NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS, REPORT
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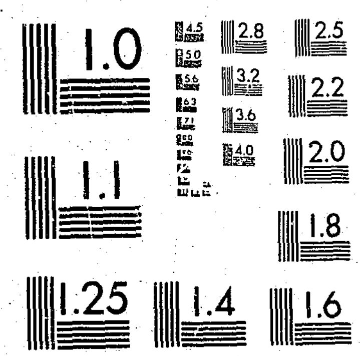

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REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS

NCJRS, 955 L'ENFANT PLAZA WASHINGTON, D.C. 20024

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Report of The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders

. . . . The only genuine, long-range solution for what has happened lies in an attack—mounted at every level—upon the conditions that breed despair and violence. All of us know what those conditions are: ignorance, discrimination, slums, poverty, disease, not enough jobs. We should attack these conditions—not because we are frightened by conflict, but because we are fired by conscience. We should attack them because there is simply no other way to achieve a decent and orderly society in America. . . .

Lyndon Baines Johnson
Address to the Nation
June 27, 1967

Foreword

This report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders responds to Executive Order 11365, issued by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 29, 1967, and to the personal charge given to us by the President.

"Let your search," he said, "be free * * *. As best you can, find the truth and express it in your report."

We have sought to do so.

"This matter," he said, "is far, far too important for politics."

This was a bipartisan Commission and a nonpartisan effort.

"Only you," he said, "can do this job. Only if you * * * put your shoulders to the wheel can America hope for the kind of report it needs and will take to its heart."

This has been a working Commission.

To our staff, headed by David Ginsburg, Executive Director, to his deputy, Victor H. Palmieri, and to all those in government and private life who helped us, we are grateful.

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INTRODUCTION

The summer of 1967 again brought racial disorders to American cities, and with them shock, fear, and bewilderment to the Nation.

The worst came during a 2-week period in July, first in Newark and then in Detroit. Each set off a chain reaction in neighboring communities.

On July 28, 1967, the President of the United States established this Commission and directed us to answer three basic questions:

What happened?

Why did it happen?

What can be done to prevent it from happening again?

To respond to these questions, we have undertaken a broad range of studies and investigations. We have visited the riot cities; we have heard many witnesses; we have sought the counsel of experts across the country.

This is our basic conclusion: Our Nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal.

Reaction to last summer's disorders has quickened the movement and deepened the division. Discrimination and segregation have long permeated much of American life; they now threaten the future of every American.

This deepening racial division is not inevitable. The movement apart can be reversed. Choice is still possible. Our principal task is to define that choice and to press for a national resolution.

To pursue our present course will involve the continuing polarization of the American community and, ultimately, the destruction of basic democratic values.

The alternative is not blind repression or capitulation to lawlessness. It is the realization of common opportunities for all within a single society.

This alternative will require a commitment to national action—compassionate, massive, and sustained, backed by the resources of the most powerful and the richest nation on this earth. From every American it will require new attitudes, new understanding, and, above all, new will.

The vital needs of the Nation must be met; hard choices must be made, and, if necessary, new taxes enacted.

Violence cannot build a better society. Disruption and disorder nourish repression, not justice. They strike at the freedom of every citizen. The community cannot—it will not—tolerate coercion and mob rule.

Violence and destruction must be ended—in the streets of the ghetto and in the lives of people.

Segregation and poverty have created in the racial ghetto a destructive environment totally unknown to most white Americans.

What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.

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It is time now to turn with all the purpose at our command to the major unfinished business of this Nation. It is time to adopt strategies for action that will produce quick and visible progress. It is time to make good the promises of American democracy to all citizens—urban and rural, white and black, Spanish-surname, American Indian, and every minority group.

Our recommendations embrace three basic principles:

- To mount programs on a scale equal to the dimension of the problems;
- To aim these programs for high impact in the immediate future in order to close the gap between promise and performance;
- To undertake new initiatives and experiments that can change the system of failure and frustration that now dominates the ghetto and weakens our society.

These programs will require unprecedented levels of funding and performance, but they neither probe deeper nor demand more than the problems which called them forth. There can be no higher priority for national action and no higher claim on the Nation's conscience.

We issue this report now, 5 months before the date called for by the President. Much remains that can be learned. Continued study is essential.

As Commissioners we have worked together with a sense of the greatest urgency and have sought to compose whatever differences exist among us. Some differences remain. But the gravity of the problem and the pressing need for action are too clear to allow further delay in the issuance of this report.

I. WHAT HAPPENED?

Chapter 1.—Profiles of Disorder

The report contains profiles of a selection of the disorders that took place during the summer of 1967. These profiles are designed to indicate how the disorders happened, who participated in them, and how local officials, police forces, and the National Guard responded. Illustrative excerpts follow:

Newark

* * * It was decided to attempt to channel the energies of the people into a nonviolent protest. While Lofton promised the crowd that a full investigation would be made of the Smith incident, the other Negro leaders began urging those on the scene to form a line of march toward the city hall.

Some persons joined the line of march. Others milled about in the narrow street. From the dark grounds of the housing project came a barrage of rocks. Some of them fell among the crowd. Others hit persons in the line of march. Many smashed the windows of the police station. The rock throwing, it was believed, was the work of youngsters; approximately 2,500 children lived in the housing project.

Almost at the same time, an old car was set afire in a parking lot. The line of march began to disintegrate. The police, their heads protected by World War I-type helmets, sallied forth to disperse the crowd. A fire engine, arriving on the scene, was pelted with rocks. As police drove people away from the station, they scattered in all directions.

A few minutes later a nearby liquor store was broken into. Some persons, seeing a caravan of cabs appear at city hall to protest Smith's arrest, interpreted this as evidence that the disturbance had been organized, and generated rumors to that effect.

However, only a few stores were looted. Within a short period of time, the disorder appeared to have run its course.

* * * * *

* * * On Saturday, July 15, [Director of Police Dominick] Spina received a report of snipers in a housing project. When he arrived he saw approximately 100 National Guardsmen and police officers crouching behind vehicles, hiding in corners, and lying on the ground around the edge of the courtyard.

Since everything appeared quiet and it was broad daylight, Spina walked directly down the middle of the street. Nothing happened. As he came to the last building of the complex, he heard a shot. All around him the troopers jumped, believing themselves to be under sniper fire. A moment later a young Guardsman ran from behind a building.

The director of police went over and asked him if he had fired the shot. The soldier said "Yes," he had fired to scare a man away from a window; that his orders were to keep everyone away from windows.

Spina said he told the soldier: "Do you know what you just did? You have now created a state of hysteria. Every Guardsman up and down this street and every state policeman and every city policeman that is present thinks that somebody just fired a shot and that it is probably a sniper."

A short time later more "gunshots" were heard. Investigating, Spina came upon a Puerto Rican sitting on a wall. In reply to a question as to whether he knew "where the firing is coming from?" the man said:

"That's no firing. That's fireworks. If you look up to the fourth floor, you will see the people who are throwing down these cherry bombs."

By this time four trucklonds of National Guardsmen had arrived and troopers and policemen were again crouched everywhere looking for a sniper. The director of police remained at the scene for 3 hours, and the only shot fired was the one by the Guardsman.

Nevertheless, at 6 o'clock that evening two columns of National Guardsmen and State troopers were directing mass fire at the Hayes housing project in response to what they believed were snipers. * * *

Detroit

* * * A spirit of carefree nihilism was taking hold. To riot and destroy appeared more and more to become ends in themselves. Late Sunday afternoon it appeared to one observer that the young people were "dancing amidst the flames."

A Negro plainclothes officer was standing at an intersection when a man threw a Molotov cocktail into a business establishment at the corner. In the heat of the afternoon, fanned by the 20 to 25 miles per hour winds of both Sunday and Monday, the fire reached the home next door within minutes. As residents uselessly sprayed the flames with garden hoses, the fire jumped from roof to roof of adjacent two- and three-story buildings. Within the hour the entire block was in flames. The ninth house in the burning row belonged to the arsonist who had thrown the Molotov cocktail. * * *

* * * * *

* * * Employed as a private guard, 55-year-old Julius L. Dorsey, a Negro, was standing in front of a market when accosted by two Negro men and a woman. They demanded he permit them to loot the market. He ignored their demands. They began to berate him. He asked a neighbor to call the police. As the argument grew more heated, Dorsey fired three shots from his pistol into the air.

The police radio reported: "Looters—they have rifles." A patrol car driven by a police officer and carrying three National Guardsmen arrived. As the looters fled, the law-enforcement personnel opened fire. When the firing ceased, one person lay dead.

He was Julius L. Dorsey.* * *

* * * * *

* * * As the riot alternately waxed and waned, one area of the ghetto remained insulated. On the northeast side the residents of some 150 square blocks inhabited by 21,000 persons had, in 1966, banded together in the Positive Neighborhood Action Committee (PNAC). With professional help from the Institute of Urban Dynamics, they had organized block clubs and made plans for the improvement of the neighborhood.* * *

When the riot broke out, the residents, through the block clubs, were able to organize quickly. Youngsters, agreeing to stay in the neighborhood, participated in detouring traffic. While many persons reportedly sympathized with the idea of a rebellion against the "system" only two small fires were set—one in an empty building.

* * * * *

* * * According to Lieutenant General Throckmorton and Colonel Bolling, the city, at this time, was saturated with fear. The National Guardsmen were afraid, the citizens were afraid, and the police were afraid. Numerous persons, the majority of them Negroes, were being injured by gunshots of undetermined origin. The general and his staff felt that the major task of the troops was to reduce the fear and restore an air of normalcy.

In order to accomplish this, every effort was made to establish contact and rapport between the troops and the residents. The soldiers—20 percent of whom were Negro—began helping to clean up the streets, collect garbage, and trace persons who had disappeared in the confusion. Residents in the neighborhoods responded with soup and sandwiches for the troops. In areas where the National Guard tried to establish rapport with the citizens, there was a similar response.

New Brunswick

* * * A short time later, elements of the crowd—an older and rougher one than the night before—appeared in front of the police station. The participants wanted to see the mayor.

Mayor [Patricia] Sheehan went out onto the steps of the station. Using a bull horn, she talked to the people and asked that she be given an opportunity to correct conditions. The crowd was boisterous. Some persons challenged the mayor. But, finally, the opinion, "She's new! Give her a chance!" prevailed.

A demand was issued by people in the crowd that all persons arrested the previous night be released. Told that this already had been done, the people were suspicious. They asked to be allowed to inspect the jail cells.

It was agreed to permit representatives of the people to look in the cells to satisfy themselves that everyone had been released.

The crowd dispersed. The New Brunswick riot had failed to materialize.

Chapter 2.—Patterns of Disorder

The "typical" riot did not take place. The disorders of 1967 were unusual, irregular, complex, and unpredictable social processes. Like most human events, they did not unfold in an orderly sequence. However, an analysis of our survey information leads to some conclusions about the riot process.

In general:

- The civil disorders of 1967 involved Negroes acting against local symbols of white American society, authority, and property in Negro neighborhoods—rather than against white persons.
- Of 164 disorders reported during the first nine months of 1967, eight (5 percent) were major in terms of violence and damage; 33 (20 percent) were serious but not major; 123 (75 percent) were minor and undoubtedly would not have received national attention as riots had the Nation not been sensitized by the more serious outbreaks.
- In the 75 disorders studied by a Senate subcommittee, 83 deaths were reported. Eighty-two percent of the deaths and more than half the injuries occurred in Newark and Detroit. About 10 percent of the dead and 36 percent of the injured were public employees, primarily law officers and firemen. The overwhelming majority of the persons killed or injured in all the disorders were Negro civilians.
- Initial damage estimates were greatly exaggerated. In Detroit, newspaper damage estimates at first ranged from $200 to $500 million; the highest recent estimate is $45 million. In Newark, early estimates ranged from $15 to $25 million. A month later damage was estimated at $10.2 million, 80 percent in inventory losses.

In the 24 disorders in 23 cities which we surveyed:

- The final incident before the outbreak of disorder, and the initial violence itself, generally took place in the evening or at night at a place in which it was normal for many people to be on the streets.
- Violence usually occurred almost immediately following the occurrence of the final precipitating incident, and then escalated rapidly. With but few exceptions, violence subsided during the day, and flared rapidly again at night. The night-day cycles continued through the early period of the major disorders.
- Disorder generally began with rock and bottle throwing and window breaking. Once store windows were broken, looting usually followed.
- Disorder did not erupt as a result of a single "triggering" or "precipitating" incident. Instead, it was generated out of an increasingly disturbed social atmosphere, in which typically a series of tension-heightening incidents over a period of weeks or months became linked in the minds of many in the Negro community with a reservoir of underlying grievances. At some point in the mounting tension, a further incident—in itself often routine or trivial—became the breaking point and the tension spilled over into violence.
- "Prior" incidents, which increased tensions and ultimately led to violence, were police actions in almost half the cases; police actions were "final" incidents before the outbreak of violence in 12 of the 24 surveyed disorders.
- No particular control tactic was successful in every situation. The varied effectiveness of control techniques emphasizes the need for advance training, planning, adequate intelligence systems, and knowledge of the ghetto community.
- Negotiations between Negroes—including young militants as well as older Negro leaders—and white officials concerning "terms of peace" occurred during virtually all the disorders

surveyed. In many cases, these negotiations involved discussion of underlying grievances as well as the handling of the disorder by control authorities.

■ The typical rioter was a teenager or young adult, a lifelong resident of the city in which he rioted, a high school dropout; he was, nevertheless, somewhat better educated than his nonrioting Negro neighbor, and was usually underemployed or employed in a menial job. He was proud of his race, extremely hostile to both whites and middle-class Negroes and, although informed about politics, highly distrustful of the political system.

A Detroit survey revealed that approximately 11 percent of the total residents of two riot areas admitted participation in the rioting, 20 to 25 percent identified themselves as "bystanders," over 16 percent identified themselves as "counterrioters" who urged rioters to "cool it," and the remaining 48 to 53 percent said they were at home or elsewhere and did not participate. In a survey of Negro males between the ages of 15 and 35 residing in the disturbance area in Newark, about 45 percent identified themselves as rioters, and about 55 percent as "noninvolved."

■ Most rioters were young Negro males. Nearly 53 percent of arrestees were between 15 and 24 years of age; nearly 81 percent between 15 and 35.

■ In Detroit and Newark about 74 percent of the rioters were brought up in the North. In contrast, of the noninvolved, 36 percent in Detroit and 52 percent in Newark were brought up in the North.

■ What the rioters appeared to be seeking was fuller participation in the social order and the material benefits enjoyed by the majority of American citizens. Rather than rejecting the American system, they were anxious to obtain a place for themselves in it.

■ Numerous Negro counterrioters walked the streets urging rioters to "cool it." The typical counterrioter was better educated and had higher income than either the rioter or the noninvolved.

■ The proportion of Negroes in local government was substantially smaller than the Negro proportion of population. Only three of the 20 cities studied had more than one Negro legislator; none had ever had a Negro mayor or city manager. In only four cities did Negroes hold other important policy-making positions or serve as heads of municipal departments.

■ Although almost all cities had some sort of formal grievance mechanism for handling citizen complaints, this typically was regarded by Negroes as ineffective and was generally ignored.

■ Although specific grievances varied from city to city, at least 12 deeply held grievances can be identified and ranked into three levels of relative intensity:

First level of intensity:

1. Police practices.
2. Unemployment and underemployment.
3. Inadequate housing.

Second level of intensity:

4. Inadequate education.
5. Poor recreation facilities and programs.
6. Ineffectiveness of the political structure and grievance mechanisms.

Third level of intensity:

7. Disrespectful white attitudes.
8. Discriminatory administration of justice.
9. Inadequacy of Federal programs.
10. Inadequacy of municipal services.
11. Discriminatory consumer and credit practices.
12. Inadequate welfare programs.

■ The results of a three-city survey of various Federal programs—manpower, education, housing, welfare and community action—indicate that, despite substantial expenditures, the number of persons assisted constituted only a fraction of those in need.

The background of disorder is often as complex and difficult to analyze as the disorder itself. But we find that certain general conclusions can be drawn:

■ Social and economic conditions in the riot cities constituted a clear pattern of severe disadvantage for Negroes compared with whites, whether the Negroes lived in the area where the riot took place or outside it. Negroes had completed fewer years of education and fewer had attended high school. Negroes were twice as likely to be unemployed and three times as likely to be in unskilled and service jobs. Negroes averaged 70 percent of the income earned by whites and were more than twice as likely to be living in poverty. Although housing cost Negroes relatively more, they had worse housing—three times as likely to be overcrowded and substandard. When compared to white suburbs, the relative disadvantage was even more pronounced.

A study of the aftermath of disorder leads to disturbing conclusions. We find that, despite the institution of some postriot programs:

■ Little basic change in the conditions underlying the outbreak of disorder has taken place. Actions to ameliorate Negro grievances have been limited and sporadic; with but few exceptions, they have not significantly reduced tensions.

■ In several cities, the principal official response has been to train and equip the police with more sophisticated weapons.

■ In several cities, increasing polarization is evident, with continuing breakdown of interracial communication, and growth of white segregationist or black separatist groups.

Chapter 3.—Organized Activity

The President directed the Commission to investigate "to what extent, if any, there has been planning or organization in any of the riots."

To carry out this part of the President's charge, the Commission established a special investigative staff supplementing the field teams that made the general examination of the riots in 23 cities. The unit examined data collected by Federal agencies and congressional committees, including thousands of documents supplied by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, gathered and evaluated information from local and state law enforcement agencies and officials, and conducted its own field investigation in selected cities.

On the basis of all the information collected, the Commission concludes that:

> The urban disorders of the summer of 1967 were not caused by, nor were they the consequence of, any organized plan or "conspiracy."

Specifically, the Commission has found no evidence that all or any of the disorders or the incidents that led to them were planned or directed by any organization or group, international, national, or local.

Militant organizations, local and national, and individual agitators, who repeatedly forecast and called for violence, were active in the spring and summer of 1967. We believe that they sought to encourage violence, and that they helped to create an atmosphere that contributed to the outbreak of disorder.

We recognize that the continuation of disorders and the polarization of the races would provide fertile ground for organized exploitation in the future.

Investigations of organized activity are continuing at all levels of government, including committees of Congress. These investigations relate not only to the disorders of 1967 but also to the actions of groups and individuals, particularly in schools and colleges, during this last fall and winter. The Commission has cooperated in these investigations. They should continue.

II. WHY DID IT HAPPEN?

Chapter 4.—The Basic Causes

In addressing the question "Why did it happen?" we shift our focus from the local to the national scene, from the particular events of the summer of 1967 to the factors within the society at large that created a mood of violence among many urban Negroes.

These factors are complex and interacting; they vary significantly in their effect from city to city and from year to year; and the consequences of one disorder, generating new grievances and new demands, become the causes of the next. Thus was created the "thicket of tension, conflicting evidence, and extreme opinions" cited by the President.

Despite these complexities, certain fundamental matters are clear. Of these, the most fundamental is the racial attitude and behavior of white Americans toward black Americans.

Race prejudice has shaped our history decisively; it now threatens to affect our future.

White racism is essentially responsible for the explosive mixture which has been accumulating in our cities since the end of World War II. Among the ingredients of this mixture are:

■ *Pervasive discrimination and segregation* in employment, education, and housing, which have resulted in the continuing exclusion of great numbers of Negroes from the benefits of economic progress.

■ *Black in-migration and white exodus*, which have produced the massive and growing concentrations of impoverished Negroes in our major cities, creating a growing crisis of deteriorating facilities and services and unmet human needs.

■ *The black ghettos*, where segregation and poverty converge on the young to destroy opportunity and enforce failure. Crime, drug addiction, dependency on welfare, and bitterness and resentment against society in general and white society in particular are the result.

At the same time, most whites and some Negroes outside the ghetto have prospered to a degree unparalleled in the history of civilization. Through television and other media, this affluence has been flaunted before the eyes of the Negro poor and the jobless ghetto youth.

Yet these facts alone cannot be said to have caused the disorders. Recently, other powerful ingredients have begun to catalyze the mixture:

■ *Frustrated hopes* are the residue of the unfulfilled expectations aroused by the great judicial and legislative victories of the civil rights movement and the dramatic struggle for equal rights in the South.

■ *A climate that tends toward approval and encouragement of violence* as a form of protest has been created by white terrorism directed against nonviolent protest; by the open defiance of law and Federal authority by state and local officials resisting desegregation; and by some protest groups engaging in civil disobedience who turn their backs on nonviolence, go beyond the constitutionally protected rights of petition and free assembly, and resort to violence to attempt to compel alteration of laws and policies with which they disagree.

■ *The frustrations of powerlessness* have led some Negroes to the conviction that there is no effective alternative to violence as a means of achieving redress of grievances, and of "moving the system." These frustrations are reflected in alienation and hostility toward the institutions of law and government and the white society which controls them, and in the reach toward racial consciousness and solidarity reflected in the slogan "Black Power."

■ *A new mood* has sprung up among Negroes, particularly among the young, in which self-esteem and enhanced racial pride are replacing apathy and submission to "the system."

■ *The police are not merely a "spark" factor.* To some Negroes police have come to symbolize white power, white racism, and white repression. And the fact is that many police do reflect and express these white attitudes. The atmosphere of hostility and cynicism is reinforced by a widespread belief among Negroes in the existence of police brutality and in a "double standard" of justice and protection—one for Negroes and one for whites.

* * * * *

To this point, we have attempted only to identify the prime components of the "explosive mixture." In the chapters that follow we seek to analyze them in the perspective of history. Their meaning, however, is clear:

In the summer of 1967, we have seen in our cities a chain reaction of racial violence. If we are heedless, none of us shall escape the consequences.

Chapter 5.—Rejection and Protest: An Historical Sketch

The causes of recent racial disorders are embedded in a tangle of issues and circumstances—social, economic, political, and psychological—which arise out of the historic pattern of Negro-white relations in America.

In this chapter we trace the pattern, identify the recurrent themes of Negro protest and, most importantly, provide a perspective on the protest activities of the present era.

We describe the Negro's experience in America and the development of slavery as an institution. We show his persistent striving for equality in the face of rigidly maintained social, economic, and educational barriers, and repeated mob violence. We portray the ebb and flow of the doctrinal tides—accommodation, separatism, and self-help—and their relationship to the current theme of Black Power. We conclude:

> The Black Power advocates of today consciously feel that they are the most militant group in the Negro protest movement. Yet they have retreated from a direct confrontation with American society on the issue of integration and, by preaching separatism, unconsciously function as an accommodation to white racism. Much of their economic program, as well as their interest in Negro history, self-help, racial solidarity and separation, is reminiscent of Booker T. Washington. The rhetoric is different, but the ideas are remarkably similar.

Chapter 6.—The Formation of the Racial Ghettos [1]

Throughout the 20th century the Negro population of the United States has been moving steadily from rural areas to urban and from South to North and West. In 1910, 91 percent of the Nation's 9.8 million Negroes lived in the South and only 27 percent of American Negroes lived in cities of 2,500 persons or more. Between 1910 and 1966 the total Negro population more than doubled, reaching 21.5 million, and the number living in metropolitan areas rose more than fivefold (from 2.6 million to 14.8 million). The number outside the South rose elevenfold (from 885,000 to 9.7 million).

Negro migration from the South has resulted from the expectation of thousands of new and highly paid jobs for unskilled workers in the North and the shift to mechanized farming in the South. However, the Negro migration is small when compared to earlier waves of European immigrants. Even between 1960 and 1966, there were 1.8 million immigrants from abroad compared to the 613,000 Negroes who arrived in the North and West from the South.

As a result of the growing number of Negroes in urban areas, natural increase has replaced migration as the primary source of Negro population increase in the cities. Nevertheless, Negro migration from the South will continue unless economic conditions there change dramatically.

Basic data concerning Negro urbanization trends indicate that:

- Almost all Negro population growth (98 percent from 1950 to 1966) is occurring within metropolitan areas, primarily within central cities.[2]
- The vast majority of white population growth (78 percent from 1960 to 1966) is occurring in suburban portions of metropolitan areas. Since 1960, white central-city population has declined by 1.3 million.
- As a result, central cities are becoming more heavily Negro while the suburban fringes around them remain almost entirely white.
- The 12 largest central cities now contain over two-thirds of the Negro population outside the South, and almost one-third of the Negro total in the United States.

Within the cities, Negroes have been excluded from white residential areas through discriminatory practices. Just as significant is the withdrawal of white families from, or their refusal to enter, neighborhoods where Negroes are moving or already residing. About 20 percent of the urban population of the United States changes residence every year. The refusal of whites to move into "changing" areas when vacancies occur means that most vacancies eventually are occupied by Negroes.

The result, according to a recent study, is that in 1960 the average segregation index for 207 of the largest U.S. cities was 86.2. In other words, to create an unsegregated population distribution, an average of over 86 percent of all Negroes would have to change their place of residence within the city.

Chapter 7.—Unemployment, Family Structure, and Social Disorganization

Although there have been gains in Negro income nationally, and a decline in the number of Negroes below the "poverty level," the condition of Negroes in the central city remains in a state of crisis. Between 2 and 2.5 million Negroes—16 to 20 percent of the total Negro population of all central cities—live in squalor and deprivation in ghetto neighborhoods.

Employment is a key problem. It not only controls the present for the Negro American but, in a most profound way, it is creating the future as well. Yet, despite continuing economic growth and declining national unemployment rates, the unemployment rate for Negroes in 1967 was more than double that for whites.

Equally important is the undesirable nature of many jobs open to Negroes and other minorities. Negro men are more than three times as likely as white men to be in low-paying, unskilled, or service jobs. This concentration of male Negro employment at the lowest end of the occupational scale is the single most important cause of poverty among Negroes.

In one study of low-income neighborhoods, the "sub-employment rate," including both unemployment and underemployment, was about 33 percent, or 8.8 times greater than the overall unemployment rate for all U.S. workers.

Employment problems, aggravated by the constant arrival of new unemployed migrants, many of them from depressed rural areas, create persistent poverty in the ghetto. In 1966, about 11.9 percent of the Nation's whites and 40.6 percent of its nonwhites were below the poverty level defined by the Social Security Administration (in 1966, $3,335 per year for an urban family of four). Over 40 percent of the nonwhites below the poverty level live in the central cities.

Employment problems have drastic social impact in the ghetto. Men who are chronically unemployed or employed in the lowest status jobs are often unable or unwilling to remain with their families. The handicap imposed on children growing up without fathers in an atmosphere of deprivation is increased as mothers are forced to work to provide support.

The culture of poverty that results from unemployment and family breakup generates a system of ruthless, exploitative relationships within the ghetto. Prostitution, dope addiction, and crime create an environmental "jungle" characterized by personal insecurity and tension. Children growing up under such conditions are likely participants in civil disorder.

Chapter 8.—Conditions of Life in the Racial Ghetto

A striking difference in environment from that of white, middle-class Americans profoundly influences the lives of residents of the ghetto.

Crime rates, consistently higher than in other areas, create a pronounced sense of insecurity. For example, in one city one low-income Negro district had 35 times as many serious crimes against persons as a high-income white district. Unless drastic steps are taken, the crime problems in poverty areas are likely to continue to multiply as the growing youth and rapid urbanization of the population outstrip police resources.

Poor health and sanitation conditions in the ghetto result in higher mortality rates, a higher incidence of major diseases, and lower availability and utilization of medical services. The infant mortality rate for nonwhite babies under the age of 1 month is 58 percent higher than for whites; for 1 to 12 months it is almost three times as high. The level of sanitation in the ghetto is far below that in high-income areas. Garbage collection is often inadequate. Of an estimated 14,000 cases of rat bite in the United States in 1965, most were in ghetto neighborhoods.

Ghetto residents believe they are exploited by local merchants; and evidence substantiates some of these beliefs. A study conducted in one city by the Federal Trade Commission showed that higher prices were charged for goods sold in ghetto stores than in other areas.

Lack of knowledge regarding credit purchasing creates special pitfalls for the disadvantaged. In many states, garnishment practices compound these difficulties by allowing creditors to deprive individuals of their wages without hearing or trial.

Chapter 9.—Comparing the Immigrant and Negro Experience

In this chapter, we address ourselves to a fundamental question that many white Americans are asking: Why have so many Negroes, unlike the European immigrants, been unable to escape from the ghetto and from poverty?

We believe the following factors play a part:

- *The maturing economy.*—When the European immigrants arrived, they gained an economic foothold by providing the unskilled labor needed by industry. Unlike the immigrant, the Negro migrant found little opportunity in the city. The economy, by then matured, had little use for the unskilled labor he had to offer.
- *The disability of race.*—The structure of discrimination has stringently narrowed opportunities for the Negro and restricted his prospects. European immigrants suffered from discrimination, but never so pervasively.
- *Entry into the political system.*—The immigrants usually settled in rapidly growing cities with powerful and expanding political machines, which traded economic advantages for political support. Ward-level grievance machinery, as well as personal representation, enabled the immigrant to make his voice heard and his power felt.

  By the time the Negro arrived, these political machines were no longer so powerful or so well equipped to provide jobs or other favors, and in many cases were unwilling to share their remaining influence with Negroes.
- *Cultural factors.*—Coming from societies with a low standard of living and at a time when job aspirations were low, the immigrants sensed little deprivation in being forced to take the less desirable and poorer paying jobs. Their large and cohesive families contributed to total income. Their vision of the future—one that led to a life outside of the ghetto—provided the incentive necessary to endure the present.

  Although Negro men worked as hard as the immigrants, they were unable to support their families. The entrepreneurial opportunities had vanished. As a result of slavery and long periods of unemployment, the Negro family structure had become matriarchal; the males played a secondary and marginal family role—one which offered little compensation for their hard and unrewarding labor. Above all, segregation denied Negroes access to good jobs and the opportunity to leave the ghetto. For them, the future seemed to lead only to a dead end.

Today, whites tend to exaggerate how well and quickly they escaped from poverty. The fact is that immigrants who came from rural backgrounds, as many Negroes do, are only now, after three generations, finally beginning to move into the middle class.

By contrast, Negroes began concentrating in the city less than two generations ago, and under much less favorable conditions. Although some Negroes have escaped poverty, few have been able to escape the urban ghetto.

[1] The term "ghetto" as used in this Report refers to an area within a city characterized by poverty and acute social disorganization and inhabited by members of a racial or ethnic group under conditions of involuntary segregation.

[2] A "central city" is the largest city of a standard metropolitan statistical area, that is, a metropolitan area containing at least one city of 50,000 or more inhabitants.

III. WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Chapter 10.—The Community Response

Our investigation of the 1967 riot cities establishes that virtually every major episode of violence was foreshadowed by an accumulation of unresolved grievances and by widespread dissatisfaction among Negroes with the unwillingness or inability of local government to respond.

Overcoming these conditions is essential for community support of law enforcement and civil order. City governments need new and more vital channels of communication to the residents of the ghetto; they need to improve their capacity to respond effectively to community needs before they become community grievances; and they need to provide opportunity for meaningful involvement of ghetto residents in shaping policies and programs which affect the community.

The Commission recommends that local governments:

- Develop Neighborhood Action Task Forces as joint community-government efforts through which more effective communication can be achieved, and the delivery of city services to ghetto residents improved.
- Establish comprehensive grievance-response mechanisms in order to bring all public agencies under public scrutiny.
- Bring the institutions of local government closer to the people they serve by establishing neighborhood outlets for local, state, and Federal administrative and public service agencies.
- Expand opportunities for ghetto residents to participate in the formulation of public policy and the implementation of programs affecting them through improved political representation, creation of institutional channels for community action, expansion of legal services, and legislative hearings on ghetto problems.

In this effort, city governments will require State and Federal support.

The Commission recommends:

- State and Federal financial assistance for mayors and city councils to support the research, consultants, staff, and other resources needed to respond effectively to Federal program initiatives.
- State cooperation in providing municipalities with the jurisdictional tools needed to deal with their problems; a fuller measure of financial aid to urban areas; and the focusing of the interests of suburban communities on the physical, social, and cultural environment of the central city.

Chapter 11.—Police and the Community

The abrasive relationship between the police and minority communities has been a major—and explosive—source of grievance, tension, and disorder. The blame must be shared by the total society.

The police are faced with demands for increased protection and service in the ghetto. Yet the aggressive patrol practices thought necessary to meet these demands themselves create tension and hostility. The resulting grievances have been further aggravated by the lack of effective mechanisms for handling complaints against the police. Special programs for bettering police-community relations have been instituted, but these alone are not enough. Police administrators, with the guidance of public officials, and the support of the entire community, must take vigorous action to improve law enforcement and to decrease the potential for disorder.

The Commission recommends that city government and police authorities:

- Review police operations in the ghetto to ensure proper conduct by police officers, and eliminate abrasive practices
- Provide more adequate police protection to ghetto residents to eliminate their high sense of insecurity and the belief in the existence of a dual standard of law enforcement.
- Establish fair and effective mechanisms for the redress of grievances against the police and other municipal employees.
- Develop and adopt policy guidelines to assist officers in making critical decisions in areas where police conduct can create tension.
- Develop and use innovative programs to insure widespread community support for law enforcement.
- Recruit more Negroes into the regular police force, and review promotion policies to insure fair promotion for Negro officers.
- Establish a "Community Service Officer" program to attract ghetto youths between the ages of 17 and 21 to police work. These junior officers would perform duties in ghetto neighborhoods, but would not have full police authority. The Federal Government should provide support equal to 90 percent of the costs of employing CSO's on the basis of one for every 10 regular officers.

