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first lead riots

By Clayton Hickerson

Associated Press writer

Dallas, April 24 (AP)- Dallas County Sheriff Bill Decker said tonight that a 3½ hour riot of Negro prisoners in the county jail had been quelled.

WEverything seems all secure now," the sheriff said a 11:30 p.m.

The jail is the same which houses convicted slayer Jack Ruby, but Ruby was not on the same floor as the riots. The sheriff said "Jack's rest ~~is~~ has not been disturbed."

Ruby was sentenced to death last month for slaying Lee Harvey Oswald, accused ~~the~~ presidential assassin.

One man, jailer Ray Masters, 50, was injured with "superficial cuts" around the neck, the sheriff said. No prisoners were hurt.

Decker said Masters was slashed by two Negro prisoners who crowded into a jail safety vestibule with him. Masters had gone to the point to investigate a fight. As ~~he fought~~ the two Negroes, the riot erupted with about 120 to 150 prisoners involved.

Decker, who was at a Dallas Police Department safety awards dinner when the riot began about 8 p.m., hurried to the jail. Sheriff's deputies, Dallas police, and Dallas firemen rushed to the scene as the prisoners screamed and hollered, set mattresses afire and threw everything they could put their hands on out the windows.

Police dogs and fire hoses were used to quell the rioters.

Sheriff Decker blamed the riot on crowded conditions in the jail. He said he ~~has~~ 1,000 prisoners in a jail built for 750.

The sheriff said that the riot was plainly disorganized. "I'm not sure they intended to riot," he said, "and I feel certain there was no escape attempt."

He said the prisoners complained of not being allowed telephone privileges enough, of not being allowed to see their lawyers more frequently, protested about the jail food, and the generally crowded conditions. He said damage was ~~confined~~ unestimated but noted that at least eight inches of water was on the floor where the riot took place. BIGA120acs