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PRESIDENT GRAVE

Sets Day of Mourning for Dr. King—Meets Rights Leaders

President's statement and his proclamation, Page 23.

By MAX FRANKEL
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 5 — President Johnson asked today to address a joint session of Congress no later than Monday evening so that he could propose "constructive action instead of destructive action in this hour of national need."

Gravely imploring Americans to "stand their ground to deny violence its victory" in the reaction to the slaying of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the President set out to arouse the nation's conscience and to win quick action on the long-stalled major items in his domestic program.

He proclaimed Sunday a national day of mourning for Dr. King, who was shot yesterday in Memphis and died later in a hospital.

Meanwhile, Congressional leaders said that Dr. King's murder could assure passage next week of a landmark civil rights bill.

Conference Canceled

To deal with the divisiveness that he said was "tearing this nation apart," Mr. Johnson canceled the already delayed conference he had planned for this weekend in Hawaii with American military and diplomatic officials stationed in South Vietnam.

Gen. William C. Westmoreland, the American commander in the war zone, was flying to Washington instead and will probably see Mr. Johnson tomorrow morning.

The President spent almost the entire day working "to avoid catastrophe." He met with moderate Negro leaders and members of Congress and of his Administration to find

ways of containing the violence, arson and looting that threatened many big cities and that spread here to within a few blocks of the White House.

He also conferred all day with officials of the District of Columbia and gave them Federal troops this evening to help restore order.

Mr. Johnson's demeanor all

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day matched his somber words as he received reports of the nation's reaction from the Justice Department, moved to the Cabinet Room for the meeting with Negro leaders, knelt in prayer at the memorial service and finally walked across the hall from his office to the Fish Room to speak before the television cameras.

There was tumult all around him as an unusual throng of reporters gathered in the west wing of the White House while technicians uncoiled miles of cables and set up dozens of microphones in the driveway outside. Through much of the day, four jet liners were still waiting at Andrews Air Force Base to take the Presidential party to Hawaii, and preparations for the journey added to the confusion.

Commanding Presence

But the President, though moved almost to tears during his television address, was a calm and commanding presence in the judgment of his visitors. Far from being a "lame duck" who had lost power by announcing that he would not run again, he was said to feel free to act as he wished without suspicion that he was merely appeasing influential blocs of voters.

The sense of urgency that throbbled through all White House offices was sustained by the flow of reports from the Justice Department, gathering news from all major cities. It was dramatized this evening by the oily black clouds and streaks of red above the burning streets of the nation's capital, 10 long blocks from the President's office.

Mr. Johnson worked there this evening on the nationwide effort to restore order and on the proposals he will be bringing to Congress after it passes the customary resolution Monday inviting him to address both houses from the rostrum of the House.

The President's Negro visi-

tors told him that prompt action was needed to bring hope to the black inhabitants of urban slums if the nonviolent Negro majority were to reject his leadership of the violent few.

Mr. Johnson told them that Dr. King's death could lead either to catastrophe or to final passage of legislation that has been waiting too long and to the rooting out of every trace of racism from white men's hearts.

He said he knew what Dr. King would have wanted and left the impression that he would mount an extraordinary effort to pass the civil rights bill, including open housing; his anticrime program; the model cities and poverty appropriations; measures to limit the sales of firearms and to begin massive construction of low-cost housing, and a tax increase to meet the costs.

"We must move with urgency and with resolve and with new energy," Mr. Johnson declared before television cameras after he and his advisers returned from a memorial service for

Dr. King at the National Cathedral.

"No words of ours and no words of mine can fill the void of the eloquent voice that has been stilled. But this I do believe deeply: the dream of Martin Luther King Jr. has not died with him.

"Men who are white—men who are black—must and will now join together, now as never in the past, to let all the forces of divisiveness know that America shall not be ruled by the bullet but only by the ballot of free and just men."

Dramatic Moment

Mr. Johnson was obviously thinking back to one of the most dramatic moments of his Administration—the night of March 15, 1965. After an explosive week of nationwide civil rights activity and demonstrations led by Dr. King in Selma, Ala., the President went before a joint session of Congress to win passage of a voting rights bill and uttered the Negro slogan, "we shall overcome," in his Southern accent.