Chapter 12.—Control of Disorder

Preserving civil peace is the first responsibility of government. Unless the rule of law prevails, our society will lack not only order but also the environment essential to social and economic progress.

The maintenance of civil order cannot be left to the police alone. The police need guidance, as well as support, from mayors and other public officials. It is the responsibility of public officials to determine proper police policies, support adequate police standards for personnel and performance, and participate in planning for the control of disorders.

To maintain control of incidents which could lead to disorders, the Commission recommends that local officials:

- Assign seasoned, well-trained policemen and supervisory officers to patrol ghetto areas, and to respond to disturbances.
- Develop plans which will quickly muster maximum police manpower and highly qualified senior commanders at the outbreak of disorders.
- Provide special training in the prevention of disorders, and prepare police for riot control and for operation in units, with adequate command and control and field communication for proper discipline and effectiveness.

- Develop guidelines governing the use of control equipment and provide alternatives to the use of lethal weapons. Federal support for research in this area is needed.
- Establish an intelligence system to provide police and other public officials with reliable information that may help to prevent the outbreak of a disorder and to institute effective control measures in the event a riot erupts.
- Develop continuing contacts with ghetto residents to make use of the forces for order which exist within the community.
- Establish machinery for neutralizing rumors, and enabling Negro leaders and residents to obtain the facts. Create special rumor details to collect, evaluate, and dispel rumors that may lead to a civil disorder.

The Commission believes there is a grave danger that some communities may resort to the indiscriminate and excessive use of force. The harmful effects of overreaction are incalculable. The Commission condemns moves to equip police departments with mass destruction weapons, such as automatic rifles, machine guns, and tanks. Weapons which are designed to destroy, not to control, have no place in densely populated urban communities.

The Commission recommends that the Federal Government share in the financing of programs for improvement of police forces, both in their normal law enforcement activities as well as in their response to civil disorders.

To assist government authorities in planning their response to civil disorder, this report contains a Supplement on Control of Disorder. It deals with specific problems encountered during riot control operations, and includes:

- Assessment of the present capabilities of police, National Guard and Army forces to control major riots, and recommendations for improvement.
- Recommended means by which the control operations of those forces may be coordinated with the response of other agencies, such as fire departments, and with the community at large.
- Recommendations for review and revision of Federal, state and local laws needed to provide the framework for control efforts and for the callup and interrelated action of public safety forces.

Chapter 13.—The Administration of Justice Under Emergency Conditions

In many of the cities which experienced disorders last summer, there were recurring breakdowns in the mechanisms for processing, prosecuting, and protecting arrested persons. These resulted mainly from long-standing structural deficiencies in criminal court systems, and from the failure of communities to anticipate and plan for the emergency demands of civil disorders.

In part, because of this, there were few successful prosecutions for serious crimes committed during the riots. In those cities where mass arrests occurred, many arrestees were deprived of basic legal rights.

The Commission recommends that the cities and states:

- Undertake reform of the lower courts so as to improve the quality of justice rendered under normal conditions.
- Plan comprehensive measures by which the criminal justice system may be supplemented during civil disorders so that its deliberative functions are protected, and the quality of justice is maintained.

Such emergency plans require broad community participation and dedicated leadership by the bench and bar. They should include:

- Laws sufficeint to deter and punish riot conduct.
- Additional judges, bail and probation officers, and clerical staff.
- Arrangements for volunteer lawyers to help prosecutors and to represent riot defendants at every stage of proceedings.
- Policies to insure proper and individual bail, arraignment, pretrial, trial, and sentencing proceedings.
- Adequate emergency processing and detention facilities.

Chapter 14.—Damages: Repair and Compensation

The Commission recommends that the Federal Government:

- Amend the Federal Disaster Act—which now applies only to natural disasters—to permit Federal emergency food and medical assistance to cities during major civil disorders, and provide long-term economic assistance afterwards.
- With the cooperation of the states, create incentives for the private insurance industry to provide more adequate property insurance coverage in inner-city areas.

The Commission endorses the report of the National Advisory Panel on Insurance in Riot-Affected Areas: "Meeting the Insurance Crisis of our Cities."

Chapter 15.—The News Media and the Disorders

In his charge to the Commission, the President asked: "What effect do the mass media have on the riots?"

The Commission determined that the answer to the President's question did not lie solely in the performance of the press and broadcasters in reporting the riots. Our analysis had to consider also the overall treatment by the media of the Negro ghettos, community relations, racial attitudes, and poverty—day by day and month by month, year in and year out.

A wide range of interviews with Government officials, law enforcement authorities, media personnel and other citizens, including ghetto residents, as well as a quantitative analysis of riot coverage and a special conference with industry representatives, leads us to conclude that:

- Despite instances of sensationalism, inaccuracy and distortion, newspapers, radio and television tried on the whole to give a balanced, factual account of the 1967 disorders.
- Elements of the news media failed to portray accurately the scale and character of the violence that occurred last summer. The overall effect was, we believe, an exaggeration of both mood and event.

■ Important segments of the media failed to report adequately on the causes and consequences of civil disorders and on the underlying problems of race relations. They have not communicated to the majority of their audience—which is white—a sense of the degradation, misery, and hopelessness of life in the ghetto.

These failings must be corrected, and the improvement must come from within the industry. Freedom of the press is not the issue. Any effort to impose governmental restrictions would be inconsistent with fundamental constitutional precepts.

We have seen evidence that the news media are becoming aware of and concerned about their performance in this field. As that concern grows, coverage will improve. But much more must be done, and it must be done soon.

The Commission recommends that the media:

■ Expand coverage of the Negro community and of race problems through permanent assignment of reporters familiar with urban and racial affairs, and through establishment of more and better links with the Negro community.

■ Integrate Negroes and Negro activities into all aspects of coverage and content, including newspaper articles and television programing. The news media must publish newspapers and produce programs that recognize the existence and activities of Negroes as a group within the community and as a part of the larger community.

■ Recruit more Negroes into journalism and broadcasting and promote those who are qualified to positions of significant responsibility. Recruitment should begin in high schools and continue through college; where necessary, aid for training should be provided.

■ Improve coordination with police in reporting riot news through advance planning, and cooperate with the police in the designation of police information officers, establishment of information centers, and development of mutually acceptable guidelines for riot reporting and the conduct of media personnel.

■ Accelerate efforts to insure accurate and responsible reporting of riot and racial news, through adoption by all news-gathering organizations of stringent internal staff guidelines.

■ Cooperate in the establishment of a privately organized and funded Institute of Urban Communications to train and educate journalists in urban affairs, recruit and train more Negro journalists, develop methods for improving police-press relations, review coverage of riots and racial issues, and support continuing research in the urban field.

Chapter 16.—The Future of the Cities

By 1985, the Negro population in central cities is expected to increase by 68 percent to approximately 20.3 million. Coupled with the continued exodus of white families to the suburbs, this growth will produce majority Negro populations in many of the Nation's largest cities.

The future of these cities, and of their burgeoning Negro populations, is grim. Most new employment opportunities are being created in suburbs and outlying areas. This trend will continue unless important changes in public policy are made.

In prospect, therefore, is further deterioration of already inadequate municipal tax bases in the face of increasing demands for public services, and continuing unemployment and poverty among the urban Negro population:

Three choices are open to the Nation:

■ We can maintain present policies, continuing both the proportion of the Nation's resources now allocated to programs for the unemployed and the disadvantaged, and the inadequate and failing effort to achieve an integrated society.

■ We can adopt a policy of "enrichment" aimed at improving dramatically the quality of ghetto life while abandoning integration as a goal.

■ We can pursue integration by combining ghetto "enrichment" with policies which will encourage Negro movement out of central city areas.

The first choice, continuance of present policies, has ominous consequences for our society. The share of the Nation's resources now allocated to programs for the disadvantaged is insufficient to arrest the deterioration of life in central-city ghettos. Under such conditions, a rising proportion of Negroes may come to see in the deprivation and segregation they experience, a justification for violent protest, or for extending support to now isolated extremists who advocate civil disruption. Large-scale and continuing violence could result, followed by white retaliation, and, ultimately, the separation of the two communities in a garrison state.

Even if violence does not occur, the consequences are unacceptable. Development of a racially integrated society, extraordinarily difficult today, will be virtually impossible when the present black central-city population of 12.1 million has grown to almost 21 million.

To continue present policies is to make permanent the division of our country into two societies: one, largely Negro and poor, located in the central cities; the other, predominantly white and affluent, located in the suburbs and in outlying areas.

The second choice, ghetto enrichment coupled with abandonment of integration, is also unacceptable. It is another way of choosing a permanently divided country. Moreover, equality cannot be achieved under conditions of nearly complete separation. In a country where the economy, and particularly the resources of employment, are predominantly white, a policy of separation can only relegate Negroes to a permanently inferior economic status.

We believe that the only possible choice for America is the third—a policy which combines ghetto enrichment with programs designed to encourage integration of substantial numbers of Negroes into the society outside the ghetto.

Enrichment must be an important adjunct to integration, for no matter how ambitious or energetic the program, few Negroes now living in central cities can be quickly integrated. In the meantime, large-scale improvement in the quality of ghetto life is essential.

But this can be no more than an interim strategy. Programs must be developed which will permit substantial Negro movement out of the ghettos. The primary goal must be a single society, in which every citizen will be free to live and work according to his capabilities and desires, not his color.

Chapter 17.—Recommendations for National Action

Introduction

No American—white or black—can escape the consequences of the continuing social and economic decay of our major cities.

Only a commitment to national action on an unprecedented scale can shape a future compatible with the historic ideals of American society.

The great productivity of our economy, and a Federal revenue system which is highly responsive to economic growth, can provide the resources.

The major need is to generate new will—the will to tax ourselves to the extent necessary to meet the vital needs of the Nation.

We have set forth goals and proposed strategies to reach those goals. We discuss and recommend programs not to commit each of us to specific parts of such programs, but to illustrate the type and dimension of action needed.

The major goal is the creation of a true union—a single society and a single American identity. Toward that goal, we propose the following objectives for national action:

■ Opening up opportunities to those who are restricted by racial segregation and discrimination, and eliminating all barriers to their choice of jobs, education, and housing.

■ Removing the frustration of powerlessness among the disadvantaged by providing the means for them to deal with the problems that affect their own lives and by increasing the capacity of our public and private institutions to respond to these problems.

■ Increasing communication across racial lines to destroy stereotypes, halt polarization, end distrust and hostility, and create common ground for efforts toward public order and social justice.

We propose these aims to fulfill our pledge of equality and to meet the fundamental needs of a democratic and civilized society—domestic peace and social justice.

Employment

Pervasive unemployment and underemployment are the most persistent and serious grievances in minority areas. They are inextricably linked to the problem of civil disorder.

Despite growing Federal expenditures for manpower development and training programs, and sustained general economic prosperity and increasing demands for skilled workers, about 2 million—white and nonwhite—are permanently unemployed. About 10 million are underemployed, of whom 6.5 million work full time for wages below the poverty line.

The 500,000 "hard-core" unemployed in the central cities who lack a basic education and are unable to hold a steady job are made up in large part of Negro males between the ages of 18 and 25. In the riot cities which we surveyed, Negroes were three times as likely as whites to hold unskilled jobs, which are often part time, seasonal, low paying and "dead end."

Negro males between the ages of 15 and 25 predominated among the rioters. More than 20 percent of the rioters were unemployed, and many who were employed held intermittent, low status, unskilled jobs which they regarded as below their education and ability.

The Commission recommends that the Federal Government:

■ Undertake joint efforts with cities and states to consolidate existing manpower programs to avoid fragmentation and duplication.

■ Take immediate action to create 2 million new jobs over the next 3 years—1 million in the public sector and 1 million in the private sector—to absorb the hard-core unemployed and materially reduce the level of underemployment for all workers, black and white. We propose 250,000 public sector and 300,000 private sector jobs in the first year.

■ Provide on-the-job training by both public and private employers with reimbursement to private employers for the extra costs of training the hard-core unemployed, by contract or by tax credits.

■ Provide tax and other incentives to investment in rural as well as urban poverty areas in order to offer to the rural poor an alternative to migration to urban centers.

■ Take new and vigorous action to remove artificial barriers to employment and promotion, including not only racial discrimination but, in certain cases, arrest records or lack of a high school diploma. Strengthen those agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, charged with eliminating discriminatory practices, and provide full support for Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act allowing Federal grant-in-aid funds to be withheld from activities which discriminate on grounds of color or race.

The Commission commends the recent public commitment of the National Council of the Building and Construction Trades Unions, AFL–CIO, to encourage and recruit Negro membership in apprenticeship programs. This commitment should be intensified and implemented.

Education

Education in a democratic society must equip children to develop their potential and to participate fully in American life. For the community at large, the schools have discharged this responsibility well. But for many minorities, and particularly for the children of the ghetto, the schools have failed to provide the educational experience which could overcome the effects of discrimination and deprivation.

This failure is one of the persistent sources of griev-

ance and resentment within the Negro community. The hostility of Negro parents and students toward the school system is generating increasing conflict and causing disruption within many city school districts. But the most dramatic evidence of the relationship between educational practices and civil disorders lies in the high incidence of riot participation by ghetto youth who have not completed high school.

The bleak record of public education for ghetto children is growing worse. In the critical skills—verbal and reading ability—Negro students are falling further behind whites with each year of school completed. The high unemployment and underemployment rate for Negro youth is evidence, in part, of the growing educational crisis.

We support integration as the priority education strategy; it is essential to the future of American society. In this last summer's disorders we have seen the consequences of racial isolation at all levels, and of attitudes toward race, on both sides, produced by three centuries of myth, ignorance, and bias. It is indispensable that opportunities for interaction between the races be expanded.

We recognize that the growing dominance of pupils from disadvantaged minorities in city school populations will not soon be reversed. No matter how great the effort toward desegregation, many children of the ghetto will not, within their school careers, attend integrated schools.

If existing disadvantages are not to be perpetuated, we must drastically improve the quality of ghetto education. Equality of results with all-white schools must be the goal.

To implement these strategies, the Commission recommends:

- Sharply increased efforts to eliminate de facto segregation in our schools through substantial federal aid to school systems seeking to desegregate either within the system or in cooperation with neighboring school systems.
- Elimination of racial discrimination in Northern as well as Southern schools by vigorous application of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Extension of quality early childhood education to every disadvantaged child in the country.
- Efforts to improve dramatically schools serving disadvantaged children through substantial federal funding of year-round quality compensatory education programs, improved teaching, and expanded experimentation and research.
- Elimination of illiteracy through greater Federal support for adult basic education.
- Enlarged opportunities for parent and community participation in the public schools.
- Reoriented vocational education emphasizing work-experience training and the involvement of business and industry.
- Expanded opportunities for higher education through increased federal assistance to disadvantaged students.
- Revision of state aid formulas to assure more per student aid to districts having a high proportion of disadvantaged school age children.

The Welfare System

Our present system of public welfare is designed to save money instead of people, and tragically ends up doing neither. This system has two critical deficiencies:

First, it excludes large numbers of persons who are in great need, and who, if provided a decent level of support, might be able to become more productive and self-sufficient. No Federal funds are available for millions of unemployed and underemployed men and women who are needy but neither aged, handicapped nor the parents of minor children.

Second, for those included, the system provides assistance well below the minimum necessary for a decent level of existence, and imposes restrictions that encourage continued dependency on welfare and undermine self-respect.

A welter of statutory requirements and administrative practices and regulations operate to remind recipients that they are considered untrustworthy, promiscuous, and lazy. Residence requirements prevent assistance to people in need who are newly arrived in the state. Searches of recipients' homes violate privacy. Inadequate social services compound the problems.

The Commission recommends that the Federal Government, acting with state and local governments where necessary, reform the existing welfare system to:

- Establish, for recipients in existing welfare categories, uniform national standards of assistance at least as high as the annual "poverty level" of income, now set by the Social Security Administration at $3,335 per year for an urban family of four.
- Require that all states receiving Federal welfare contributions participate in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Unemployed Parents Program (AFDC-UP) that permits assistance to families with both father and mother in the home, thus aiding the family while it is still intact.
- Bear a substantially greater portion of all welfare costs—at least 90 percent of total payments.
- Increase incentives for seeking employment and job training, but remove restrictions recently enacted by the Congress that would compel mothers of young children to work.
- Provide more adequate social services through neighborhood centers and family-planning program.
- Remove the freeze placed by the 1967 welfare amendments on the percentage of children in a State that can be covered by Federal assistance.
- Eliminate residence requirements.

As a long-range goal, the Commission recommends that the Federal Government seek to develop a national system of income supplementation based strictly on need with two broad and basic purposes:

- To provide, for those who can work or who do work, any necessary supplements in such a way as to develop incentives for fuller employment.
- To provide, for those who cannot work and for mothers who decide to remain with their children, a minimum standard of decent living, and to aid in saving children from the prison of poverty that has held their parents.

A broad system of supplementation would involve substantially greater Federal expenditures than anything now contemplated. The cost will range widely depending on the standard of need accepted as the "basic allowance" to individuals and families, and on the rate at which additional income above this level is taxed. Yet if the deepening cycle of poverty and dependence on welfare can be broken, if the children of the poor can be given the opportunity to scale the wall that now separates them from the rest of society, the return on this investment will be great indeed.

Housing

After more than three decades of fragmented and grossly underfunded Federal housing programs, nearly 6 million substandard housing units remain occupied in the United States.

The housing problem is particularly acute in the minority ghettos. Nearly two-thirds of all nonwhite families living in the central cities today live in neighborhoods marked by substandard housing and general urban blight. Two major factors are responsible:

First: Many ghetto residents simply cannot pay the rent necessary to support decent housing. In Detroit, for example, over 40 percent of the nonwhite-occupied units in 1960 required rent of over 35 percent of the tenants' income.

Second: Discrimination prevents access to many nonslum areas, particularly the suburbs, where good housing exists. In addition, by creating a "back pressure" in the racial ghettos, it makes it possible for landlords to break up apartments for denser occupancy, and keeps prices and rents of deteriorated ghetto housing higher than they would be in a truly free market.

To date, Federal programs have been able to do comparatively little to provide housing for the disadvantaged. In the 31-year history of subsidized Federal housing, only about 800,000 units have been constructed, with recent production averaging about 50,000 units a year. By comparison, over a period only 3 years longer, FHA insurance guarantees have made possible the construction of over 10 million middle and upper income units.

Two points are fundamental to the Commission's recommendations:

First: Federal housing programs must be given a new thrust aimed at overcoming the prevailing patterns of racial segregation. If this is not done, those programs will continue to concentrate the most impoverished and dependent segments of the population into the central-city ghettos where there is already a critical gap between the needs of the population and the public resources to deal with them.

Second: The private sector must be brought into the production and financing of low and moderate-rental housing to supply the capabilities and capital necessary to meet the housing needs of the Nation.

The Commission recommends that the Federal Government:

- Enact a comprehensive and enforceable Federal open-housing law to cover the sale or rental of all housing, including single-family homes.
- Reorient Federal housing programs to place more low- and moderate-income housing outside of ghetto areas.
- Bring within the reach of low- and moderate-income families within the next 5 years 6 million new and existing units of decent housing, beginning with 600,000 units in the next year.

To reach this goal we recommend:

- Expansion and modification of the rent supplement program to permit use of supplements for existing housing, thus greatly increasing the reach of the program.
- Expansion and modification of the below-market interest rate program to enlarge the interest subsidy to all sponsors, provide interest-free loans to nonprofit sponsors to cover preconstruction costs, and permit sale of projects to nonprofit corporations, co-operatives, or condominiums.
- Creation of an ownership supplement program similar to present rent supplements, to make home ownership possible for low-income families.
- Federal writedown of interest rates on loans to private builders constructing moderate-rent housing.
- Expansion of the public housing program, with emphasis on small units on scattered sites, and leasing and "turnkey" programs.
- Expansion of the Model Cities program.
- Expansion and reorientation of the urban renewal program to give priority to projects directly assisting low-income households to obtain adequate housing.

Conclusion

One of the first witnesses to be invited to appear before this Commission was Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, a distinguished and perceptive scholar. Referring to the reports of earlier riot commissions, he said:

> I read that report * * * of the 1919 riot in Chicago, and it is as if I were reading the report of the investigating committee on the Harlem riot of '35, the report of the investigating committee on the Harlem riot of '43, the report of the McCone Commission on the Watts riot.
>
> I must again in candor say to you members of this Commission—it is a kind of Alice in Wonderland—with the same moving picture reshown over and over again, the same analysis, the same recommendations, and the same inaction.

These words come to our minds as we conclude this report.

We have provided an honest beginning. We have learned much. But we have uncovered no startling truths, no unique insights, no simple solutions. The destruction and the bitterness of racial disorder, the harsh polemics of black revolt and white repression have been seen and heard before in this country.

It is time now to end the destruction and the violence, not only in the streets of the ghetto but in the lives of people.

Preface

I

The summer of 1967 brought racial disorder again to American cities, deepening the bitter residue of fear and threatening the future of all Americans.

We are charged by the President with the responsibility to examine this condition and to speak the truth as we see it. Two fundamental questions confront us:

How can we as a people end the resort to violence while we build a better society?

How can the Nation realize the promise of a single society—one nation indivisible—which yet remains unfulfilled?

Violence surely cannot build that society. Disruption and disorder will nourish not justice but repression. Those few who would destroy civil order and the rule of law strike at the freedom of every citizen. They must know that the community cannot and will not tolerate coercion and mob action.

We have worked together these past months with a sense of the greatest urgency. Although much remains that can be learned, we have determined to say now what we already have learned. We do this in the hope that the American public will understand the nature and gravity of the problem and that those who have power to act—at all levels of government and in all sections of the community—will listen and respond.

This sense of urgency has led us to consolidate in this single report the interim and final reports called for by the President. To accomplish this, it has been necessary to do without the benefit of some studies still under way which will not be completed for months to come. Certain of these studies—a 15-city survey of Negro and white attitudes, a special survey of attitudes of community leaders, elected officials, administrators and teachers, a report on the application of mediation techniques, and a further analysis of riot arrestees—will be issued later, with other materials, as supplemental reports.

We believe that to wait until midsummer to present our findings and recommendations may be to forfeit whatever opportunity exists for this report to affect, this year, the dangerous climate of tension and apprehension that pervades our cities.

II

Last summer over 150 cities reported disorders in Negro—and in some instances, Puerto Rican—neighborhoods. These ranged from minor disturbances to major outbursts involving sustained and widespread looting and destruction of property. The worst came during a 2-week period in July when large-scale disorders erupted first in Newark and then in Detroit, each setting off a chain reaction in neighboring communities.

It was in this troubled and turbulent setting that the President of the United States established this Commission. He called upon it "to guide the country through a thicket of tension, conflicting evidence and extreme opinions."

In his charge, the President framed the Commission's mandate in these words:

"We need to know the answers to three basic questions about these riots:

—What happened?

—Why did it happen?

—What can be done to prevent it from happening again and again?"

The three parts of this report offer answers to these questions.

Part I tells "What happened?" Chapter 1 is a profile of the 1967 disorders told through a narrative of the summer's events in 10 of the 23 cities surveyed by the Commission. Chapter 2 calls on data from all 23 cities to construct an analytical profile. Chapter 3 is the report of the Commission on the issue of conspiracy.

Part II responds to the question, "Why did it happen?" Early in our investigation it became clear that the disorders were not the result of contemporary conditions alone; Chapter 5 identifies some of the historical factors that are an essential part of the background of last summer's outbreaks. Chapters 6 through 9 deal with present conditions, examining the impact of ghetto formation, unemployment, and family structures, and conditions of life in the ghettos, and the differences between the Negro experience and that of other urban immigrant groups.

Part III contains our answer to the question, "What can be done?" Our recommendations begin with organizing the community to respond more effectively to ghetto needs and then proceed with police-community relations, control of disorders, the administration of justice under emergency conditions, compensation for property damage, the role of the news media, and national action in the critical areas of employment, education, welfare and housing.

In formulating this report, we have attempted to draw on all relevant sources. During closed hearings held from August through December, we heard over 130 witnesses, including Federal, state and local officials, experts from the military establishment and law enforcement agencies, universities and foundations, Negro leaders, and representatives of the business community. We personally visited eight cities in which major disturbances had occurred. We met together for 24 days to review and revise the several drafts of our report. Through our staff, we also undertook field surveys in 23 cities in which disorders occurred during the summer of 1967, and took sworn testimony in nine of the cities investigated and from Negro leaders and militants across the country. Expert consultants and advisers supplemented the work of our staff in all the areas covered in our report.

III

Much of our report is directed to the condition of those Americans who are also Negroes and to the social and economic environment in which they live—many in the black ghettos of our cities. But this Nation is confronted with the issue of justice for all its people—white as well as black, rural as well as urban. In particular, we are concerned for those who have continued to keep faith with society in the preservation of public order—the people of Spanish surname, the American Indian and other minority groups to whom this country owes so much.

We wish it to be clear that in focusing on the Negro, we do not mean to imply any priority of need. It will not do to fight misery in the black ghetto and leave untouched the reality of injustice and deprivation elsewhere in our society. The first priority is order and justice for all Americans.

In speaking of the Negro, we do not speak of "them." We speak of us—for the freedoms and opportunities of all Americans are diminished and imperiled when they are denied to some Americans. The tragic waste of human spirit and resources, the unrecoverable loss to the Nation which this denial has already caused—and continues to produce—no longer can be ignored or afforded.

Two premises underlie the work of the Commission:

- That this Nation cannot abide violence and disorder if it is to ensure the safety of its people and their progress in a free society.
- That this Nation will deserve neither safety nor progress unless it can demonstrate the wisdom and the will to undertake decisive action against the root causes of racial disorder.

This report is addressed to the institutions of government and to the conscience of the Nation, but even more urgently, to the mind and heart of each citizen. The responsibility for decisive action, never more clearly demanded in the history of our country, rests on all of us.

We do not know whether the tide of racial disorder has begun to recede. We recognize as we must that the conditions underlying the disorders will not be obliterated before the end of this year or the end of the next and that so long as these conditions exist a potential for disorder remains. But we believe that the likelihood of disorder can be markedly lessened by an American commitment to confront those conditions and eliminate them—a commitment so clear that Negro citizens will know its truth and accept its goal. The most important step toward domestic peace is an act of will; this country can do for its people what it chooses to do.

The pages that follow set forth our conclusions and the facts upon which they are based. Our plea for civil order and our recommendations for social and economic change are a call to national action. We are aware of the breadth and scope of those recommendations, but they neither probe deeper nor demand more than the problems which call them forth.

Part I: What Happened?

Chapter 1
Profiles of Disorder
INTRODUCTION

The President directed the Commission to produce "a profile of the riots—of the rioters, of their environment, of their victims, of their causes and effects."

In response to this mandate the Commission constructed profiles of the riots in 10 of the 23 cities under investigation. Brief summaries of what were often conflicting views and perceptions of confusing episodes, they are, we believe, a fair and accurate picture of what happened.

From the profiles, we have sought to build a composite view of the riots as well as of the environment out of which they erupted.

* * * * *

The summer of 1967 was not the beginning of the current wave of disorders. Omens of violence had appeared much earlier.

1963–64

In 1963, serious disorders, involving both whites and Negroes, broke out in Birmingham, Savannah, Cambridge, Md., Chicago, and Philadelphia. Sometimes the mobs battled each other; more often they fought the police.

The most violent encounters took place in Birmingham. Police used dogs, firehoses, and cattle prods against marchers, many of whom were children. White racists shot at Negroes and bombed Negro residences. Negroes retaliated by burning white-owned businesses in Negro areas. On a quiet Sunday morning, a bomb exploded beneath a Negro church. Four young girls in a Sunday school class were killed.

In the spring of 1964, the arrest and conviction of civil rights demonstrators provoked violence in Jacksonville. A shot fired from a passing car killed a Negro woman. When a bomb threat forced evacuation of an all-Negro high school, the students stoned policemen and firemen and burned the cars of newsmen. For the first time, Negroes used Molotov cocktails in setting fires.

Two weeks later, at a demonstration protesting school segregation in Cleveland, a bulldozer accidentally killed a young white minister. When police moved in to disperse a crowd composed primarily of Negroes, violence erupted.

In late June, white segregationists broke through police lines and attacked civil rights demonstrators in St. Augustine, Florida. In Philadelphia, Mississippi, law enforcement officers were implicated in the lynch murders of three civil rights workers. On July 10, Ku Klux Klansmen shot and killed a Negro U.S. Army lieutenant colonel, Lemuel Penn, as he was driving through Georgia.

On July 16, in New York City, several young Negroes walking to summer school classes became involved in a dispute with a white building superintendent. When an off-duty police lieutenant intervened, a 15-year-old boy attacked him with a knife. The officer shot and killed the boy.

A crowd of teenagers gathered and smashed store windows. Police arrived in force and dispersed the group.

On the following day, the Progressive Labor Movement, a Marxist-Leninist organization, printed and passed out inflammatory leaflets charging the police with brutality.

On the second day after the shooting, a rally called by the Congress of Racial Equality to protest the Mississippi lynch murders developed into a march on a precinct police station. The crowd clashed with the police; one person was killed, and 12 police officers and 19 citizens were injured.

For several days thereafter, the pattern was repeated: despite exhortations of Negro community leaders against violence, protest rallies became uncontrollable. Police battled mobs in Harlem and in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. Firemen fought fires started with Molotov cocktails. When bricks and bottles were thrown, police responded with gunfire. Widespread looting followed and many persons were injured.

A week later, a riot broke out in Rochester when police tried to arrest an intoxicated Negro youth at a street dance. After 2 days of violence, the National Guard restored order.

During the first 2 weeks of August, disorders took place in three New Jersey communities: Jersey City, Elizabeth, and Paterson.

On August 15, when a white liquor store owner in the Chicago suburb of Dixmoor had a Negro woman arrested for stealing a bottle of whiskey, he was accused of having manhandled her. A crowd gathered in front of the store, broke the store window, and threw rocks at passing cars. The police restored order. The next day, when the disturbance was renewed, a Molotov cocktail set the liquor store afire. Several persons were injured.

The final violence of the summer occurred in Philadelphia. A Negro couple's car stalled at an intersection in an area known as "The Jungle"—where, with almost 2,000 persons living in each block, there is the greatest incidence of crime, disease, unemployment, and poverty in the city. When two police officers, one white and one black, attempted to move the car, the wife of the owner became abusive, and the officers arrested her. Police officers and Negro spectators gathered at the scene. Two nights of rioting, resulting in extensive damage, followed.

1965

In the spring of 1965, the Nation's attention shifted back to the South. When civil rights workers staged a nonviolent demonstration in Selma, Alabama, police and state troopers forcibly interrupted their march. Within the next few weeks racists murdered a white clergyman and a white housewife active in civil rights.

In the small Louisiana town of Bogalusa, when Negro demonstrators attacked by whites received inadequate police protection, the Negroes formed a self-defense group called the "Deacons for Defense and Justice."

As late as the second week of August, there had been few disturbances outside the South. But, on the evening of August 11, as Los Angeles sweltered in a heat wave, a highway patrolman halted a young Negro driver for speeding. The young man appeared intoxicated, and the patrolman arrested him. As a crowd gathered, law enforcement officers were called to the scene. A highway patrolman mistakenly struck a bystander with his billy club. A young Negro woman, who was accused of spitting on the police, was dragged into the middle of the street.

When the police departed, members of the crowd began hurling rocks at passing cars, beating white motorists, and overturning cars and setting them on fire. The police reacted hesitantly. Actions they did take further inflamed the people on the streets.

The following day, the area was calm. Community leaders attempting to mediate between Negro residents and the police received little cooperation from municipal authorities. That evening the previous night's pattern of violence was repeated.

Not until almost 30 hours after the initial flareup did window smashing, looting, and arson begin. Yet the police utilized only a small part of their forces.

Few police were on hand the next morning when huge crowds gathered in the business district of Watts, 2 miles from the location of the original disturbance, and began looting. In the absence of police response, the looting became bolder and spread into other areas. Hundreds of women and children from five housing projects clustered in or near Watts took part. Around noon, extensive firebombing began. Few white persons were attacked; the principal intent of the rioters now seemed to be to destroy property owned by whites in order to drive white "exploiters" out of the ghetto.

The chief of police asked for National Guard help, but the arrival of the military units was delayed for several hours. When the Guardsmen arrived, they, together with police, made heavy use of firearms. Reports of "sniper fire" increased. Several persons were killed by mistake. Many more were injured.

Thirty-six hours after the first Guard units arrived, the main force of the riot had been blunted. Almost 4,000 persons were arrested. Thirty-four were killed and hundreds injured. Approximately $35 million in damage had been inflicted.

The Los Angeles riot, the worst in the United States since the Detroit riot of 1943, shocked all who had been confident that race relations were improving in the North, and evoked a new mood in Negro ghettos across the country.

