

ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY
JANUARY 16

Baylor Stands Firm On Refusal to Play

On January 16, 1959, Minneapolis Lakers basketball star Elgin Baylor boycotted a game in Charleston to protest a local hotel's refusal to accommodate the team's African American players.

CSO: SS.8.25

Investigate the Document: (Charleston Gazette, January 17, 1959)

1. How many African American players were on the Minneapolis Lakers' roster that were unable to stay in the same hotel as their white teammates?
2. Instead of checking in at the white players' hotel, Coach Kundla decided to do *what* with the team's lodging in Charleston?
3. What local star was playing for the Minneapolis Lakers?

Think Critically: A local 13-year-old boy was quoted in the article, stating, "They teach us about democracy in school. But they don't seem to practice it very much around here. It just burns me up." How did this boy's sentiments add to the article? Do you think the boy's views are aligned with the author of the article? Why or why not? Do the Jim Crow Laws have an impact today? Why or why not? [What were some of the effective methods of nonviolent protest practiced by some civil rights groups to achieve their goals?](#) How does Elgin Baylor's protest fit into the Civil Rights Movement?

READ ROBB
ON MIKOYAN'S
CANDY GIVING

—Page 4

The Charleston Gazette

The State Newspaper

Charleston, West Virginia, Saturday Morning, January 17, 1959

16 Pages—2 Sections—Five Cents



Segregation Ruling Ires Pro Player

By A. L. Hardman
Sports Editor

The 2,356 basketball fans who braved cold weather and icy road conditions to see the Minneapolis Lakers play the Cincinnati Royals Friday night at the Civic Center were deprived of seeing the Lakers' star rookie, Elgin Baylor, in action because of a misunderstanding over hotel accommodations for the Minneapolis team.

Baylor, in protest of segregation rules of local hotels, sat out the entire game and did not even don a uniform despite the fact he had been advertised as one of the top attractions by the American Business Club which sponsored—and lost about \$1,000—on the game.

Coach John Kundla of the Lakers would not comment on the absence of Baylor from the lineup nor would he discuss the developments after his team arrived. (Please Turn to Page 10 Col. 1)

(Continued From Page 1)

arrived here Friday afternoon at approximately 3 p. m.

When Baylor was asked why he was not in uniform he said, "You'll have to ask the coach." When Kundla was approached he replied, "You'll have to ask Baylor."

BILL BOLDEN, acting manager of the Civic Center, explained the situation as totally uncalled for and displayed correspondence with Coach Kundla to show that he had cleared all matters in regard to housing here long before the game.

On Dec. 17, Kundla wrote Bolden as follows:

"We would like to have you arrange hotel accommodations for the team and myself, arriving in Charleston at 1:58 p. m. Jan. 16. We usually require five doubles and one single. Will there be any problem finding rooms for our Negro players along with the rest of the team? I shall leave it to your discretion to obtain the best possible accommodations. Please let us have the name of the hotel."

Bolden wired Kundla on Dec. 29, stating that he had completed hotel arrangements and advising Kundla that the Negro players would be taken care of at another hotel. Nothing further was heard from Kundla.

When the Minneapolis team checked in at their local hotel Friday afternoon, however, Kundla protested when he learned that his three Negro players—Baylor, Boo Ellis and Ed Fleming—were booked at another hotel.

INSTEAD OF CHECKING in the white players at the hotel reserved for them, Kundla took his entire squad to the hotel assigned to house the Negro players.

Bolden reminded the coach, however, of their correspondence. And this seemed to cool down matters. But Baylor did not change his mind. He refused to dress for the game.

Local fans had little to say about his absence from the lineup. They were more interested in their home town idol, Rod Hundley, who gave a good account of himself.

It was indicated that the Ameri-

READ ROBB
ON MIKOYAN'S
CANDY GIVING

—Page 4

The Charleston Gazette

The State Newspaper



Charleston, West Virginia, Saturday Morning, January 17, 1959

16 Pages—2 Sections—Five Cents

can Business Club might protest to the league president, Maurice Podoloff, because Baylor did not play. But last night the ABC was more interested in the fact that the game was a losing proposition.

"We'll drop about \$1,000," said Tom Corrie, who promoted the game for the club.

THE ATTENDANCE of 2,356 was the actual turnstile count. Corrie said there may have been 2,500 in the center and a number of tickets sold in advance didn't turn up because of weather conditions.

But the ABC put up \$6,500 to bring the game here and at prices like this, they figured Baylor should have taken his protest out on someone besides the promoters of the game, who have nothing to do with local hotels.

A 13-year-old boy, hearing a radio report on the discrimination controversy, called The Gazette to protest fluently for two full minutes on the injustice of refusing to provide equal services to all the team members.

"They teach us about democracy in school," the youth blurted out. "But they don't seem to practice it very much around here. It just burns me up."