Speaking today near the end of a tumultuous week that began with his announcement Sunday that he would not seek re-election, the President said he had not understated the case when he spoke Sunday of the divisiveness that was tearing the country apart.

"But together," he added, "a nation united and a nation caring and a nation concerned and

a nation that thinks more of the nation's interests than we do of any individual self-interest or political interest—that nation can and shall and will overcome."

In broadcasting this appeal, the President also read the proclamation in which he designated Sunday as a day of national mourning for Dr. King. He directed that all official and military installations at home and abroad fly the American flag at half-staff until interment of the civil rights leader.

Mr. Johnson said he had asked Congress to receive him

at the earliest possible moment but, in view of its weekend adjournment, he hoped no later than Monday "in the area of" 9 P.M. The House adjourned yesterday until Monday at noon. The Senate met briefly until 1:11 P.M. today, largely for eulogies to Dr. King, and recessed until 10 A.M. Monday.

The President's request was put during the morning meeting to House Speaker John W. McCormack of Massachusetts.

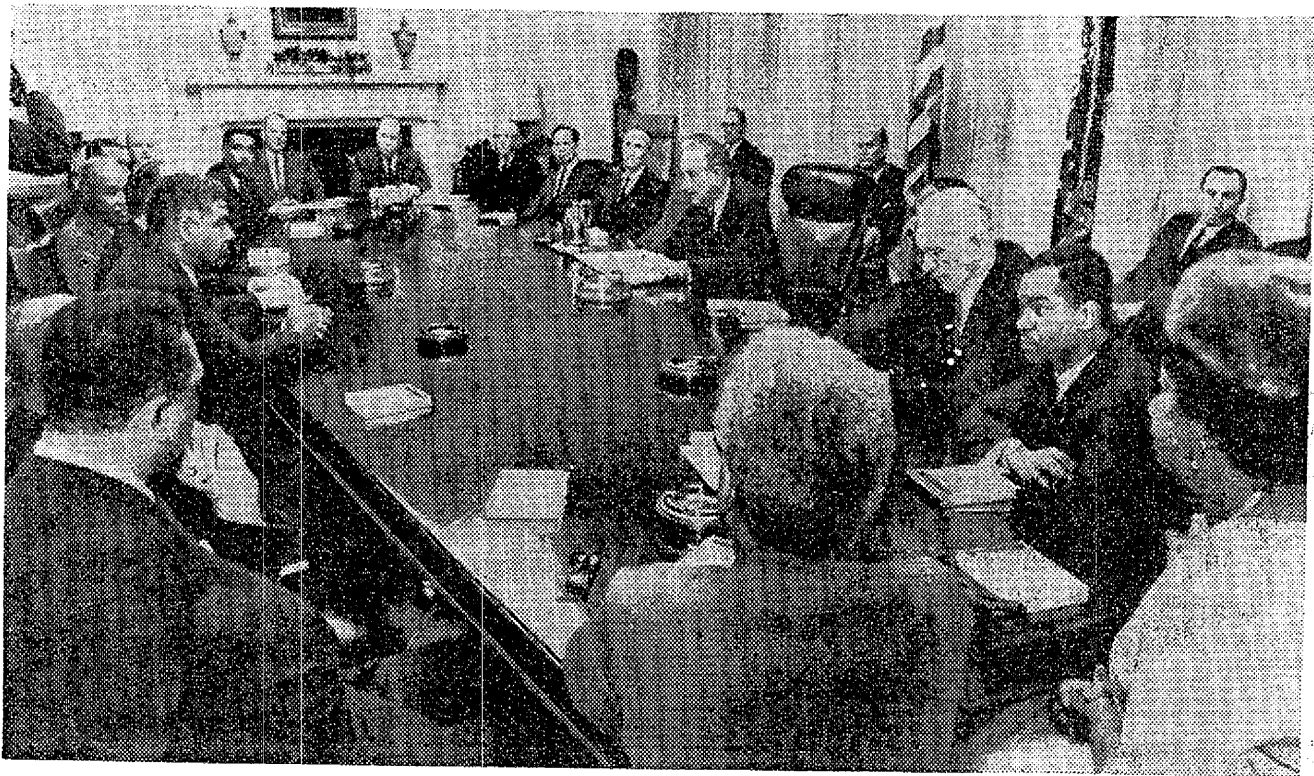
Also present when the group assembled at the White House at 11 A.M. were a dozen Negro leaders, including Mayor Richard G. Hatcher of Gary, Ind., and Mayor Walter E. Washington of Washington, and the two men Mr. Johnson made the first Negroes ever to serve in the Cabinet and on the Supreme Court—Robert C. Weaver, Sec-