1966

The events of 1966 made it appear that domestic turmoil had become part of the American scene.

In March, a fight between several Negroes and Mexican-Americans resulted in a new flareup in Watts. In May, after a police officer accidentally shot and killed a Negro, demonstrations by Negro militants again increased tension in Los Angeles.

Evidence was accumulating that a major proportion of riot participants were youths. Increasing race pride, skepticism about their job prospects, and dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of their education, caused unrest among students in Negro colleges and high schools throughout the country. Students and youths were the principal participants in at least six of the 13 spring and early summer disorders of 1966.

July 12, 1966, was a hot day in Chicago. Negro youngsters were playing in water gushing from an illegally opened fire hydrant. Two police officers, arriving on the scene, closed the hydrant. A Negro youth turned it on again, and the police officers arrested him. A crowd gathered. Police reinforcements arrived. As the crowd became unruly, seven Negro youth were arrested.

Rumors spread that the arrested youths had been beaten and that police were turning off fire hydrants in Negro neighborhoods but leaving them on in white areas. Sporadic window breaking, rock throwing, and firebombing lasted for several hours. Most of the participants were teenagers.

In Chicago, as in other cities, the long-standing grievances of the Negro community needed only minor incidents to trigger violence.

In 1961 when Negroes, after being evacuated from a burning tenement, had been sheltered in a church in an all-white area, a crowd of residents had gathered and threatened to attack the church unless the Negroes were removed.

Segregated schools and housing had led to repeated picketing and marches by civil rights organizations. When marchers had gone into white neighborhoods, they had been met on several occasions by KKK signs and crowds throwing eggs and tomatoes. In 1965, when a Chicago firetruck had killed a Negro woman in an accident, Negroes had congregated to protest against the fire station's all-white complement. Rock throwing and looting had broken out. More than 170 persons were arrested in 2 days.

On the evening of July 13, 1966, the day after the fire hydrant incident, rock throwing, looting and firebombing began again. For several days thereafter, the pattern of violence was repeated. Police responding to calls were subjected to random gunfire. Rumors spread. The press talked in highly exaggerated terms of "guerrilla warfare" and "sniper fire."

Before the police and 4,200 National Guardsmen managed to restore order, scores of civilians and police had been injured. There were 533 arrests, including 155 juveniles. Three Negroes were killed by stray bullets, among them a 13-year-old boy and a 14-year-old pregnant girl.

Less than a week later, Ohio National Guardsmen were mobilized to deal with an outbreak of rioting that continued for 4 nights in the Hough section of Cleveland. It is probable that Negro extremists, although they neither instigated nor organized the disorder, exploited and enlarged it. Amidst widespread reports of "sniper fire," four Negroes, including one young woman, were killed; many others, several children among them, were injured. Law enforcement officers were responsible for two of the deaths, a white man firing from a car for a third, and a group of young white vigilantes for the fourth.

Some news media keeping "tally sheets" of the disturbances began to apply the term "riot" to acts of vandalism and relatively minor disorders.

At the end of July, the National States Rights Party, a white extremist organization that advocates deporting Negroes and other minorities, preached racial hatred at a series of rallies in Baltimore. Bands of white youths were incited into chasing and beating Negroes. A court order halted the rallies.

Forty-three disorders and riots were reported during 1966. Although there were considerable variations in circumstances, intensity, and length, they were usually ignited by a minor incident fueled by antagonism between the Negro population and the police.

Spring, 1967

In the spring of 1967, disorders broke out at three Southern Negro universities at which SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), a militant anti-white organization, had been attempting to organize the students.

On Friday, April 7, learning that Stokely Carmichael was speaking at two primarily Negro universities, Fisk and Tennessee A&I, in Nashville, and receiving information that some persons were preparing to riot, the police adopted an emergency riot plan. On the following day, Carmichael and others, including South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond, spoke at a symposium at Vanderbilt University.

That evening, the Negro operator of a restaurant located near Fisk University summoned police to arrest an allegedly intoxicated Negro soldier.

Within a few minutes, students, many of them members of SNCC, began to picket the restaurant. A squad of riot police arrived and soon became the focus of attention. Spectators gathered. When a city bus was halted and attacked by members of the crowd, a Negro police lieutenant fired five shots into the air.

Rocks and bottles were thrown and additional police were called into the area. Officers fired a number of shots over the heads of the crowd. The students and spectators gradually dispersed.

On the following evening, after negotiations between

students and police broke down, crowds again began forming. Police fired over their heads, and shots were fired back at the police. On the fringes of the campus, several white youths aimed shots at a police patrol wagon.

A few days later, when police raided the home of several young Negro militants, they confiscated a half-dozen bottles prepared as Molotov cocktails.

About a month later, students at Jackson State College, in Jackson, Mississippi, were standing around after a political rally when two Negro police officers pursued a speeding car, driven by a Negro student, onto the campus. When the officers tried to arrest the driver, the students interfered. The police called for reinforcements. A crowd of several hundred persons quickly gathered, and a few rocks were thrown.

On the following evening, an even larger crowd assembled. When police attempted to disperse it by gunfire, three persons were hit. One of them, a young Negro, died the next day. The National Guard restored order.

Six days later, on May 16, two separate Negro protests were taking place in Houston. One group was picketing a garbage dump in a Negro residential neighborhood, where a Negro child had drowned. Another was demonstrating at a junior high school on the grounds that Negro students were disciplined more harshly than white.

That evening college students who had participated in the protests returned to the campus of Texas Southern University. About 50 of them were grouped around a 21-year-old student, D.W., a Vietnam veteran, who was seeking to stimulate further protest action. A dispute broke out, and D.W. reportedly slapped another student. When the student threatened D.W., he left, armed himself with a pistol, and returned.

In response to the report of a disturbance, two unmarked police cars with four officers arrived. Two of the officers questioned D.W., discovered he was armed with a pistol, and arrested him.

A short time later, when one of the police cars returned to the campus, it was met by rocks and bottles thrown by students. As police called for reinforcements, sporadic gunshots reportedly came from the men's dormitory. The police returned the fire.

For several hours, gunfire punctuated unsuccessful attempts by community leaders to negotiate a truce between the students and the police.

When several tar barrels were set afire in the street and hooting broke out again, police decided to enter the dormitory. A patrolman, struck by a ricocheting bullet, was killed. After clearing all 480 occupants from the building, police searched it and found one shotgun and two .22 caliber pistols. The origin of the shot that killed the officer was not determined.

As the summer of 1967 approached, Americans, conditioned by 3 years of reports of riots, expected violence. But they had no answers to hard questions: What was causing the turmoil? Was it organized and, if so, by whom? Was there a pattern to the disorders?

I. TAMPA

On Sunday, June 11, 1967, Tampa, Fla., sweltered in the 94-degree heat. A humid wind ruffled the bay, where thousands of persons watched the hydroplane races. Since early morning the police department's Selective Enforcement Unit, designed as a riot control squad, had been employed to keep order at the races.

At 5:30 p.m., a block from the waterfront, a photo supply warehouse was broken into. Forty-five minutes later, two police officers spotted three Negro youths as they walked near the State Building. When the youths caught sight of the officers, they ducked into an alley. The officers gave chase. As they ran, the suspects left a trail of photographic equipment scattered from yellow paper bags they were carrying.

The officers transmitted a general broadcast over the police radio. As other officers arrived on the scene, a chase began through and around the streets, houses, and alleys of the neighborhood. When Negro residents of the area adjacent to the Central Park Village housing project became aware of the chase, they began to participate. Some attempted to help the officers in locating the suspects.

R. C. Oates, one of 17 Negroes on the 511-man Tampa police force, spotted 19-year-old Martin Chambers, bare to the waist, wriggling away beneath one of the houses. Oates called for Chambers to surrender. Ignoring him, Chambers emerged running from beneath the house. A white officer, J. L. Calvert, took up the pursuit.

Pursuing Calvert, in turn, were three young Negroes, all spectators. Behind one of the houses a high cyclone fence created a 2-foot wide alley 25 feet in length.

As Chambers darted along the fence, Officer Calvert rounded the corner of the house. Calvert yelled to him to halt. Chambers ignored him. Calvert pointed his .38 revolver and fired. The slug entered the back of Chambers and passed completely through his body. Raising his hands over his head, he clutched at the cyclone fence.

When the three youths running behind Officer Calvert came upon the scene, they assumed Chambers had been shot standing in the position in which they saw him. Rumor quickly spread through the neighborhood that a white police officer had shot a Negro youth who had had his hands over his head and was trying to surrender.

The ambulance that had been summoned became lost on the way. The gathering crowd viewing the bloody, critically injured youth grew increasingly belligerent.

Finally, Officer Oates loaded Chambers into his car and drove him to the hospital. The youth died shortly thereafter.

As officers were leaving the scene, a thunderstorm broke. Beneath the pelting rain, the spectators scattered. When an officer went back to check the area he found no one on the streets.

A few minutes after 7 p.m., the Selective Enforcement Unit, tired and sun-parched, reported in from the races. A half hour later, a report was received that 500 persons were gathering. A police car was sent into the area to check the report. The officers could find no one. The men of the Selective Enforcement Unit were told to go home.

The men in the scout car had not, however, penetrated into the Central Park Village housing complex where, as the rain ended, hundreds of persons poured from the apartments. At least half were teenagers and young adults. As they began to mill about and discuss the shooting, old grievances, both real and imagined, were resurrected: discriminatory practices of local stores, advantages taken by white men of Negro girls, the kicking in the face of a Negro by a white man as the Negro lay handcuffed on the ground, blackballing of two Negro high schools by the athletic conference.

Although officials prided themselves on supposedly good race relations and relative acceptance by whites of integration of schools and facilities, Negroes, composing almost 20 percent of the population,[1] had had no one of their own race to represent them in positions of policy or power, nor to appeal to for redress of grievances.

There was no Negro on the city council; none on the school board; none in the fire department; none of high rank on the police force. Six of every 10 houses inhabited by Negroes were unsound. Many were shacks with broken window panes, gas leaks, and rat holes in the walls. Rents averaged $50 to $60 a month. Such recreational facilities as did exist lacked equipment and supervisors. Young toughs intimidated the children who tried to use them.

The majority of Negro children never reached the eighth grade. In the high schools, only 3 to 4 percent of Negro seniors attained the minimum passing score on the State's college entrance examination, one-tenth the percentage of white students.

A difference of at least three-and-a-half years in educational attainment separated the average Negro and white. Fifty-five percent of the Negro men in Tampa were working in unskilled jobs. More than half of the families had incomes of less than $3,000 a year. The result was that 40 percent of the Negro children lived in broken homes, and the city's crime rate ranked in the top 25 percent in the Nation.

About a month before, police-community relations had been severely strained by the actions of a pair of white officers who were subsequently transferred to another beat.

When Officer Oates returned to the area, he attempted to convince the crowd to disperse by announcing that a complete investigation would be made into the shooting. He seemed to be making headway when a young woman came running down the street screaming that the police had killed her brother. Her hysteria galvanized the crowd. Rock throwing began. Police cars driving into the area were stoned. The police, relying on a previous experience when, after withdrawal of their units, the crowd had dispersed, decided to send no more patrol cars into the vicinity.

This time the maneuver did not work. From nearby

Tampa, June 1967

[1] Throughout the report, in the presentation of statistics *Negro* is used interchangeably with *nonwhite*. Wherever available, current data are used. Where no updating has been possible, figures are those of the 1960 census. Sources are the U.S. Bureau of the Census and other Government agencies, and, in a few instances, special studies.

bars and tawdry night spots patrons joined the throng. A window was smashed. Haphazard looting began. As fluid bands of rioters moved down the Central Avenue business district, stores whose proprietors were particularly disliked were singled out. A grocery store, a liquor store, a restaurant were hit. The first fire was set.

Because of the dismissal of the Selective Enforcement Unit and the lack of accurate intelligence information, the police department was slow to react. Although Sheriff Malcolm Beard of Hillsborough County was in contact with the Department throughout the evening, it was not until after 11 p.m. that a request for deputies was made to him.

At 11:30 p.m., a recall order, issued earlier by the police department, began to bring officers back into the area. By this time, the streets in the vicinity of the housing project were lighted by the flames of burning buildings.

Falling power lines whipped sparks about the skirmish line of officers as they moved down the street. The popping noise of what sounded to the officers like gunshots came from the direction of the housing project.

The officers did not return the fire. Police announced from a sound car that anyone caught armed would be shot. The firing ceased. Then, and throughout the succeeding 2 days, law enforcement officers refrained from the use of firearms. No officer or civilian suffered a gunshot wound during the riot.

Driving along the expressway, a young white couple, Mr. and Mrs. C. D., were startled by the fires. Deciding to investigate, they took the off-ramp into the midst of the riot. The car was swarmed over. Its windows were shattered. C. D. was dragged into the street.

As he emerged from a bar in which he had spent the evening, 19-year old J. C., a Negro fruit-picker from Arkansas, was as surprised by the riot as Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Rushing toward the station wagon in which the young woman was trapped, he interposed himself between her and the mob. Although rocks and beer cans smashed the windows, she was able to drive off. J. C. pushed through to where the white man lay. With the hoots and jeers of rioting youths ringing in his ears, J. C. helped him, also, to escape.

By 1 a.m., police officers and sheriff's deputies had surrounded an area several blocks square. Firemen began to extinguish the flames which, by this time, had spread to several other establishments from the three stores in which they had, originally, been set. No resistance was met. Control was soon reestablished.

"White Hats" in Tampa, June 1967

Governor Claude Kirk flew to Tampa. Since the chief of police was absent, and since the Governor regarded the sheriff as his "direct arm," Sheriff Beard was placed in charge of the combined forces of the police and sheriff's departments.

For the next 12 hours, the situation remained quiet but tense. By the afternoon of Monday, June 12, the sheriff's and police forces both had been fully committed. The men were tired. There were none in reserve.

As a precaution, the sheriff requested that a National Guard contingent be made available.

Late in the afternoon, Governor Kirk met with the residents at a school in the Central Park Village area. It was a tense meeting. Most speakers, whether white or Negro, were booed and hissed. The meeting broke up without concrete results. Nevertheless, the Governor believed it had enabled the residents to let off steam.

That evening, as National Guard troops began to supplant local forces in maintaining a perimeter and establishing roving patrols, antipoverty workers went from door to door, urging citizens to stay off the streets.

A reported attempt by Black Muslims to incite further violence failed. Although there were scattered reports of trouble from several areas of the city, and a few fires were set—largely in vacant buildings—there were no major incidents. Several youths with a cache of Molotov cocktails were arrested. They were white.

All the next day, false reports poured into police headquarters. Everyday scenes took on menacing tones. Twenty Negro men, bared to the waist and carrying clubs, were reported to be gathering. They turned out to be construction workers.

Mayor Nuccio met with residents. At their suggestion that the man most likely to carry weight with the youngsters was Coach Jim Williams, he placed a call to Tallahassee, where Williams was attending a coaching clinic.

An impressive-looking man with graying hair, Williams arrived in Tampa almost 48 hours after the shooting of Martin Chambers. Together with another coach, he went to an eatery called The Greek Stand, behind which he found a number of youngsters fashioning an arsenal of bottles, bricks, and Molotov cocktails. As in the crowds that were once more beginning to gather, the principal complaint was the presence of the National Guard, which, the residents asserted, gave them a feeling of being hemmed in. Williams decided to attempt to negotiate the removal of the National Guard if the people would agree to keep the peace and to disperse.

When Sheriff Beard arrived at a meeting called for the College Hill Elementary School, Robert Gilder of the NAACP was speaking to leaders of the Negro youth. Some were college students who had been unable to get summer jobs. One was a Vietnam veteran who had been turned down for a position as a swimming pool lifeguard. The youths believed that discrimination had played a part in their failure to find jobs.

The suggestion was made to Sheriff Beard that the National Guard be pulled out of the Negro areas and that these young men, as well as others, be given the opportunity to keep order. The idea, which was encouraged by James Hammond, Director of the Commission of Community Relations, made sense to the sheriff. He decided to take a chance on the Youth Patrol.

In another part of the city, West Tampa, two Negro community leaders, Dr. James O. Brookins and attorney Delano S. Stewart, were advised by acquaintances that, unless the intensive patrolling of Negro neighborhoods ceased, people planned to set fires in industrial districts that evening. Like Coach Williams, Dr. Brookins and Stewart contacted neighborhood youths and invited Sheriff Beard to a meeting. The concept of the Youth Patrol was expanded. Participants were identified first by phosphorescent arm bands and later by white hats.

During the next 24 hours, 126 youths, some of whom had participated in the riot, were recruited into the patrol. Many were high school dropouts.

On Wednesday, the inquiry into the death of Martin Chambers was concluded. With the verdict that Officer Calvert had fired the shot justifiably and in the line of duty, apprehension rose that trouble would erupt again. The leaders of the Youth Patrol were called in. The Sheriff explained the law to them and pointed out that the verdict was in conformance with the law. Despite the fact that the verdict was not to their liking, the White Hats continued to keep order.

II. CINCINNATI

On Monday, June 12, before order had been restored in Tampa, trouble erupted 940 miles away in Cincinnati.

Beginning in October 1965, assaults on middle-aged white women, several of whom were murdered, had generated an atmosphere of fear. When the "Cincinnati Strangler" was tentatively identified as a Negro, a new element of tension was injected into relations between the races.

In December 1966, a Negro jazz musician named Posteal Laskey was arrested and charged with one of the murders. In May of 1967, he was convicted and sentenced to death. Two of the principal witnesses against Laskey were Negroes. Nevertheless, many Ne-

groes felt that because of the charged atmosphere, he had not received a fair trial.

They were further aroused when, at about the same time, a white man, convicted of manslaughter in the death of his girlfriend, received a suspended sentence. Although the cases were dissimilar, there was talk in the Negro community that the difference in the sentences demonstrated a double standard of justice for white and for black.

A drive began in the Negro community to raise funds for an appeal. Laskey's cousin, Peter Frakes, began walking the streets on behalf of this appeal carrying a sandwich board declaring: "Cincinnati Guilty—Laskey Innocent." After warning him several times, police arrested Frakes on a charge of blocking pedestrian traffic.

Many Negroes viewed his arrest as evidence of police harassment, similar to the apparently selective enforcement of the city's antiloitering ordinance. Between January 1966, and June 1967, 170 of some 240 persons arrested under the ordinance were Negro.

Frakes was arrested at 12:35 a.m. on Sunday, June 11. That evening, concurrent with the commencement of a Negro Baptist convention, it was announced in one of the churches that a meeting to protest the Frakes arrest and the antiloitering ordinance would be held the following night on the grounds of a junior high school in the Avondale District.

Part of the significance of such a protest meeting lay in the context of past events. Without the city's realizing what was occurring, over the years protest through political and nonviolent channels had become increasingly difficult for Negroes. To young, militant Negroes, especially, such protest appeared to have become almost futile.

Although the city's Negro population had been rising swiftly—in 1967, 135,000 out of the city's 500,000 residents were Negroes—there was only one Negro on the city council. In the 1950's with a far smaller Negro population, there had been two. Negroes attributed this to dilution of the Negro vote through abolition of the proportional representation system of electing the nine councilmen.

Although, by 1967, 40 percent of the schoolchildren were Negro, there was only one Negro on the board of education. Of more than 80 members of various city commissions, only three or four were Negro.

Under the leadership of the NAACP, picketing, to protest lack of Negro membership in building trades unions, took place at the construction site of a new city convention hall. It produced no results. When the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, who had been one of the leaders of the Birmingham demonstrations of 1963, staged a protest against alleged discriminatory practices at the county hospital, he and his followers were arrested and convicted of trespassing.

Traditional Negro leaders drawn from the middle class lost influence as promises made by the city produced petty results. In the spring of 1967, a group of 14 white and 14 Negro business and community leaders, called the Committee of 28, talked about 2,000 job openings for young Negroes. Only 65 materialized. Almost one out of every eight Cincinnati Negroes was unemployed. Two of every five Negro families were living on or below the border of poverty.

A study of the West End section of the city indicated that one out of every four Negro men living there was out of work. In one public housing area, two-thirds of the fathers were missing. Of private housing occupied by Negroes, one-fourth was overcrowded, and half was deteriorated or dilapidated.

In the 90-degree temperature of Monday, June 12, as throughout the summer, Negro youngsters roamed the streets. The two swimming pools available to them could accommodate only a handful. In the Avondale section—once a prosperous white middle class community, but now the home of more than half the city's Negro population—Negro youths watched white workers going to work at white-owned stores and businesses. One youth began to count the number of delivery trucks being driven by Negroes. During the course of the afternoon, of the 52 trucks he counted, only one had a Negro driver. His sampling was remarkably accurate. According to a study conducted by the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, less than 2 percent of truckdrivers in the Cincinnati area are Negro.

Late in the afternoon, the youths began to interfere with deliveries being made by white drivers. Dr. Bruce Green, president of the local NAACP chapter, was notified. Dr. Green asked his colleague, Dr. Robert Reid, the director of the Opportunities Industrialization Center, to go and try to calm the youngsters. Dr. Reid found several whom he knew, and convinced them to go with him to the Avondale Special Services Office to talk things over.

They were drawing up plans for a meeting with merchants of the Avondale area when word came of an altercation at a nearby drugstore. Several of the youths left the meeting and rushed over to the store. Dr. Reid followed them. The owner of the store was complaining to the police that earlier the youths had been interfering with his business; he declared that he wasn't going to stand for it.

Dr. Reid was attempting to mediate when a police sergeant arrived and asked the officers what was going on. One allegedly replied that they had been called in because "young nigger punks were disrupting deliveries to the stores."

A dispute arose between Dr. Reid and the sergeant as to whether the officer had said "nigger." After further discussion, the sergeant told the kids to "break it up!" Dr. Reid, together with some of the youngsters, returned to the Special Services Office. After talking to the youngsters again, Dr. Reid left to attend a meeting elsewhere.

Soon after, some of the youngsters headed for the junior high school, where the meeting protesting the Frakes arrest and the antiloitering ordinance was scheduled to take place.

The police department, alerted to the possibility of a disturbance, mobilized. However, the police were wary of becoming, as some Negro militants had complained, an inciting factor. Some months earlier, when Ku Klux Klansmen had been attracted to the scene of a speech by Stokely Carmichael, a Negro crowd, reacting to the heavy police patrolling, had gathered about the car of a plainclothesman and attempted to overturn it. On Monday, June 12, the department decided to withhold its men from the immediate area of the meeting.

It appeared for a time as if this policy might be rewarded. Near the end of the rally, however, a Negro real estate broker arose to defend the police and the antiloitering ordinance. The crowd, including the youngsters who had had the encounter with the police officers only a short time earlier, was incensed. When the meeting broke up, a missile was hurled through the window of a nearby church. A small fire was set in the street. A Molotov cocktail was thrown through the window of a drug store.

The police were able to react quickly. There was only one major confrontation between them and the mob. Little resistance was offered.

Although windows were broken in some two dozen stores, there was virtually no looting. There were 14 arrests, some unconnected with the disturbance. Among those arrested was a community worker, now studying for a doctorate at Brandeis University. When he went to the area to help get people off the streets, he was arrested and charged with loitering.

The next morning, a judge of the Municipal Court, before whom most of the persons charged were to be brought, said he intended to mete out the maximum sentence to anyone found guilty of a riot-connected offense. Although the judge later told the Commission that he knew his statement was a "violation of judicial ethics," he said that he made it because the "city was in a state of siege," and he intended it to act as a deterrent against further violence.

Maximum sentences were, in fact, pronounced by the judge on all convicted in his court, regardless of the circumstances of the arrest, or the background of the persons arrested. Police were charging most white persons arrested with disorderly conduct—for which the maximum sentence is 30 days in jail and a $100 fine. Many Negroes, however, were charged with violation of the Riot Act—for which the maximum sentence is 1 year in jail plus a $500 fine. Consequently, a major portion of the Negro community viewed this as an example of discriminatory justice.

Tuesday morning, Negro leaders presented a list of 11 demands and grievances stemming from the Monday night meeting to the municipal government. Included were demands for repeal of the antiloitering law, release of all prisoners arrested during the disturbance, full employment for Negroes, and equal justice in the courts.

Municipal officials agreed that the city council would consider the demands. However, they rejected a suggestion that they attend an open-air meeting of residents in the Avondale section. City leaders did not want to give stature to the militants by recognizing them as the *de facto* representatives of the community. Yet, by all indications, the militants were the only persons with influence on the people on the streets.

Mayor Walton H. Bachrach declared that he was "quite surprised" by the disturbance because the council had "worked like hell" to help Negroes. Municipal officials, whose contacts were, as in other cities, generally with a few middle-class Negroes, appeared not to realize the volatile frustrations of Negroes in the ghetto.

Early in the evening a crowd, consisting mostly of teenagers and young adults, began to gather in the Avondale District. When, after a short time, no one appeared to give direction, they began to mill about. A few minutes before 7 p.m., cars were stoned and windows were broken. Police moved in to disperse the gathering.

Fires were set. When firemen reached the scene they were barraged with rocks and bottles. A full-scale confrontation took place between police riot squads and the Negro crowd. As police swept the streets, people scattered. According to the chief of police, at approximately 7:15, "All hell broke loose."

The disorder leaped to other sections of the city. The confusion and rapidity with which it spread made it almost impossible to determine its scope.

Many reports of fires set by Molotov cocktails, cars being stoned, and windows being broken were received by the police. A white motorist—who died 3 weeks later—and a Negro sitting on his porch suffered gunshot wounds. Rumors spread of Negro gangs raiding white neighborhoods, of shootings, and of organization of the riot. Nearly all of them were determined later to be unfounded.

At 9:40 p.m., following a request for aid to surrounding communities, Mayor Bachrach placed a call to the Governor asking for mobilization of the National Guard.

At 2:30 a.m. Wednesday, the first Guard units appeared on the streets. They followed a policy of restraint in the use of weapons. Few shots were fired. Two hours later, the streets were quiet. Most of the damage was minor. Of 40-odd fires reported before dawn, only 11 resulted in a loss of more than $1,000.

The fire department log listed four as having caused major damage.

That afternoon, the city council held an open session. The chamber was jammed with Negro residents, many of whom gave vociferous support as their spokesman criticized the city administration. When the audience became unruly, a detail of National Guardsmen was stationed outside the council chamber. Their presence resulted in a misunderstanding, causing many of the Negroes to walk out and the meeting to end.

Wednesday night, there were virtually no reports of riotous activity until 9 p.m., when scattered incidents of violence again began to take place. One person was injured by a gunshot.

Despite fears of a clash between Negroes and SAMS—white Southern Appalachian migrants whose economic conditions paralleled those of Negroes—such a clash was averted.

H. "Rap" Brown, arriving in the city on Thursday, attempted to capitalize on the discontent by presenting a list of 20 "demands." Their principal effect would have been total removal of all white persons, whatever their capacity, from the ghetto area. Demand No. 18 stated that "at any meeting to settle grievances . . . any white proposal or white representative objected to by black representatives must be rejected automatically." No. 20 demanded a veto power over police officers patrolling the community.

His appearance had no galvanizing effect. Although scattered incidents occurred for 3 days after the arrival of the National Guard, the disorder never returned to its early intensity.

Of 63 reported injuries, 12 were serious enough to require hospitalization; 56 of the persons injured were white. Most of the injuries resulted from thrown objects or glass splinters. Of the 107 persons arrested Tuesday night, when the main disturbance took place, 75 were 21 years of age or younger. Of the total of 404 persons arrested, 128 were juveniles, and 338 were 26 years of age or younger. Of the adults arrested, 29 percent were unemployed.

III. ATLANTA

On Saturday, June 17, as the National Guard was being withdrawn from Cincinnati, the same type of minor police arrest that had initiated the Cincinnati riot took place in Atlanta.

Rapid industrialization following World War II, coupled with annexations that quadrupled the area of the city, had made Atlanta a vigorous and booming community. Pragmatic business and political leaders worked to give it a reputation as the moderate stronghold of the Deep South.

Nevertheless, despite acceptance, in principle, of integration of schools and facilities, the fact that the city is the headquarters both for civil rights organizations and segregationist elements created a strong and ever-present potential for conflict.

The rapidly growing Negro population, which, by the summer of 1967 had reached an estimated 44 percent, and was scattered in several ghettos throughout the city, was maintaining constant pressure on surrounding white residential areas. Some real estate agents engaged in "block-busting tactics" [8] to stimulate panic sales by white homeowners. The city police were continually on the alert to keep marches and countermarches of civil rights and white supremacist organizations from flaring into violence.

In September 1966, following a fatal shooting by a police officer of a Negro auto thief who was resisting arrest, only the dramatic ghetto appearance of Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr., had averted a riot.

Boasting that Atlanta had the largest KKK membership in the country, the Klan, on June 4, 1967, marched through one of the poorer Negro sections. A massive police escort prevented a racial clash.

According to Mayor Allen, 55 percent of municipal employees hired in 1967 were Negroes, bringing their proportion of the city work force to 28 percent. Of 908 police department employees, 85 are Negro—a higher proportion of Negroes than in most major city police departments in the Nation.

To the Negro community, however, it appeared that the progress made served only to reduce the level of inequality. Equal conditions for blacks and whites remained a hope for the future. Different pay scales for black and white municipal employees performing the same jobs had been only recently eliminated.

The economic and educational gap between the black and white populations may, in fact, have been increasing. The average white Atlantan was a high school graduate; the average Negro Atlantan had not completed the eighth grade.

In 1960, the median income of a Negro family was less than half of the white's $6,350 a year, and 48 percent of Negro families earned less than $3,000 a year. Fifty percent of the men worked in unskilled jobs, and many more Negro women than men, 7.9 percent as against 4.9 percent of the respective work forces, held well-paying, white collar jobs.

Living on marginal incomes in cramped and deteriorating quarters—one-third of the housing was overcrowded and more than half substandard—families were breaking up at an increasing rate. In approximately four out of every 10 Negro homes the father was missing. In the case of families living in public housing projects, more than 60 percent are headed by females.

Mayor Allen estimated there were 25,000 jobs in the city waiting to be filled because people lacked the education or skills to fill them. Yet overcrowding in many Negro schools forced the scheduling of extended and double sessions. Although Negroes comprised 60 percent of the school population, there were 14 "white" high schools compared to nine Negro.

The city has integrated its schools, but *de facto* segregation as a result of housing patterns has had the effect of continuing separate schooling of nearly all white and Negro pupils. White high school students attended classes 6½ hours a day; Negroes in high schools with double sessions attended 4½.

One Atlanta newspaper continued to advertise jobs by race, and in some industrial plants there were "Negro" jobs and "white" jobs with little chance for advancement by Negroes.

Shortly after 8 p.m. on Saturday, June 17, a young Negro, E. W., carrying a can of beer, attempted to enter the Flamingo Grill in the Dixie Hills Shopping Center. When a Negro security guard told the youth he could not enter, a scuffle ensued. Police officers were called to the guard's aid. E. W. received help from his 19-year-old sister, who flailed away at the officers with her purse. Another 19-year-old Negro youth entered the fray. All three were arrested.

Although some 200 to 300 persons had been drawn to the scene of the incident, when police asked them to disperse, they complied.

Because the area is isolated from the city in terms of transportation, and there are few recreational facilities, the shopping center is a natural gathering place. The next night, Sunday, an even bigger crowd was on hand.

As they mingled, residents discussed their grievances. They were bitter about their inability to get the city government to correct conditions and make improvements. Garbage sometimes was not picked up for 2 weeks in succession. Overflowing garbage cans, littered streets, and cluttered empty lots were breeding grounds for rats. Inadequate storm drains led to flooded streets. Although residents had obtained title to several empty lots for use as playgrounds, the city failed to provide the equipment and men necessary to convert them.

The area lacked a swimming pool. A nearby park was inaccessible because of the lack of a road. Petitions submitted to the mayor's office for the correcting of these and other conditions were acknowledged, but not acted upon.

Since only one of the 16 aldermen was a Negro, and a number of black wards were represented by white aldermen, many Negroes felt they were not being properly represented on the city government. The small number of elected Negro officials appeared to be due to a system in which aldermen are elected at large, but represent specific wards, and must reside in the wards from which they are elected. Because of the quilted pattern of black-white housing, white candidates were able to meet the residency requirements for running from predominantly Negro wards. Since, however, candidates are dependent upon the city-wide vote for election, and the city has a white majority, few Negroes had been able to attain office.

A decision was made by the Dixie Hills residents to organize committees and hold a protest meeting the next night.

The headquarters of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) is located in Atlanta. Its former president, Stokely Carmichael, wearing a green Malcolm X sweatshirt, appeared, together with several companions. Approaching a police captain, Carmichael asked why there were so many police cars in the area. Informed that they were there to make sure there was no disturbance, Carmichael, clapping his hands, declared in a sing-song voice that there might have to be a riot if the police cars were not removed. When Carmichael refused to move on as requested, he was arrested.

Soon released on bail, the next morning Carmichael declared that the black people were preparing to resist "armed aggression" by the police by whatever means necessary.

