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**ORIGINAL**

ANALYSES OF DAYTON

by

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In the space of a year, Dayton experienced three disturbances. Ideally this would present the opportunity to consider developments over time, yet the information collected is not adequate to this task. In each case the disturbances were rather similar. There does not appear to have been an escalation, and the reverse may even be true. They all occurred in a milieu rich in felt Negro grievances which became even more charged given particular incidents (in two cases the killing of a Negro and in a third the failure to refund a grass roots poverty agency). The behavior of the agencies of social control does not seem to have grossly deepened or widened the extent of the disturbances, although a number of complaints were made about police behavior during the incidents. In each case the disturbances (I think?) reached their highest intensity on the first night and participation was mainly by the young. Burning, looting, rock throwing occurred, but not on a massive scale. There was much counter riot activity in Dayton, and apparently great (and successful) efforts were made to cool things by the Negro leaders.

Dayton seems somewhat aware of the problems faced by the Negro community yet its efforts to solve community problems have not been successful. There seems to be a tendency (a) either to deny that any problems exist, or (b) committee which then acknowledges that a problem exists but does nothing

about it, or (c) to set up a formal organization to deal with the problems but to deny this organization the means of effectively solving problems . In each of these cases discontent is generated and comes to have a symbolic meaning beyond particular issues. In the first case over the failure to grant legitimacy to black claims and the later cases over a sense of being duped and put upon by basically insincere hypocrits. There would seem to be much misperception and misunderstanding on the part of both whites and Negroes in Dayton, particularly the former. The structure of local government is not conducive to Negroes being effectively represented and the fragmented and competing Negro leadership groups can not present a united front.

#### Structure of Government and White Officials

The non-partisan city council and school board members are elected at large--a Negro thus needs white support to be elected since Negroes are only \_\_\_\_% of the population. This system can also give people a sense of being unrepresented.

According to the report it is the "universal opinion of the Negro community that the white power structure either doesn't or can't communicate with Negroes." Whites have not yet accepted the depth of the problem. Housing in particular is a problem of great concern to Negroes but this is not seen as a problem to the whites.

While the white power structure occasionally seems aware of and sympathetic to Negro problems there seems to be a vast

gap in communication and much misperception among white leaders as to the causes and depth of black discontentment. The extent to which whites are willing to go once they do acknowledge the existence of a problem is nowhere as far as they must go to overcome community problems. Several whites in high positions seemed to lack the ability to deal with problems others feel that Negroes are "getting more than they deserve" now.

The part-time Mayor (a realtor) was described by several people as an unqualified (high school drop out) although amateur with limited influence and he recently voted against a city fair housing ordinance and the superintendent of schools looked forward to retirement and wasn't concerned with innovation. He is described as "a tired old man with neither the interest nor the energy to confront the education problems which are his responsibility.

The Mayor held the belief that participants in the disturbance were thieves who just wanted to loot and who did not have specific grievances along with his statement that "our Negroes are fat" indicates the gulf in communication. He further reports "it's difficult not to say 'boy' when you have been used to saying it all your life, just for anyone you meet."

Lack of appreciation of the seriousness of the situation may also be seen in the view of a prominent banker that future violence is unlikely unless H. Rap Brown or someone else incites people. His belief that "Negroes want everything right now and do not fully realize how much time is required," and

that the problems faced by Negroes stem from the fact that "the Negro subculture doesn't espouse white values" could lead to strong indignation on the part of the Negro community.

The white establishment, until the recent Barbee killing, seems to have taken the very serious issue of police/community relations rather lightly in spite of the past history of discrimination in the department, the resentment of certain vice squad officers said to exploit Negro prostitutes and abuse Negroes in general, and certain issues that had become highly symbolic such as the Mitchell(?) killing.

Note the chief of police's view that preceding the June riot "there were no tensions or incidents, more than the 'usual' Negro complaints about not being treated properly," and until the shooting of Barbee the police image in the Negro community was perfectly alright, although H. Rap Brown is seen as the catalyst to the June outburst, the chief further notes "there are muggers and thieves who live by their wits and who just seek a chance to loot; they profit by riots." The chief and other white authorities error in seeing this only as a problem of law and order and the way in which participants may "profit by riots." Beyond the financial profiting for some the riots are a way of achieving manhood and symbolic acts of defiance against an oppressive society.

