter today, Mr. Gibson elected last June as the first black mayor of a major Eastern city, declared: "The original points of contention — management prerogatives and the terms and conditions of employment of teachers — have ceased to be the focus of discussion."

Accusing both sides of having used inflammatory rhetoric, the Mayor said: "Demagoguery has replaced conciliation, and the energies which could otherwise be channeled into productive service are being spent on activities destined to bring about a confrontation of the most destructive and undesirable nature."

About 60 per cent of Newark's 380,000 people are black. About 10 per cent are Spanish-speaking.

Mayor Gibson, contending that the strike had "developed into a grave and bitter crisis," condemned "all tactics which are leading to division and polarization in our community" and said the rights of children to continuing education were non-negotiable.

The Mayor who has sought to keep his lines of communication to both sides open throughout the strike despite pressure from blacks and whites, called the strike a "tragic contest for victory" with roots that predate the strike itself.

"Inferior education in this city has been a fact of life for all for many years," the Mayor declared. "Blacks, Spanish-speaking persons and whites have for too long been denied equal educational opportunity."

Asserting that relationships in the school system have been "horrendously marred by disputes and distrust," he said that the strike was prolonging a system that "condemns our high school graduates to be functional illiterates and maintains our school dropout rate at 30 per cent."

1,700 GO TO FUNERAL OF SLAIN POLICEMAN

Special to The New York Times
BLUE POINT, L.I., April 10 — More than 1,700 uniformed policemen from Long Island, New York City, New Jersey and as far away as Buffalo attended a funeral service here this morning for Patrolman George Frees of the Suffolk County police, who was shot and killed last Tuesday while investigating a shooting in Wyandanch.

Patrolman Frees, 28 years old and the father of three children, who lived in nearby Bayport, was the first policeman killed in the line of duty in the Police Department's 11-year history. The department, created in 1960, is the major police agency in Suffolk County's five western towns.

Patrolman Frees and Patrolman Robert Staab, 30, were both shot when they arrived at 53 Mount Avenue, Wyandanch. Patrolman Frees, shot in the neck, died almost instantly, and Patrolman Staab, shot in the lower body, is still in serious condition at Good Samaritan Hospital in West Islip.

Today's special prayer service at 10 A.M. at Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church was followed by burial in the Holy Sepulchre cemetery at Coram. Because Patrolman Frees died in the line of duty, he was given an inspector's funeral.

TENNIS STAR TO SEEK FUNDS FOR THE POOR

WASHINGTON, April 10 (AP) — Arthur Ashe has volunteered to use his contacts in the tennis world to try help raise the \$500,000 needed for a student project to give medical care to the poor in Mississippi's Quitman County.

Quitman is one of the nation's poorest counties, and students of Howard University, a predominantly Negro school here, have been trying for three years to raise the funds to

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