Shortly thereafter in the Dixie Hills Shopping Center, which had been closed down for the day, a Negro youth, using a broom handle, began to pound on the outside bell of a burglar alarm that had been set off, apparently, by a short circuit. Police officers responded to the alarm and ordered him to stop hitting the bell. A scuffle ensued. Several bystanders intervened. One of the officers drew his service revolver and fired, superficially wounding the young man.

Tension rose. Approximately 250 persons were present at that evening's meeting. When a number of Negro leaders urged the submission of a petition of grievances through legal channels, the response was lukewarm. When Carmichael took to the podium, urging Negroes "to take to the streets and force the police department to work until they fall in their tracks," the response was tumultuous.

The press quoted him as saying: "It's not a question of law and order. We are not concerned with peace. We are concerned with the liberation of black people. We have to build a revolution."

As the people present at the meeting poured into the street, they were joined by others. The crowd soon numbered an estimated 1,000. From alleys and rooftops rocks and bottles were thrown at the nine police officers on the scene. Windows of police cars were broken. Firecrackers exploded in the darkness. Police believe they may have been fired on.

[8] A block is considered to have been "busted" when one Negro family has been sold a home in a previously all-white area.

Reinforced by approximately 60 to 70 officers, the police, firing over the heads of the crowd, quickly regained control. Of the 10 persons arrested, six were 21 years of age or younger; only one was in his thirties.

The next day city equipment appeared in the area to begin work on the long-delayed playgrounds and other projects demanded by the citizens. It was announced that a Negro youth patrol would be established along the lines of the Tampa White Hats.

SNCC responded that volunteers for the patrol would be selling their "black brothers out" and would be viewed as "black traitors," to be dealt with in the "manner we see fit." Nevertheless, during the course of the summer, the 200 youths participating in the corps played an important role in preventing a serious outbreak. The police believe that establishment of the youth corps became a major factor in improving police-community relations.

Another meeting of area residents was called for Tuesday evening. At its conclusion, 200 protesters were met by 300 police officers. As two police officers chased several boys down the street, a cherry bomb or incendiary device exploded at the officers' feet. In response, several shots were fired from a group of police consisting mostly of Negro officers. The discharge from a shotgun struck in the midst of several persons sitting on the front porch of a house. A 46-year old man was killed; a 9-year old boy was critically injured.

Because of the efforts of neighborhood and anti-poverty workers who circulated through the area, and the later appearance of Mayor Allen, no further violence ensued.

When H. "Rap" Brown, who had returned to the city that afternoon, went to other Negro areas in an attempt to initiate a demonstration against the shooting of the Negroes on the porch, he met with no response.

Within the next few days, a petition was drawn up by State Senator Leroy Johnson and other moderate Negro leaders demanding that Stokely Carmichael get out of the community and allow the people to handle their own affairs. It was signed by more than 1,000 persons in the Dixie Hills area.

IV. NEWARK

The last outburst in Atlanta occurred on Tuesday night, June 20. That same night, in Newark, N.J., a tumultuous meeting of the planning board took place. Until 4 a.m., speaker after speaker from the Negro ghetto arose to denounce the city's intent to turn over 150 acres in the heart of the central ward as a site for the State's new medical and dental college.

The growing opposition to the city administration by vocal black residents had paralyzed both the planning board and the board of education. Tension had been rising so steadily throughout the northern New Jersey area that, in the first week of June, Col. David Kelly, head of the state police, had met with municipal police chiefs to draw up plans for state police support of city police wherever a riot developed. Nowhere was the tension greater than in Newark.

Founded in 1666, the city, part of the Greater New York City port complex, rises from the salt marshes of the Passaic River. Although in 1967 Newark's population of 400,000 still ranked it 30th among American municipalities, for the past 20 years the white middle class had been deserting the city for the suburbs.

In the late 1950's, the desertions had become a rout. Between 1960 and 1967, the city lost a net total of more than 70,000 white residents. Replacing them in vast areas of dilapidated housing where living conditions, according to a prominent member of the County Bar Association, were so bad that "people would be kinder to their pets," were Negro migrants, Cubans, and Puerto Ricans. In 6 years, the city switched from 65 percent white to 52 percent Negro and 10 percent Puerto Rican and Cuban.

The white population, nevertheless, retained political control of the city. On both the city council and the board of education, seven of nine members were white. In other key boards, the disparity was equal or greater. In the central ward, where the medical college controversy raged, the Negro constituents and their white councilman found themselves on opposite sides of almost every crucial issue.

The municipal administration lacked the ability to respond quickly enough to navigate the swiftly changing currents. Even had it had great astuteness, it would have lacked the financial resources to affect significantly the course of events.

In 1962, seven-term Congressman Hugh Addonizio had forged an Italian-Negro coalition to overthrow longtime Irish control of the city hall. A liberal in Congress, Addonizio, when he became mayor, had opened his door to all people. Negroes, who had been excluded from the previous administration, were brought into the government. The police department was integrated.

Nevertheless, progress was slow. As the Negro population increased, more and more of the politically oriented found the progress inadequate.

The Negro-Italian coalition began to develop strains over the issue of the police. The police were largely Italian, the persons they arrested were largely Negro. Community leaders agreed that, as in many police forces, there was a small minority of officers who abused

their responsibility. This gave credibility to the cries of "brutality!" voiced periodically by ghetto Negroes.

In 1965, Mayor Addonizio, acknowledging that there was "a small group of misguided individuals" in the department, declared that "it is vital to establish once and for all, in the minds of the public, that charges of alleged police brutality will be thoroughly investigated and the appropriate legal or punitive action be taken if the charges are found to be substantiated."

Pulled one way by the Negro citizens who wanted a police review board, and the other by the police, who adamantly opposed it, the mayor decided to transfer "the control and investigation of complaints of police brutality out of the hands of both the police and the public and into the hands of an agency that all can support—the Federal Bureau of Investigation," and to send "a copy of any charge of police brutality * * * directly to the Prosecutor's office." However, the FBI could act only if there had been a violation of a person's federal civil rights. No complaint was ever heard of again.

Nor was there much redress for other complaints. The city had no money with which to redress them.

The city had already reached its legal bonding limit, yet expenditures continued to outstrip income. Health and welfare costs, per capita, were 20 times as great as for some of the surrounding communities. Cramped by its small land area of 23.6 square miles—one-third of which was taken up by Newark Airport and unusable marshland—and surrounded by independent jurisdictions, the city had nowhere to expand.

Taxable property was contracting as land, cleared for urban renewal, lay fallow year after year. Property taxes had been increased, perhaps, to the point of diminishing return. By the fall of 1967, they were to reach $661.70 on a $10,000 house—double that of suburban communities.[3] As a result, people were refusing either to own or to renovate property in the city. Seventy-four percent of white and 87 percent of Negro families lived in rental housing. Whoever was able to move to the suburbs, moved. Many of these persons, as downtown areas were cleared and new office buildings were constructed, continued to work in the city. Among them were a large proportion of the people from whom a city normally draws its civic leaders, but who, after moving out, tended to cease involving themselves in the community's problems.

During the daytime Newark more than doubled its population—and was, therefore, forced to provide services for a large number of people who contributed nothing in property taxes. The city's per capita outlay for police, fire protection, and other municipal services continued to increase. By 1967 it was twice that of the surrounding area.

Consequently, there was less money to spend on education. Newark's per capita outlay on schools was considerably less than that of surrounding communities. Yet within the city's school system were 78,000 children, 14,000 more than 10 years earlier.

Twenty thousand pupils were on double sessions. The dropout rate was estimated to be as high as 33 percent. Of 13,600 Negroes between the ages of 16 and 19, more than 6,000 were not in school. In 1960 over half of the adult Negro population had less than an eighth grade education.

The typical ghetto cycle of high unemployment, family breakup, and crime was present in all its elements. Approximately 12 percent of Negroes were without jobs. An estimated 40 percent of Negro children lived in broken homes. Although Newark maintained proportionately the largest police force of any major city, its crime rate was among the highest in the Nation. In narcotics violations it ranked fifth nationally. Almost 80 percent of the crimes were committed within 2 miles of the core of the city, where the central ward is located. A majority of the criminals were Negro. Most of the victims, likewise, were Negro. The Mafia was reputed to control much of the organized crime.

Robert Curvin, CORE official, tries to calm crowd in Newark, July 1967

Under such conditions a major segment of the Negro population became increasingly militant. Largely excluded from positions of traditional political power, Negroes, tutored by a handful of militant social activists who had moved into the city in the early 1960's, made use of the antipoverty program, in which poor people were guaranteed representation, as a political springboard. This led to friction between the United Community Corporation, the agency that administered the antipovery program, and the city administration.

When it became known that the secretary of the board of education intended to retire, the militants

[3] The legal tax rate is $7.76 per $100 of market value. However, because of inflation, a guideline of 85.27 percent of market value is used in assessing, reducing the true tax rate to $6.617 per $100.

proposed for the position the city's budget director, a Negro with a master's degree in accounting. The mayor, however, had already nominated a white man. Since the white man had only a high school education, and at least 70 percent of the children in the school system were Negro, the issue of who was to obtain the secretaryship, an important and powerful position, quickly became a focal issue.

Joined with the issue of the 150-acre medical school site, the area of which had been expanded to triple the original request—an expansion regarded by the militants as an effort to dilute black political power by moving out Negro residents—the board of education battle resulted in a confrontation between the mayor and the militants. Both sides refused to alter their positions.

Wounded rioter escorted from violence scene, Newark, July 1967

Into this impasse stepped a Washington Negro named Albert Roy Osborne. A flamboyant, 42-year-old former wig salesman who called himself Colonel Hassan Jeru-Ahmed and wore a black beret, he presided over a mythical "Blackman's Volunteer Army of Liberation." Articulate and magnetic, the self-commissioned "colonel" proved to be a one-man show. He brought Negro residents flocking to board of education and planning board meetings. The Colonel spoke in violent terms, and backed his words with violent action. At one meeting he tore the tape from the official stenographic recorder.

It became more and more evident to the militants that, though they might not be able to prevail, they could prevent the normal transaction of business. Filibustering began. A Negro former State assemblyman held the floor for more than 4 hours. One meeting of the board of education began at 5 p.m., and did not adjourn until 3:23 a.m. Throughout the months of May and June, speaker after speaker warned that if the mayor persisted in naming a white man as secretary to the board of education and in moving ahead with plans for the medical school site, violence would ensue. The city administration played down the threats.

On June 27, when a new secretary to the board of education was to be named, the state police set up a command post in the Newark armory.

The militants, led by the local CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) chapter, disrupted and took over the board of education meeting. The outcome was a stalemate. The incumbent secretary decided to stay on another year. No one was satisfied.

At the beginning of July there were 24,000 unemployed Negroes within the city limits. Their ranks were swelled by an estimated 20,000 teenagers, many of whom, with school out and the summer recreation program curtailed due to a lack of funds, had no place to go.

Police, Guardsmen collar alleged looters, Newark, July 1967

On July 8, Newark and East Orange police attempted to disperse a group of Black Muslims. In the melee that followed, several police officers and Muslims suffered injuries necessitating medical treatment. The resulting charges and countercharges heightened the tension between police and Negroes.

Early on the evening of July 12, a cabdriver named John Smith began, according to police reports, tailgating a Newark police car. Smith was an unlikely candidate to set a riot in motion. Forty years old, a Georgian by birth, he had attended college for a year before entering the Army in 1950. In 1953 he had been honorably discharged with the rank of corporal. A chess-playing trumpet player, he had worked as a musician and a factory hand before, in 1963, becoming a cabdriver.

As a cabdriver, he appeared to be a hazard. Within a relatively short period of time he had eight or nine accidents. His license was revoked. When, with a

woman passenger in his cab, he was stopped by the police, he was in violation of that revocation.

From the high-rise towers of the Reverend William P. Hayes housing project, the residents can look down on the orange-red brick facade of the Fourth Precinct Police Station and observe every movement. Shortly after 9:30 p.m., people saw Smith, who either refused or was unable to walk, being dragged out of a police car and into the front door of the station.

Within a few minutes, at least two civil rights leaders received calls from a hysterical woman declaring a cabdriver was being beaten by the police. When one of the persons at the station notified the cab company of Smith's arrest, cabdrivers all over the city began learning of it over their cab radios.

A crowd formed on the grounds of the housing project across the narrow street from the station. As more and more people arrived, the description of the beating purportedly administered to Smith became more and more exaggerated. The descriptions were supported by other complaints of police malpractice that, over the years, had been submitted for investigation—but had never been heard of again.

Several Negro community leaders, telephoned by a civil rights worker and informed of the deteriorating situation, rushed to the scene. By 10:15 p.m., the atmosphere had become so potentially explosive that Kenneth Melchior, the senior police inspector on the night watch, was called. He arrived at approximately 10:30 p.m.

Met by a delegation of civil rights leaders and militants who requested the right to see and interview Smith, Inspector Melchior acceded to their request.

When the delegation was taken to Smith, Melchior agreed with their observations that, as a result of injuries Smith had suffered, he needed to be examined by a doctor. Arrangements were made to have a police car transport him to the hospital.

Both within and outside of the police station, the atmosphere was electric with hostility. Carloads of police officers arriving for the 10:45 p.m. change of shifts were subjected to a gauntlet of catcalls, taunts, and curses.

Joined by Oliver Lofton, administrative director of the Newark Legal Services Project, the Negro community leaders inside the station requested an interview with Inspector Melchior. As they were talking to the inspector about initiating an investigation to determine how Smith had been injured, the crowd outside became more and more unruly. Two of the Negro spokesmen went outside to attempt to pacify the people.

There was little reaction to the spokesmen's appeal that the people go home. The second of the two had just finished speaking from atop a car when several Molotov cocktails smashed against the wall of the police station.

With the call of "Fire!" most of those inside the station, police officers and civilians alike, rushed out of the front door. The Molotov cocktails had splattered to the ground; the fire was quickly extinguished.

Inspector Melchior had a squad of men form a line across the front of the station. The police officers and the Negroes on the other side of the street exchanged volleys of profanity.

Three of the Negro leaders, Timothy Still of the United Community Corporation, Robert Curvin of CORE, and Lofton, requested they be given another opportunity to disperse the crowd. Inspector Melchior agreed to let them try and provided a bullhorn. It was apparent that the several hundred persons who had gathered in the street and on the grounds of the housing project were not going to disperse. Therefore, it was decided to attempt to channel the energies of the people into a nonviolent protest. While Lofton promised the crowd that a full investigation would be made of the Smith incident, the other Negro leaders urged those on the scene to form a line of march toward the city hall.

Oustide 4th Precinct Station House, Newark, July 1967

Some persons joined the line of march. Others milled about in the narrow street. From the dark grounds of the housing project came a barrage of rocks. Some of them fell among the crowd. Others hit persons in the line of march. Many smashed the windows of the police station. The rock throwing, it was believed, was the work of youngsters; approximately 2,500 children lived in the housing project.

Almost at the same time, an old car was set afire in a parking lot. The line of march began to disintegrate. The police, their heads protected by World War I-type helmets, sallied forth to disperse the crowd. A fire engine, arriving on the scene, was pelted with rocks. As police drove people away from the station, they scattered in all directions.

A few minutes later, a nearby liquor store was broken into. Some persons, seeing a caravan of cabs

appear at City Hall to protest Smith's arrest, interpreted this as evidence that the disturbance had been organized, and generated rumors to that effect.

However, only a few stores were looted. Within a short period of time the disorder ran its course.

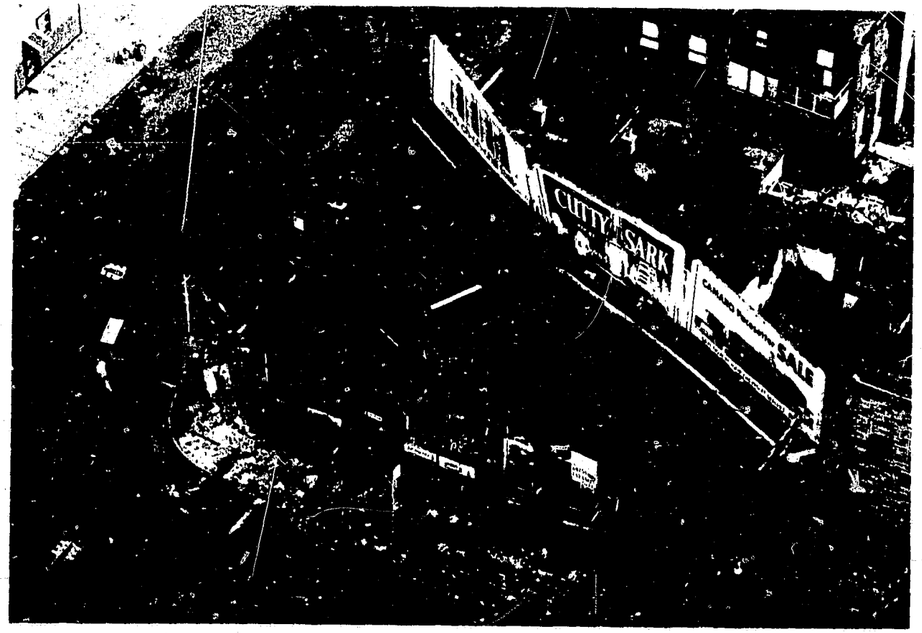
The next afternoon, Thursday, July 13, the mayor described it as an isolated incident. At a meeting with Negro leaders to discuss measures to defuse the situation, he agreed to appoint the first Negro police captain, and announced that he would set up a panel of citizens to investigate the Smith arrest. To one civil rights leader, this sounded like "the playback of a record," and he walked out. Other observers reported that the mayor seemed unaware of the seriousness of the tensions.

The police were not. Unknown to the mayor, Dominick Spina, the Director of Police, had extended shifts from 8 hours to 12, and was in the process of mobilizing half the strength of the department for that evening. The night before, Spina had arrived at the Fourth Precinct Police Station at approximately midnight, and had witnessed the latter half of the disturbance. Earlier in the evening he had held the regularly weekly "open house" in his office. This was intended to give any person who wanted to talk to him an opportunity to do so. Not a single person had shown up.

As director of police, Spina had initiated many new programs: police-precinct councils, composed of the police precinct captain and business and civic leaders, who would meet once a month to discuss mutual problems; Junior Crimefighters; a Boy Scout Explorer program for each precinct; mandatory human relations training for every officer; a Citizens' Observer Program, which permitted citizens to ride in police cars and observe activities in the stations; a Police Cadet program; and others.

Many of the programs initially had been received enthusiastically, but—as was the case with the "open house"—interest had fallen off. In general, the programs failed to reach the hard-core unemployed, the disaffected, the school dropouts—of whom Spina estimates there are 10,000 in Essex County—that constitute a major portion of the police problem.

Reports and rumors, including one that Smith had died, circulated through the Negro community. Tension continued to rise. Nowhere was the tension greater than at the Spirit House, the gathering place for Black Nationalists, Black Power advocates, and militants of every hue. Black Muslims, Orthodox Moslems, and members of the United Afro-American Association, a



Newark aftermath, July 1967

new and growing organization that follows, in general, the teachings of the late Malcolm X, came regularly to mingle and exchange views. Antiwhite playwright LeRoi Jones held workshops. The two police-Negro clashes, coming one on top of the other, coupled with the unresolved political issues, had created a state of crisis.

On Thursday, inflammatory leaflets were circulated in the neighborhoods of the Fourth Precinct. A "Police Brutality Protest Rally" was announced for early evening in front of the Fourth Precinct Station. Several television stations and newspapers sent news teams to interview people. Cameras were set up. A crowd gathered.

A picket line was formed to march in front of the police station. Between 7 and 7:30 p.m., James Threatt, executive director of the Newark Human Rights Commission, arrived to announce to the people the decision of the mayor to form a citizens group to investigate the Smith incident, and to elevate a Negro to the rank of captain.

The response from the loosely milling mass of people was derisive. One youngster shouted "Black Power!" Rocks were thrown at Threatt, a Negro. The barrage of missiles that followed placed the police station under siege.

Newark during July 1967 disorder

After the barrage had continued for some minutes, police came out to disperse the crowd. According to witnesses, there was little restraint of language or action by either side. A number of police officers and Negroes were injured.

As on the night before, once the people had been dispersed, reports of looting began to come in. Soon the glow of the first fire was seen.

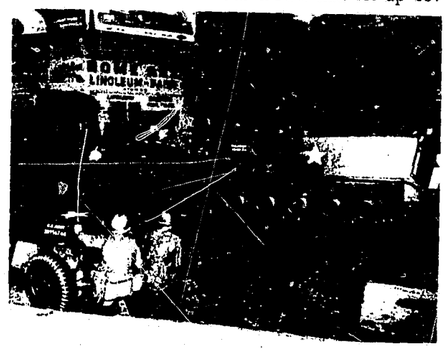
Without enough men to establish control, the police set up a perimeter around a 2-mile stretch of Springfield Avenue, one of the principal business districts, where bands of youths roamed up and down smashing windows. Grocery and liquor stores, clothing and furniture stores, drugstores and cleaners, appliance stores and pawnshops were the principal targets. Periodically, police officers would appear and fire their weapons over the heads of looters and rioters. Laden with stolen goods, people began returning to the housing projects.

Near midnight, activity appeared to taper off. The mayor told reporters the city had turned the corner.

As news of the disturbances had spread, however, people had flocked into the streets. As they saw stores being broken into with impunity, many bowed to temptation and joined the looting.

Without the necessary personnel to make mass arrests, police were shooting into the air to clear stores. A Negro boy was wounded by a .22 caliber bullet said to have been fired by a white man riding in a car. Guns were reported stolen from a Sears, Roebuck store. Looting, fires, and gunshots were reported from a widening area. Between 2 and 2:30 a.m. on Friday, July 14, the mayor decided to request Gov. Richard J. Hughes to dispatch the state police and National Guard troops. The first elements of the state police arrived with a sizeable contingent before dawn.

During the morning the Governor and the mayor, together with the police and National Guard officers, made a reconnaissance of the area. The police escort guarding the officials arrested looters as they went. By early afternoon the National Guard had set up 137



Newark, July 1967

roadblocks, and state police and riot teams were beginning to achieve control. Command of antiriot operations was taken over by the Governor, who decreed a "hard line" in putting down the riot.

As a result of technical difficulties, such as the fact that the city and state police did not operate on the same radio wave-lengths, the three-way command structure—city police, state police and National Guard—worked poorly.

At 3:30 p.m. that afternoon, the family of Mrs. D. J. was standing near the upstairs windows of their apartment, watching looters run in and out of a furniture store on Springfield Avenue. Three carloads of

police rounded the corner. As the police yelled at the looters, they began running.

The police officers opened fire. A bullet smashed the kitchen window in Mrs. D. J.'s apartment. A moment later she heard a cry from the bedroom. Her 3-year-old daughter, Debbie, came running into the room. Blood was streaming down the left side of her face: the bullet had entered her eye. The child spent the next 2 months in the hospital. She lost the sight of her left eye and the hearing in her left ear.

Simultaneously, on the street below, Horace W. Morris, an associate director of the Washington Urban League who had been visiting relatives in Newark, was about to enter a car for the drive to Newark Airport. With him were his two brothers and his 73-year-old stepfather, Isaac Harrison. About 60 persons had been on the street watching the looting. As the police arrived, three of the looters cut directly in front of the group of spectators. The police fired at the looters. Bullets plowed into the spectators. Everyone began running. As Harrison, followed by the family, headed toward the apartment building in which he lived, a bullet kicked his legs out from under him. Horace Morris lifted him to his feet. Again he fell. Mr. Morris' brother, Virgil, attempted to pick the old man up. As he was doing so, he was hit in the left leg and right forearm. Mr. Morris and his other brother managed to drag the two wounded men into the vestibule of the building, jammed with 60 to 70 frightened, angry Negroes.

Bullets continued to spatter against the walls of the buildings. Finally, as the firing died down, Morris—whose stepfather died that evening—yelled to a sergeant that innocent people were being shot.

"Tell the black bastards to stop shooting at us," the sergeant, according to Morris, replied.

"They don't have guns; no one is shooting at you," Morris said.

"You shut up, there's a sniper on the roof," the sergeant yelled.

A short time later, at approximately 5 p.m., in the same vicinity, a police detective was killed by a small caliber bullet. The origin of the shot could not be determined. Later during the riot, a fireman was killed by a .30 caliber bullet. Snipers were blamed for the deaths of both.

At 5:30 p.m., on Beacon Street, W. F. told J. S., whose 1959 Pontiac he had taken to the station for inspection, that his front brake needed fixing. J. S., who had just returned from work, went to the car which was parked in the street, jacked up the front end, took the wheel off, and got under the car.

The street was quiet. More than a dozen persons were sitting on porches, walking about, or shopping. None heard any shots. Suddenly several state troopers appeared at the corner of Springfield and Beacon. J. S. was startled by a shot clanging into the side of the garbage can next to his car. As he looked up he saw a state trooper with his rifle pointed at him. The next shot struck him in the right side .

At almost the same instant, K. G., standing on a porch, was struck in the right eye by a bullet. Both he and J. S. were critically injured.

At 8 p.m., Mrs. L. M. bundled her husband, her husband's brother, and her four sons into the family car to drive to a restaurant for dinner. On the return trip her husband, who was driving, panicked as he approached a National Guard roadblock. He slowed the car, then quickly swerved around. A shot rang out. When the family reached home, everyone began piling out of the car. Ten-year-old Eddie failed to move. Shot through the head, he was dead.

Although, by nightfall, most of the looting and burning had ended, reports of sniper fire increased. The fire was, according to New Jersey National Guard reports, "deliberately or otherwise inaccurate." Maj. Gen. James F. Cantwell, Chief of Staff of the New Jersey National Guard, testified before an Armed Services Subcommittee of the House of Representatives that "there was too much firing initially against snipers"

Derelict car ablaze in Newark disorder, July 1967

because of "confusion when we were finally called on for help and our thinking of it as a military action."

"As a matter of fact," Director of Police Spina told the Commission, "down in the Springfield Avenue area it was so bad that, in my opinion, Guardsmen were firing upon police and police were firing back at them * * *. I really don't believe there was as much sniping as we thought * * *. We have since compiled statistics indicating that there were 79 specified instances of sniping."

Several problems contributed to the misconceptions regarding snipers: the lack of communications; the fact that one shot might be reported half a dozen times by half a dozen different persons as it caromed and reverberated a mile or more through the city; the fact that the National Guard troops lacked riot training. They were, said a police official, "young and very scared," and had had little contact with Negroes.

Within the Guard itself contact with Negroes had certainly been limited. Although, in 1949, out of a force of 12,529 men there had been 1,183 Negroes, following the integration of the Guard in the 1950's the number had declined until, by July of 1967, there were 303 Negroes in a force of 17,529 men.

On Saturday, July 15, Spina received a report of snipers in a housing project. When he arrived he saw approximately 100 National Guardsmen and police officers crouching behind vehicles, hiding in corners and lying on the ground around the edge of the courtyard.

Since everything appeared quiet and it was broad daylight, Spina walked directly down the middle of the street. Nothing happened. As he came to the last building of the complex, he heard a shot. All around him the troopers jumped, believing themselves to be under sniper fire. A moment later a young Guardsman ran from behind a building.

The director of police went over and asked him if he had fired the shot. The soldier said yes, he had fired to scare a man away from a window; that his orders were to keep everyone away from windows.

Spina said he told the soldier: "Do you know what you just did? You have now created a state of hysteria. Every Guardsman up and down this street and every state policeman and every city policeman that is present thinks that somebody just fired a shot and that it is probably a sniper."

A short time later more "gunshots" were heard. Investigating, Spina came upon a Puerto Rican sitting on a wall. In reply to a question as to whether he knew "where the firing is coming from?" the man said:

"That's no firing. That's fireworks. If you look up to the fourth floor, you will see the people who are throwing down these cherry bombs."

By this time, four truckloads of National Guardsmen had arrived and troopers and policemen were again crouched everywhere, looking for a sniper. The director of police remained at the scene for three hours, and the only shot fired was the one by the guardsman.

Nevertheless, at six o'clock that evening two columns of National Guardsmen and state troopers were directing mass fire at the Hayes Housing project in response to what they believed were snipers.

On the 10th floor, Eloise Spellman, the mother of several children, fell, a bullet through her neck.

Across the street, a number of persons, standing in an apartment window, were watching the firing directed at the housing project. Suddenly, several troopers whirled and began firing in the general direction of the spectators. Mrs. Hattie Gainer, a grandmother, sank to the floor.

A block away Rebecca Brown's 2-year-old daughter was standing at the window. Mrs. Brown rushed to drag her to safety. As Mrs. Brown was, momentarily, framed in the window, a bullet spun into her back.

All three women died.

Post-riot food distribution at church in Newark, July 1967

A number of eye witnesses, at varying times and places, reported seeing bottles thrown from upper story windows. As these would land at the feet of an officer he would turn and fire. Thereupon, other officers and Guardsmen up and down the street would join in.

In order to protect his property, B. W. W., the owner of a Chinese laundry, had placed a sign saying "Soul Brother" in his window. Between 1 and 1:30 a.m., on Sunday, July 16, he, his mother, wife, and brother, were watching television in the back room. The neighborhood had been quiet. Suddenly, B. W. W. heard the sound of jeeps, then shots.

Going to an upstairs window he was able to look out into the street. There he observed several jeeps, from which soldiers and state troopers were firing into stores that had "Soul Brother" signs in the windows. During the course of three nights, according to dozens of eye witness reports, law enforcement officers shot into and smashed windows of businesses that contained signs indicating they were Negro-owned.

At 11 p.m., on Sunday, July 16, Mrs. Lucille Pugh looked out of the window to see if the streets were clear. She then asked her 11-year-old son, Michael, to take the garbage out. As he reached the street and was illuminated by a street light, a shot rang out. He died.

By Monday afternoon, July 17, state police and National Guard forces were withdrawn. That evening, a Catholic priest saw two Negro men walking down the street. They were carrying a case of soda and two bags of groceries. An unmarked car with five police officers pulled up beside them. Two white officers got out of the car. Accusing the Negro men of looting, the officers made them put the groceries on the sidewalk, then kicked the bags open, scattering their contents all over the street.

Telling the men, "Get out of here," the officers drove off. The Catholic priest went across the street to help gather up the groceries. One of the men turned to him: "I've just been back from Vietnam 2 days," he said, "and this is what I get. I feel like going home and getting a rifle and shooting the cops."

Of the 250 fire alarms, many had been false, and 13 were considered by the city to have been "serious." Of the $10,251,000 damage total, four-fifths was due to stock loss. Damage to buildings and fixtures was less than $2 million.

Twenty-three persons were killed—a white detective, a white fireman, and 21 Negroes. One was 73-year-old Isaac Harrison. Six were women. Two were children.

V. NORTHERN NEW JERSEY

Reports of looting, sniping, fire and death in Newark wove a web of tension over other Negro enclaves in northern New Jersey. Wherever Negro ghettos existed—Elizabeth, Englewood, Jersey City, Plainfield, New Brunswick—people had friends and relatives living in Newark. Everywhere the telephone provided a direct link to the scenes of violence. The telephoned messages frequently were at variance with reports transmitted by the mass media.

As reports of the excessive use of firearms in Newark grew, so did fear and anger in the Negro ghettos. Conversely, rumors amplified by radio, television and the newspapers—especially with regard to guerrilla bands roaming the streets—created a sense of danger and terror within the white communities. To Mayor Patricia Q. Sheehan of New Brunswick, it seemed "almost as if there was a fever in the air." She went on to say: "Rumors were coming in from all sides on July 17th. Negroes were calling to warn of possible disturbances; whites were calling; shop owners were calling. Most of the people were concerned about a possible bloodbath."

Her opinion was: "We are talking ourselves into it."

Everywhere there was the same inequality with regard to education, job opportunities, income, and housing. Everywhere, partly because the Negro population was younger than the white, Negroes were under-represented on the local government. In six New Jersey communities [4] with sizeable Negro populations, of a total of 50 councilmen, six were Negro. In a half-dozen school systems in which Negro children comprised as much as half of the school population, of a total of 42 members on boards of education, seven were Negro.

In each of the ghettos the Negro felt himself surrounded by an intransigent wall of whites. In four suburban cities—Bloomfield, Harrison, Irvington, and Maplewood—forming an arc about Newark, out of a total population of more than 150,000, only 1,000 were Negroes. In the six cities surrounding Plainfield, out of a population of more than 75,000, only 1,500 were Negro.

Three northern New Jersey communities—Jersey City, Paterson, and Elizabeth—had had disorders in previous years, the first two in 1964, Elizabeth in both 1964 and 1965. In general, these seem to have developed from resentment against the police. The most serious outbreak had occurred in Jersey City after police had arrested a woman, and a rumor circulated that the woman had been beaten.

As early as May 1967, the authorities in Jersey City and Elizabeth had started receiving warnings of trouble in the summer ahead. Following the Newark outbreak, rumors and reports, as in New Brunswick, became rampant. The police, relying on past experiences, were in no mood to take chances. In both Jersey City and Elizabeth, patrols were augmented, and the departments were placed in a state of alert.