The chief also feels that the city manager is giving Negroes more than their share of service. He notes "they are getting extra care because of the kinds of things that have happened recently."

The tone of the chief's remarks are consistent with the report of a staff member who spent an evening reading with the police. "The police do not seem to understand or comprehend the kinds of problems and resentments which their very presence in the Negro community causes."

An additional issue of a great concern to many Negroes in housing, yet feel there is a serious problem here.

The chief further suggests, perhaps in a projection of his own feelings that "the real trouble" in the relationship between whites and Negroes is that "the white men are scared to death ~~that~~ that their grandchildren will be half-breeds, and the Negroes are aware of this; they resent deeply that white men consider the Negro unfit to mix racially. White men don't want their daughters to marry colored."

### Negro Leadership

The Negro population has increased 27% in the last 6 years as whites flee to the suburbs. The Negro community in Dayton does not suffer from a lack of leaders or organizations. However the leadership group (and presumably the larger community) seems quite divided along lines of social classes and those holding to different ideologies, but often among those who are similar in this respect. The conflicts among different militant groups and the constant emergence of new militant groups is indicative of the lack of unity. In the last year one leader has created 3 militant groups, each group emerging because conflict was generated in the previous

group.

Different Negro groups apparently split over support for a school bond, an open housing law (the militants opposing this because the NAACP favored it) the building of public housing, the appearance of H. Rap Brown, and the riots. In addition the failure to refund MAT by SCOPE seems to have left a bitter legacy.

This results in a situation whereby Negroes cannot present a unified front and this inhibits the power they can bring to bear on behalf of their demands. The white leadership is said to exploit this situation and to talk with both militants and moderates at separate times. When it is sincere the city power structure may have difficulty communicating because there are so many different organizations claiming to represent the Negro community.<sup>1</sup>

Some optimistic leaders may be using the Negro struggle to advance their own personal interests. Anger at the larger white community may draw fuel from intra-Negro rivalry. Indignation expressed toward white society may be inspired not only

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1. The business leaders in the city are said to be more liberal now than ever before and more willing to work with Negroes, yet they are reportedly very confused about which Negroes and which Negro organizations they should work with. As a result they don't work with any. This proliferation of Negro groups can of course also be used as an excuse by whites who may have been unwilling to work with Negroes even if there was a single unified structure.

by dissatisfaction with conditions and the desire for change but also by a desire to gain power in the Negro community, a situation could (?) develop when complaints have the function of arousing and mobilizing Negroes and not only (or at all?) attacking the white power structure.

This type situation seems more likely in a community such as Dayton with its proliferation of Negro leadership groups.

Thus the structure of government in Dayton (and its personal) and the organization of the Negro community are not conducive to effective representation for Negroes.

In the midst of this situation one finds a great many Negro grievances, some not acknowledged by the white community and those that are acknowledged not adequately acted upon.

#### Grievances

The police are an especially sensitive issue. Until 1963 the department actively discriminated against Negroes and currently 3% of its force is black. The police are reputed to call people "boy," "nigger," and "bitch." Two officers in particular are disliked because they "beat nigger heads" and exploit prostitutes. Furthermore it is widely felt that the police department goes out to the west side every evening with the intention to "beat so many nigger heads tonight." The mechanisms for processing complaints against the police are ~~ade~~ inadequate and the report of the civil rights commission that a police review mechanism be created has not been acted upon. Complaints currently are referred to the

police personnel office which is not an integral part of the police administration. Negroes are said to be tired of filing complaints and not obtaining results. The policemen on the beat are particularly resented and there is the feeling that the "relative" enlightenment of the higher echelons does not filter down. The average patrolman has not had community relations training. The Negro community has a particularly bad image of the police department. There have been 3 police chiefs in the last 4 years. The police handling of the Williams and Barbee incidents are not of such a nature as to inspire confidence. In both cases lying and highly unprofessional behavior seemed to have occurred.

