

Negroes And The National Guard

PART IV

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

There were more than 100 major riot incidents in the United States in the 1966-67 period, ranging from the destruction in Detroit to the holocaust of Newark.

Many innocent people were killed, millions of dollars in property was destroyed, stores and shops looted, people arrested and brutalized--with dogs, gas, billy clubs and the personal wrath of the police and National Guardsmen.

Almost every city or hamlet that didn't have a riot was tense with the expectation that one might visit the area at any moment. What did we learn from it all?

During the first two months of 1968, the press was saturated with news of National Guard reorganizations, special riot training, new and more effective equipment, new tactics, and more elaborate ideas for suppressing and containing Negroes in the ghetto.

Negroes continued to render mild forms of "indoors" protests, and seemed to accomplish very little. In fact, three college students were killed when the Guard and state police were called out in Orangeburg, S.C., because Negroes protested a segregated bowling alley.

Several reports on the use of Guard troops indicated the soldiers not only used "excessive force," but were actually guilty of murder in some instances.

MANY NEW proposals, ideas, programs and philosophies have been voiced thus far--especially since this is an election year--on how to prevent riots, how to curb crime in the streets, and how to rebuild the damaged cities. Yet, not many concerned themselves with the roots of the outbreaks.

By JOSEPH L. TURNER
NEGRO PRESS INTERNATIONAL

One proposal, by Cook County (Ill.) Sheriff Joseph Woods, was to organize a "posse" of riot fighters under his control. The turnout of enthusiasts looking for a "legal" opportunity to shoot and kill revealed in an interesting way what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said earlier about the Windy City: "We didn't create any racism, we merely uncovered it."

What we have learned from the riots and protest demonstrations, from the use of National Guardsmen, and from the suggestions and/or accomplishments in race relations has been that a strong brand of racism does exist in America.

We have learned too that more and more the Negro can, and must take steps to help control his own destiny; that he must develop the independence in politics, economics, and in socio-civic leadership where he cannot be denied.

Then there is the matter that he must be instrumental in making the suggestions and helping develop the programs and ideas that will offer him more self-help opportunities; that he must develop a strong sense of personal pride and racial unity; that he must not continue to take the short personal gain and give up his freedom and individualism.

A great deal of the hope of accomplishing these things we have learned during 1966-67 rest on the hopes of the report of the President's Committee on National Disorders, and the willingness of the nation to adopt these and other suggestions in their attempts to solve the causes of riots and social unrest.

NEXT WEEK: 1968, TIME OF CHANGE

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of all programs throughout the state designed for the achievement of equality of opportunity in education and employment including segments on "Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada, Inc.," "Equal and Continuing Education (with suggested 'Special Needs in Nevada's Public School System')", and "Education for the World of Work."

The report concludes with a call for "Affirmative Action" stating "The League of Women Voters sees opportunities for individual and collective action now in Nevada to narrow the wide gap in education and employment between the poor and the affluent among us." Suggested areas of action are "affirmative hiring", "affirmative education", and "affirmative individual action" with specific methods of action in all three areas spelled out.

IN THE area of "affirmative individual action", the report points out "There is much that each of us can do in informing ourselves, in informing others, in participating in programs, and in spurring on our local and state representatives to make 'the commitment of resources equal to the magnitude of the problems we face'."

Thoughtfully provided to aid citizens in "informing themselves and others" is a bibliography of Nevada literature as "Some Useful Reference Works In The Equal Opportunity Field In Nevada". To the 10 listed reference works is added "Two Newspapers in particular: The Las Vegas VOICE and The Native Nevadan", the VOICE is proud to report.

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