[4] Jersey City, Elizabeth, Englewood, Plainfield, Paterson, New Brunswick.

The view from Jersey City is that of the New York skyline. Except for a few imposing buildings, such as the high-rise New Jersey Medical Center, much of the city is a collection of factories and deteriorating houses, cut up by ribbons of superhighways and railroads.

As one of the principal freight terminals for New York City, Jersey City's decline has paralleled that of the railroads. As railroad lands deteriorated in value and urban renewal lands were taken off the tax rolls, assessed valuation plummeted from $464 million in 1964 to $367 million in 1967. The tax rate, according to Mayor Thomas J. Whelan, has "reached the point of diminishing returns."

Urban renewal projects, which were intended to clear slums and replace them with low-cost housing, in fact, resulted in a reduction of 2,000 housing units. On one area, designated for urban renewal 6 years before, no work had been done, and it remained as blighted in 1967 as it had been in 1961. Ramshackle houses deteriorated, no repairs were made, yet people continued to inhabit them. "Planners make plans and then simply tell people what they are going to do," Negroes complained in their growing opposition to such projects.

Wooden sewers serve residents of some sections of the city. Collapsing brick sewers in other sections back up the sewage. The population clamors for better education, but the school system has reached its bonding capacity. By 1975 it is estimated that there will be a net deficit of 10 elementary schools and one high school.

Recently, the mayor proposed to the Ford Foundation that it take over the operation of the entire educational system. The offer was declined.

Many whites send their children to parochial schools. Possibly as a result, white residents have been slower to move to the suburbs than in other cities.

The exodus, however, is accelerating. Within the past 10 years, the Negro population has almost doubled, and now comprises an estimated 20 percent of the total. The little Negro political leadership that exists is fragmented and indecisive. The county in which Jersey City is located is run by an old-line political machine that has given Negroes little opportunity for participation.

Although the amount of schooling whites and Negroes have had is almost equal, in 1960 the median family income of whites was $1,500 more than that of Negroes.

The police department, like Newark's, one of the largest in the Nation for a city of its size, has a reputation for toughness. A successful white executive recalled that in his childhood: "We were accustomed to the special service division of the police department. If we were caught hanging around we were picked up by the police, taken to a nearby precinct, and beaten with a rubber hose."

A city official, questioned about Negro representation on the 825-man police force, replied that it was 34 times greater than 20 years ago. Twenty years ago, it had consisted of one man.

During the 4 days of the Newark riot, when Jersey City was flooded with tales of all description, Mayor Whelan announced that if there were any disturbances he would "meet force with force." The ghetto area was saturated with police officers.

On Monday and Tuesday, July 17 and 18, when crowds gathered and a few rocks were thrown, mass arrests were made. Only one store was broken into, and pilferage was limited to items such as candy and chewing gum.

One man died. He was a Negro passenger in a cab into which a Negro boy threw a Molotov cocktail.

In Elizabeth, as in Jersey City, police had beefed up their patrols, and the very presence of so many officers contributed to the rising tensions. Residents of the 12-block by three-block ghetto, jammed between the New Jersey Turnpike and the waterfront, expressed the opinion that: "We are being punished but we haven't done anything."

"The community," another said later, "felt it was in a concentration camp."

Youths from the two high-density housing projects concentrated in the area were walking around saying: "We're next, we might as well go."

Between 10 and 10:30 p.m. Monday, July 17, a window was broken in a drugstore across the street from a housing project. A businessman commented: "Down here in the port, it's business as usual when one store window is broken each week. What is normal becomes abnormal at a time like this."

When the window was broken, three extra police cars were sent to the area. Shortly after 11 p.m., the field supervisor dispatched three more cars and, observing the crowd gathering at the housing project, requested an additional 30 patrolmen. The department activated its emergency recall plan.

Since there are almost no recreational facilities, on any summer night scores of youths may be found congregating on the streets near the housing projects. As more and more police cars patrolled the streets, rocks and bottles were thrown at them.

Store windows were broken. Fires were set in trash cans and in the middle of the street. An expectation of impending violence gripped the crowd.

Arriving on the scene, Human Rights Commission Executive Director Hugh Barbour requested that, in order to relieve tension, the extra police be withdrawn

from the immediate vicinity of the crowd. The officer in command agreed to pull back the patrols.

Workers from the anti-poverty agency and the Human Relations Commission began circulating through the area, attempting to get kids off the street. Many of the residents had relatives and friends in Newark. Based on what had happened there, they feared that, if the disturbance were not curbed, it would turn into a bloodbath.

The peacemakers were making little headway when a chicken fluttered out of the shattered window of a poultry market. One youth tried to throw gasoline on it and set it afire. As the gasoline sloshed onto the pavement, the chicken leaped. The flames merely singed its feathers. A gangling 6-foot youth attempted to stomp the chicken. The bird, which had appeared dead, reacted violently. As it fluttered and darted out of his way, the youth screamed, slipped, and tumbled against a tree.

The stark comedy reduced the tension. People laughed. Soon some began to drift home.

A short time later, a Molotov cocktail was thrown against the front of a tavern. Fire engines met with no opposition as they extinguished the flames before they could do much damage.

The chief of police ordered the area cleared. As the officers moved in, the persons who remained on the street scattered. Within 15 minutes the neighborhood was deserted.

Both municipal authorities and Negro leaders feared that, if the disorder followed the pattern of other disturbances, there would be an intensification of action by youths the next day. Therefore, the next evening, police patrolled the 36 square blocks with more than 100 men, some of them stationed on rooftops. Tension mounted as residents viewed the helmeted officers, armed with shotguns and rifles.

Early in the evening, the mayor agreed to meet with a delegation of 13 community leaders. When they entered his office, the chief of police was already present. The mayor read him an order that, if he were faced with sniping or flagrant looting, his men were to: "Shoot to kill. * * * Force will be met with superior force." An officer's deviation from this order, the mayor said, would be considered dereliction of duty.

Some of the members of the delegation believed that the mayor had staged the reading of this order for their benefit, and were not pleased by his action. They proposed a "peacekeeper task force." The mayor agreed to let them try. One hundred stickers with the word "Peacekeeper" were printed.

One of those who agreed to be a peacekeeper was Hesham Jaaber. Jaaber, who officiated at Malcolm X's funeral and has made two pilgrimages to Mecca, is a leader of a small sect of Orthodox Moslems. A teacher of Arabic and the Koran at the Spirit House in Newark, he is a militant who impressed the mayor with his sense of responsibility.

Although Jaaber believed that certain people were sucking the life blood out of the community—"Count the number of taverns and bars in the Elizabeth port area and compare them with the number of recreation facilities"—he had witnessed the carnage in Newark and believed it could serve no purpose to have a riot. Two dozen of his followers, in red fezzes, took to the streets to urge order. He himself traveled about in a car with a bullhorn.

As the peacekeepers began to make their influence felt, the police withdrew from the area. There was no further trouble.

Nevertheless, many white citizens reacted unfavorably to the fact that police had permitted Negro community leaders to aid in the dispersal of the crowd on the first night. The police were called "yellow," and accused of allowing the looting and damaging of stores.

In Englewood, a bedroom community of 28,000, astride the Palisades opposite New York, police had been expecting a riot by some of the city's 7,000 Negro residents since 2 weeks before Newark. As part of this expectation they had tested tear gas guns on the police firing range, situated in the middle of the Negro residential area. The wind had blown the tear gas into surrounding houses. The occupants had been enraged.

A continuing flow of rumors and anonymous tips to police of a riot in preparation had specified July 19 and July 28. However, the week following the Newark outbreak, the rumors began mentioning Friday, July 21, as the date. And it was on that day the chief of police became sufficiently concerned to alert the mayor, order mobilization of the police department, and request police assistance from Bergen County and nearby communities. The 160 officers who responded brought the total force in Englewood that evening to 220 men.

At approximately 9 p.m. a rock was thrown through a market in the lower-class Negro area, resulting in the setting off of a burglar alarm at police headquarters. Two police cars responded. They were hit by rocks.

The tactical force of officers that had been assembled was rushed to the scene. A small number of persons, estimated in the official police report to be no more than 15 or 20, were standing in the street. When police formed a skirmish line, the loiterers, mostly youths, retreated into a large nearby park.

As the police remained in the vicinity, people, attracted by the presence of the officers, began drifting out of the park. Angry verbal exchanges took place between the residents and the police. The Negroes demanded to see the mayor.

The mayor arrived. The residents complained about the presence of so many police officers. Other grievances, many of them minor, began to be aired. According to the mayor, he become involved in a "shouting match," and departed. Shortly thereafter the police, too, left.

They returned after receiving a report that two markets had been hit by Molotov cocktails. Arriving, they discovered firemen fighting two small fires on the outside of the markets.

The police ordered the people on the street to disperse and return to their homes. A rock knocked out a streetlight. Darkness blanketed the area. From behind hedges and other places of concealment a variety of missiles were thrown at the police. The officer in charge was cut severely when a bottle broke the windshield of a car.

A fire department lighting unit was brought to the scene to illuminate the area. Except for some desultory rock throwing, the neighborhood was quiet for the rest of the night. The only other disturbance occurred when a small band of youths made a foray into the city's principal business district two blocks away. Although a few windows were broken, there was no looting. Police quickly sealed off the area.

The same pattern of disorders continued for the next three nights. A relatively large number of police, responding to the breaking of windows or the setting of a fire, would come upon a small number of persons in the street. Fires repeatedly were set at or near the same two stores and a tavern. On one occasion, two Negro youths threw Molotov cocktails at police officers, and the officers responded with gunfire.

Although sounds resembling gunshots were heard sporadically throughout the area, no bullets or expended shells were found. Lt. William Clark who, as the Bergen County Police Department's civil disorders expert, was on the scene, reported that teenagers, as a harassing tactic, had exploded cherry bombs and firecrackers over a widely scattered area. Another view is that there may have been shots, but that they were fired into the air.

Nevertheless, the press reported that: "Snipers set up a three-way crossfire at William and Jay Streets in the heart of the Fourth Ward Negro ghetto, and pinned down 100 policemen, four reporters and a photographer for more than an hour."

These reports were "very definitely exaggerated and overplayed," according to Deputy Chief William F. Harrington of the Englewood Police Department. What police termed a "disturbance" appeared in press reports as a "riot," and "was way out of proportion in terms of the severity of the situation."

"I feel strongly," the Chief said, "that the news media * * * actually inflamed the situation day by day."

VI. PLAINFIELD

New Jersey's worst violence outside of Newark was experienced by Plainfield, a pleasant, tree-shaded city of 45,000. A "bedroom community," more than a third of whose residents work outside the city, Plainfield had had relatively few Negroes until 1950. By 1967, the Negro population had risen to an estimated 30 percent of the total. As in Englewood, there was a division between the Negro middle class, which lived in the East side "gilded ghetto," and the unskilled, unemployed and underemployed poor on the West side.

Geared to the needs of a suburban middle class, the part-time and fragmented city government had failed to realize the change in character which the city had undergone, and was unprepared to cope with the problems of a growing disadvantaged population. There was no full-time administrator or city manager. Boards, with independent jurisdiction over such areas as education, welfare and health, were appointed by the part-time mayor, whose own position was largely honorary.

Accustomed to viewing politics as a gentleman's pastime, city officials were startled and upset by the intensity with which demands issued from the ghetto. Usually such demands were met obliquely, rather than head-on.

In the summer of 1966, trouble was narrowly averted over the issue of a swimming pool for Negro youngsters. In the summer of 1967, instead of having built the

Plainfield, July 1967

pool, the city began busing the children to the county pool a half-hour's ride distant. The fare was 25 cents per person, and the children had to provide their own lunch, a considerable strain on a frequent basis for a poor family with several children.

The bus operated only on 3 days in midweek. On weekends the county pool was too crowded to accommodate children from the Plainfield ghetto.

Pressure increased upon the school system to adapt itself to the changing social and ethnic backgrounds of its pupils. There were strikes and boycotts. The track system created *de facto* segregation within a supposedly integrated school system. Most of the youngsters from white middle-class districts were in the higher track, most from the Negro poverty areas in the lower. Relations were strained between some white teachers and Negro pupils. Two-thirds of school dropouts were estimated to be Negro.

In February 1967 the NAACP, out of a growing sense of frustration with the municipal government, tacked a list of 19 demands and complaints to the door of the city hall. Most dealt with discrimination in housing, employment and in the public schools. By summer, the city's common council had not responded. Although two of the 11 council members were Negro, both represented the East side ghetto. The poverty area was represented by two white women, one of whom had been appointed by the council after the elected representative, a Negro, had moved away.

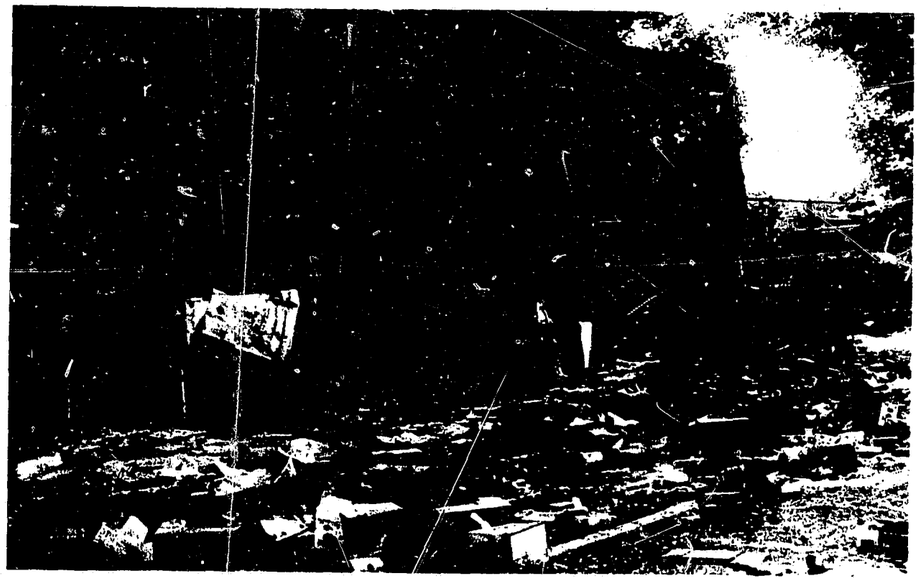
Relations between the police and the Negro community, tenuous at best, had been further troubled the week prior to the Newark outbreak. After being handcuffed during a routine arrest in a housing project, a woman had fallen down a flight of stairs. The officer said she had slipped. Negro residents claimed he had pushed her.

When a delegation went to city hall to file a complaint, they were told by the city clerk that he was not empowered to accept it. Believing that they were being given the run-around, the delegation, angry and frustrated, departed.

On Friday evening, July 14, the same police officer was moonlighting as a private guard at a diner frequented by Negro youths. He was, reportedly, number two on the Negro community's "10 most-wanted" list of unpopular police officers.

(The list was colorblind. Although out of 82 officers on the force only five were Negro, two of the 10 on the "most-wanted" list were Negro. The two officers most respected in the Negro community were white.)

Although most of the youths at the diner were of high school age, one, in his midtwenties, had a reputation as a bully. Sometime before 10 p.m., as a result of an argument, he hit a 16-year-old boy and split open his face. As the boy lay bleeding on the asphalt, his friends rushed to the police officer and demanded that he call an ambulance and arrest the offender. Instead, the officer walked over to the boy, looked at him, and reportedly said: "Why don't you just go home and wash up?" He refused to make an arrest.



Riot debris, Plainfield, July 1967

The youngsters were incensed. They believed that, had the two participants in the incident been white, the older youth would have been arrested, the younger taken to the hospital immediately.

On the way to the housing project where most of them lived, the youths traversed four blocks of the city's business district. As they walked, they smashed three or four windows. An observer interpreted their behavior as a reaction to the incident at the diner, in effect challenging the police officer: "If you won't do anything about that, then let's see you do something about this!"

On one of the quiet city streets, two young Negroes, D. H. and L. C., had been neighbors. D. H. had graduated from high school, attended Fairleigh Dickinson University and, after receiving a degree in psychology, had obtained a job as a reporter on the Plainfield *Courier-News*.

L. C. had dropped out of high school, become a worker in a chemical plant, and, although still in his twenties, had married and fathered seven children. A man with a strong sense of family, he liked sports and played in the local baseball league. Active in civil rights, he had, like the civil rights organizations, over the years, become more militant. For a period of time he had been a Muslim.

The outbreak of vandalism aroused concern among the police. Shortly after midnight, in an attempt to decrease tensions, D. H. and the two Negro councilmen met with the youths in the housing project. The focal point of the youths' bitterness was the attitude of the police—until 1966 police had used the word "nigger" over the police radio and one officer had worn a Confederate belt buckle and had flown a Confederate pennant on his car. Their complaints, however, ranged over local and national issues. There was an overriding cynicism and disbelief that government would, of its own accord, make meaningful changes to improve the lot of the lower-class Negro. There was an overriding belief that there were two sets of policies by the people in power, whether law enforcement officers, newspaper editors, or government officials: one for white, and one for black.

There was little confidence that the two councilmen could exercise any influence. One youth said: "You came down here last year. We were throwing stones at some passing cars, and you said to us that this was not the way to do it. You got us to talk with the man. We talked to him. We talked with him, and we talked all year long. We ain't got nothing yet!"

However, on the promise that meetings would be arranged with the editor of the newspaper and with the mayor later that same day, the youths agreed to disperse.

At the first of these meetings, the youths were, apparently, satisfied by the explanation that the newspaper's coverage was not deliberately discriminatory. The meeting with the mayor, however, proceeded badly. Negroes present felt that the mayor was complacent and apathetic, and that they were simply being given the usual lip service, from which nothing would develop.

The mayor, on the other hand, told Commission investigators that he recognized that "citizens are frustrated by the political organization of the city," because he, himself, has no real power and "each of the councilmen says that he is just one of the 11 and therefore can't do anything."

After approximately 2 hours, a dozen of the youths walked out, indicating an impasse and signaling the breakup of the meeting. Shortly thereafter, window smashing began. A Molotov cocktail was set afire in a tree. One fire engine, in which a white and Negro fireman were sitting side by side, had a Molotov cocktail thrown at it. The white fireman was burned.

As window smashing continued, liquor stores and taverns were especially hard hit. Some of the youths believed that there was an excess concentration of bars in the Negro section, and that these were an unhealthy influence in the community.

Because the police department had mobilized its full force, the situation, although serious, never appeared to get out of hand. Officers made many arrests. The chief of the fire department told Commission investigators that it was his conclusion that "individuals making fire bombs did not know what they were doing, or they could have burned the city."

At 3 o'clock Sunday morning, a heavy rain began, scattering whatever groups remained on the streets.

Homes searched for weapons, Plainfield, July 1967

In the morning, police made no effort to cordon off the area. As white sightseers and churchgoers drove by the housing project there was sporadic rock throwing. During the early afternoon, such incidents increased.

At the housing project, a meeting was convened by L. C. to draw up a formal petition of grievances. As the youths gathered it became apparent that some of them had been drinking. A few kept drifting away from the parking lot where the meeting was being held to throw rocks at passing cars. It was decided to move the meeting to a county park several blocks away.

Between 150 and 200 persons, including almost all of the rock throwers, piled into a caravan of cars and headed for the park. At approximately 3:30 p.m., the chief of the Union County park police arrived to find the group being addressed by David Sullivan, executive director of the human relations commission. He "informed Mr. Sullivan he was in violation of our park ordinance and to disperse the group."

Sullivan and L. C. attempted to explain that they were in the process of drawing up a list of grievances, but the chief remained adamant. They could not meet in the park without a permit, and they did not have a permit.

After permitting the group 10 to 15 minutes grace, the chief decided to disperse them. "Their mood was very excitable," he reported, and "in my estimation no one could appease them so we moved them out without too much trouble. They left in a caravan of about 40 cars, horns blowing and yelling and headed south on West End Avenue to Plainfield."

Within the hour, looting became widespread. Cars were overturned, a white man was snatched off a motorcycle, and the fire department stopped responding to alarms because the police were unable to provide protection. After having been on alert until midday, the Plainfield Police Department was caught unprepared. At 6 p.m., only 18 men were on the streets. Checkpoints were established at crucial intersections in an effort to isolate the area.

Officer John Gleason, together with two reserve officers, had been posted at one of the intersections, three blocks from the housing project. Gleason was a veteran officer, the son of a former lieutenant on the police department. Shortly after 8 p.m., two white youths, chased by a 22-year-old Negro, Bobby Williams, came running from the direction of the ghetto toward Gleason's post.

As he came in sight of the police officers, Williams stopped. Accounts vary of what happened next, or why Officer Gleason took the action he did. What is known is that when D.H., the newspaper reporter, caught sight of him a minute or two later, Officer Gleason was two blocks from his post. Striding after Williams directly into the ghetto area, Gleason already had passed one housing project. Small groups were milling about. In D.H.'s words: "There was a kind of shock and amazement," to see the officer walking by himself so deep in the ghetto.

Suddenly, there was a confrontation between Williams and Gleason. Some witnesses report Williams had a hammer in his hand. Others say he did not. When D.H., whose attention momentarily had been distracted, next saw Gleason he had drawn his gun and was firing at Williams. As Williams, critically injured, fell to the ground, Gleason turned and ran back toward his post.

Negro youths chased him. Gleason stumbled, regained his balance, then had his feet knocked out from under him. A score of youths began to beat him and kick him. Some residents of the apartment house attempted to intervene, but they were brushed aside. D.H. believes that, under the circumstances and in the atmosphere that prevailed at that moment, any police officer, black or white, would have been killed.

Room after Guardsmen, troopers search for carbines, Plainfield, July 1967

After they had beaten Gleason to death, the youths took D.H.'s camera from him and smashed it.

Fear swept over the ghetto. Many residents—both lawless and law-abiding—were convinced, on the basis of what had occurred in Newark, that law enforcement officers, bent on vengeance, would come into the ghetto shooting.

People began actively to prepare to defend themselves. There was no lack of weapons. Forty-six carbines were stolen from a nearby arms manufacturing plant and passed out in the street by a young Negro, a former newspaper boy. Most of the weapons fell into the hands of youths, who began firing them wildly. A fire station was peppered with shots.

Law enforcement officers continued their cordon about the area, but made no attempt to enter it except, occasionally, to rescue someone. National Guardsmen arrived shortly after midnight. Their armored personnel carriers were used to carry troops to the fire station, which had been besieged for 5 hours. During this period only one fire had been reported in the city.

Reports of sniper firing, wild shooting, and general chaos continued until the early morning hours.

By daylight Monday, New Jersey state officials had begun to arrive. At a meeting in the early afternoon, it was agreed that to inject police into the ghetto would be to risk bloodshed; that, instead, law enforcement personnel should continue to retain their cordon.

All during the day various meetings took place between government officials and Negro representatives. Police were anxious to recover the carbines that had been stolen from the arms plant. Negroes wanted assurances against retaliation. In the afternoon, L.C., an official of the human relations commission, and others drove through the area urging people to be calm and to refrain from violence.

At 8 p.m., the New Jersey attorney general, commissioner of community affairs, and commander of the state police, accompanied by the mayor, went to the housing project and spoke to several hundred Negroes. Some members of the crowd were hostile. Others were anxious to establish a dialog. There were demands that officials give concrete evidence that they were prepared to deal with Negro grievances. Again, the meeting was inconclusive. The officials returned to City Hall.

At 9:15 p.m., L. C. rushed in claiming that—as a result of the failure to resolve any of the outstanding problems, and reports that people who had been arrested by the police were being beaten—violence was about to explode anew. The key demand of the militant faction was that those who had been arrested during the riot should be released. State officials decided to arrange for the release on bail of 12 arrestees charged with minor violations. L. C., in turn, agreed to try to induce return of the stolen carbines by Wednesday noon.

As state officials were scanning the list of arrestees to determine which of them should be released, a message was brought to Colonel Kelly of the state police that general firing had broken out around the perimeter.

The report testified to the tension: an investigation disclosed that one shot of unexplained origin had been heard. In response, security forces had shot out street lights, thus initiating the "general firing."

At 4 o'clock Tuesday morning, a dozen prisoners were released from jail. Plainfield police officers considered this a "sellout."

When, by noon on Wednesday, the stolen carbines had not been returned, the governor decided to authorize a mass search. At 2 p.m., a convoy of state police and National Guard troops prepared to enter the area. In order to direct the search as to likely locations, a handful of Plainfield police officers were spotted throughout the 28 vehicles of the convoy.

As the convoy prepared to depart, the state community affairs commissioner, believing himself to be carrying out the decision of the governor not to permit Plainfield officers to participate in the search, ordered their removal from the vehicles. The basis for his order was that their participation might ignite a clash between them and the Negro citizens.

As the search for carbines in the community progressed, tension increased rapidly. According to witnesses and newspaper reports, some men in the search force left apartments in shambles.

The search was called off an hour and a half after it was begun. No stolen weapons were discovered. For the Plainfield police, the removal of the officers from the convoy had been a humiliating experience. A half hour after the conclusion of the search, in a meeting charged with emotion, the entire department threatened to resign unless the state community affairs commissioner left the city. He acceded to the demand.

On Friday, 7 days after the first outbreak, the city began returning to normal.

Guardsmen move in for house to house carbine search, Plainfield, July 1967

VII. NEW BRUNSWICK

Although New Brunswick has about the same population as Plainfield, New Brunswick is a county seat and center of commerce, with an influx of people during the day. No clearly defined Negro ghetto exists. Substantial proportions of the population are Puerto Rican, foreign-born, and Negro.

All during the weekend, while violence sputtered, flared, subsided, then flared again in Plainfield, less than 10 miles away, there were rumors that "New Brunswick was really going to blow." Dissatisfaction in the Negro community revolved around several issues: the closing of a local teenage coffeehouse by the police department, the lack of a swimming pool and other recreation facilities, and the release of a white couple on very low bond after they had been arrested for allegedly shooting at three Negro teenagers. As elsewhere, there was a feeling that the law was not being applied equally to whites and Negroes.

By Monday, according to Mayor Patricia Sheehan, the town was "haunted by what had happened in Newark and Plainfield." James E. Amos, the associate director of the antipoverty program in Middlesex County, said there was a "tenseness in the air" that "got thicker and thicker."

Staff members of the antipoverty agency met with the mayor and city commissioners to discuss what steps might be taken to reduce the tension. The mayor, who had been elected on a reform platform 2 months previously, appointed a Negro police officer, Lieutenant John Brokaw, as community liaison officer. He was authorized to report directly to the mayor.

Negro officers in the department went into the streets in plain clothes to fight rumors and act as counterrioters. Uniformed police officers were counseled to act with restraint to avoid the possibility of a police action setting off violence. The radio station decided on its own initiative to play down rumors and news of any disturbance.

The antipoverty agency set up a task force of workers to go into all of the communities, white, Puerto Rican, and Negro, to report information and to try to cool the situation.

The chief of police met with the chiefs of surrounding communities to discuss cooperation in case a disorder broke out.

The streets remained quiet until past 9 p.m. Then scattered reports of windows being broken began to be received by police. At 10:30 p.m., Amos noticed 100 youngsters marching in a column of twos down the street. A tall Negro minister stepped from the office of the antipoverty agency and placed himself in the street in order to head them off.

"Brothers! Stop! Let me talk to you!" he called out.

The marchers brushed past him. A small boy, about 13 years old, looked up at the minister:

"Black power, baby!" he said.

The New Brunswick police were reinforced by 100 officers from surrounding communities. Roadblocks were set up on all principal thoroughfares into the city.

Wild rumors swept the city: reports of armed Negro and white gangs, shootings, fires, beatings, and deaths.

In fact, what occurred was more in the nature of random vandalism. According to Mayor Sheehan, it was "like Halloween—a gigantic night of mischief."

Tuesday morning the mayor imposed a curfew, and recorded a tape, played periodically over the city's radio station, appealing for order. Most of the persons who had been picked up the previous night were released on their own recognizance or on low bail.

The antipoverty agency, whose summer program had not been funded until a few days previously, began hiring youngsters as recreational aides. So many teenagers applied that it was decided to cut each stipend in half and hire twice as many as planned.

When the youngsters indicated a desire to see the mayor, she and the city commissioners agreed to meet with them. Although initially hostile, the 35 teenagers who made up the group "poured out their souls to the mayor." The mayor and the city commissioners agreed to the drawing up of a statement by the Negro youths attacking discrimination, inferior educational and employment opportunities, police harassment, and poor housing.

Four of the young people began broadcasting over the radio station, urging their "soul brothers and sisters" to "cool it, because you will only get hurt and the mayor has talked with us and is going to do something for us." Other youths circulated through the streets with the same message.

Despite these measures, a confrontation between the police and a crowd that gathered near a public housing project occurred that evening. The crowd was angry at the massive show of force by police in riot dress. "If you don't get the cops out of here," one man warned, "we are all going to get our guns." Asked to return to their homes, people replied: "We will go home when you get the police out of the area."

Requested by several city commissioners to pull back the uniformed police, the chief at first refused. He was then told it was a direct order from the mayor. The police were withdrawn.

A short time later, elements of the crowd—an older and rougher one than the night before—appeared in front of the police station. The participants wanted to see the mayor.

Mayor Sheehan went out onto the steps of the station. Using a bullhorn, she talked to the people and asked that she be given an opportunity to correct conditions. The crowd was boisterous. Some persons challenged the mayor. But, finally, the opinion, "She's new! Give her a chance!" prevailed.

A demand was issued by people in the crowd that all persons arrested the previous night be released. Told that this already had been done, the people were suspicious. They asked to be allowed to inspect the jail cells.

It was agreed to permit representatives of the people to look in the cells to satisfy themselves that everyone had been released.

The crowd dispersed. The New Brunswick riot had failed to materialize.

VIII. DETROIT

On Saturday evening, July 22, the Detroit Police Department raided five "blind pigs." The blind pigs had had their origin in prohibition days, and survived as private social clubs. Often, they were after-hours drinking and gambling spots.

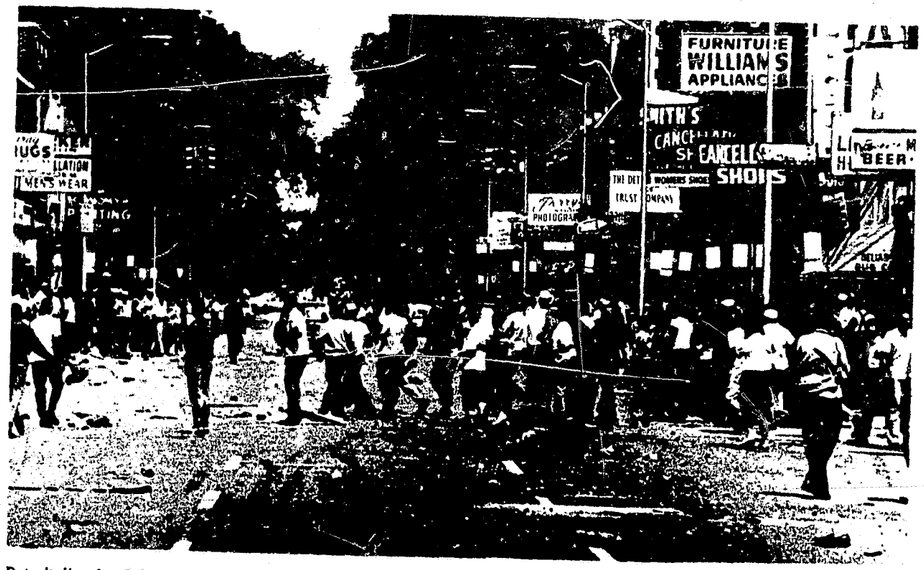
The fifth blind pig on the raid list, the United Community and Civic League at the corner of 12th Street and Clairmount, had been raided twice before. Once 10 persons had been picked up; another time, 28. A Detroit vice squad officer had tried but failed to get in shortly after 10 o'clock Saturday night. He succeeded, on his second attempt, at 3:45 Sunday morning.

The Tactical Mobile Unit, the Police Department's crowd control squad, had been dismissed at 3 a.m. Since Sunday morning traditionally is the least troublesome time for police in Detroit—and all over the country—only 193 officers were patroling the streets. Of these, 44 were in the 10th precinct where the blind pig was located.

Police expected to find two dozen patrons in the blind pig. That night, however, it was the scene of a party for several servicemen, two of whom were back from Vietnam. Instead of two dozen patrons, police found 82. Some voiced resentment at the police intrusion.

An hour went by before all 82 could be transported from the scene. The weather was humid and warm—the temperature that day was to rise to 86—and despite the late hour, many people were still on the street. In short order, a crowd of about 200 gathered.

In November of 1965, George Edwards, Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, and Commissioner of the Detroit Police Department from 1961 to 1963, had written in the *Michigan Law Review:*



Detroit disorder, July 1967

It is clear that in 1965 no one will make excuses for any city's inability to foresee the possibility of racial trouble. * * * Although local police forces generally regard themselves as public servants with the responsibility of maintaining law and order, they tend to minimize this attitude when they are patrolling areas that are heavily populated with Negro citizens. There, they tend to view each person on the streets as a potential criminal or enemy, and all too often that attitude is reciprocated. Indeed, hostility between the Negro communities in our large cities and the police departments, is the major problem in law enforcement in this decade. It has been a major cause of all recent race riots.

