

Jimmy Booker Reports:

JHS 103, PS 194 And City Hall

By JAMES BOOKER

Miss Jeanne Robinson, a teacher in JHS 13, 106th St., and Madison Ave., halted her marching around City Hall and told the Amsterdam News: "This is the first organized expression of New York City Negro parents showing that they are interested in things that affect them, and I had to join it."

"It's worth it to lose a day's pay and earn a lifetime of dignity and self-respect," she added proudly. At her school, more than half the teachers were absent from classes Monday as

only 82 of the 1,415 students showed up.

Leroy Smalls, who coordinated boycott activities in the Harlem

area from 125th to 135th Sts., between Lenox and Lexington Aves., said, "Everybody feels something has to be done, and we are ready to face it and want action now."

Not Scared

Mrs. Louise Gaither, community coordinator at PS 194, led a large group of teachers and students from her school and told this newspaper, "We're marching for freedom and we're not scared of anybody or any jobs." Support of the boycott was so complete at the school, located at 244 W. 144th St., that officials closed it down shortly after 9 a.m.

These expressions were similar to many heard as more than 2,000 boycotters left their individual school demonstrations in the freezing cold to join the warmth of the march against "Segregation, Substitutes, and Overcrowding," at City Hall.

They came from all over. Jim

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OH! FREEDOM — Two George Washington High School co-eds sing "Oh Freedom" while picketing before the well integrated school Monday in protest.

test against the Board of Education policy of racial distribution.

(Gilbert Photo)

-City Hall

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Horton, a labor official, led more than 300 white and Negro youths from the Lower East Side Committee for Civil Rights. Rev. Robert Rhodes, a white Methodist minister, said, "This is my way of helping in this fight. I just don't believe Donovan has any feeling for the problem."

A white youth in the group, Steve Rappaport, said he was marching, "For Freedom for Everybody."

Integration

And so it went, 2,000 strong, black and white, Negro and Puerto Rican, Jew and Gentile, as they came from the Village-Chelsea NAACP, New York NAACP, Bronx NAACP, Hughes Student Council, Parents Workshop Committee, Local 1199, Drug and Hospital Workers Union, Negro War Veterans, Lower Harlem Tenants Council, and many individual schools, to join in the protest demonstrations and chant, "Integration," and "Jim Crow Must Go."

Unfortunately, the man they had come to lay their protests before, Mayor Robert Wagner, was not at City Hall all day Monday, remaining at Gracie Mansion.

Leaders of the citywide school boycott were in Brooklyn and after an hour's marching, demonstrators at City Hall decided to join them and then continued their march across the Brooklyn Bridge to the Board of Education headquarters.

Earlier Monday students in two fringe schools, PS 117, 240 E. 109th St., and JHS 54, 103 W. 107th St., made the boycotts almost complete. PS 117 which has 1,920 students attending, had only 360 students in school Monday, a majority white and Puerto Rican, and only three teachers absent.

The boycotters at the school, named after Booker T. Washington, were mainly teachers, with Harold Schenckler, of 14 W. 90th St., as school captain, assisted by another teacher, John Fish.

When we arrived at the school shortly after 6:30 they were on duty, and already a couple of teachers had entered quietly.

The first Negro teacher to arrive, Mrs. M. Reed, entered quietly, and turned her head when an Amsterdam News reporter sought to question her. Another teacher came to her defense, however, saying she was concerned because she had an exam Monday.

Off Work

Within minutes, however, two mothers, Mrs. Eliase Johnson, of 140 W. 104th St., and Mrs. Addie Wroten, of the same address, joined the demonstrators.

"I'm taking off from work because I'm tired of my child going to a segregated school," Mrs. Johnson said.

"My son just isn't getting the kind of education here that he

would get in a white school," Mrs. Wroten declared as she put on her sign which read, "Fight Jimcrow Now."

Several blocks away, at the Jefferson Park School, which has a 65 per cent Puerto Rican census, 30 per cent Negro, and 5 per cent white, at 240 E. 109th St., David Tirado, school captain said he was dedicated to the fight.

Segregated School

"I have four children going here and three at PS 101, and they are getting a poor education. They have no books and no integration. I will continue fighting," he said.

Down the street a blonde student from Barnard, who refused to give her name, said she had joined, "because I went to segregated schools in El Paso, Tex., and I know the damage it does to you."

Mrs. Dorothy DuPont, of 1809 Lexington Ave., who was the co-captain at the school, said she was demonstrating "for better school standards and a better school for my four children who are deprived of so many things at this school that white kids receive in other neighborhoods."

Another of the school's pickets, Mrs. Bessie Pritchard, of 1830 Lexington Ave., said while she had transferred her child from PS 117 to PS 43 because of the poor quality of education he was getting there, "I am back here picketing to help the other parents whose kids still attend school here."

And so it went, in conversations with pickets throughout Monday, the mood was similar, the fever is rising, and despite the freezing cold, it was obvious, from children to parents and teachers, "we shall overcome."