

# “NO REGRETS”



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### Introduction

In 1955, following *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Little Rock school board accepted a plan of gradual integration presented by superintendent Virgil Blossom. According to the plan, Little Rock schools were to begin the integration process in the fall of 1957. However, when nine African American students enrolled in previously all-white Little Rock Central High School appeared in front of their new school on September 4, 1957, they were met by a white angry mob and the Arkansas National Guard. Governor of Arkansas Orval Faubus called the latter not to protect the black students' right to an equal education but to block them from entering the school building. In response to this violation of federal laws, President Dwight Eisenhower federalized the Arkansas National Guard and ordered them to support the integration and protect the African American students. The students are known today as the Little Rock Nine and the events are remembered as the Little Rock Crisis.

In this activity, you will examine a newspaper article that reports on a meeting between two members of the Little Rock Nine, Thelma Mothershed Wair and Terrence Roberts, and former governor Orval Faubus that took place over thirty years after the Little Rock Crisis. The meeting was part of the conference titled “The 50s: A Decade in Black and White.”



CENTER FOR ARKANSAS  
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"Ex-governor doesn't regret blocking blacks," *The Salina Journal*, June 5, 1990 (Elizabeth Huckaby Papers)

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### Questions:

1. How many years after the Little Rock Crisis was this article written and published?
2. How did former governor Orval Faubus feel about his 1957 decision to block the Little Rock Nine from entering Little Rock Central High School in 1990? How did he defend his 1957 actions?
3. How did Thelma Mothershed Wair, one of the Little Rock Nine, respond to Faubus' 1990 comments?
4. What do you think about Faubus' defense of his 1957 actions? What do you think about Mothershed Wair's response to it?
5. What does the interaction between Faubus, Mothershed Wair, and Terrence Roberts described in this article tell us about racial relations in 1990?
6. How would you interpret the title of the conference mentioned in this article: "The 50s: A Decade in Black and White"?