Stay Out, The Water’s Fine: Desegregating Municipal Swimming Facilities In St. Petersburg, Florida

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IN MOST COMMUNITIES OF THE SOUTH, SEGREGATION IN RECREATION FACILITIES WAS MAINTAINED BY LOCAL ORDINANCE OR BY PREVAILING CUSTOM. ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA, HAD NO LAW REQUIRING THE SEPARATION OF THE RACES AT THE MUNICIPAL POOLS AND BEACHES. BY “TRADITION,” NEGROS USED THE BATHING BEACH LOCATED AT THE SOUTH MOLE, ON THE EAST END OF FIRST AVENUE SOUTH, AN AREA NOW KNOWN AS DEMENS LANDING. THE CITY MADE LITTLE EFFORT TO ENTICE NEGROS TO THE SOUTH MOLE. THE SPOT WAS BLIGHTED WITH FREIGHT AND PASSENGER CARS PARKED BY THE ATLANTIC COAST LINE RAILROAD AND, ACCORDING TO COUNCILMAN RAY CHASE, THE SOUTH MOLE LOOKED “LIKE A DUMP.” 4 ALTHOUGH THIS WAS THE ONLY ACCESS THAT ST. PETERSBURG NEGROS HAD TO TAMPA BAY AND ALTHOUGH THEY HAD NO ACCESS TO THE GULF OF MEXICO, MANY WHITE RESIDENTS WERE UPSET THAT BLACKS HAD ANY ACCESS TO BEACHES. IN 1935, MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT “THE MATTER OF NEGRO BATHING AT THE WATERFRONT . . . A PRACTICE THAT, IF ALLOWED TO CONTINUE, WOULD CAUSE TROUBLE.” TO REMEDY THE SITUATION, THE COUNCIL APPOINTED A COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE BUILDING A POOL AT CAMPBELL PARK, OR PROVIDING “SOME SORT OF CHEAP TRANSPORTATION” TO TAKE NEGROS TO A REMOTE BEACH. NOTHING HAPPENED. 5

Pasadena Community Church, to call for “simple justice in giving the Negro a bathing beach. With 45 miles of beach, surely we can find some place.”

Besides the South Mole, the only other swimming site for Negroes in St. Petersburg was the Jennie Hall pool located at Wildwood Park. Built in the early 1950s, the construction costs were paid for by an anonymous contribution of $25,000 from a local white resident and $55,000 in city funds. However, within a few years of its opening, the city closed the pool, arguing that a lack of patronage made it financially unprofitable for the city to operate.

Until 1954, St. Petersburg, like other Southern communities, justified segregation of recreational facilities by citing the hoary Plessy v. Ferguson decision. This 1896 ruling by the United States Supreme Court upheld a Louisiana law requiring “separate but equal” accommodations on railroads. The “separate but equal” doctrine was applied to all phases of life in the South. Unfortunately, the “separate” part of the doctrine was enforced but not the requirement of “equal” facilities. In most areas of the South, including St. Petersburg, recreational facilities for blacks were obviously not equal to those provided for the white community. Providing two equal sets of recreational facilities, one for whites and one for blacks, was too costly for most cities. The easiest course of action, and the one chosen by St. Petersburg, was to maintain minimal recreational facilities for Negroes.

In 1954, the United States Supreme Court knocked out the supports holding up the Plessy doctrine in the Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka case. A unanimous Supreme Court concluded that “in the field of public education the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place.” States could no longer maintain segregated schools. But what about other areas? Southern states argued that the opinion of the Court declared that only segregation in public education was unconstitutional. Segregation in other areas, including recreation, was still deemed by the South to be acceptable. This view prevailed, even though one week after the Brown decision, the Supreme Court decided two cases involving the issue of “separate but equal” in recreation. In the first case, blacks in Louisville, Kentucky, were excluded from an amphitheatre located in a “white only” city park. The Court vacated the judgment of the lower court and remanded the case for further consideration in light of Brown and “conditions that now prevail.” In the second case, the issue involved the segregated municipal golf courses in Houston, Texas. The Supreme Court denied the city's request for a hearing, thereby upholding the order of the Court of Appeals to admit Negro patrons. In spite of these two cases, Southern communities continued to maintain their policies of segregated beaches and pools.

