

MISSISSIPPI NOTEBOOK

By TOM ETHRIDGE



Behind The Headlines, Off The Cuff

LOVE'S LABOR LOST? — A "liberal" Atlanta editor reportedly was guest speaker, on the subject of Race Relations, at the recent Biloxi convention of the Mississippi Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

Presumably, these state executives wanted some practical ideas on how to maintain cordial race relations.

We don't know what the Atlanta editor said at Biloxi but we did read that front - page story Wednesday from the Associated Press in Atlanta under the big headline:

TEAR GAS SUBDUES ATLANTA RACE RIOT

First paragraph of this AP report said "Tear gas scattered an angry crowd of about 500 Negroes". Looks like our State Chamber bigshots went to a goat's house looking for wool" when they invited an Atlanta journalist to give them some hot tips in re friendly race relations.

SAD BUT TRUE, no one person or group — not even Atlanta's all-wise Mastermind of Journalism — has a guaranteed formula for racial harmony in today's troubled world.

It is obvious that Atlanta has major problems in this phase, but that hasn't kept the Northern-owned Atlanta press from pointing the finger of scorn and ridicule at Mississippi.

Perhaps it's coincidence but since the Atlanta editor was invited to Mississippi as a guest problem-solver, his Atlanta paper has front-paged a series of special articles putting Mississippi in a very unfavorable light. . .

WE ARE DEPICTED as backward, bigoted, cruel, oppressive, un-Christian. . . you name it and we've been called it by the Northern-owned Atlanta newspaper.

A recent page-one Atlanta feature has even accused Mississippi of deliberately starving our unfortunate and underprivileged needy — despite official government figures showing that about one in every five Mississippians has been getting free government groceries through the welfare program.

This "starvation" charge, like others aired in Atlanta papers lately, has been made on the basis of unsupported testimony by paid workers for The Revolution. Feature stuff praising our state's NAACP talent has been printed over there in Georgia's capital city. . .

ASIDE FROM the "race riot" there this week, Atlanta has been experiencing other severe tensions and is becoming a Crime Center of Dixie. Murder, rape, robbery and assault are increasingly common.

Often called "The New York of the South," Atlanta is getting to be about as unsafe as Gotham, largely because of an overdose of "rights," without proper restraint, enjoyed by LBJ's Chosen People.

There are many sharp thorns among the roses of progress, but the seamy side of Atlanta's growth has never been publicized. Before undertaking to condemn Mississippi for lacking "racial peace," our Georgia contemporaries need to improve their own local situations, it would appear.

THE ATLANTA PRESS, a mouthpiece for the Great Society and Omnipotent Federalism, has been especially severe in criticizing Mississippi's conservative newspapers which faithfully publicize and support Chamber programs.

Home folks may wonder why State Chamber Executives have gone far afield to honor an editor and newspaper so markedly hostile to Mississippi's established order.