retary of Housing and Urban Development, and Associate Justice Thurgood Marshall, a veteran of many of the early court battles for civil rights.

According to George Christian, White House press secretary, Mr. Johnson recalled some of Dr. King's contributions to freedom and civil rights and then posed the question of whether the nation would respond constructively or violently to the slaying.

The President said he had tried for years to heal the divisions in the nation, particularly those between the races. He vowed to do everything he could to narrow that division.

He asked Negro leaders to appeal to their people, saying, "I need your help; the country needs a voice now calling for unity, nonviolence and for so-



Associated Press

CONFERENCE AT WHITE HOUSE: President Johnson, members of his Cabinet, Negro leaders and others discussing the death of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and its aftermath. Clockwise, from bottom left: the Rev. Leon Sullivan, Opportunities Industrialization Center, Philadelphia; Bishop George W. Baber, American Methodist Episcopal Church; Whitney M. Young Jr., the National Urban League; Vice President Humphrey, almost hidden; Roy Wilkins, N.A.A.C.P.; Federal Judge A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., almost hidden; Robert C. Weaver, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Clarence Mitchell 3d, a Maryland State Senator; Clark M. Clifford, Defense Secretary; Sena-

tor Thomas H. Kuchel, California Republican; Representative William M. McCulloch, Ohio Republican; Representative Carl Albert, Oklahoma Democrat; Senator Mike Mansfield, Montana Democrat; Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, hidden by President; Clarence Mitchell Jr., N.A.A.C.P., hidden by Representative John W. McCormack, Massachusetts Democrat; the Rev. Walter E. Fauntroy, the District of Columbia Council; Mrs. Dorothy I. Height, National Council of Negro Women, and Bayard Rustin, A. Philip Randolph Institute. Behind the President's chair is Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, Under Secretary of State. Several persons not shown here also were present.



Associated Press

AT MEETING: Thurgood Marshall, a civil rights leader before becoming Supreme Court Justice, with the President.

cial justice." He disclosed that he had asked John W. Gardner, former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, to use the machinery of the Urban Coalition to bring whites and Negroes together in as many cities as possible.

Chairman of Coalition

Mr. Gardner is chairman of the coalition of community leaders working to save the cities.

Justice Marshall was said to have pointed out the importance of breaking the nation's mood of depression. Bayard Rustin, executive director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, said the President had stated the problem clearly and urged that something be done to give the poor a reasonable hope that their condition would be relieved in the "short range."

Mrs. Dorothy I. Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women, was said to have pointed to the many efforts being made on behalf of nonviolence. The Rev. Leon Sullivan, head of the Opportunities Industrialization Center in Philadelphia, said the large majority of Negroes opposed violence but asked that responsible leaders be given "something tangible" in the way of progress

with which to oppose the advocates of force.

A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., Federal judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, said, according to Mr. Christian's account, that "if we have resolve we can turn this darkest moment into our finest hour." Clarence Mitchell Jr., director of the Washington bureau of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, is said to have praised the President's devotion to the Negro American.

At noon, Mr. Johnson led his guests in a 12-car motorcade to the National Cathedral for the emotional one-hour service. They returned to the White House with Chief Justice Earl Warren at 1 o'clock and continued the discussion, with the President outlining the status of his legislative proposals.