A direct challenge to the legality of segregated municipal beaches came in 1955, and involved the city of Baltimore, Maryland. District Judge Roszel C. Thomsen concluded that the segregation of Baltimore’s beaches was justified “to avoid any conflict which might arise from racial antipathies.” In other words, the fears of racial violence resulting from integrated swimming facilities constituted a proper governmental objective to sustain segregation. Judge Thomsen also argued that “colored people are more relaxed and feel more at home in their own group,” and because of this, “most colored people will get more recreation from bathing and swimming with other colored people than in mixed groups.”
However, Judges John J. Parker, Armstead Dobie and Morris Soper of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed Judge Thomsen’s decision. The three judge panel concluded “that segregation cannot be justified as a means to preserve the public peace” or “as a proper exercise of the police power of the state.” On November 7, 1955, the Supreme Court affirmed the ruling of the Court of Appeals.12

The Southern reaction to this decision was immediate and hostile. Georgia Governor Marvin Griffin announced that “comingling of the races in Georgia state parks and recreation areas will not be permitted or tolerated. The state will go out of the park business before allowing a breakdown in segregation.”13 The Attorney General of Georgia, Eugene Cook, raged that “the NAACP is able to get most anything it wants from the Supreme Court . . . that is designed to further its program to force intermarriage of the races.”14 United States Senator Herman Talmadge (D, Ga.) simply indicated that “the court of last resort is the people, and if the people don’t comply, there is little people can do about it.”15

In Florida, the reaction was similar. Governor LeRoy Collins indicated that, as in the school desegregation cases, implementation would depend on “local conditions.” Attorney General Richard W. Ervin declared that Florida was not ready to integrate parks and beaches. “There may be some facilities where it would work,” announced Ervin, “but the idea of children of mixed races in swimming pools is against the public attitude.” The Pinellas County Commission announced that plans to provide “separate but equal” beaches on Mullet Key were being scrapped, while Sarasota County Commissioner Glen R. Leach indicated that his county would sell or lease its beaches to private developers.16

Less than three months before the Supreme Court’s decision, Elwood Chisholm, a New York attorney for the NAACP, urged blacks in Florida to use the beaches. “Why have beaches of your own,” asked Chisholm, when “you have a beach that your taxes are paying for? Go use it!”17 Seven blacks in St. Petersburg heeded such advice on August 21, 1955, when they attempted to purchase tickets at Spa Pool in downtown St. Petersburg. The ticket seller immediately summoned the police, who told the blacks to use their own bathing beach at the South Mole. J. P. Moses, head of the Cooperative Citizens Committee, a local black political organization, announced that the “purpose of the trip to Spa Pool was to be denied entrance, thus laying the foundation for legal action against the city.”18 On November 30, 1955, six Negroes filed suit contending that their constitutional rights were violated when St. Petersburg denied them access to Spa Pool and Beach. Heading the list of plaintiffs was Dr. Fred Alsup, a black physician who established his practice in St. Petersburg in 1950.19