Several inquiries into Dayton's problems have reported similar problems. These included rats, absentee slum lords who do little to repair their property and charge high rents. Ineffective inspectors, condemned vacant buildings left standing, and difficulties in obtaining loans faced by property owners who wish to repair their homes. In addition most stores in the area are owned by whites and there are complaints of high interest charges and higher prices. Unemployment is between 14 to 20% in some areas. There are no day care centers for women with small children. The welfare agency seems unduly centralized and clients must take two busses to pick up their checks. Small businesses, some unions (building trades) discriminate and there are complaints of a lack of upgrading at larger firms. Defactor segregated inferior housing is a serious problem for an important segment of

the community. Many people have been displaced by urban renewal and super highways. The school system is segregated and seems unresponsive to the needs of Negroes. According to one report, even teachers are sometimes referred to as "boy" or "nigger." Many high school graduates receive such poor educations that even with their degrees they can not find employment. A study by a group headed by the Mayor using hard data noted that Negroes receive poorer municipal services than white families in all areas and that Negroes are more dissatisfied with police response when called than are whites.

#### September 1966 Disturbance

The first disturbance coincided with the meeting of the National States Rights Party, the throwing of cherry bombs at Negroes, on the sidewalks the murder of a Negro and dissatisfaction with the way the police handled it (plus rumor that had been killed by a white which police said was "scientifically impossible"), and high tension in the area because two vice officers held in particular dislike by the Negro community were said to be "beating heads in the area."

When police arrived at the scene of the murder they did not immediately take the men to the hospital but ~~g~~ began asking questions. A large crowd formed and apparently started stoning cars with white drivers.

The ~~M~~ Mayor held an ~~a~~ early morning meeting with the leader of a militant faction and apparently agreed to

release 3 prisoners arrested by the police at 4:55 A.M. (perhaps <sup>J</sup>Jessie can expand on this). The Mayor then claims that these three men came back and started the riot. In return for the release from prison, the militant leader agreed that he would quiet the crowd of from 35-50 disorderly persons and send them home.

The officer who arrested the three men earlier was on the scene (probably a tactical error) and the three men began screaming at him. The officer withdrew after his car was accosted.

The militant leader tries without success to get the crowd to follow him to City Hall.

White cars are being stoned and a white bus driver and bakery delivery man are dragged out and beaten. These attacks seem indiscriminate.

The crowd of activists has now doubled and finally do agree to follow the militant leader to his headquarters. A meeting is held and a message sent to Police Chief requesting a conference at the militants headquarters.

The chief refuses to come. Some embryonic political  
may be seen here.

A portion of the activists did seem to want to talk and were rebuffed. They filed out onto street and walked about, reportedly drinking and throwing bottles at "whichever window happened to be nearby."

The first store is broken into at 9:15 A.M. A furniture store and this followed by a clothing store. At this point

behavior does not seem chaotic or wild [p]. A window is broken and two men enter a store and carry things out and then return for another load.

Spectators are now drawn in and police estimate that up to 300 are now involved. A police officer on the scene withdraws "more because he was ashamed to stand by and watch the looting than because he was forced out." From the above account one gets a definite sense of process and development-- a crowd gathers, a meeting is held, people mill about, stones are thrown at cars, a [MAN] windows are broken, several people began looting, many others then join in.

By later afternoon roadblocks are set up and the West Side is isolated. Seven hundred national guard and county police (?) are called in and by 7 P.M., September 1, things are pretty much under control. Firemen were not harassed and there was no sniping, [firebombing does not appear to have been extensive?]. This show of military force is sufficient to stop the disturbance.

### June 1967

This disturbance developed after an MAT/<sup>sponsored</sup>(or inspired?) rally concerned with the police, the role of Negroes in the city election, and to promote orderly action in the field of employment.

Tension was high in Dayton before Brown appeared over the failure to refund MAT, and rumors were out that a riot was going to occur. The content of Brown's speech is not

known, though it is reported to have been inflammatory, though reports are contradictory here. Given the community conditions it would seem that Brown's appearance was neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the occurrence of a riot. This can be seen in the fact that Dayton had two other disturbances without inflammatory agitation ~~and~~ and other times efforts to stir up violence had failed. It would be difficult to say with even a mild degree of scientific precision that had Brown not spoken there would not have been a disturbance. All of the elements for a disturbance were present without the appearance of Brown, including apparently a minor given wide currency that a riot was to occur. Though to be sure Brown's presence in no way inhibited the disturbance and may have helped to make it more likely.

