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Newsweek

THE RACES:

Reading the Riot Act

The last wisps of smoke still drifted lazily over gutted ghetto buildings across the nation in the agonizing aftermath of the racial disorders sparked by the murder of Martin Luther King. But even as they lifted, a new battle was in the wind, this time over the powder-keg problem of how to handle outbreaks of racial violence. Put most bluntly, it came down to a question of which came first: the preservation of human life or the protection of private property.

The latest rash of ghetto flash fires had been banked with a degree of police restraint that, some critics claimed, amounted to a license to loot. The result: fewer lives were lost in more than 130 cities (the count was 39) than in Detroit alone last summer. But the price in property loss had been high: more than \$51 million dollars in scorched and pillaged buildings and, perhaps more important, the impression for many that arsonists and pillagers had been allowed to roam the streets almost at will. Was this any way to preserve the peace?

As Chicago's doughty Mayor Richard J. Daley saw it, the answer was an angry "No!" Last week, Daley called a press conference to make it clear that henceforth he wanted arsonists and looters shot on sight. "Anyone with a Molotov cocktail . . . is a potential murderer . . . and should be shot right on the spot," he snapped. "Looters—you wouldn't want to shoot the youngsters—but you detain them by shooting . . . to maim or cripple." Before the week was out, scores of local, state and Federal officials and thousands of concerned citizens had jumped into the debate that Daley had begun—either on the mayor's side or ranged vehemently against him.

Dramatic Echo: Daley's hewing to a hard line, sparked in part by rumor that this summer's Democratic National Convention might be taken away from Chicago, was only the most dramatic echo of a growing chorus of complaints from ghetto tenants, landlords and shopkeepers. They blamed their loss of goods and livelihoods on insufficient police protection and deterrence. Soon the mayor collected more than 4,300 telegrams, phone calls and letters, 90 per cent of which, ac-

ording to his aides, backed his stand.

But others were appalled at what Daley had done. One Chicago Negro leader labeled it a "Fascist response" likely to incite more violence than it could deter. Mayors like New York's John Lindsay and Detroit's Jerome Cavanagh—caught up in their own urban crises—took time out to defend the policy of maximum police restraint. (The three major Presidential candidates, clearly aware of Daley's clout, ducked the issue, however.) And the Administration, through Attorney General Ramsey Clark, warned a convention of editors that shoot-to-kill-or-cripple orders could very well lead to "a very dangerous escalation of the problems we are so intent on solving." How? Milwaukee's militant white Rev. James E. Groppi reviewed the dangerous dynamics of fighting the fire with firepower. "The more oppres-

sphere of dissent, disobedience and disregard for law in the U.S.

What all of this would mean in terms of long, hot summers yet to come could not be accurately predicted. Most law-enforcement professionals seemed determined, however, to perfect their new approach—relying on massive manpower, split-second mobility and an array of relatively safe, if still somewhat controversial, non-lethal weapons to prevent arson and looting and save lives as well.

Apparently dissent from Daley's decree began to seep into Chicago's City Hall, and the mayor began to back-pedal a bit on his order. Claiming that "everyone has blown this thing out of proportion," Daley said that it had long been established policy in Chicago that "only minimum force be used by policemen." But, he added, "this established policy was never intended to support permissive violence [and] destruction." There the troubling issue rested—unresolved for Chicago and the nation, at least until the test of the fires next time.

MEMPHIS:

Price of Victory

In a burst of whoops and cheers that rattled Clayborn Temple to its back pews, the mostly Negro garbage collectors of Memphis ratified a contract settlement with the city last week—and thus ended the 65-day-old strike that led to the murder of Martin Luther King.

In paycheck terms, the settlement was meager (15 cents an hour in wage boosts), but it still marked a victory for the workers on every major issue. The city at last recognized the garbage men's union and agreed to a payroll checkoff of union dues. More important still was the morale boost for Memphis Negroes, who had turned the strike into a broad-gauge civil-rights campaign. "You have gained the right to stand on your own two feet," said a local black preacher. "Don't let anybody turn you around."

The jubilation stopped short of City Hall, where Mayor Henry Loeb, 47, a tall, handsome conservative, did his best to keep the union victory from looking like a personal defeat. What the settlement actually seemed to reflect was a softening of white attitudes after King's assassination—a thaw that also prompted the city's all-white chamber of commerce to begin a new drive to get local businessmen to hire and train more Negroes.

But Memphis was not yet past its time of troubles. King's successor, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, vowed that next month's Poor People's March on Washington would start at the motel where King was slain, and local Negro leaders were laying plans to try to improve working conditions for blacks at city hospitals and the Memphis Housing Authority. For the price of victory in the sanitation strike could not easily be forgotten. "We won," said one old garbage man, "but we lost a good man along the way."



Chicago Sun-Times

Daley: Shoot on sight

sive a police department becomes," he told the same editors, "the greater is our desire to resist, to the point where we don't care whether we live or die . . ."

It was precisely the failure of deadly force as an effective deterrent that led to the policy of police restraint. The new approach—fostered by the recommendations of the President's riot commission—helped reduce the number of accidental shootings by nervous protectors of the peace during the recent nationwide disorders. But the argument over a potential increase in property losses also raised a larger, more complex social problem: would the restraint of cops simply encourage disrespect for law and order? Many concerned observers, with no particular love for the mayor of Chicago, wondered whether the sight of looters staggering past armed officers would not further pollute a growing at-