The community reaction to the attempted desegregation of Spa Pool and Beach took several forms. The St. Petersburg Times urged restraint, while local politicians and political organizations urged defiance. The Times editorialized that, “It is only right that every citizen of this community would have a place to swim . . . . Our failure in the past to provide a modern, adequate facility has reaped the Spa suit among other things.”20 The St. Petersburg City Council refused to act on a petition submitted by blacks which urged the city to open Spa Pool and Beach to all residents. Councilman Ray Chase asked the legal department, “How long can we stall this off in court?” Meanwhile, City Manager Ross E. Windom chastised blacks for not using the facilities already open to them.21
The attempted desegregation of the pools and beaches provided the impetus for the formation of the St. Petersburg Citizens’ Council. Citizens’ Councils had sprung to life rapidly in the South after the *Brown* decision, and they led the effort against integration of any aspect of Southern life. Mainly composed of respectable, middle-class whites who rejected the violent tactics of the Ku Klux Klan, nevertheless, the Councils often applied economic coercion to maintain segregation. The day after the attempted integration of Spa Pool, ninety people gathered in a room at City Hall to launch a local chapter of the lilywhite group. A petition was passed around the room opposing desegregation of the pools and beaches, and several speakers harangued against any integration in St. Petersburg. The Reverend C. Lewis Fowler, head of Kingdom Bible Seminary, warned the audience that integration would destroy the Anglo-Saxon race. Rev. Fowler promised his audience that he would soon have “official documentation” that Chief Justice Earl Warren “was chosen by agitation of an international cabal.”

While the city of St. Petersburg was becoming embroiled in a political controversy, the case of *Alsup v. St. Petersburg* began to work its way through the judicial maze. One might ask why the case would even be heard by the federal courts considering the recent decision rendered in the Baltimore case. Nevertheless, St. Petersburg contended that its circumstances differed from the other city. Whereas Baltimore operated its pools and beaches in its governmental capacity, St. Petersburg said it operated its swimming facilities in its proprietary capacity. All cities engage in proprietary or business-like activities which are expected to be financially self-supporting. While Baltimore’s effort to justify segregation in swimming as a proper exercise of police powers was found to violate the “equal protection” clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, St. Petersburg claimed that its segregated pools were “effectuated simply by administrative regulation adopted for the purpose of efficiently carrying on a business that the appellant city happens to be engaged in,” and not as part of the city’s police powers.23 This argument was rejected by Federal District Judge George W. Whitehurst, who contended that “the capacity in which the municipality operates its swimming pool and beach is immaterial.”24 All operations of the city, both governmental and proprietary, are subject to the Fourteenth Amendment. Judge Whitehurst ordered the city not to deny Negroes use of Spa Pool or Beach, but he suspended his decree pending appeal.

St. Petersburg appealed the decision of the District Court to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. The city continued to stress its belief that the Fourteenth Amendment was not
applicable to the proprietary operations of a city. In its brief to the Circuit Court, St. Petersburg maintained that it not only had the right “but the duty to operate this pool and beach as a business enterprise and for the best interest of the inhabitants who are stockholders, so to speak, in this enterprise.” If Negroes were admitted, “white patronage would cease or practically cease,” and the city would be forced to close the pool. A three judge panel on the Circuit Court was not any more convinced by this argument than was the District Court. On December 19, 1956, the Court of Appeals denied the request by St. Petersburg to continue its policy of segregation. The Justices noted:

> It is no answer that the beach and pool cannot be operated at a profit on a nonsegregated basis, and that the City will be forced to close the pool . . . . [U]nfortunate as closing the pool may be, that furnishes no ground for abridging the rights of the appellees to its use without discrimination on the grounds of race so long as it is operated.

With two strikes against it, St. Petersburg made its final and futile appeal to the United States Supreme Court. On April Fool’s Day in 1957, the highest tribunal refused to hear the city’s plea and, thereby, affirmed the lower court’s decision.

Although St. Petersburg’s black community won the legal battle, city officials refused to concede defeat. On June 5, 1958, over a year after the Supreme Court decision, eight blacks sought admission to Spa Pool. On the directions of pool manager John Gough, they were allowed to purchase tickets. Even though they swam for an hour with no disorder, City Manager Ross Windom had the pool closed “for repairs” and ordered uniform police to patrol the area. The eight blacks who sought admission were between eighteen and twenty-four years old, and six were college students. In an unusual statement, Windom called those seeking admission “ill-advised,” and said that “the majority of Negro citizens don’t wish to exercise any right the Supreme Court may have given them.” Mayor John D. Burroughs proclaimed that the visits of blacks to Spa Pool were instigated by “some colored people who are not representative of our true Negro citizens.” Burroughs did urge the development of a Negro beach to prevent a recurrence of the recent incident.

