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OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20530

December 12, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Honorable Donald Rumsfeld  
 Assistant to the President  
 The White House

FROM: Laurence H. Silberman *LHS*  
 Deputy Attorney General

*GR-1*

SUBJECT: School Unrest in Boston

The Justice Department has undertaken the following actions to discharge its law enforcement responsibilities arising out of the recent Boston school unrest:

- (1) An attorney from the Community Relations Service is, and has been since late summer, acting as a liaison between the court and the community. The CRS is providing anti-rumor centers and maintaining an open channel for information to flow to the Department from the minority group community leaders.
- (2) As appropriate, Departmental officials from the Civil Rights Division have appeared in the Federal District Court, at the Court's request, to provide guidance regarding the use of federal forces for local peace-keeping purposes. (The United States is not a party to the pending school litigation.)
- (3) The Civil Rights Division has, since October, maintained a federal presence in Boston consisting of several lawyers and backup staff working with the United States Attorney's office and the FBI. This task force has conducted grand jury investigations, returned indictments and filed criminal charges. It is conducting ongoing investigations of a variety of alleged criminal interferences with

federally protected rights. Nine cases are presently pending and a number of others are under investigation.

The situation in Boston had ameliorated significantly prior to December 11, and most pending FBI investigations were being concluded. Few new federally cognizable incidents were reported. However, following the stabbing incident on December 11, and the ensuing disturbances in South Boston, Justice attorneys were dispatched to Boston and an FBI investigation was commenced. The FBI is maintaining, pursuant to our request, a constant on-site monitoring of troubled areas (an FBI agent was, for example, inside South Boston High School during the disturbance on December 11).

My latest information is that the private plaintiffs will ask Judge Garrity tomorrow morning to order the State to offer certain protection, including the reintroduction of state troopers and use of the national guard, but will not seek an order requiring Federal intervention. It is possible that they may ask Judge Garrity to order the Federal Government to intervene; while not unprecedented, such a judicial action would be unusual. If the court entered such an order, we would seek to limit federal involvement to the "interference" issue.

I understand that the South Boston schools have been closed for the week. The local school officials are also reported to be considering the possibility of closing schools a week early for Christmas vacation in the hope of further relaxing tensions. Our position with respect to an early Christmas closing should remain informal since the Federal Government is not actually a party in the Boston school case. Should the White House position be sought on this matter, we would recommend that the appropriate Boston officials be urged to approve an early Christmas closing.