At the time of Detroit's 1943 race riot, Judge Edwards told Commission investigators, there was "open warfare between the Detroit Negroes and the Detroit Police Department." As late as 1961, he had thought that "Detroit was the leading candidate in the United States for a race riot."

There was a long history of conflict between the police department and citizens. During the labor battles of the 1930's, union members had come to view the Detroit Police Department as a strike-breaking force. The 1943 riot, in which 34 persons died, was the bloodiest in the United States in a span of two decades.

Judge Edwards and his successor, Commissioner Ray Girardin, attempted to restructure the image of the department. A Citizens Complaint Bureau was set up to facilitate the filing of complaints by citizens against officers. In practice, however, this Bureau appeared to work little better than less enlightened and more cumbersome procedures in other cities.

On 12th Street, with its high incidence of vice and crime, the issue of police brutality was a recurrent theme. A month earlier, the killing of a prostitute had been determined by police investigators to be the work of a pimp. According to rumors in the community, the crime had been committed by a vice squad officer.

At about the same time, the killing of Danny Thomas, a 27-year-old Negro Army veteran, by a gang of white youths had inflamed the community. The city's major newspapers played down the story in hope that the murder would not become a cause for increased tensions. The intent backfired. A banner story in the *Michigan Chronicle*, the city's Negro newspaper, began: "As James Meredith marched again Sunday to prove a Negro could walk in Mississippi without fear, a young woman who saw her husband killed by a white gang, shouting: 'Niggers keep out of Rouge Park,' lost her baby.

"Relatives were upset that the full story of the murder was not being told, apparently in an effort to prevent the incident from sparking a riot."

Some Negroes believed that the daily newspapers' treatment of the story was further evidence of the double standard: playing up crimes by Negroes, playing down crimes committed against Negroes.

Although police arrested one suspect for murder, Negroes questioned why the entire gang was not held. What, they asked, would have been the result if a white man had been killed by a gang of Negroes? What if Negroes had made the kind of advances toward a white woman that the white men were rumored to have made toward Mrs. Thomas?

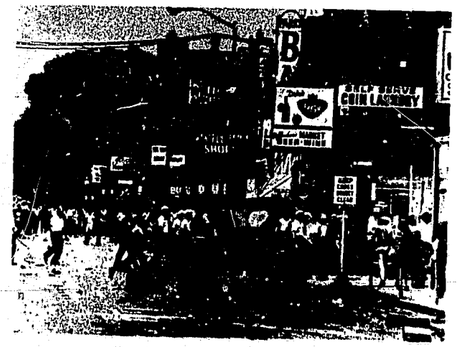
The Thomas family lived only four or five blocks from the raided blind pig.

A few minutes after 5 a.m., just after the last of those arrested had been hauled away, an empty bottle smashed into the rear window of a police car. A litter basket was thrown through the window of a store. Rumors circulated of excess force used by the police during the raid. A youth, whom police nicknamed "Mr. Greensleeves" because of the color of his shirt, was shouting: "We're going to have a riot!" and exhorting the crowd to vandalism.

At 5:20 a.m., Commissioner Girardin was notified. He immediately called Mayor Jerome Cavanagh. Seventeen officers from other areas were ordered into the 10th Precinct. By 6 a.m., police strength had grown to 369 men. Of these, however, only 43 were committed to the immediate riot area. By that time, the number of persons on 12th Street was growing into the thousands and widespread window-smashing and looting had begun.

On either side of 12th Street were neat, middle-class districts. Along 12th Street itself, however, crowded apartment houses created a density of more than 21,000 persons per square mile, almost double the city average.

The movement of people when the slums of "Black Bottom" had been cleared for urban renewal had changed 12th Street from an integrated community into an almost totally black one, in which only a number of merchants remained white. Only 18 percent of the residents were homeowners. Twenty-five percent of the housing was considered so substandard as to require clearance. Another 19 percent had major deficiencies.



Detroit disorder, July 1967

The crime rate was almost double that of the city as a whole. A Detroit police officer told Commission investigators that prostitution was so widespread that officers made arrests only when soliciting became blatant. The proportion of broken families was more than twice that in the rest of the city.

By 7:50 a.m., when a 17-man police commando unit attempted to make the first sweep, an estimated 3,000 persons were on 12th Street. They offered no resistance. As the sweep moved down the street, they gave way to one side, and then flowed back behind it.

A shoe store manager said he waited vainly for police for 2 hours as the store was being looted. At 8:25 a.m., someone in the crowd yelled, "The cops are coming!" The first flames of the riot billowed from the store. Firemen who responded were not harassed. The flames were extinguished.

By midmorning, 1,122 men—approximately a fourth of the police department—had reported for duty. Of these, 540 were in or near the six-block riot area. One hundred eight officers were attempting to establish a cordon. There was, however, no interference with looters, and police were refraining from the use of force.

Commissioner Girardin said: "If we had started shooting in there * * * not one of our policemen would have come out alive. I am convinced it would have turned into a race riot in the conventional sense."

According to witnesses, police at some roadblocks made little effort to stop people from going in and out of the area. Bantering took place between police officers and the populace, some still in pajamas. To some observers, there seemed at this point to be an atmosphere of apathy. On the one hand, the police failed to interfere with the looting. On the other, a number of older, more stable residents, who had seen the street deteriorate from a prosperous commercial thoroughfare to one ridden by vice, remained aloof.

Detroit disorder, July 1967

Because officials feared that the 12th Street disturbance might be a diversion, many officers were sent to guard key installations in other sections of the city. Belle Isle, the recreation area in the Detroit River that had been the scene of the 1943 riot, was sealed off.

In an effort to avoid attracting people to the scene, some broadcasters cooperated by not reporting the riot, and an effort was made to downplay the extent of the disorder. The facade of "business as usual" necessitated the detailing of numerous police officers to protect the 50,000 spectators that were expected at that afternoon's New York Yankees-Detroit Tigers baseball game.

Early in the morning, a task force of community workers went into the area to dispel rumors and act as counterrioters. Such a task force had been singularly successful at the time of the incident in the Kercheval district in the summer of 1966, when scores of people had gathered at the site of an arrest. Kercheval, however, has a more stable population, fewer stores, less population density, and the city's most effective police-community relations program.

The 12th Street area, on the other hand, had been determined, in a 1966 survey conducted by Dr. Ernest Harburg of the Psychology Department of the University of Michigan, to be a community of high stress and tension. An overwhelming majority of the residents indicated dissatisfaction with their environment.

Of the interviewed, 93 percent said they wanted to move out of the neighborhood; 73 percent felt that the streets were not safe; 91 percent believed that a person was likely to be robbed or beaten at night; 58 percent knew of a fight within the last 12 months in which a weapon had been employed; 32 percent stated that they themselves owned a weapon; 57 percent were worried about fires.

A significant proportion believed municipal services to be inferior: 36 percent were dissatisfied with the schools; 43 percent with the city's contribution to the neighborhood; 77 percent with the recreational facilities; 78 percent believed police did not respond promptly when they were summoned for help.

U.S. Representative John Conyers, Jr., a Negro, was notified about the disturbance at his home a few blocks from 12th Street, at 8:30 a.m. Together with other community leaders, including Hubert G. Locke, a Negro and assistant to the commissioner of police, he began to drive around the area. In the side streets, he asked people to stay in their homes. On 12th Street, he asked them to disperse. It was, by his own account, a futile task.

Numerous eyewitnesses interviewed by Commission investigators tell of the carefree mood with which people ran in and out of stores, looting and laughing, and joking with the police officers. Stores with "Soul Brother" signs appeared no more immune than others. Looters paid no attention to residents who shouted at

them and called their actions senseless. An epidemic of excitment had swept over the persons on the street.

Congressman Conyers noticed a woman with a baby in her arms; she was raging, cursing "whitey" for no apparent reason.

Shortly before noon, Congressman Conyers climbed atop a car in the middle of 12th Street to address the people. As he began to speak, he was confronted by a man in his fifties whom he had once, as a lawyer, represented in court. The man had been active in civil rights. He believed himself to have been persecuted as a result, and it was Convers' opinion that he may have been wrongfully jailed. Extremely bitter, the man was inciting the crowd and challenging Conyers: "Why are you defending the cops and the establishment? You're just as bad as they are!"

A police officer in the riot area told Commission investigators that neither he nor his fellow officers were instructed as to what they were supposed to be doing. Witnesses tell of officers standing behind sawhorses as an area was being looted—and still standing there much later, when the mob had moved elsewhere. A squad from the commando unit, wearing helmets with face-covering visors and carrying bayonet-tipped carbines, blockaded a street several blocks from the scene of the riot. Their appearance drew residents into the street. Some began to harangue them and to question why they were in an area where there was no trouble. Representative Conyers convinced the police department to remove the commandos.

By that time, a rumor was threading through the crowd that a man had been bayoneted by the police. Influenced by such stories, the crowd became belligerent. At approximately 1 p.m., stonings accelerated. Numerous officers reported injuries from rocks, bottles, and other objects thrown at them. Smoke billowed upward from four fires, the first since the one at the shoe store early in the morning. When firemen answered the alarms, they became the target for rocks and bottles.

At 2 p.m., Mayor Cavanagh met with community and political leaders at police headquarters. Until then there had been hope that, as the people blew off steam, the riot would dissipate. Now the opinion was nearly unanimous that additional forces would be needed.

A request was made for state police aid. By 3 p.m., 360 officers were assembling at the armory. At that moment looting was spreading from the 12th Street area to other main thoroughfares.

There was no lack of the disaffected to help spread it. Although not yet as hard-pressed as Newark, Detroit was, like Newark, losing population. Its prosperous middle-class whites were moving to the suburbs and being replaced by unskilled Negro migrants. Between 1960 and 1967, the Negro population rose from just under 30 percent to an estimated 40 percent of the total.

In a decade, the school system had gained 50,000 to 60,000 children. Fifty-one percent of the elementary school classes were overcrowded. Simply to achieve the statewide average, the system needed 1,650 more teachers and 1,000 additional classrooms. The combined cost would be $63 million.

Of 300,000 school children, 171,000, or 57 percent, were Negro. According to the Detroit superintendent of schools, 25 different school districts surrounding the city spent up to $500 more per pupil per year than Detroit. In the inner city schools, more than half the pupils who entered high school became dropouts.

The strong union structure had created excellent conditions for most working men, but had left others, such as civil service and Government workers, comparatively disadvantaged and dissatisfied. In June, the "Blue Flu" had struck the city as police officers, forbidden to strike, had staged a sick-out. In September, the teachers were to go on strike. The starting wages for a plumber's helper were almost equal to the salary of a police officer or teacher.

Some unions, traditionally closed to Negroes, zealously guarded training opportunities. In January of

Detroit disorder, July 1967

1967, the school system notified six apprenticeship trades it would not open any new apprenticeship classes unless a large number of Negroes were included. By fall, some of the programs were still closed.

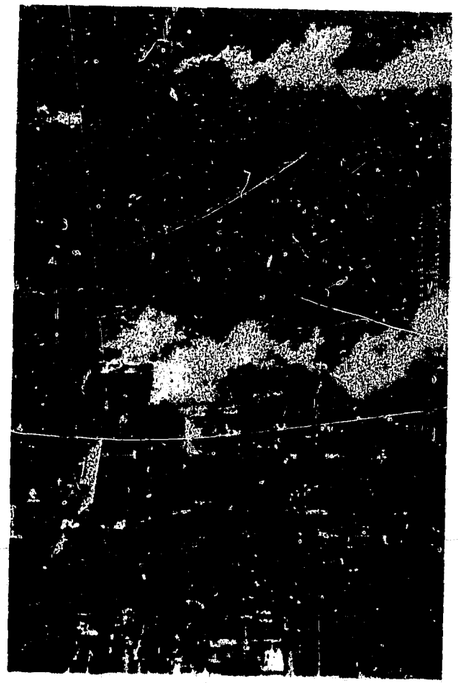
High school diplomas from inner-city schools were regarded by personnel directors as less than valid. In July, unemployment was at a 5-year peak. In the 12th Street area, it was estimated to be between 12 and 15 percent for Negro men and 30 percent or higher for those under 25.

The more education a Negro had, the greater the disparity between his income and that of a white with the same level of education. The income of whites and Negroes with a seventh-grade education was about equal. The median income of whites with a high school diploma was $1,600 more per year than that of Negroes. White college graduates made $2,600 more. In fact, so far as income was concerned, it made very little difference to a Negro man whether he had attended school for 8 years or for 12. In the fall of 1967, a study conducted at one inner-city high school, Northwestern, showed that, although 50 percent of the dropouts had found work, 90 percent of the 1967 graduating class was unemployed.

Mayor Cavanagh had appointed many Negroes to key positions in his administration, but in elective offices the Negro population was still underrepresented. Of nine councilmen, one was a Negro. Of seven school board members, two were Negroes.

Although Federal programs had brought nearly $360 million to the city between 1962 and 1967, the money appeared to have had little impact at the grassroots. Urban renewal, for which $38 million had been allocated, was opposed by many residents of the poverty area.

Because of its financial straits, the city was unable



Detroit riot zone, July 1967

to produce on promises to correct such conditions as poor garbage collection and bad street lighting, which brought constant complaints from Negro residents.

On 12th Street, Carl Perry, the Negro proprietor of a drugstore and photography studio, was dispensing ice cream, sodas, and candy to the youngsters streaming in and out of his store. For safekeeping, he had brought the photography equipment from his studio, in the next block, to the drugstore. The youths milling about repeatedly assured him that, although the market next door had been ransacked, his place of business was in no danger.

In midafternoon, the market was set afire. Soon after, the drug store went up in flames.

State Representative James Del Rio, a Negro, was camping out in front of a building he owned when two small boys, neither more than 10 years old, approached. One prepared to throw a brick through a window. Del Rio stopped him: "That building belongs to me," he said.

"I'm glad you told me, baby, because I was just about to bust you in!" the youngster replied.

Some evidence that criminal elements were organizing spontaneously to take advantage of the riot began to manifest itself. A number of cars were noted to be returning again and again, their occupants methodically looting stores. Months later, goods stolen during the riot were still being peddled.

A spirit of carefree nihilism was taking hold. To riot and to destroy appeared more and more to become ends in themselves. Late Sunday afternoon, it appeared to one observer that the young people were "dancing amidst the flames."

A Negro plainclothes officer was standing at an intersection when a man threw a Molotov cocktail into a business establishment at the corner. In the heat of the afternoon, fanned by the 20 to 25 m.p.h. winds of both Sunday and Monday, the fire reached the home next door within minutes. As residents uselessly sprayed the flames with garden hoses, the fire jumped from roof to roof of adjacent two- and three-story buildings. Within the hour, the entire block was in flames. The ninth house in the burning row belonged to the arsonist who had thrown the Molotov cocktail.

In some areas, residents organized rifle squads to protect firefighters. Elsewhere, especially as the wind-whipped flames began to overwhelm the Detroit Fire Department and more and more residences burned, the firemen were subjected to curses and rock-throwing.

Because of a lack of funds, on a per capita basis the department is one of the smallest in the Nation. In comparison to Newark, where approximately 1,000 firemen patrol an area of 16 square miles with a population of 400,000, Detroit's 1,700 firemen must cover a city of 140 square miles with a population of 1.6 million. Because the department had no mutual aid agreement with surrounding communities, it could not

quickly call in reinforcements from outlying areas, and it was almost 9 p.m. before the first arrived. At one point, out of a total of 92 pieces of Detroit firefighting equipment and 56 brought in from surrounding communities, only four engine companies were available to guard areas of the city outside of the riot perimeter.

As the afternoon progressed, the fire department's radio carried repeated messages of apprehension and orders of caution:

> There is no police protection here at all; there isn't a policeman in the area. * * * If you have trouble at all, pull out! * * * We're being stoned at the scene. It's going good. We need help! * * * Protect yourselves! Proceed away from the scene. * * * Engine 42 over at Linwood and Gladstone. They are throwing bottles at us so we are getting out of the area. * * * All companies without police protection—all companies without police protection—orders are to withdraw, do not try to put out the fires. I repeat—all companies without police protection orders are to withdraw, do not try to put out the fires!

It was 4:30 p.m. when the firemen, some of them exhausted by the heat, abandoned an area of approximately 100 square blocks on either side of 12th Street to await protection from police and National Guardsmen.

During the course of the riot, firemen were to withdraw 283 times.

Fire Chief Charles J. Quinlan estimated that at least two-thirds of the buildings were destroyed by spreading fires rather than fires set at the scene. Of the 683 structures involved, approximately one-third were residential, and in few, if any, of these was the fire set originally.

Governor George Romney flew over the area between 8:30 and 9 p.m. "It looked like the city had been bombed on the west side and there was an area two-and-a-half miles by three-and-a-half miles with major fires, with entire blocks in flames," he told the Commission.

In the midst of chaos, there were some unexpected individual responses.

Twenty-four-year-old E.G., a Negro born in Savannah, Ga., had come to Detroit in 1965 to attend Wayne State University. Rebellion had been building in him for a long time because,

> You just had to bow down to the white man. * * * When the insurance man would come by he would always call out to my mother by her first name and we were expected to smile and greet him happily. * * * Man, I know he would never have thought of me or my father going to his home and calling his wife by her first name. Then I once saw a white man slapping a young pregnant Negro woman on the street with such force that she just spun around and fell. I'll never forget that.

When a friend called to tell him about the riot on 12th Street, E. G. went there expecting "a true revolt," but was disappointed as soon as he saw the looting begin: "I wanted to see the people really rise up in revolt. When I saw the first person coming out of the store with things in his arms, I really got sick to my stomach and wanted to go home. Rebellion against the white suppressors is one thing, but one measly pair of shoes or some food completely ruins the whole concept."

E. G. was standing in a crowd, watching firemen

Looting in Detroit, July 1967

work, when Fire Chief Alvin Wall called out for help from the spectators. E. G. responded. His reasoning was: "No matter what color someone is, whether they are green or pink or blue, I'd help them if they were in trouble. That's all there is to it."

He worked with the firemen for 4 days, the only Negro in an all-white crew. Elsewhere, at scattered locations, a half dozen other Negro youths pitched in to help the firemen.

At 4:20 p.m., Mayor Cavanagh requested that the National Guard be brought into Detroit. Although a major portion of the Guard was in its summer encampment 200 miles away, several hundred troops were conducting their regular week-end drill in the city. That circumstance obviated many problems. The first troops were on the streets by 7 p.m.

At 7:45 p.m., the mayor issued a proclamation instituting a 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew. At 9:07 p.m., the first sniper fire was reported. Following his aerial survey of the city, Governor Romney, at or shortly before midnight, proclaimed that "a state of public emergency exists" in the cities of Detroit, Highland Park and Hamtramck.

At 4:45 p.m., a 68-year-old white shoe repairman, George Messerlian, had seen looters carrying clothes from a cleaning establishment next to his shop. Armed with a saber, he had rushed into the street, flailing away at the looters. One Negro youth was nicked on the shoulder. Another, who had not been on the scene, inquired as to what had happened. After he had been told, he allegedly replied: "I'll get the old man for you!"

Going up to Messerlian, who had fallen or been knocked to the ground, the youth began to beat him with a club. Two other Negro youths dragged the attacker away from the old man. It was too late. Messerlian died 4 days later in the hospital.

At 9:15 p.m., a 16-year-old Negro boy, superficially wounded while looting, became the first reported gunshot victim.

At midnight, Sharon George, a 23-year-old white woman, together with her two brothers, was a passenger in a car being driven by her husband. After having dropped off two Negro friends, they were returning home on one of Detroit's main avenues when they were slowed by a milling throng in the street. A shot fired from close range struck the car. The bullet splintered in Mrs. George's body. She died less than 2 hours later.

An hour before midnight, a 45-year-old white man, Walter Grzanka, together with three white companions, went into the street. Shortly thereafter, a market was broken into. Inside the show window, a Negro man began filling bags with groceries and handing them to confederates outside the store. Grzanka twice went over to the store, accepted bags, and placed them down beside his companions across the street. On the third occasion he entered the market. When he emerged, the market owner, driving by in his car, shot and killed him.

In Grzanka's pockets, police found seven cigars, four packages of pipe tobacco, and nine pairs of shoelaces.

Before dawn, four other looters were shot, one of them accidentally while struggling with a police officer. A Negro youth and a National Guardsman were injured by gunshots of undetermined origin. A private guard shot himself while pulling his revolver from his pocket. In the basement of the 13th Precinct Police Station, a cue ball, thrown by an unknown assailant, cracked against the head of a sergeant.

At about midnight, three white youths, armed with a shotgun, had gone to the roof of their apartment building, located in an all-white block, in order, they said, to protect the building from fire. At 2:45 a.m., a patrol car, carrying police officers and National Guardsmen, received a report of "snipers on the roof." As the patrol car arrived, the manager of the building went to the roof to tell the youths they had better come down.

The law enforcement personnel surrounded the building, some going to the front, others to the rear. As the manager, together with the three youths, descended the fire escape in the rear, a National Guardsman, believing he heard shots from the front, fired. His shot killed 23-year-old Clifton Pryor.

Early in the morning, a young white fireman and a 49-year-old Negro homeowner were killed by fallen power lines.

By 2 a.m. Monday, Detroit police had been augmented by 800 State Police officers and 1,200 National Guardsmen. An additional 8,000 Guardsmen were on the way. Nevertheless, Governor Romney and Mayor Cavanagh decided to ask for Federal assistance. At 2:15 a.m., the mayor called Vice President Hubert Humphrey, and was referred to Attorney General Ramsey Clark. A short time thereafter, telephone contact was established between Governor Romney and the attorney general.[5]

There is some difference of opinion about what occurred next. According to the attorney general's office, the governor was advised of the seriousness of the request and told that the applicable Federal statute required that, before Federal troops could be brought into the city, he would have to state that the situation had deteriorated to the point that local and state forces could no longer maintain law and order. According to the governor, he was under the impression that he was being asked to declare that a "state of insurrection" existed in the city.

[5] A little over two hours earlier, at 11:55 p.m., Mayor Cavanagh had informed the U.S. Attorney General that a "dangerous situation existed in the city." Details are set forth in the final report of Cyrus R. Vance, covering the Detroit riot, released on September 12, 1967.

The governor was unwilling to make such a declaration, contending that, if he did, insurance policies would not cover the loss incurred as a result of the riot. He and the mayor decided to re-evaluate the need for Federal troops.

Contact between Detroit and Washington was maintained throughout the early morning hours. At 9 a.m., as the disorder still showed no sign of abating, the governor and the mayor decided to make a renewed request for Federal troops.

Shortly before noon, the President of the United States authorized the sending of a task force of paratroops to Selfridge Air Force Base, near the city. A few minutes past 3 p.m., Lt. Gen. John L. Throckmorton, commander of Task Force Detroit, met Cyrus Vance, former Deputy Secretary of Defense, at the air base. Approximately an hour later, the first Federal troops arrived at the air base.

After meeting with state and municipal officials, Mr. Vance, General Throckmorton, Governor Romney, and Mayor Cavanagh, made a tour of the city, which lasted until 7:15 p.m. During this tour Mr. Vance and General Throckmorton independently came to the conclusion that—since they had seen no looting or sniping, since the fires appeared to be coming under control, and since a substantial number of National Guardsmen had not yet been committed—injection of Federal troops would be premature.

As the riot alternately waxed and waned, one area of the ghetto remained insulated. On the northeast side, the residents of some 150 square blocks inhabited by 21,000 persons had, in 1966, banded together in the Positive Neighborhood Action Committee (PNAC). With professional help from the Institute of Urban Dynamics, they had organized block clubs and made plans for the improvement of the neighborhood. In order to meet the need for recreational facilities, which the city was not providing, they had raised $3,000 to purchase empty lots for playgrounds. Although opposed to urban renewal, they had agreed to cosponsor with the Archdiocese of Detroit a housing project to be controlled jointly by the archdiocese and PNAC.

When the riot broke out, the residents, through the block clubs, were able to organize quickly. Youngsters, agreeing to stay in the neighborhood, participated in detouring traffic. While many persons reportedly sympathized with the idea of a rebellion against the "system," only two small fires were set—one in an empty building.

During the daylight hours Monday, nine more persons were killed by gunshots elsewhere in the city, and many others were seriously or critically injured. Twenty-three-year-old Nathaniel Edmonds, a Negro, was sitting in his backyard when a young white man stopped his car, got out, and began an argument with him. A few minutes later, declaring he was "going to paint his picture on him with a shotgun," the white man allegedly shotgunned Edmonds to death.

Mrs. Nannie Pack and Mrs. Mattie Thomas were sitting on the porch of Mrs. Pack's house when police began chasing looters from a nearby market. During the chase officers fired three shots from their shotguns. The discharge from one of these accidentally struck the two women. Both were still in the hospital weeks later.

Included among those critically injured when they were accidentally trapped in the line of fire were an 8-year-old Negro girl and a 14-year-old white boy.

As darkness settled Monday, the number of incidents reported to police began to rise again. Although many turned out to be false, several involved injuries to police officers, National Guardsmen, and civilians by gunshots of undetermined origin.

Watching the upward trend of reported incidents, Mr. Vance and General Throckmorton became convinced Federal troops should be used, and President Johnson was so advised. At 11:20 p.m., the President signed a proclamation federalizing the Michigan National Guard and authorizing the use of the paratroopers.

At this time, there were nearly 5,000 Guardsmen in the city, but fatigue, lack of training, and the haste with which they had had to be deployed reduced their effectiveness. Some of the Guardsmen traveled 200 miles and then were on duty for 30 hours straight. Some had never received riot training and were given on-the-spot instructions on mob control—only to discover that there were no mobs, and that the situation they faced on the darkened streets was one for which they were unprepared.

Commanders committed men as they became available, often in small groups. In the resulting confusion, some units were lost in the city. Two Guardsmen assigned to an intersection on Monday were discovered still there on Friday.

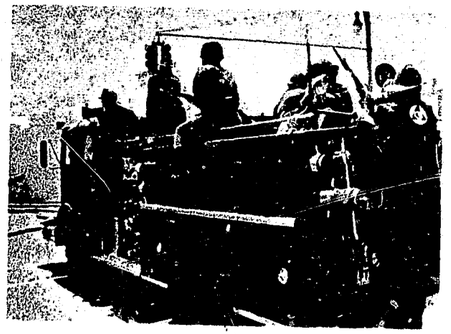
Lessons learned by the California National Guard two years earlier in Watts regarding the danger of overreaction and the necessity of great restraint in using weapons had not, apparently, been passed on to the Michigan National Guard. The young troopers could not be expected to know what a danger they were creating by the lack of fire discipline, not only to the civilian population but to themselves.

A Detroit newspaper reporter who spent a night riding in a command jeep told a Commission investigator of machine guns being fired accidentally, street lights being shot out by rifle fire, and buildings being placed under siege on the sketchiest reports of sniping. Troopers would fire, and immediately from the distance there would be answering fire, sometimes consisting of tracer bullets.

In one instance, the newsman related, a report was received on the jeep radio that an Army bus was pinned down by sniper fire at an intersection. National

Guardsmen and police, arriving from various directions, jumped out and began asking each other: "Where's the sniper fire coming from?" As one Guardsman pointed to a building, everyone rushed about, taking cover. A soldier, alighting from a jeep, accidentally pulled the trigger on his rifle. As the shot reverberated through the darkness, an officer yelled: "What's going on?" "I don't know," came the answer. "Sniper, I guess."

Without any clear authorization or direction, someone opened fire upon the suspected building. A tank rolled up and sprayed the building with .50-caliber tracer bullets. Law enforcement officers rushed into the surrounded building and discovered it empty. "They must be firing one shot and running," was the verdict.



Guardsmen ride "shotgun" on fire truck, Detroit, July 1967

The reporter interviewed the men who had gotten off the bus and were crouched around it. When he asked them about the sniping incident, he was told that someone had heard a shot. He asked "Did the bullet hit the bus?" The answer was: "Well, we don't know."

Bracketing the hour of midnight Monday, heavy firing, injuring many persons and killing several, occurred in the southeastern sector, which was to be taken over by the paratroopers at 4 a.m., Tuesday, and which was, at this time, considered to be the most active riot area in the city.

Employed as a private guard, 55-year-old Julius L. Dorsey, a Negro, was standing in front of a market when accosted by two Negro men and a woman. They demanded he permit them to loot the market. He ignored their demands. They began to berate him. He asked a neighbor to call the police. As the argument grew more heated, Dorsey fired three shots from his pistol into the air.

The police radio reported: "Looters, they have rifles." A patrol car driven by a police officer and carrying three National Guardmen arrived. As the looters fled, the law enforcement personnel opened fire. When the firing ceased, one person lay dead.

He was Julius L. Dorsey.

In two areas—one consisting of a triangle formed by Mack, Gratiot, and E. Grand Boulevard, the other surrounding Southeastern High School—firing began shortly after 10 p.m. and continued for several hours.

In the first of the areas, a 22-year-old Negro complained that he had been shot at by snipers. Later, a half dozen civilians and one National Guardsman were wounded by shots of undetermined origin.

Henry Denson, a passenger in a car, was shot and killed when the vehicle's driver, either by accident or intent, failed to heed a warning to halt at a National Guard roadblock.

Similar incidents occurred in the vicinity of Southeastern High School, one of the National Guard staging areas. As early as 10:20 p.m., the area was reported to be under sniper fire. Around midnight there were two incidents, the sequence of which remains in doubt.

Shortly before midnight, Ronald Powell, who lived three blocks east of the high school and whose wife was, momentarily, expecting a baby, asked the four friends with whom he had been spending the evening to take him home. He, together with Edward Blackshear, Charles Glover, and John Leroy climbed into Charles Dunson's station wagon for the short drive. Some of the five may have been drinking, but none was intoxicated.

To the north of the high school, they were halted at a National Guard roadblock, and told they would have to detour around the school and a fire station at Mack and St. Jean Streets because of the firing that had been occurring. Following orders, they took a circuitous route and approached Powell's home from the south.

On Lycaste Street, between Charlevoix and Goethe, they saw a jeep sitting at the curb. Believing it to be another roadblock, they slowed down. Simultaneously a shot rang out. A National Guardsmen fell, hit in the ankle.

Other National Guardsmen at the scene thought the shot had come from the station wagon. Shot after shot was directed against the vehicle, at least 17 of them finding their mark. All five occupants were injured, John Leroy fatally.

At approximately the same time, firemen, police, and National Guardsmen at the corner of Mack and St. Jean Streets, 2½ blocks away, again came under fire from what they believed were rooftop snipers to the southeast, the direction of Charlevoix and Lycaste. The police and guardsmen responded with a hail of fire.

When the shooting ceased, Carl Smith, a young firefighter, lay dead. An autopsy determined that the shot had been fired at street level, and, according to police, probably had come from the southeast.

At 4 a.m., when paratroopers, under the command

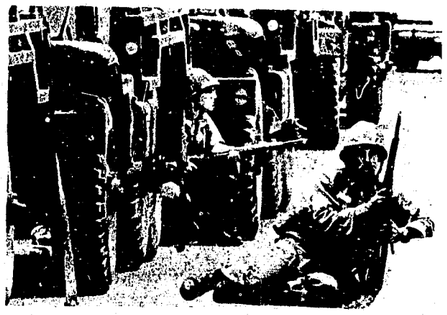
of Col. A. R. Bolling, arrived at the high school, the area was so dark and still that the colonel thought, at first, that he had come to the wrong place. Investigating, he discovered National Guard troops, claiming they were pinned down by sniper fire, crouched behind the walls of the darkened building.

The colonel immediately ordered all of the lights in the building turned on and his troops to show themselves as conspicuously as possible. In the apartment house across the street, nearly every window had been shot out, and the walls were pockmarked with bullet holes. The colonel went into the building and began talking to the residents, many of whom had spent the night huddled on the floor. He reassured them no more shots would be fired.

According to Lieutenant General Throckmorton and Colonel Bolling, the city, at this time, was saturated with fear. The National Guardsmen were afraid, the residents were afraid, and the police were afraid. Numerous persons, the majorty of them Negroes, were being injured by gunshots of undetermined origin. The general and his staff felt that the major task of the troops was to reduce the fear and restore an air of normalcy.

In order to accomplish this, every effort was made to establish contact and rapport between the troops and the residents. Troopers—20 percent of whom were Negro—began helping to clean up the streets, collect garbage, and trace persons who had disappeared in the confusion. Residents in the neighborhoods responded with soup and sandwiches for the troops. In areas where the National Guard tried to establish rapport with the citizens, there was a similar response.

Within hours after the arrival of the paratroops, the area occupied by them was the quietest in the city, bearing out General Throckmorton's view that the key to quelling a disorder is to saturate an area with "calm, determined, and hardened professional soldiers." Loaded weapons, he believes, are unnecessary. Troopers had strict orders not to fire unless they could see the specific person at whom they were aiming. Mass fire was forbidden.