The two St. Petersburg newspapers could not have been further apart in their analysis of the situation. The Independent vigorously supported the city’s action in closing the pool and beach, while the Times was just as vigorous in its denunciation of the city administration. According to the Independent, “the city followed a wise course this week when it closed Spa Beach after eight young Negroes bent on an obvious show of strength gained entrance.” The editor warned the black community that “invading white beach facilities will result in recriminations and frictions which doubtless will undo progress in race relations.” The Independent hinted that the black beach might be closed if blacks continued their protest.

In contrast to this position, the Times chided local officials for a lack of leadership. “In a resort town like St. Petersburg,” wrote the Times, “it is indefensible to deprive 85% of the population of a beach to block a 15% minority.” The view of the Times was more moderate than that coming from the Independent and the city administration, but the Times was certainly not pushing for massive integration of swimming facilities. In at least three different editorials
during the summer of 1958, the *Times* supported more Negro beaches rather than the integration of existing beaches. According to the *Times*, “Northern cities which have recognized that segregation is both immoral and illegal have found that when there are abundant beaches and facilities a natural segregation or fraternization evolves.” In a similar view in another editorial, the *Times* indicated that “personal preference and neighborhood considerations will lead Negro citizens to use certain of the beaches and whites others. Both races will feel more at home among their own people and will have more fun together.”

St. Petersburg’s black community was united in its quest to integrate the city’s beaches and pools. The local NAACP chapter indicated that the pool closing was a denial of constitutional rights to all citizens, and warned that the attempt of city officials to defy previous court decrees might produce “the rumblings of another Little Rock.” F. A. Dunn, chairman of the local NAACP, issued the following statement on behalf of his organization: “We consider the act of city officials to close the beach as being arbitrary and unwarranted since there was no indication of violence or misconduct on the part of those who sought to use the facilities.” Numerous other black residents commented that since they were taxpayers they were entitled to use any and all city facilities.

Meanwhile, the two police officers patrolling the beach turned away over 150 white residents seeking to use it. One resident, a forty-four year old white man, was arrested for swimming at Spa Beach. The pool and beach were temporarily reopened on June 8th until Davis Isom, Jr., a black graduate of Gibbs High School, bought a ticket and swam in the pool. Although some forty white swimmers exhibited no concern over his presence, City Manager Windom ordered the pool and beach closed again. The next day, June 9th, the city council voted unanimously to close the pool to prevent integration. After the council’s action, Dr. Fred Alsup, one of the six petitioners who originally filed the court suit against the city, threatened new litigation unless the city reopened the pool and beach to all residents.

During the summer of 1958, Spa Pool and Beach remained closed despite substantial pressure on the city administration to open the pool. The pressure was not just from black residents who wanted to use the facility. Local white residents complained about the closing and the cancellation of swimming classes for youngsters. A biracial organization, the St. Petersburg Council on Human Relations, accused the city of making “a crisis out of a peaceful incident.” The Council unsuccessfully urged that the pool and beach be reopened. Perhaps the greatest pressure to reopen the facilities came from the business community. Businessmen were concerned about the adverse effect that the closing of the beach and pool would have on the
tourist industry in St. Petersburg. Consequently, the operators of downtown hotels and businesses, led by the Chamber of Commerce, asked the city to develop a Negro beach at the west end of the Gandy Bridge.34