Cincinnati may have had effect on Dayton, according to one report. Some Dayton Negroes said "they're doing it why not us?" No evidence to evaluate this.

Following the meeting (9:00 P.M.) about one hundred young Negroes came onto the street. Soon a white man was pulled from his car, robbed and attacked. By 9:30, unorganized unruly groups looting, breaking store windows, and throwing rocks and bottles at police cars and , this continued until about 3:00 A.M.

Incidents spread from general rally area throughout a West Dayton. (Jessie did this disturbance begin in the same place more or less as the other two?) First store reported

looted at 9:47 P.M. Demonstrators are said to be wondering up and down the street in a disorganized pattern screaming and throwing rocks and bottles.

Police lack manpower to handle situation and are ordered not to stand by and watch looting.

At 12:40 A.M., June 15, five whites are arrested at Fifth and Ludlow (where is this--in block area?) with guns in their car. The "liberal editor of a paper described June 14 as a night of "very limited looting."

The report has not further information on the disturbance which officially ended at 1:00 A.M., June 18. The youth patrol was active in cooling things. In all 182 Negroes were arrested and \$175,000 damage was done due to arson, destruction of property, burglary and looting.

Barbee, an elderly middle class man with an M.A. in psychology was shot in a non-Negro area by an off duty white policeman who mistook the buldge in Barbee's coat (his pipe) to be a gun. One eyewitness reports Barbee was handcuffed when shot. He had a gun in his hand when found but this gun had been placed ~~there~~ there by the policeman who killed him. ~~The~~ The officer involved in this incident was arrested and released on his own recognizante. This further angered Negroes since many were still in jail from the June disturbance because they were unable to raise bail.

The September 1967 disturbance emerged out of a meeting called to protest the Barbee shooting. The meeting reportedly

went well but impatient young people were dissatisfied-- one jumped up and shouted that it was time to move on. The leaders of the meeting tried to cool the younger people, but were unable to do so and the disorder began. A few windows were broken and there was some looting but no fires were reported. Data is especially skimpy for this disturbance.

#### Response of the Authorities

The response of the social control agencies does not seem to have been of such a nature as to greatly deepen and widen the disturbance. The incidents were quelled without any shots being fired. However hard evidence is lacking here, as it is for other relevant questions. Some Negro leaders and the head of the local war on poverty agency felt that the police handled things reasonably well.

However other leaders were quite critical of the police and felt that the police used the riot as an excuse to unduly harass people. There were complaints that police put handcuffs on people in such a fashion as to stop circulation, and if a person complained the police were said to tighten the cuffs. At one point the police were ordered to remove their name tags this incident, whatever its motivations, could have served to increase indignation since it may have been felt that the police removed the tags so as to avoid responsibility for any of their subsequent acts. A lack of communication between city hall and the police <sup>may</sup> ~~may~~ perhaps be seen in the fact that an agent of the city manager was arrested by the

police in the MAT office along with a number of other people. It was not clear what these people were arrested for and they were soon released. There were also reports that the police grabbed people indiscriminately out of their cars and off the streets. According to one observer the people involved in the riot were much more responsive to the orders of the National Guard than they were to the local police. Police did not have adequate resources to deal with (Ask Jessie Epstein how many times the National Guard had to be called in--I think once, perhaps twice) the situation, and had to ask for outside help from the County police and the National Guard.

Some felt that police provoke Negroes to riot because they earn overtime pay. Field reports quotes one officer as asking a Negro when the community was going to riot again as he made \$50 a day in overtime pay during the last disturbance.

#### Counter Riot Activity

There seemed to be a great deal of counter riot activity within the Dayton Negro community, but good detailed data are lacking. However the activities of people trying to calm the situation were no doubt important in keeping the Dayton disturbance at a relatively low level of intensity. Ministers and leaders and the white hats were actively trying to quiet things. The white hats in particular were said to be successful because they were working with their own peer groups. They were active in both 1967 disturbances. Most of the "responsible" Negro leaders had opposed bringing H. Rap

Brown in to speak. The Negro churches have since spoken out condemning the violence. A petition (circulated by POOR-Prevention of Organized Riots?) was passed out following the June 1967 disturbance requesting that the gentleman responsible for bringing in Brown refrain from bringing in anymore outsiders. According to the field report their seemed to be a very negative reaction in the Negro community to the June uprising. In at least one case the appeal to teenagers who were looting to go home was done out of fear that they would be seriously injured by the Dayton and Montgomery police.