Guardsmen take cover, Detroit, July 1967

During five days in the city, 2,700 Army troops expended only 201 rounds of ammunition, almost all during the first few hours, after which even stricter fire discipline was enforced. (In contrast, New Jersey National Guardsmen and state police expended 13,326 rounds of ammunition in three days in Newark.) Hundreds of reports of sniper fire—most of them false—continued to pour into police headquarters; the Army logged only 10. No paratrooper was injured by a gunshot. Only one person was hit by a shot fired by a trooper. He was a young Negro who was killed when he ran into the line of fire as a trooper, aiding police in a raid on an apartment, aimed at a person believed to be a sniper.

General Throckmorton ordered the weapons of all military personnel unloaded, but either the order failed to reach many National Guardsmen, or else it was disobeyed.

Even as the general was requesting the city to relight the streets, Guardsmen continued shooting out the lights, and there were reports of dozens of shots being fired to dispatch one light. At one such location, as Guardsmen were shooting out the street lights, a radio newscaster reported himself to be pinned down by "sniper fire."

On the same day that the general was attempting to restore normalcy by ordering street barricades taken down, Guardsmen on one street were not only, in broad daylight, ordering people off the street, but off their porches and away from the windows. Two persons who failed to respond to the order quickly enough were shot, one of them fatally.

The general himself reported an incident of a Guardsman "firing across the bow" of an automobile that was approaching a roadblock.

As in Los Angeles 2 years earlier, roadblocks that were ill-lighted and ill-defined—often consisting of no more than a trash barrel or similar object with Guardsmen standing nearby—proved a continuous hazard to motorists. At one such roadblock, National Guard Sgt. Larry Post, standing in the street, was caught in a sudden crossfire as his fellow Guardsmen opened up on a vehicle. He was the only soldier killed in the riot.

With persons of every description arming themselves, and guns being fired accidentally or on the vaguest pretext all over the city, it became more and more impossible to tell who was shooting at whom. Some firemen began carrying guns. One accidentally shot and wounded a fellow fireman. Another injured himself.

The chaos of a riot, and the difficulties faced by police officers, are demonstrated by an incident that occurred at 2 a.m., Tuesday.

A unit of 12 officers received a call to guard firemen from snipers. When they arrived at the corner of Vicksburg and Linwood in the 12th Street area, the intersection was well-lighted by the flames completely enveloping one building. Sniper fire was directed at the officers from an alley to the north, and gun flashes were observed in two buildings.

As the officers advanced on the two buildings, Patrolman Johnie Hamilton fired several rounds from his machinegun. Thereupon, the officers were suddenly subjected to fire from a new direction, the east. Hamilton, struck by four bullets, fell, critically injured, in the intersection. As two officers ran to his aid, they too were hit.

By this time other units of the Detroit Police Department, state police, and National Guard had arrived on the scene, and the area was covered with a hail of gunfire.

In the confusion the snipers who had initiated the shooting escaped.

At 9:15 p.m., Tuesday, July 25, 38-year-old Jack Sydnor, a Negro, came home drunk. Taking out his pistol, he fired one shot into an alley. A few minutes later, the police arrived. As his common-law wife took refuge in a closet, Sydnor waited, gun in hand, while the police forced open the door. Patrolman Roger Poike, the first to enter, was shot by Sydnor. Although critically injured, the officer managed to get off six shots in return. Police within the building and on the street then poured a hail of fire into the apartment. When the shooting ceased, Sydnor's body, riddled by the gunfire, was found lying on the ground outside a window.

Paratrooper stands guard, Detroit, July 1967

Nearby, a state police officer and a Negro youth were struck and seriously injured by stray bullets. As in other cases where the origin of the shots was not immediately determinable, police reported them as "shot by sniper."

Reports of "heavy sniper fire" poured into police headquarters from the two blocks surrounding the apartment house where the battle with Jack Sydnor had taken place. National Guard troops with two tanks were dispatched to help flush out the snipers.

Shots continued to be heard throughout the neighborhood. At approximately midnight—there are discrepancies as to the precise time—a machinegunner on a tank, startled by several shots, asked the assistant gunner where the shots were coming from. The assistant gunner pointed toward a flash in the window of an apartment house from which there had been earlier reports of sniping.

The machinegunner opened fire. As the slugs ripped through the window and walls of the apartment, they nearly severed the arm of 21-year-old Valerie Hood. Her 4-year-old niece, Tonya Blanding, toppled dead, a .50-caliber bullet hole in her chest.

A few seconds earlier, 19-year-old Bill Hood, standing in the window, had lighted a cigarette.

Down the street, a bystander was critically injured by a stray bullet. Simultaneously, the John C. Lodge Freeway, two blocks away, was reported to be under sniper fire. Tanks and National Guard troops were sent to investigate. At the Harlan House Motel, 10 blocks from where Tonya Blanding had died a short time earlier, Mrs. Helen Hall, a 51-year-old white businesswoman, opened the drapes of the fourth floor hall window. Calling out to other guests, she exclaimed: "Look at the tanks!"

She died seconds later as bullets began to slam into the building. As the firing ceased, a 19-year-old Marine, carrying a Springfield rifle, burst into the building. When, accidentally, he pushed the rifle barrel through a window, firing commenced anew. A police investigation showed that the Marine, who had just decided to "help out" the law enforcement personnel, was not involved in the death of Mrs. Hall.

R. R., a white 27-year-old coin dealer, was the owner of an expensive, three-story house on L Street, an integrated middle-class neighborhood. In May of 1966, he and his wife and child had moved to New York and had rented the house to two young men. After several months, he had begun to have problems with his tenants. On one occasion, he reported to his attorney that he had been threatened by them.

In March of 1967, R. R. instituted eviction proceed-

ings. These were still pending when the riot broke out. Concerned about the house, R. R. decided to fly to Detroit. When he arrived at the house on Wednesday, July 26, he discovered the tenants were not at home.

He then called his attorney, who advised him to take physical possession of the house and, for legal purposes, to take witnesses along.

Together with his 17-year-old brother and another white youth, R. R. went to the house, entered, and began changing the locks on the doors. For protection they brought a .22 caliber rifle, which R. R.'s brother took into the cellar and fired into a pillow in order to test it.

Shortly after 8 p.m., R. R. called his attorney to advise him that the tenants had returned, and he had refused to admit them. Thereupon, R. R. alleged, the tenants had threatened to obtain the help of the National Guard. The attorney relates that he was not particularly concerned. He told R. R. that if the National Guard did appear he should have the officer in charge call him (the attorney).

At approximately the same time, the National Guard claims it received information to the effect that several men had evicted the legal occupants of the house, and intended to start sniping after dark.

A National Guard column was dispatched to the scene. Shortly after 9 p.m., in the half-light of dusk, the column of approximately 30 men surrounded the house. A tank took position on a lawn across the street. The captain commanding the column placed in front of the house an explosive device similar to a firecracker. After setting this off in order to draw the attention of the occupants to the presence of the column, he called for them to come out of the house. No attempt was made to verify the truth or falsehood of the allegations regarding snipers.

When the captain received no reply from the house, he began counting to 10. As he was counting, he said, he heard a shot, the origin of which he could not determine. A few seconds, later he heard another shot and saw a "fire streak" coming from an upstairs window. He thereupon gave the order to fire.

According to the three young men, they were on the second floor of the house and completely bewildered by the barrage of fire that was unleashed against it. As hundreds of bullets crashed through the first- and second-story windows and richocheted off the walls, they dashed to the third floor. Protected by a large chimney, they huddled in a closet until, during a lull in the firing, they were able to wave an item of clothing out of the window as a sign of surrender. They were arrested as snipers.

The firing from rifles and machine guns had been so intense that in a period of a few minutes it inflicted an estimated $10,000 worth of damage. One of a pair of stone columns was shot nearly in half.

Jailed at the 10th precinct station sometime Wednesday night, R. R. and his two companions were taken from their cell to an "alley court," police slang for an unlawful attempt to make prisoners confess. A police officer, who has resigned from the force, allegedly administered such a severe beating to R. R. that the bruises still were visible 2 weeks later.

R. R.'s 17-year-old brother had his skull cracked open, and was thrown back into the cell. He was taken to a hospital only when other arrestees complained that he was bleeding to death.

At the preliminary hearing 12 days later, the prosecution presented only one witness, the National Guard captain who had given the order to fire. The police officer who had signed the original complaint was not asked to take the stand. The charges against all three of the young men were dismissed.

Nevertheless, the morning after the original incident, a major metropolitan newspaper in another section of the country composed the following banner story from wire service reports:

> DETROIT, *July 27 (Thursday)*.—Two National Guard tanks ripped a sniper's haven with machine guns Wednesday night and flushed out three shaggy-haired white youths. Snipers attacked a guard command post and Detroit's racial riot set a modern record for bloodshed. The death toll soared to 36, topping the Watts bloodbath of 1966 in which 35 died and making Detroit's insurrection the most deadly racial riot in modern U.S. history. * * *
>
> In the attack on the sniper's nest, the Guardsmen poured hundreds of rounds of .50 caliber machine gun fire into the home, which authorities said housed arms and ammunition used by West Side sniper squads.
>
> Guardsmen recovered guns and ammunition. A reporter with the troopers said the house, a neat brick home in a neighborhood of $20,000 to $50,000 homes, was torn apart by the machine gun and rifle fire.
>
> Sniper fire crackled from the home as the Guard unit approached. It was one of the first verified reports of sniping by whites. * * *
>
> A pile of loot taken from riot-ruined stores was recovered from the sniper's haven, located ten blocks from the heart of the 200-square block riot zone.
>
> Guardsmen said the house had been identified as a storehouse of arms and ammunition for snipers. Its arsenal was regarded as an indication that the sniping—or at least some of it—was organized.

As hundreds of arrestees were brought into the 10th precinct station, officers took it upon themselves to carry on investigations and to attempt to extract confessions. Dozens of charges of police brutality emanated from the station as prisoners were brought in uninjured, but later had to be taken to the hospital.

In the absence of the precinct commander, who had transferred his headquarters to the riot command post at a nearby hospital, discipline vanished. Prisoners who requested that they be permitted to notify someone of their arrest were almost invariably told that: "The telephones are out of order." Congressman Conyers and State Representative Del Rio, who went to the station hoping to coordinate with the police the establishing of a community patrol, were so upset by what they saw that they changed their minds and gave up on the project.

A young woman, brought into the station, was told to strip. After she had done so, and while an officer took pictures with a Polaroid camera, another officer came up to her and began fondling her. The negative of one of the pictures, fished out of a wastebasket, subsequently was turned over to the mayor's office.

Citing the sniper danger, officers throughout the department had taken off their bright metal badges. They also had taped over the license plates and the numbers of the police cars. Identification of individual officers became virtually impossible.

On a number of occasions officers fired at fleeing looters, then made little attempt to determine whether their shots had hit anyone. Later some of the persons were discovered dead or injured in the street.

In one such case police and National Guardsmen were interrogating a youth suspected of arson when, according to officers, he attempted to escape. As he vaulted over the hood of an automobile, an officer fired his shotgun. The youth disappeared on the other side of the car. Without making an investigation, the officers and Guardsmen returned to their car and drove off.

Looted supermarket, Detroit, July 1967

When nearby residents called police, another squad car arrived to pick up the body. Despite the fact that an autopsy disclosed the youth had been killed by five shotgun pellets, only a cursory investigation was made, and the death was attributed to "sniper fire." No police officer at the scene during the shooting filed a report.

Not until a Detroit newspaper editor presented to the police the statements of several witnesses claiming that the youth had been shot by police after he had been told to run did the department launch an investigation. Not until 3 weeks after the shooting did an officer come forward to identify himself as the one who had fired the fatal shot.

Citing conflicts in the testimony of the score of witnesses, the Detroit Prosecutor's office declined to press charges.

Prosecution is proceeding in the case of three youths in whose shotgun deaths law enforcement personnel were implicated following a report that snipers were firing from the Algiers Motel. In fact, there is little evidence that anyone fired from inside the building. Two witnesses say that they had seen a man, standing outside of the motel, fire two shots from a rifle. The interrogation of other persons revealed that law enforcement personnel then shot out one or more street lights. Police patrols responded to the shots. An attack was launched on the motel.

The picture is further complicated by the fact that this incident occurred at roughly the same time that the National Guard was directing fire at the apartment house in which Tonya Bianding was killed. The apartment house was only six blocks distant from and in a direct line with the motel.

The killings occurred when officers began on-the-spot questioning of the occupants of the motel in an effort to discover weapons used in the "sniping." Several of those questioned reportedly were beaten. One was a Negro ex-paratrooper who had only recently been honorably discharged, and had gone to Detroit to look for a job.

Although by late Tuesday looting and fire-bombing had virtually ceased, between 7 and 11 p.m. that night there were 444 reports of incidents. Most were reports of sniper fire.

During the daylight hours of July 26, there were 534 such reports. Between 8:30 and 11 p.m., there were 255. As they proliferated, the pressure on law enforcement officers to uncover the snipers became intense. Homes were broken into. Searches were made on the flimsiest of tips. A Detroit newspaper headline aptly proclaimed: "Everyone's Suspect in No Man's Land."

Before the arrest of a young woman IBM operator in the city assessor's office brought attention to the situation on Friday, July 28, any person with a gun in his home was liable to be picked up as a suspect.

Of the 27 persons charged with sniping, 22 had charges against them dismissed at preliminary hearings, and the charges against two others were dismissed later. One pleaded guilty to possession of an unregistered gun and was given a suspended sentence. Trials of two are pending.

In all, more than 7,200 persons were arrested. Almost 3,000 of these were picked up on the second day of the riot, and by midnight Monday 4,000 were incarcerated in makeshift jails. Some were kept as long as 30 hours on buses. Others spent days in an underground garage without toilet facilities. An uncounted number were people who had merely been unfortunate enough to be on the wrong street at the wrong time. Included were members of the press whose attempts to show their credentials had been ignored. Released later, they were chided for not having exhibited their identification at the time of their arrests.

The booking system proved incapable of adequately handling the large number of arrestees. People became lost for days in the maze of different detention facilities. Until the later stages, bail was set deliberately high, often at $10,000 or more. When it became apparent that this policy was unrealistic and unworkable, the prosecutor's office began releasing on low bail or on their own recognizance hundreds of those who had been picked up. Nevertheless, this fact was not publicized for fear of antagonizing those who had demanded a high-bail policy.

Of the 43 persons who were killed during the riot, 33 were Negro and 10 were white. Seventeen were looters, of whom two were white. Fifteen citizens (of whom four were white), one white National Guardsman, one white fireman, and one Negro private guard died as the result of gunshot wounds. Most of these deaths appear to have been accidental, but criminal homicide is suspected in some.

Two persons, including one fireman, died as a result of fallen powerlines. Two were burned to death. One was a drunken gunman; one an arson suspect.

Gutted buildings, Detroit

One white man was killed by a rioter. One police officer was felled by a shotgun blast when a gun, in the hands of another officer, accidentally discharged during a scuffle with a looter.

Action by police officers accounted for 20 and, very likely, 21 of the deaths; action by the National Guard for seven, and, very likely, nine; action by the Army for one. Two deaths were the result of action by storeowners. Four persons died accidentally. Rioters were responsible for two, and perhaps three of the deaths; a private guard for one. A white man is suspected of murdering a Negro youth. The perpetrator of one of the killings in the Algiers Motel remains unknown.

Damage estimates, originally set as high as $500 million, were quickly scaled down. The city assessor's office placed the loss—excluding business stock, private furnishings, and the buildings of churches and charitable institutions—at approximately $22 million. Insurance payments, according to the State Insurance Bureau, will come to about $32 million, representing an estimated 65 to 75 percent of the total loss.

By Thursday, July 27, most riot activity had ended. The paratroopers were removed from the city on Saturday. On Tuesday, August 1, the curfew was lifted and the National Guard moved out.

Family in charred ruins of home, Detroit, July 1967

METHODOLOGY—PROFILES OF DISORDER

Construction of the Profiles of Disorder began with surveys by field teams in 23 cities. From an analysis of the documents compiled and field interviews, 10 of the 23, a fair cross section of the cities, were chosen for intensive further investigation.

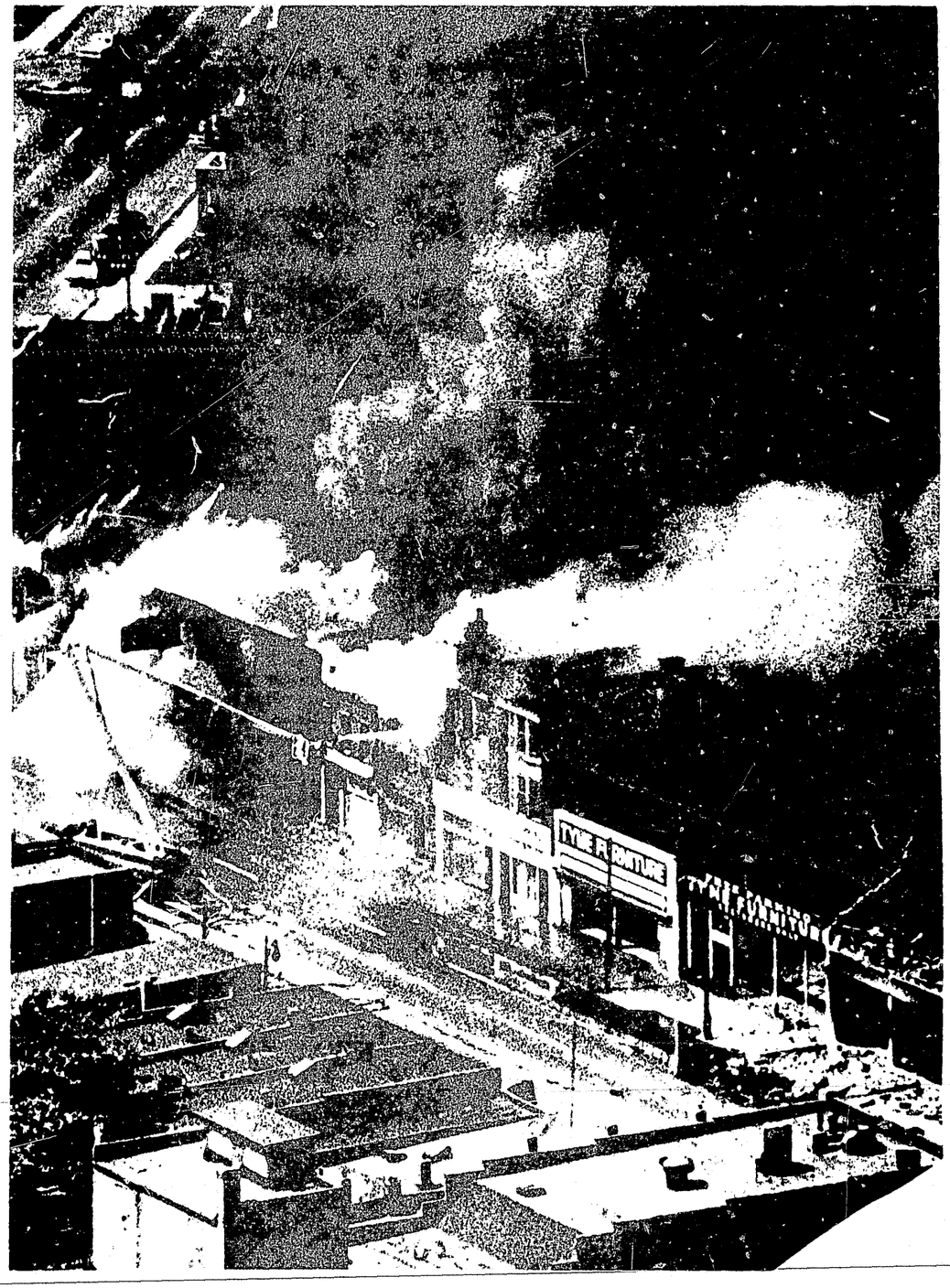
A special investigating group was dispatched to each city under study to conduct in-depth interviews of persons previously questioned and others that had come to our attention as a result of the analysis. Additional documents were obtained. In the process of acquisition, analysis, and distillation of information, the special investigating group made several trips to each city. In the meantime, the regular field teams continued to conduct their surveys and report additional information.

The approximately 1,200 persons interviewed represent a cross section of officials, observers, and participants involved in the riot process—from mayors, police chiefs, and army officers to Black Power advocates and rioters. Experts in diverse fields, such as taxation, fire fighting, and psychology, were consulted. Testimony presented to the Commission in closed hearings was incorporated.

Many official documents were used in compiling chronologies and corroborating statements made by witnesses. These included but were not limited to police department and other law enforcement agencies' after-action reports, logs, incident reports, injury reports, and reports of homicide investigations; after-action reports of U.S. Army and National Guard units; FBI reports; fire department logs and reports; and reports from Prosecutors' offices and other investigating agencies.

About 1,500 pages of depositions were taken from 90 witnesses to substantiate each of the principal items in the Profiles.

Since some information was supplied to the Commission on a confidential basis, a fully annotated, footnoted copy of the Profiles cannot be made public at this time, but will be deposited in the Archives of the United States.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Chapter 2

Patterns of Disorder

INTRODUCTION

The President asked the Commission to answer several specific questions about the nature of riots:

- The kinds of communities in which they occurred;
- The characteristics—including age, education, and job history—of those who rioted and those who did not;
- The ways in which groups of lawful citizens can be encouraged to help cool the situation;
- The relative impact of various depressed conditions in the ghetto which stimulated people to riot;
- The impact of Federal and other programs on those conditions;
- The effect on rioting of police-community relationships;
- The parts of the community which suffered the most as a result of the disorders.

The Profiles in the foregoing chapter portray the nature and extent of 10 of the disorders which took place during the summer of 1967. This chapter seeks in these events, and in the others which we surveyed, a set of common elements to aid in understanding what happened and in answering the President's questions.

This chapter also considers certain popular conceptions about riots. Disorders are often discussed as if there were a single type. The "typical" riot of recent years is sometimes seen as a massive uprising against white people, involving widespread burning, looting, and sniping, either by all ghetto Negroes or by an uneducated, Southern-born Negro underclass of habitual criminals or "riffraff". An agitator at a protest demonstration, the coverage of events by the news media, or an isolated "triggering" or "precipitating" incident, is often identified as the primary spark of violence. A uniform set of stages is sometimes posited, with a succession of confrontations and withdrawals by two cohesive groups, the police on one side and a riotous mob on the other. Often it is assumed that there was no effort within the Negro community to reduce the violence. Sometimes the only remedy prescribed is application of the largest possible police or control force, as early as possible.

What we have found does not validate these conceptions. We have been unable to identify constant patterns in all aspects of civil disorders. We have found that they are unusual, irregular, complex, and, in the present state of knowledge, unpredictable social processes. Like many human events, they do not unfold in orderly sequences.

Moreover, we have examined the 1967 disorders within a few months after their occurrence and under pressing time limitations. While we have collected information of considerable immediacy, analysis will undoubtedly improve with the passage and perspective of time and with the further accumulation and refinement of data. To facilitate further analysis we have appended much of our data to this report.

We have categorized the information now available about the 1967 disorders as follows:

- The pattern of violence over the nation: severity, location, timing, and numbers of people involved;

- The riot process in a sample of 24 disorders we have surveyed:* prior events, the development of violence, the various control efforts on the part of officials and the community, and the relationship between violence and control efforts;
- The riot participants: a comparison of rioters with those who sought to limit the disorder and with those who remained uninvolved;
- The setting in which the disorders occurred: social and economic conditions, local governmental structure, the scale of Federal programs, and the grievance reservoir in the Negro community;
- The aftermath of disorder: the ways in which communities responded after order was restored in the streets.

Based upon information derived from our surveys, we offer the following generalizations:

1. No civil disorder was "typical" in all respects. Viewed in a national framework, the disorders of 1967 varied greatly in terms of violence and damage: while a relatively small number were major under our criteria and a somewhat larger number were serious, most of the disorders would have received little or no national attention as "riots" had the Nation not been sensitized by the more serious outbreaks.

2. While the civil disorders of 1967 were racial in character, they were not *inter*racial. The 1967 disorders, as well as earlier disorders of the recent period, involved action within Negro neighborhoods against symbols of white American society—authority and property—rather than against white persons.

3. Despite extremist rhetoric, there was no attempt to subvert the social order of the United States. Instead, most of those who attacked white authority and property seemed to be demanding fuller participation in the social order and the material benefits enjoyed by the vast majority of American citizens.

4. Disorder did not typically erupt without preexisting causes as a result of a single "triggering" or "precipitating" incident. Instead, it developed out of an increasingly disturbed social atmosphere, in which typically a series of tension-heightening incidents over a period of weeks or months became linked in the minds of many in the Negro community with a shared reservoir of underlying grievances.

5. There was, typically, a complex relationship between the series of incidents and the underlying grievances. For example, grievances about allegedly abusive police practices, unemployment and underemployment, housing, and other conditions in the ghetto, were often aggravated in the minds of many Negroes by incidents involving the police, or the inaction of municipal authorities on Negro complaints about police action, unemployment, inadequate housing or other conditions. When grievance-related incidents recurred and rising tensions were not satisfactorily resolved, a cumulative process took place in which prior incidents were readily recalled and grievances reinforced. At some point in the mounting tension, a further incident—in itself often routine or even trivial—became the breaking point, and the tension spilled over into violence.

Detroit disorder scene, July 1967

6. Many grievances in the Negro community result from the discrimination, prejudice and powerlessness which Negroes often experience. They also result from the severely disadvantaged social and economic conditions of many Negroes as compared with those of whites in the same city and, more particularly, in the predominantly white suburbs.

7. Characteristically, the typical rioter was not a hoodlum, habitual criminal or riffraff; nor was he a recent migrant, a member of an uneducated underclass or a person lacking broad social and political concerns. Instead, he was a teenager or young adult, a lifelong resident of the city in which he rioted, a high school dropout—but somewhat better educated than his Negro neighbor—and almost invariably underemployed or employed in a menial job. He was proud of his race, extremely hostile to both whites and middle-class Negroes and, though informed about politics, highly distrustful of the political system and of political leaders.

8. Numerous Negro counterrioters walked the streets urging rioters to "cool it." The typical counterrioter resembled in many respects the majority of Negroes, who neither rioted nor took action against the rioters, that is, the noninvolved. But certain differences are crucial: the counterrioter was better educated and had higher income than either the rioter or the noninvolved.

9. Negotiations between Negroes and white officials occurred during virtually all the disorders surveyed. The negotiations often involved young, militant Negroes as well as older, established leaders. Despite a setting of chaos and disorder, negotiations in many cases involved discussion of underlying grievances as well as the handling of the disorder by control authorities.

10. The chain we have identified—discrimination, prejudice, disadvantaged conditions, intense and pervasive grievances, a series of tension-heightening incidents, all culminating in the eruption of disorder at the hands of youthful, politically-aware activists—must be understood as describing the central trend in the disorders, not as an explanation of all aspects of the riots or of all rioters. Some rioters, for example, may have shared neither the conditions nor the grievances of their Negro neighbors; some may have coolly and deliberately exploited the chaos created by others; some may have been drawn into the melee merely because they identified with, or wished to emulate, others. Nor do we intend to suggest that the majority of the rioters, who shared the adverse conditions and grievances, necessarily articulated in their own minds the connection between that background and their actions.

Store burned and looted, Detroit, July 1967

11. The background of disorder in the riot cities was typically characterized by severely disadvantaged conditions for Negroes, especially as compared with those for whites; a local government often unresponsive to these conditions; Federal programs which had not yet reached a significantly large proportion of those in need; and the resulting reservoir of pervasive and deep grievance and frustration in the ghetto.

12. In the immediate aftermath of disorder, the status quo of daily life before the disorder generally was quickly restored. Yet, despite some notable public and private efforts, little basic change took place in the conditions underlying the disorder. In some cases, the result was increased distrust between blacks and whites, diminished interracial communication, and growth of Negro and white extremist groups.

I. THE PATTERN OF VIOLENCE AND DAMAGE

LEVELS OF VIOLENCE AND DAMAGE

Because definitions of civil disorder vary widely, between 51 and 217 disorders were recorded by various agencies as having occured during the first 9 months of 1967. From these sources we have developed a list of 164 disorders which occurred during that period.[2] We have ranked them in three categories of violence and damage, utilizing such criteria as the degree and duration of violence, the number of active participants, and the level of law enforcement response:

Major Disorders

Eight disorders, 5 percent of the total, were major. These were characterized generally by a combination of the following factors: (1) many fires, intensive looting, and reports of sniping; (2) violence lasting more than 2 days; (3) sizeable crowds; and (4) use of National Guard or Federal forces as well as other control forces.[2]

Serious Disorders

Thirty-three disorders, 20 percent of the total, were serious but not major. These were characterized generally by: (1) isolated looting, some fires, and some rock throwing; (2) violence lasting between 1 and 2 days; (3) only one sizeable crowd or many small groups and (4) use of state police though generally not National Guard or Federal forces.[3]

Minor Disorders

One hundred and twenty-three disorders, 75 percent of the total, were minor. These would not have been classified as "riots" or received wide press attention without national conditioning to a "riot" climate. They were characterized generally by: (1) a few fires or broken windows; (2) violence lasting generally less than 1 day; (3) participation by only small numbers of people; and (4) use, in most cases, only of local police or police from a neighboring community.[4]

The 164 disorders which we have categorized occurred in 128 cities. Twenty-five (20 percent) of the cities had two or more disturbances. New York had five separate disorders, Chicago had four, six cities had three and 17 cities had two.[5] Two cities which experienced a major disorder—Cincinnati and Tampa—had subsequent disorders; Cincinnati had two more. However, in these two cities the later disorders were less serious than the earlier ones. In only two cities were later disorders more severe.[6]

* See the Statement on Methodology in the Appendix for a description of our survey procedures.

Three conclusions emerge from the data:

- The significance of the 1967 disorders cannot be minimized. The level of disorder was major or serious, in terms of our criteria, on 41 occasions in 39 cities.
- The level of disorder, however, has been exaggerated. Three-fourths of the disorders were relatively minor and would not have been regarded as nationally-newsworthy "riots" in prior years.
- The fact that a city had experienced disorder earlier in 1967 did not immunize it from further violence.

DISTRIBUTION IN TERMS OF TIME, AREA AND SIZE OF COMMUNTY

Time

In 1967, disorders occurred with increasing frequency as summer approached and tapered off as it waned. More than 60 percent of the 164 disorders occurred in July alone.

DISORDERS BY MONTH [7] AND LEVEL

Month (1967)	Number of major disorders	Number of serious disorders	Number of minor disorders	Totals
January			1	1
February				
March		1		1
April		1	3	4
May		3	8	11
June	3	3	10	16
July	5	22	76	103
August		3	14	17
September			11	11
Total	8	33	123	164

Area

The violence was not limited to any one section of the country.

DISORDERS BY REGION [8] AND LEVEL

Region	Number of major disorders	Number of serious disorders	Number of minor disorders	Total (percent)
East	3	10	44	35
Midwest	4	11	44	36
South and border	1	7	19	16
West		5	16	13
Total	8	33	123	100

When timing and location are considered together, other relationships appear. Ninety-eight disorders can be grouped into 23 clusters, which consist of two or more disturbances occurring within 2 weeks and within a few hundred miles of each other.

"Clustering" was particularly striking for two sets of cities. The first, centered on Newark, consisted of disorders in 14 New Jersey cities. The second, centered on Detroit, consisted of disturbances in seven cities in Michigan and one in Ohio.[9]

Size of Community

The violence was not limited to large cities. Seven of the eight major disorders occurred in communities with populations of 250,000 or more. But 37 (23 percent) of the disorders reviewed occurred in communities with populations of 50,000 or less; and 67 disorders (41 percent) occurred in communities with populations of 100,000 or less, including nine (about 22 percent) of the 41 serious or major disturbances.

DISORDERS BY LEVEL AND CITY POPULATION [10]

City population (in thousands)	Number of major disorders	Number of serious disorders	Number of minor disorders	Totals
0–50	1	5	31	37
50–100	0	3	27	30
100–250	0	8	23	31
250–500	5	10	15	30
500–1,000	1	4	10	15
Over 1,000	1	3	13	17
Totals	8	33	119 [11]	160 [11]

DEATH, INJURY AND DAMAGE

In its study of 75 disturbances in 67 cities, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Senate Committee on Government Operations reported 83 deaths and 1,897 injuries.[12] Deaths occurred in 12 of these disturbances. More than 80 percent of the deaths and more than half the injuries occurred in Newark and Detroit. In more than 60 percent of the disturbances, no deaths and no more than 10 injuries were reported.[13]

Substantial damage to property also tended to be concentrated in a relatively small number of cities. Of the disorders which the Commission surveyed, significant damage resulted in Detroit ($40–$45 million), Newark ($10.2 million), and Cincinnati (more than $1 million). In each of nine cities, damage was estimated at less than $100,000.[14]

Fire caused extensive damage in Detroit and Cincinnati, two of the three cities which suffered the greatest destruction of property.[15] Newark had relatively little loss from fire but extensive inventory loss from looting and damage to stock.[16]

Damage estimates made at the time of the Newark and Detroit disorders were later greatly reduced. Early estimates in Newark ranged from $15 to $25 million; a month later the estimate was revised to $10.2 million. In Detroit, newspaper damage estimates at first ranged from $200 million to $500 million; the highest recent estimate is $45 million.[17]

What we have said should not obscure three important factors. First, the dollar cost of the disorders should be increased by the extraordinary administrative expenses of municipal, state and Federal Governments.[18] Second, deaths and injuries are not the sole measures of the cost of civil disorders in human terms. For example, the cost of dislocation of people—though clearly not quantifiable in dollars and cents—was a significant factor in Detroit, the one case in which many residences were destroyed.[19] Other human costs —fear, distrust, and alienation—were incurred in every disorder. Third, even a relatively low level of violence and damage in absolute terms may seriously disrupt a small or medium-sized community.

VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

Of the 83 persons who died in the 75 disorders studied by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, about 10 percent were public officials, primarily law officers and firemen. Among the injured, public officials made up 38 percent.[20] The overwhelming majority of the civilians killed and injured were Negroes.

Retail businesses suffered a much larger proportion of the damage during the disorders than public institutions, industrial properties, or private residences. In Newark, 1,029 establishments, affecting some 4,492 employers and employees, suffered damage to buildings or loss of inventory or both. Those which suffered the greatest loss through looting, in descending order of loss, were liquor, clothing, and furniture stores.

White-owned businesses are widely believed to have been damaged much more frequently than those owned by Negroes. In at least nine of the cities studied, the damage seems to have been, at least in part, the result of deliberate attacks on white-owned businesses characterized in the Negro community as unfair or disrespectful toward Negroes.[21]

Not all the listed damage was purposeful or was caused by rioters. Some was a byproduct of violence. In certain instances police and fire department control efforts caused damage. The New Jersey Commission on Civil Disorders has found that in Newark, retributive action was taken against Negro-owned property by control forces.[22] Some damage was accidental. In Detroit some fire damage, especially to residences, may have been caused primarily by a heavy wind.

Public institutions generally were not targets of serious attacks,[23] but police and fire equipment was damaged in at least 15 of the 23 cities.[24]

Of the cities surveyed, significant damage to residences occurred only in Detroit. In at least nine of the 22 other cities there was minor damage to residences, often resulting from fires in adjacent businesses.[25]

After the riot, Detroit

II. THE RIOT PROCESS

The Commission has found no "typical" disorder in 1967 in terms of intensity of violence and extensiveness of damage. To determine whether, as is sometimes suggested, there was a typical "riot process," we examined 24 disorders which occurred during 1967 in 20 cities and three university settings.[26] We have concentrated on four aspects of that process:

- The accumulating reservoir of grievances in the Negro community;
- "Precipitating" incidents and their relationship to the reservoir of grievances;
- The development of violence after its initial outbreak;
- The control effort, including official force, negotiation, and persuasion.

We found a common social process operating in all 24 disorders in certain critical respects. These events developed similarly, over a period of time and out of an accumulation of grievances and increasing tension in the Negro community. Almost invariably, they exploded in ways related to the local community and its particular problems and conflicts. But once violence erupted, there began a complex interaction of many elements—rioters, official control forces, counter-rioters—in which the differences between various disorders were more pronounced than the similarities.

THE RESERVOIR OF GRIEVANCES IN THE NEGRO COMMUNITY

Our examination of the background of the surveyed disorders revealed a typical pattern of deeply held grievances which were widely shared by many members of the Negro community.[27] The specific content of the expressed grievances varied somewhat from city to city. But in general, grievances among Negroes in all the cities related to prejudice, discrimination, severely disadvantaged living conditions, and a general sense of frustration about their inability to change those conditions.

Specific events or incidents exemplified and reinforced the shared sense of grievance. News of such incidents spread quickly throughout the community and added to the reservoir. Grievances about police practices, unemployment and underemployment, housing, and other objective conditions in the ghetto were aggravated in the minds of many Negroes by the inaction of municipal authorities.

Out of this reservoir of grievance and frustration, the riot process began in the cities which we surveyed.

PRECIPITATING INCIDENTS

In virtually every case a single "triggering" or "precipitating" incident can be identified as having immediately preceded—within a few hours and in generally the same location—the outbreak of disorder.[28] But this incident was usually a relatively minor, even trivial one, by itself substantially disproportionate to the scale of violence that followed. Often it was an incident of a type which had occurred frequently in the same community in the past without provoking violence.

We found that violence was generated by an increasingly disturbed social atmosphere, in which typically not one, but a series of incidents occurred over a period of weeks or months prior to the outbreak of disorder.[29] Most cities had three or more such incidents; Houston had 10 over a 5-month period. These earlier or prior incidents were linked in the minds of many Negroes to the preexisting reservoir of underlying grievances. With each such incident, frustration and tension grew until at some point a final incident, often similar to the incidents preceding it, occurred and was followed almost immediately by violence.

As we see it, the prior incidents and the reservoir of underlying grievances contributed to a cumulative process of mounting tension that spilled over into violence when the final incident occurred. In this sense the entire chain—the grievances, the series of prior tension-heightening incidents, and the final incident—was the "precipitant" of disorder.

This chain describes the central trend in the disorders we surveyed and not necessarily all aspects of the riots or of all rioters. For example, incidents have not always increased tension; and tension has not always resulted in violence. We conclude only that both processes did occur in the disorders we examined.

Similarly, we do not suggest that all rioters shared the conditions or the grievances of their Negro neighbors: some may deliberately have exploited the chaos created out of the frustration of others; some may have been drawn into the melee merely because they identified with, or wished to emulate, others. Some who shared the adverse conditions and grievances did not riot.

We found that the majority of the rioters did share the adverse conditions and grievances, although they did not necessarily articulate in their own minds the connection between that background and their actions.

Newark and Detroit presented typical sequences of prior incidents, a buildup of tensions, a final incident, and the outbreak of violence:

NEWARK

Prior Incidents

1965: A Newark policeman shot and killed an 18-year-old Negro boy. After the policeman had stated that he had fallen and his gun had discharged accidentally, he later claimed that the youth had assaulted another officer and was shot as he fled. At a hearing it was decided that the patrolman had not used excessive force. The patrolman remained on duty, and his occasional assignment to Negro areas was a continuing source of irritation in the Negro community.

April 1967: Approximately 15 Negroes were arrested while picketing a grocery store which they claimed sold bad meat and used unfair credit practices.

Late May, early June: Negro leaders had for several months voiced strong opposition to a proposed medical-dental center to be built on 150 acres of land in the predominantly Negro central ward. The dispute centered mainly around the lack of relocation provisions for those who would be displaced by the medical center. The issue became extremely volatile in late May when public "blight hearings" were held regarding the land to be condemned. The hearings became a public forum in which many residents spoke against the proposed center. The city did not change its plan.

Late May, June: The mayor recommended appointment of a white city councilman who had no more than a high school education to the position of secretary to the board of education. Reportedly, there was widespread support from both whites and Negroes for a Negro candidate who held a master's degree and was considered more qualified. The mayor did not change his recommendation. Ultimately, the original secretary retained his position and neither candidate was appointed.

July 8: Several Newark policemen, allegedly including the patrolman involved in the 1965 killing, entered East Orange to assist the East Orange police during an altercation with a group of Negro men.

Final Incident

July 12, approximately 9:30 p.m.: A Negro cab driver was injured during or after a traffic arrest in the heart of the central ward. Word spread quickly, and a crowd gathered in front of the Fourth Precinct stationhouse across the street from a large public housing project.

Initial Violence

Same day, approximately 11:30 p.m.: The crowd continued to grow until it reached 300 to 500 people. One or two Molotov cocktails were thrown at the stationhouse. Shortly after midnight the police dispersed the crowd, and window-breaking and looting began a few minutes later. By about 1 a.m., the peak level of violence for the first night was reached.

DETROIT

Prior Incidents

August 1966: A crowd formed during a routine arrest of several Negro youths in the Kercheval section of the city. Tensions were high for several hours, but no serious violence occurred.

June 1967: A Negro prostitute was shot to death on her front steps. Rumors in the Negro community attributed the killing to a vice-squad officer. A police investigation later reportedly unearthed leads to a disgruntled pimp. No arrests were made.

June 26: A young Negro man on a picnic was shot to death while reportedly trying to protect his pregnant wife from assault by seven white youths. The wife witnessed the slaying and miscarried shortly thereafter. Of the white youths, only one was charged. The others were released.

Final Incident

July 23, approximately 3:45 a.m.: Police raided a "blind pig," a type of night club in the Negro area which served drinks after hours. Eighty persons were in the club—more than the police had anticipated—attending a party for several servicemen, two of whom had recently returned from Vietnam. A crowd of about 200 persons gathered as the police escorted the patrons into the police wagons.

Initial Violence

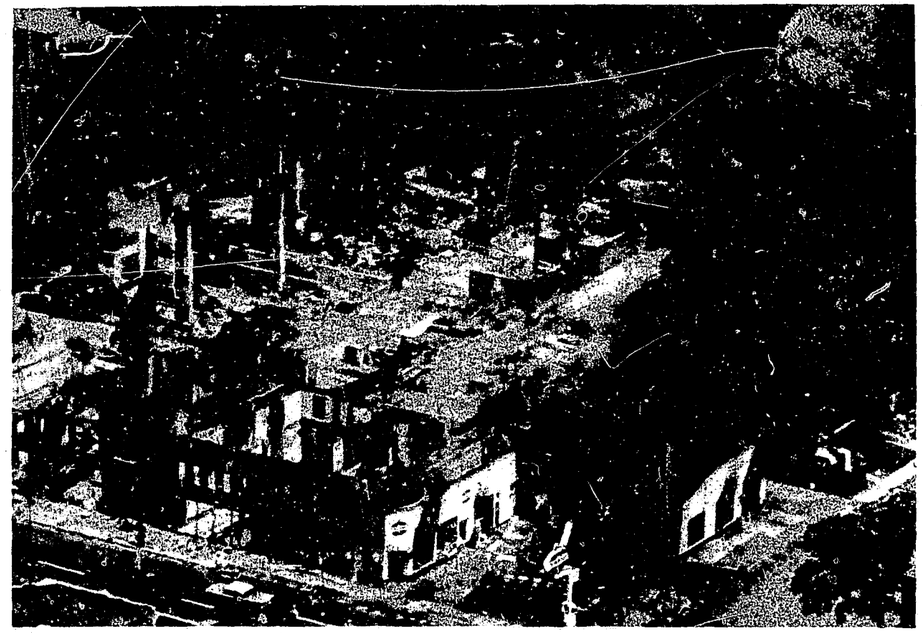
Approximately 5:00 a.m.: As the last police cars drove away from the "blind pig," the crowd began to throw rocks. By 8:00 a.m., looting had become widespread. Violence continued to increase throughout the day, and by evening reached a peak level for the first day.

In the 24 disorders surveyed, the events identified as tension-heightening incidents, whether prior or final, involved issues which generally paralleled the grievances we found in these cities.[30] The incidents identified were of the following types:

Police Actions

Some 40 percent of the prior incidents involved allegedly abusive or discriminatory police actions.[31] Most of the police incidents began routinely and involved a response to, at most, a few persons rather than a large group.[32]

A typical incident occurred in Bridgeton, N.J., 5 days before the disturbance when two police officers went to the home of a young Negro man to investigate a nonsupport complaint. A fight ensued when the officers attempted to take the man to the police station, and the Negro was critically injured and partially



Service station burns amid gutted buildings, Detroit, July 1967

paralyzed. A Negro minister representing the injured man's family asked for suspension of the two officers involved pending investigation. This procedure had been followed previously when three policemen were accused of collusion in the robbery of a white-owned store. The Negro's request was not granted.

Police actions were also identified as the final incident preceding 12 of the 24 disturbances.[33] Again, in all but two cases, the police action which became the final incident began routinely.[34]

The final incident in Grand Rapids occurred when police attempted to apprehend a Negro driving an allegedly stolen car. A crowd of 30 to 40 Negro spectators gathered. The suspect had one arm in a cast, and some of the younger Negroes in the crowd intervened because they thought the police were handling him too roughly.

Protest Activities

Approximately 22 percent of the prior incidents involved Negro demonstrations, rallies, and protest meetings.[35] Only five involved appearances by nationally known Negro militants.[36]

Protest rallies and meetings were also identified as the final incident preceding five disturbances. Nationally known Negro militants spoke at two of these meetings; in the other three only local leaders were involved.[37] A prior incident involving alleged police brutality was the principal subject of each of three rallies.[38] Inaction of municipal authorities was the topic for two other meetings.[39]

White Racist Activities

About 17 percent of the prior incidents involved activities by whites intended to discredit or intimidate Negroes or violence by whites against Negroes.[40] These included some 15 cross-burnings in Bridgeton, the harrassment of Negro college students by white teenagers in Jackson, Mississippi, and, in Detroit, the slaying of a Negro by a group of white youths. No final incidents were classifiable as racist activity.

Previous Disorders in the Same City

In this category were approximately 16 percent of the prior incidents, including seven previous disorders, the handling of which had produced a continuing sense of grievance.[41] There were other incidents, usually of minor violence, which occurred prior to seven disorders [42] and were seen by the Negro community as precursors of the subsequent disturbance. Typically, in Plainfield the night before the July disorder, a Negro youth was injured in an altercation between white and Negro teenagers. Tensions rose as a result. No final incidents were identified in this category.

Disorders in Other Cities

Local media coverage and rumors generated by the Newark and Detroit riots were specifically identified as prior incidents in four cases.[43] However, these major disorders appeared to be important factors in all the disorders which followed them.

Child in ruins of home, Detroit, July 1967

Media coverage and rumors generated by the major riots in nearby Newark and Plainfield were the only identifiable final incidents preceding five nearby disorders.[44] In these cases there was a substantial mobilization of police and extensive patrolling of the ghetto area in anticipation of violence.

Official City Actions

Approximately 14 percent of the prior incidents were identified as action, or in some cases, inaction of city officials other than police or the judiciary.[45] Typically, in Cincinnati 2 months prior to the disturbance, approximately 200 representatives (mostly Negroes) of the innercity community councils sought to appear before the city council to request summer recreation funds. The council permitted only one person from the group to speak, and then only briefly, on the ground that the group had not followed the proper procedure for placing the issue on the agenda.

No final incidents were identified in this category.

Administration of Justice

Eight of the prior incidents involved cases of allegedly discriminatory administration of justice.[46] Typical was a case in Houston a month-and-a-half before the disorder. Three civil rights advocates were arrested for leading a protest and for their participation in organizing a boycott of classes at the predominantly Negro Texas Southern University. Bond was set at $25,000 each. The court refused for several days to reduce bond, even though TSU officials dropped the charges they had originally pressed.

There were no final incidents identified involving the administration of justice.

In a unique case in New Haven, the shooting of a Puerto Rican by a white man was identified as the final incident before violence.[47]

Finally, we have noted a marked relationship between prior and final incidents within each city. In most of the cities surveyed, the final incident was of the same type as one or more of the prior incidents. For example, police actions were identified as both the final incident and one or more prior incidents preceding seven disturbances.[48] Rallies or meetings to protest police actions involved in a prior incident were identified as the final incident preceding three additional disturbances.[49] The cumulative reinforcement of grievances and heightening of tensions found in all instances were particularly evident in these cases.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIOLENCE

Once the series of precipitating incidents culminated in violence, the riot process did not follow a uniform pattern in the 24 disorders surveyed.[50] However, some similarities emerge.

The final incident before the outbreak of disorder, and the initial violence itself, generally occurred at a time and place in which it was normal for many people to be on the streets. In most of the 24 disorders, groups generally estimated at 50 or more persons were on the street at the time and place of the first outbreak.[51]

In all 24 disturbances, including the three university-related disorders, the initial disturbance area consisted of streets with relatively high concentrations of pedestrian and automobile traffic at the time. In all but two cases—Detroit and Milwaukee—violence started between 7 p.m. and 12:30 a.m., when the largest numbers of pedestrians could be expected. Ten of the 24 disorders erupted on Friday night, Saturday, or Sunday.[52]

In most instances, the temperature during the day on which violence first erupted was quite high.[53] This contributed to the size of the crowds on the street, particularly in areas of congested housing.

Major violence occurred in all 24 disorders during the evening and night hours, between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., and in most cases between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m.[54] In only a few disorders, including Detroit and Newark, did substantial violence occur or continue during the daytime.[55] Generally, the night-day cycles continued in daily succession through the early period of the disorder.[56]

At the beginning of disorder, violence generally flared almost immediately after the final precipitating incident.[57] It then escalated quickly to its peak level, in the case of 1-night disorders, and to the first night peak in the case of continuing disorders.[58] In Detroit and Newark, the first outbreaks began within two hours and reached severe, although not the highest, levels within 3 hours.

In almost all of the subsequent night-day cycles, the change from relative order to a state of disorder by a number of people typically occurred extremely rapidly—within 1 or 2 hours at the most.[59]

Nineteen of the surveyed disorders lasted more than 1 night.[60] In 10 of these, violence peaked on the first night, and the level of activity on subsequent nights was the same or less.[61] In the other nine disorders, however, the peak was reached on a subsequent night.[62]

Disorder generally began with less serious violence against property, such as rock and bottle-throwing and window-breaking.[63] These were usually the materials and the targets closest to hand at the place of the initial outbreak.

Once store windows were broken, looting usually followed.[64] Whether fires were set only after looting occurred is unclear. Reported instances of fire-bombing and Molotov cocktails in the 24 disorders appeared to occur as frequently during one cycle of violence as during another in disorders which continued through more than one cycle.[65] However, fires seemed to break out more frequently during the middle cycles of riots lasting several days.[66] Gunfire and sniping were also reported more frequently during the middle cycles.[67]

THE CONTROL EFFORT

What type of community response is most effective once disorder erupts is clearly a critically important question. Chapter 12, "Control of Disorder," and the Supplement on Control of Disorder consider this question at length. We consider in this section the variety of control responses, official and unofficial, utilized in the 24 surveyed disorders, including:

- Use or threatened use of local official force;
- Use or threatened use of supplemental official force from other jurisdictions;
- Negotiations between officials and representatives from the Negro community;
- On-the-street persuasion by "counterrioters."

Disorders are sometimes discussed as if they consisted of a succession of confrontations and withdrawals by two cohesive groups, the police or other control force on one side and a riotous mob on the other. Often it is assumed that there was no effort within the Negro

community to reduce the violence. Sometimes the only remedy prescribed is mobilization of the largest possible police or control force as early as possible.

None of these views is accurate. We found that:

- A variety of different control forces employed a variety of tactics, often at the same time, and often in a confused situation;
- Substantial non-force control efforts, such as negotiations and on-the-street persuasion by "counterrioters," were usually underway, often simultaneously with forcible control efforts; counterrioter activity often was carried on by Negro residents of the disturbance area, sometimes with and frequently without official recognition;
- No single tactic appeared to be effective in containing or reducing violence in all situations.

Local official force

In 20 of the 24 disorders, the primary effort to restore order at the beginning of violence was made entirely by local police.[68] In 10 cases no additional outside force was called for after the initial response.[69] In only a few cases was the initial control force faced with crowds too large to control.[70]

The police approach to the initial outbreak of disorder in the surveyed cities was generally cautious.[71] Three types of response were employed. One was dispersal (clearing the area, either by arrests or by scattering crowds), used in 10 cases.[72] Another was reconnaissance (observing and evaluating developments), used in eight cases.[73] In half of these instances, they soon withdrew from the disturbance area, generally because they believed they were unable to cope with the disorder.[74] The third was containment (preventing movement in or out of a cordoned or barricaded area), used in six cases.[75]

No uniform result from utilizing any of the three control approaches is apparent. In at least half of the 24 cases, it can reasonably be said that the approach taken by the police failed to prevent the continuation of violence.[76] To the extent that their effectiveness is measurable, the conclusion appears to hold for subsequent police control responses as well.[77] There is also evidence in some instances of over-response in subsequent cycles of violence.[78]

The various tactical responses we have described are not mutually exclusive, and in many instances combinations were employed. The most common were attempts at dispersal in the disturbance area and a simultaneous cordon or barricade at the routes leading from the disturbance area to the central commercial area of the city, either to contain the disturbance or to prevent persons outside the area from entering it, or both.[79]

In 11 disorders a curfew was imposed at some time, either as the major dispersal technique or in combination with other techniques.[80]

In only four disorders was tear gas used at any point as a dispersal technique.[81]

Only Newark and New Haven used a combination of all three means of control—cordon, curfew, and tear gas.[82]

Supplemental Official Force

In nine disturbances—involving a wide variation in the intensity of violence—additional control forces were brought in after there had been serious violence which local police had been unable to handle alone.[83] In every case, further violence occurred, often more than once and often of equal or greater intensity than before.[84]

The result was the same when extra forces were mobilized before serious violence. In four cities where this was done,[85] violence nonetheless occurred, in most cases more than once,[86] and often of equal or greater intensity than in the original outbreak.[87]

In the remaining group of seven cities, no outside control forces were called,[88] because the level and duration of violence were lower. Outbreaks in these cities nevertheless followed the same random pattern as in the cities which used outside forces.[89]

Negotiation

In 21 of the 24 disturbances surveyed, discussion or negotiation occurred during the disturbance. These took the form of relatively formal meetings between government officials and Negroes during which grievances and issues were discussed and means were sought to restore order.[90]

Such meetings were usually held either immediately before or soon after the outbreak of violence.[91] Meetings often continued beyond the first or second day of the disorder and, in a few instances, through the entire period of the disorder.[92]

The Negro participants in these meetings usually were established leaders in the Negro community, such as city councilmen or members of human relations commissions, ministers, or officers of civil rights or other community organizations.[93] However, Negro youths participated in over one-third of these meetings.[94] In a few disorders both youths and adult Negro leaders participated,[95] sometimes without the participation of local officials.[96]

Employees of community action agencies occasionally participated, either as intermediaries or as participants. In some cases they provided the meeting place.[97]

Discussions usually included issues generated by the disorder itself, such as the treatment by the police of those arrested.[98] In 12 cases, prior ghetto grievances, such as unemployment and inadequate recreational facilities, were included as subjects.[99] Often both disorder-related and prior grievances were discussed,[100] with the focus generally shifting from the former to the latter as the disorder continued.

How effective these meetings were is, as in the case of forcible response, impossible to gauge. Again, much depends on who participated, timing, and other responses being made at the same time.

Counterrioters

In all but six of the 24 disorders, Negro private citizens were active on the streets attempting to restore order primarily by means of persuasion.[101] In a Detroit survey of riot area residents over the age of 15, some 14 percent stated that they had been active as counterrioters.[102]

Counterrioters sometimes had some form of official recognition from either the mayor or a human relations council.[103] Police reaction in these cases varied from total opposition to close cooperation.[104] In most cases, some degree of official authorization was given before the activity of the counterrioters began,[105] and in a smaller number of cases, their activity was not explicitly authorized but merely condoned by the authorities.[106]

Distinctive insignia were worn by the officially recognized counter-rioters in at least a few cities.[107] In Dayton and Tampa, the white helmets issued to the counter-rioters have made the name "White Hats" synonymous with counter-rioters.

Public attention has centered on the officially recognized counter-rioters. However, counter-rioters are known to have acted independently, without official recognition, in a number of cities.[108]

Counterrioters generally included young men, ministers, community action agency and other antipoverty workers, and well-known ghetto residents.[109] Their usual technique was to walk through the disturbance area urging people to "cool it," although they often took other positive action as well, such as distributing food.[110]

How effective the counterrioters were is difficult to estimate. Authorities in several cities indicated that they believed they were helpful.

III. THE RIOT PARTICIPANT

It is sometimes assumed that the rioters were criminal types, overactive social deviants, or riffraff—recent migrants, members of an uneducated underclass, alienated from responsible Negroes, and without broad social or political concerns. It is often implied that there was no effort within the Negro community to attempt to reduce the violence.

We have obtained data on participation from four different sources:[111]

- Eyewitness accounts from more than 1,200 interviews in our staff reconnaissance survey of 20 cities;
- Interview surveys based on probability samples of riot area residents in the two major riot cities—Detroit and Newark—designed to elicit anonymous self-identification of participants as rioters, counterrioters or noninvolved;
- Arrest records from 22 cities; and
- A special study of arrestees in Detroit.

Only partial information is available on the total numbers of participants. In the Detroit survey, approximately 11 percent of the sampled residents over the age of 15 in the two disturbance areas admittedly participated in rioting; another 20 to 25 percent admitted to having been bystanders but claimed that they had not participated; approximately 16 percent claimed they had engaged in counterriot activity; and the largest proportion (48 to 53 percent) claimed they were at home or elsewhere and did not participate. However, a large proportion of the Negro community apparently believed that more was gained than lost through rioting, according to the Newark and Detroit surveys.[112]

Greater precision is possible in describing the characteristics of those who participated. We have combined the data from the four sources to construct a profile of the typical rioter and to compare him with the counterrioter and the noninvolved.

THE PROFILE OF A RIOTER

The typical rioter in the summer of 1967 was a Negro, unmarried male between the ages of 15 and 24. He was in many ways very different from the stereotype. He was not a migrant. He was born in the state and was a lifelong resident of the city in which the riot took place. Economically his position was about the same as his Negro neighbors who did not actively participate in the riot.

Although he had not, usually, graduated from high school, he was somewhat better educated than the average inner-city Negro, having at least attended high school for a time.

Nevertheless, he was more likely to be working in a menial or low status job as an unskilled laborer. If he was employed, he was not working full time and his employment was frequently interrupted by periods of unemployment.

He feels strongly that he deserves a better job and that he is barred from achieving it, not because of lack of training, ability, or ambition, but because of discrimination by employers.

He rejects the white bigot's stereotype of the Negro as ignorant and shiftless. He takes great pride in his race and believes that in some respects Negroes are superior to whites. He is extremely hostile to whites, but his hostility is more apt to be a product of social and economic class than of race; he is almost equally hostile toward middle class Negroes.

He is substantially better informed about politics than Negroes who were not involved in the riots. He is more likely to be actively engaged in civil rights efforts, but is extremely distrustful of the political system and of political leaders.

THE PROFILE OF THE COUNTERRIOTER

The typical counterrioter, who risked injury and arrest to walk the streets urging rioters to "cool it," was an active supporter of existing social institutions. He was, for example, far more likely than either the rioter or the noninvolved to feel that this country is worth defending in a major war. His actions and his attitudes reflected his substantially greater stake in the social system; he was considerably better educated and more affluent than either the rioter or the noninvolved. He was somewhat more likely than the rioter, but less likely than the noninvolved, to have been a migrant. In all other respects he was identical to the noninvolved.[113]

CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Race

Of the arrestees 83 percent were Negroes; 15 percent were whites.[114] Our interviews in 20 cities indicate that almost all rioters were Negroes.

Age

The survey data from Detroit, the arrest records, and our interviews in 20 cities, all indicate that the rioters were late teenagers or young adults.[115] In the Detroit survey, 61.3 percent of the self-reported rioters were between the ages of 15 and 24, and 86.3 percent were between 15 and 35. The arrest data indicate that 52.5 percent of the arrestees were between 15 and 24, and 80.8 percent were between 15 and 35.

Of the noninvolved, by contrast, only 22.6 percent in the Detroit survey were between 15 and 24, and 38.3 percent were between 15 and 35.

Sex

In the Detroit survey, 61.4 percent of the self-reported rioters were male. Arrestees, however, were almost all male—89.3 percent.[116] Our interviews in 20 cities indicate that the majority of rioters were male. The large difference in proportion between the Detroit survey data and the arrestee figures probably reflects either selectivity in the arrest process or less dramatic, less provocative riot behavior by women.

Family Structure

Three sources of available information—the Newark survey, the Detroit arrest study, and arrest records from four cities—indicate a tendency for rioters to be single.[117] The Newark survey indicates that rioters were single—56.2 percent—more often than the noninvolved—49.6 percent.

The Newark survey also indicates that rioters were more likely to have been divorced or separated—14.2 percent—than the noninvolved—6.4 percent. However, the arrest records from four cities indicate that only a very small percentage of those arrested fall into this category.

In regard to the structure of the family in which he was raised, the self-reported rioter, according to the Newark survey, was not significantly different from many of his Negro neighbors who did not actively participate in the riot. Twenty-five and five-tenths percent of the self-reported rioters and 23 percent of the noninvolved were brought up in homes where no adult male lived.[118]

Region of Upbringing

Both survey data[119] and arrest records[120] demonstrate unequivocally that those brought up in the region in which the riot occurred are much more likely to have participated in the riots. The percentage of self-reported rioters brought up in the North is almost identical for the Detroit survey—74.4 percent—and the Newark survey—74 percent. By contrast, of the noninvolved, 36 percent in Detroit and 52.4 percent in Newark were brought up in the region in which the disorder occurred.[121]

Data available from five cities on the birthplace of arrestees indicate that 63 percent of the arrestees were born in the North. Although birthplace is not necessarily identical with place of upbringing, the data are sufficiently similar to provide strong support for the conclusion.

Of the self-reported counterrioters, however, 47.5 percent were born in the North, according to the Detroit survey, a figure which places them between self-reported rioters and the noninvolved. Apparently, a significant consequence of growing up in the South is the tendency toward noninvolvement in a riot situation, while involvement in a riot, either in support of or against existing social institutions, was more common among those born in the North.

Residence

Rioters are not only more likely than the noninvolved to have been born in the region in which the riot occurred, but they are also more likely to have been long-term residents of the city in which the disturbance took place.[122] The Detroit survey data indicate that 59.4 percent of the self-reported rioters, but only 34.6 percent of the noninvolved, were born in Detroit. The comparable figures in the Newark survey are 53.5 percent and 22.5 percent.

Outsiders who temporarily entered the city during the riot might have left before the surveys were conducted and therefore may be underestimated in the

Looting in Milwaukee, August 1967

survey data. However, the arrest data,[123] which is contemporaneous with the riot, suggest that few outsiders were involved: 90 percent of those arrested resided in the riot city, 7 percent lived in the same state, and only 1 percent were from outside the state. Our interviews in 20 cities corroborate these conclusions.

Income

In the Detroit and Newark survey data, income level alone does not seem to correlate with self-reported riot participation.[124] The figures from the two cities are not directly comparable since respondents were asked for individual income in Detroit and family income in Newark. More Detroit self-reported rioters (38.6 percent) had annual incomes under $5,000 per year than the noninvolved (30.3 percent), but even this small difference disappears when the factor of age is taken into account.

In the Newark data, in which the age distributions of self-reported rioters and the noninvolved are more similar, there is almost no difference between the rioters, 32.6 percent of whom had annual incomes under $5,000, and the noninvolved, 29.4 percent of whom had annual incomes under $5,000.

The similarity in income distribution should not, however, lead to the conclusion that more affluent Negroes are as likely to riot as poor Negroes. Both surveys were conducted in disturbance areas where incomes are considerably lower than in the city as a whole and the surrounding metropolitan area.[125] Nevertheless, the data show that rioters are not necessarily the poorest of the poor.

While income fails to distinguish self-reported rioters from those who were not involved, it does distinguish counterrioters from rioters and the noninvolved. Less than 9 percent of both those who rioted and those not involved earned more than $10,000 annually. Yet almost 20 percent of the counterrioters earned this amount or more. In fact, there were no male self-reported counterrioters in the Detroit survey who earned less than $5,000 annually. In the Newark sample there were seven respondents who owned their own homes; none of them participated in the riot. While extreme poverty does not necessarily move a man to riot, relative affluence seems at least to inhibit him from attacking the existing social order and may motivate him to take considerable risks to protect it.

Education

Level of schooling is strongly related to participation. Those with some high school education were more likely to riot than those who had only finished grade school.[126] In the Detroit survey, 93 percent of the self-reported rioters had gone beyond grade school, compared with 72.1 percent of the noninvolved. In the Newark survey the comparable figures are 98.1 and 85.7 percent. The majority of self-reported rioters were not, however, high school graduates.

The counterrioters were clearly the best educated of the three groups. Approximately twice as many counterrioters had attended college as had the noninvolved, and half again as many counterrioters had attended college as rioters. Considered with the information on income, the data suggest that counterrioters were probably well on their way into the middle class.

Education and income are the only factors which distinguish the counterrioter from the noninvolved. Apparently, a high level of education and income not only prevents rioting but is more likely to lead to active, responsible opposition to rioting.

Employment

The Detroit and Newark surveys, the arrest records from four cities, and the Detroit arrest study all indicate that there are no substantial differences in unemployment between the rioters and the noninvolved.[127]

Unemployment levels among both groups were extremely high. In the Detroit survey, 29.6 percent of the self-reported rioters were unemployed; in the Newark survey, 29.7 percent; in the four-city arrest data, 33.2 percent; and in the Detroit arrest study, 21.8 percent. The unemployment rates for the noninvolved in the Detroit and Newark surveys were 31.5 and 19.0 percent.

Self-reported rioters were more likely to be only intermittently employed, however, than the noninvolved. Respondents in Newark were asked whether they had been unemployed for as long as a month or more during the last year.[128] Sixty-one percent of the self-reported rioters, but only 43.4 percent of the noninvolved, answered, "yes."

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