Various suggestions were offered as to how the swimming issue might be resolved. The St. Petersburg Times editorialized that “more, better beaches is the only solution.” The Times preferred developing the beaches along the Sunshine Skyway and suggested that the $1.75 toll be reduced to twenty-five cents for blacks desiring to use the beach. The Times opposed the Gandy site arguing that it was “more accessible to the Negroes of Clearwater and Tampa who have no salt water swimming at all.”35 The City Council, however, decided to develop the St. Petersburg side of the Gandy causeway as a Negro beach. There were three major problems with this choice. First, as the Times had suggested, the Gandy site might prove more beneficial to Clearwater and Tampa Negroes than those in St. Petersburg. Hence, Councilman Ray Chase suggested that the city of Tampa ought to pay part of the approximately $15,000 needed to develop the beach. Second, many St. Petersburg blacks indicated that they would be unsatisfied with anything other than integrated beaches and pools. The Rev. Enoch Davis, pastor of Bethel Baptist Church and a long time black activist, told the Times that Gandy beach would not “solve the segregation problem. I don’t think it would be accepted . . . if it is a device to prevent integration.” Similar views were expressed by Dr. Fred Alsup, J. P. Moses and numerous other black community activists.36 Finally, the Gandy site was outside the St. Petersburg city limits, making it unacceptable to local blacks.

On September 3, 1958, Spa Pool and Beach were suddenly reopened. It was more than coincidental that the reopening of the pool and beach coincided with the resumption of school. Because the reopening was unannounced, attendance was very low at both the pool and the beach. The next day a lone Negro girl swam for an hour at the beach, and City Manager Windom closed the pool for the third time. Windom acknowledged that the courts had given blacks the legal right to use the pool, but he said that “we cannot escape from the reality that a long established custom provides for separation of the races in recreational facilities. The City of St. Petersburg does not want to take the responsibility of trying to establish an integrated pool with the rise of possible derisive friction between the races which we have heretofore avoided.”37

The city made one more attempt to open the pool and beach, but closed the swimming area for a fourth and final time in 1958, when four black males swam at Spa Beach on September 9th. In a bitter statement, Windom accused the Negroes of “trying to force an integrated beach. While
the federal courts have ordered that if the city operates the beach and pool they cannot be segregated,” said Windom, “there is nothing in the court order stating the city must operate them.”

Windom was right. In fact, the opinion of the Court of Appeals made exactly the same point. Thirteen years later the United States Supreme Court would accept this logic when they permitted Jackson, Mississippi, to close all of its pools rather than operate them on an integrated basis.

Although Windom’s perception of the problem was probably accurate, the city manager’s solution was simply not feasible in a tourist community like St. Petersburg. The Times immediately criticized Windom and the city administration for showing “an appalling lack of leadership.” The newspaper contended that the city’s policy of closing the pools and beaches every time a Negro used them was both foolish and futile. It was foolish in that it gave “a handful of Negro youngsters” the sense of power “to know that all they have to do is walk into a place and it will be shut down.” It was futile because soon the city would be confronted with the same situation at area parks, Al Lang field, the municipal pier, and other recreational areas. Would the city also close down all of these facilities?
Nevertheless, on September 15, the city council decided to keep Spa Pool and Beach closed. To “punish” blacks, the city voted to take the $15,000 that had been appropriated to develop the Negro beach at the Gandy site and use it to develop the North Shore Beach as a segregated beach for whites. City Manager Windom told the council that the Alsup decision applied only to Spa Pool and Beach, and not to be new North Shore Beach. Windom justified this approach by saying that the administration was “preserving order” in St. Petersburg, a community where “white and black alike depend on tourism for their livelihood. A successful tourist season is important to us all.” The Independent concurred, arguing that it was “obvious” that Northerners will not come to St. Petersburg “to use biracial beaches and pools.”

Most of the letters to the editor expressed support for the city’s action. One writer supported segregated beaches and accused those blacks trying to integrate of being “agitators” who were put up to the task by the “Communists.” Another reader wrote that “Negroes don’t want to swim, they just want to push integration.” One individual suggested using litigation to keep the pools...
segregated since the Negroes could not afford the constant lawsuits. In contrast, others favored the reopening of the beaches on an integrated basis. One observer asked, “How long can the white man expect the Negro to pay taxes on public recreation places and not be allowed to use them?” Finally, a Captain at MacDill Air Force Base suggested that segregationists use private beaches if they objected to swimming with Negroes. He expressed the frustrations of many when he stated that if given the choice, he would “rather have some Negroes on the beach than no public beaches.”

