

Paratroops fly in to patrol the capital's smouldering streets

from MICHAEL DAVIE: Washington, 6 April

'One young boy, carrying a pile of shirts, was asked why he was looting. They killed our man, he replied. Few of the looters seemed troubled by the fear of being arrested.'

AN AIRBORNE brigade some 2,000 strong was flown into Washington today to support the 4,000 troops and 1,600 policemen already on duty in the smouldering streets of the nation's capital.

The Negro mayor, Walter E. Washington, imposed a further curfew on the city tonight from 5.30 p.m. to 6.30 a.m. He also reaffirmed the ban on any sale of liquor and firearms. Petrol can be sold only if pumped directly into the main tanks of cars.

Some looting and sniping started again today but generally the city seemed to be settling down. The fires were under control, the Mayor said, and there were no further reports of rioting or looting.

Troops were deployed at key points to keep people out of the most heavily hit areas.

Police said that two negro looters, one a 14-year-old boy, had been shot during the disturbances. A white man was fatally stabbed in a petrol station near the middle of the city and the fourth death was of a man killed by a collapsing wall near a burned down building.

Three hundred and fifty people have been injured, including seven policemen and six firemen. There have been more than 2,000 arrests. The number of fires, and the cost of the riots, remain unassessed.

Many shops and businesses remain shut today. In the worst hit areas, work began on clearing debris from

the streets. The city's welfare departments as well as private organisations have been out providing free food and arranging shelter. Some families spent last night in churches.

The President issued a statement today appealing to citizens to follow the directions of the Mayor.

Troops are no longer visible around the White House, which they surrounded on Friday, but men worked into the early hours of this morning to erect steel cable barriers to protect the President's official residence.

Tourists flee

Washington's Public Safety Director, Patrick Murphy, stated today that a prosecution of Stokely Carmichael, the Black Power leader, is being considered.

Carmichael said publicly yesterday in Washington: 'The revolutions which have been occurring around this country are only light stuff compared with what is to come. There will be no crying and no funerals for those who have died. We shall retaliate in our own way. We shall no longer seek justice in the courtrooms but in the streets of America. There will be no need for any more intellectual dis-

cussions on civil rights, only for violence.'

He urged Negroes to 'go home and get your guns.'

Martin Luther King's right-hand man in Washington, the City Council vice-chairman Walter Fauntroy, has been speeding from one radio and television station to another to broadcast appeals for 'restraint, calm and non-violence.' Those who react violently, Mr Fauntroy has constantly repeated, 'do dishonour to the life and mission of Dr King.'

Thousands of tourists have left the city since the riots began. Airlines flying out of Washington report much heavier business than usual. The Hilton Hotel says it has had 200 cancellations. The annual Cherry Blossom Festival, which usually attracts 750,000 tourists to the city, and which was scheduled for this weekend, has been cancelled.

Stories of the riots continue to come in. One young boy, carrying a pile of shirts, was asked why he was looting. 'They killed our man,' he replied. At one time, on Friday afternoon, some streets looked as if there was a huge and highly successful sale in progress.

Women walked briskly along with bursting shopping-baskets. A youth carried a vast cardboard box with the word 'stereophonic' written on the side. Two men struggled with a handsome armchair. Few of the looters seemed troubled by the fear of being arrested.

Police orders were to use force only when driven to it. They were told not to load their guns unless ordered, and not to fire except by an officer's direct order.

Considering the scale of the damage, casualties seem to have been light.

Eight big fires

The Mayor, at his own request, is being assisted by Mr Cyrus Vance, formerly a senior colleague of Mr McNamara in the Pentagon, and pacemaker in the recent Cyprus dispute. Mr Vance has been the President's trouble shooter at previous riots, notably the great Detroit riot of last year, which he said today was far worse than the disturbances here.

At the height of the riots yesterday, eight major fires were visible from the air, besides scores of smaller ones. As he looked out of his study window at the White House, the President's view of the Washington Monument at that time must have been obscured by smoke. If he opened the window he must have smelled the fires.

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