Schools Free Of Demonstrators; Protests Suspended For Week

There were no demonstrations today for the first time in more than a week in support of Negro protests against the test integration program planned by the Peoria School Board. All but 20 of the 120 students suspended after they walked out of Manual High School Thurs-
day were readmitted to classes today. Three were denied admission and the others didn’t report.

Absenteeism was down at Manual today from 360 students to 241. This is considered just slightly more than normal.

Twelve schools with the heaviest Negro enrollments in the city which had a total of 5,800 absences on Monday and 2,000 on Tuesday had only 1,700 today. Most of them reported normal absenteeism, according to the school system.

Unlike the last two mornings, when police and demonstrators clashed outside the school, there were no incidents this morning.

JOHN GWYNN, president of the local NAACP, announced last night that all demonstra-
tions, including night marches, will be suspended for the rest of this week.

Gwynn also canceled last night’s march, which would have been the ninth consecutive march to the school administra-
tion building.

The reason given by Gwynn for cancellation of the marches and demonstrations was the absence from the city until next week.

Gwynn’s absence also caused cancellation of a meeting between School Board members and representatives of the NAACP which had been tenta-
vively arranged for tonight.

THE MEETING had been ar-
ranged by “The Magnificent Gentlemen,” a Negro group, and was to have been moderated by Mayor Robert Lohmeyer.

Gwynn is to be in Washington, D.C., to participate in a confer-
ence called by the U. S. Civil Rights Commission. He is one of hundreds invited to appear at a three-day meeting on educational opportunities.

Espey C. Williamson, presi-
dent of the School Board, said last night that he had agreed to the meeting, and at least half of the other board members had been contacted and also agreed to meet if the meeting were appropriately arranged and preferably at the school administration building.

Gwynn read a letter he had received from Mayor Lohmeyer. The letter was an answer to the NAACP Youth Council’s protest yesterday against indiscriminate use of a disabling gas by police at Manual High School Monday and yesterday.

IN HIS LETTER the mayor said that the police department is charged with the responsibility of maintaining peace in the city, and must exercise wise judgment in the fulfillment of this duty.

“IT is not the policy of the Peoria Police Department to use any weapon of police work indiscriminately. They will only use the degree of force required to maintain the peace of this city,” the letter ended.

It made no direct reference to the use of the spray.

A couple of fights broke out between Negro youths in the Carver Center area last night while they were waiting to begin the march that later was canceled.

Gwynn came out of the building and broke up one fight.

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Williamson Urged To Meet NAACP

The Bradley University Chapter of the Assn. of American University Professors is urging School Board President Espey Williamson or the entire board to meet with NAACP representa-
tives to discuss the present school situation.

A resolution to this effect was passed at last night’s AAPP meeting and conveyed in a letter to Williamson today.