Community and business pressure continued to mount against the policies of the city administration. Downtown hotel, motel and apartment owners met on September 18, and sent a resolution to City Manager Windom and Mayor Burroughs expressing alarm over the “permanent closing of Spa Beach. This has caused us great financial loss in the tourist trade . . . . It has given us a bad civic reputation.” The hotel, motel and apartment owners, along with the United Churches of Greater St. Petersburg, called on Windom and Burroughs to reopen Spa Beach. The city officials again turned down the request. Windom responded: “I do not want to be the person that integrated St. Petersburg.” Burroughs simply stated: “I like the Negro. I like him in his place. I do not believe in integration.”

On September 27, 1958, the Mayor proposed razing Spa Pool and replacing it with a 3,500 seat municipal auditorium. On October 7, the council voted 4-3 to accept Burroughs’ proposal. The auditorium project was supported by downtown hotels and businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, J. E. “Doc” Webb of Webb’s City, and Ed C. Wright, a major Pinellas County landholder. Opposition to the auditorium came from the Council of Neighborhood Organizations (CONA), the Times, the St. Petersburg Planning Board and the black community. Some 9,500 residents signed a petition to oppose the auditorium and to put the issue before the electorate. The political pressure forced the city to abandon its plan for a municipal auditorium.

As month after month dragged by, St. Petersburg residents found themselves in the unenviable position of having some of the most attractive beaches in the nation that no one, white or black, could use. A caption on a photograph from the St. Petersburg Times showing the deserted beaches captured the frustrations of many. It read: “Stay out, the water’s fine.” One of the many victims of the beach controversy was City Manager Ross Windom, who announced his resignation on November 11, 1958, ending his ten-year reign as manager. Windom attacked Mayor Burroughs for “repeatedly and flagrantly” violating the city charter, and expressed his desire to take a position in the private sector. Verlyn Fletcher was selected as Acting City Manager by the Council.

Suddenly, on January 6, 1959, the council voted 4-3 to reopen Spa Pool and Beach. Acting City Manager Fletcher announced that the pool and beach would stay open “unless there was trouble.” Over 400 people used the beach that day, and the swimming facilities remained open from that day on. Apparently not having learned its lesson, the council also let Pasadena Golf Course revert to private ownership in order to try to prevent the desegregation of that facility.

Why did the city suddenly decide to reverse past actions by reopening the pool and beach? It was not due to a change in the racial attitude on the part of the council members. Although the council voted to reopen the pool, at the same time it tried to avoid desegregation of the Pasadena
Golf Course. A combination of factors forced the city to alter its position. The most important factor was the realization by the city administration that it had no legal grounds to continue to deny blacks use of the pool and beach. If the municipally owned facilities were open, they had to be open to everyone. Second, the city hoped that few Negroes would avail themselves of the opportunity to use the pool and beach once the novelty had worn off. This assumption was apparently correct because newspaper accounts indicate very minimal black use of these facilities after their reopening. Third, political pressures forced the administration to re-think its position. White residents were troubled that a major recreational complex was no longer open to them. Businesses were upset about the loss of downtown tourist traffic and the possible long-term harm that might result from an inflamed racial climate. Political pressure also came from the *St. Petersburg Times*, which was a constant thorn in the side of the city administration. The *Times* repeatedly called for equal treatment of St. Petersburg’s black population and constantly criticized the city administration's policy of defiance. Finally, the black community played an important role in pressuring the city for change. From August 21, 1955, when blacks first attempted to use Spa Pool and Beach until January 6, 1959, when the pool was opened on an integrated basis, numerous blacks applied constant pressure on city officials. It is noteworthy that

Stay Out, the Water's Fine.

