

Aid to Private Schools Ruled Void in Louisiana

NEW ORLEANS, La. (UPI) — Three federal judges Saturday threw out Louisiana's grant-in-aid program for financing segregated private schools. They called it a link in a 100-year chain of state laws aimed at keeping whites and Negroes from attending the same schools.

The judges, ruling in a suit brought against the Louisiana Financial Assistance Commission, which administers the \$4 million annual program, said that unless the grants system was destroyed it would shatter public schools for both races.

U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Judges J. M. Wisdom and Robert A. Ainsworth Jr. and U.S. Dist. Judge Herbert W. Christenberry handed down the ruling.

It included a criticism of Louisiana's state legislators for setting up the program in 1962 under the administration of then Gov. Jimmie H. Davis.

THE GRANT program provides students \$2 a day based on a 180-day school year as tuition if they elect to attend private, non-sectarian schools rather than desegregated public schools.

The grant schools have been criticized in Louisiana for having substandard facilities and inferior programs of instruction.

"They are the fruits of the state's traditional racially biased policy of providing segregated schools for white pupils," said the judges.

"As certainly as '12' is the next number of a series starting 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, Act 147 (setting up the system) fitted into the long series of statutes the Louisiana legislature enacted for over a hundred years to maintain segregated schools for white children."

THE COURT traced a series of acts passed by the legislature, including the Louisiana constitutional convention of 1921, to back up its attack on the motives of the legislature.