#### Post Riot

The post riot periods seemed to be marked by a certain amount of soul searching and the feeling on the part of many that something is wrong, the establishment of a committee to find out what is wrong, perhaps the establishment of an ineffective organization or passage of a law to deal with some of the problems, e.g., a state fair housing law that is not enforced, a human relations commission lacking in direction and strong support from the community and city government, a poverty program with insufficient funds not reaching people most in need of help (partly here Negroes are unaware of some of the programs) but basically nothing very much seems to change, in spite of some marginal charges such as better garbage collection. The perceptions of many Negroes reflect this lack of change. Some urban league officials reported that not only had things not gotten any

better between the riots, but that in one area, police/  
community relations they had actually gotten worse.

A committee was set up under a [state] representative  
to find the causes and problems of Negro unrest in September  
1966. A report [was] issued several months later and very  
little action had been taken on the report [up to the summer of 1967]. However the  
city government did buy an armored car for riot control.  
Many [in] the Negro community now feel that such reports  
have little meaning and that the white power structure does  
not have any real desire to take action. The problems are  
pointed out to them yet little happens. This can create a  
new kind of frustration--a sense of being betrayed and not  
taken seriously. Apparently the last incident, the killing  
of a middle class Negro under seemingly highly suspicious  
conditions, has led many moderate Negroes who previously  
opposed violence and discounted claims of the militants, to  
listen more attentively. Subsequent acts by the police  
could perhaps drive many of these people [out] of the  
moderate camp.

Thus between the disturbances there was no easing of  
tensions. The things that troubled Negroes in 1966 were  
still present and perhaps more intensely felt in 1967  
given the [rising] of aspirations and their unfulfilment.  
Until there is massive regress of grievances it seems reasonable  
to expect more disturbances in the future. Should the more  
moderate and "responsible" Negro leadership become alienated

from the white establishment, as some signs indicate they increasingly are, then a much more extensive and damaging uprising can be expected.

The Negro community, particularly after the Barbee killing, does seem to show an increase in cohesiveness.

Reportedly many militants are tired of talking with whites and have no desire to continue or improve a dialogue with the white community to the extent that this happens for the more moderate groups an even more serious situation will exist.

The white hat patrol, according to one report has been hampered in its effectiveness and subject to mistrust because of its identification with the white business establishment.<sup>1</sup> Efforts at control of this nature should perhaps be treated more subtly by whites.

#### Changes Over Time and Some Similarities in the Disturbances

At two points changes in the participants over time are noted: September 1966 participants were said to be

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1. They received a telegram from SNCC calling them "uncle toms" and stating that this is just another example of the old white trick of divide and conquer.

The data are not clear on time order but it appears (perhaps Jessie can check this) that one militant leader began collecting money from local businesses to "protect" them. One observer did suggest that places that had subscribed to this protection service did not seem to be attacked. This might be an example of a "disreputable" person moving in to exploit a situation which the first time developed spontaneously.

between the ages of 21 to 25 while June 1967 under 21. The disturbance of June '66 was said to have fewer people of middle income involved than those of 1967. This evidence is very tenuous. It would be very useful to obtain the police arrest records for the three time periods. A change in class composition, if documented might indicate increased lack of faith in system among middle class people. Such a change could be observed among some following the Barbee killing.

Young people were predominant activists, according to several people there was little participation from the older members of the community.

Negro leaders report that police brutality was greater in the June '67 than September '66 disturbance.

Although much damage was done (\$175,000 in June '67) these disturbances seem on a smaller scale than what could have occurred. Older people seemed less likely to get drawn in than other communities, no attacks on firemen, no sniping was reported nor did the police fire, and a pattern of consistent burning did not emerge.

In spite of the low intensity many people see the current situation as tense and explosive and report that a "full scale riot" "a full fledged riot," "an escalation to riot propositions" could easily emerge.