Photograph courtesy of St. Petersburg Times and Evening Independent.
the black effort concentrated on the legal ways of opening recreational facilities. Thus, Negroes pursued conservative goals insofar as they sought to obtain opportunities available to other citizens. It took three and a half years of protest before the city relented, but Negroes in St. Petersburg won the right to use public recreational facilities that they always had supported with their tax dollars. It was the end of a difficult struggle for simple justice.


6 The historical background and the Hamilton quotation were from the St. Petersburg Times, December 22, 1955.


8 163 U.S. 537 (1896).


12 220 F2d 386 (4th Cir. 1955) and 350 U.S. 877 (1955).

13 St. Petersburg Times, November 9, 1955.


17 Miami Herald, October 29, 1955.


19 Alsup would be party to another suit challenging the policy of Pinellas County government in excluding blacks from a public golf course. See Enoch Davis, The Bethel Trail, (St. Petersburg: Valkyrie Press, 1979), pp. 82-83. The other blacks who filed suit against St. Petersburg’s segregated beaches and pools were Willet Williams, Naomi Williams, Ralph Wimbish, Chester James, Jr., and Harold Davis.


21 Minutes, St. Petersburg City Council, September 24, 1955.

Legal brief submitted by the City of St. Petersburg in the case of *Alsop v. St. Petersburg*. Brief supplied to author courtesy of the Legal Department, City of St. Petersburg.


Legal brief filed by the City of St. Petersburg in the case of *St. Petersburg v. Alsop*.

*St. Petersburg v. Alsop*, 238 F2d 820 (5th Cir. 1956).

*St. Petersburg Independent*, June 5, 1958 and the *St. Petersburg Times* and *New York Times* of June 6, 1958. The eight blacks seeking admission were Morgan Richards, 23; Natan Holmes, 19; Otto Woodbury, 24, FAMU; Allen Williams, Jr., 23, Morehouse graduate; Betty Harden, 18, student at Talladega (Ala.) College; Bettye Fluker, 22, FAMU; Victoria Monroe, 22, former FAMU student; and Bertha Dancil, 18, Gibbs Jr. College.

*St. Petersburg Times*, June 6, 1958, and June 7, 1958.


See the *St. Petersburg Times*, June 11, June 7, and September 14, 1958. The position of the *Times* was not unlike that of Judge Thomsen in the Dawson case already cited.

*St. Petersburg Times*, June 7, 1958.


*St. Petersburg Times*, July 1, 1958.

*Ibid.*, June 27, 1958. Walter Ramseur, President of the St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce, expressed concerns about “tense” race relations which could be “tremendously injurious” to a tourist community like St. Petersburg.


*Ibid.*, June 11, 12 and 13, 1958. On June 6, Clearwater opened a one mile beach area on the Courtney Campbell Causeway for Negroes. About six weeks later, James West, a 33-year-old black Tampan, drowned at the new recreation area. This would convince many Tampa Bay blacks that their beaches were unsafe when compared to the “white” beaches.


*St. Petersburg Times*, September 14, 1950.

Minutes, St. Petersburg City Council, September 15, 1958, and *St. Petersburg Independent*, September 12, 1958.

*St. Petersburg Times*, August 23 and September 17, 1958.


*Ibid.*, September 27, October 2 and 8, and December 23 and 25, 1958.
Minutes, St. Petersburg City Council, January 6, 1959, and *St. Petersburg Times*, February 13, 1962. On June 1, 1963, the wooden hotel complex surrounding Spa Pool burned to the ground, never to be rebuilt.

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45 *St. Petersburg Times*, November 11, 1958.

46 Minutes, St. Petersburg City Council, January 6, 1959, and *St. Petersburg Times*, February 13, 1962. On June 1, 1963, the wooden hotel complex surrounding Spa Pool burned to the ground, never to be rebuilt.