

Summer's Urban Violence Stirs Fears of Terrorism

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 20—The United States has passed through another summer without massive urban riots, but group and political violence—from civil disorders to the ambushing of policemen—has become so widespread and persistent that some authorities find this more troubling than the concentrated upheavals of the nineteen-sixties.

Preliminary 1971 statistics and interviews with experts on the subject indicate that violence resulting from social unrest has remained at a high level in urban disorders, bombings of buildings, harassment of authorities and racial clashes. There have been declines in some categories but increases in others.

The chief law enforcement concern now—aside from the steady rise in nonpolitical crimes such as homicide, rape and assault—is the prospect for a continued rise in terrorist groups that oppose the established order.

The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of

Violence, headed by Milton S. Eisenhower, disbanded at the end of 1969, but some of its members have kept up with developments on an informal basis. "We feel that in the various areas of violence we covered there has been little if any abatement," said Lloyd N. Cutler, a Washington lawyer who was executive director of the commission.

Although he noted an apparent decline in violence on college campuses, a trend he attributed to reforms and changes instituted locally and the winding down of the war in Vietnam, he said:

"We believe there has been a substantial rise in terrorism as seen in the polarization of young blacks, in the prison uprisings and in the ambush shooting of policemen, and terrorism is the most difficult form of violence to cope with."

If present trends continue, Mr. Cutler said, "I think we are going to make Belfast look like nothing in another decade." He

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was referring to the civil strife in Northern Ireland.

Group violence in the United States, which began on a large scale in the sixties, has followed a general pattern. It has moved from one battleground to the next—first in scattered areas of the South as white terrorists sought to put down the civil rights movement; then in the central cities nationwide with massive and destructive protests by blacks and other minorities; then on the college campuses in mostly peaceful but sometimes violent clashes involving the war, race and protests against the institutions involved; then in scattered bombings and other terrorist acts involving a variety of protests.

In each of these areas the violence has peaked after a time and declined as the battleground shifted elsewhere. But current statistics, although incomplete, suggest that a substantial residue of violence has remained in each area, adding up to a fabric of disorder.

For example, some radicals say they have given up bombings, but the police find high school students putting together bombs in their suburban homes; the Ku Klux Klan, which reached its peak about 1966, is now linked to the bombings of school buses in Pontiac, Mich.; four years after the big Detroit riot there is still burning and looting in some cities; though violence on the campus is declining, the president of Harvey Mudd College in California has his office fire-bombed.

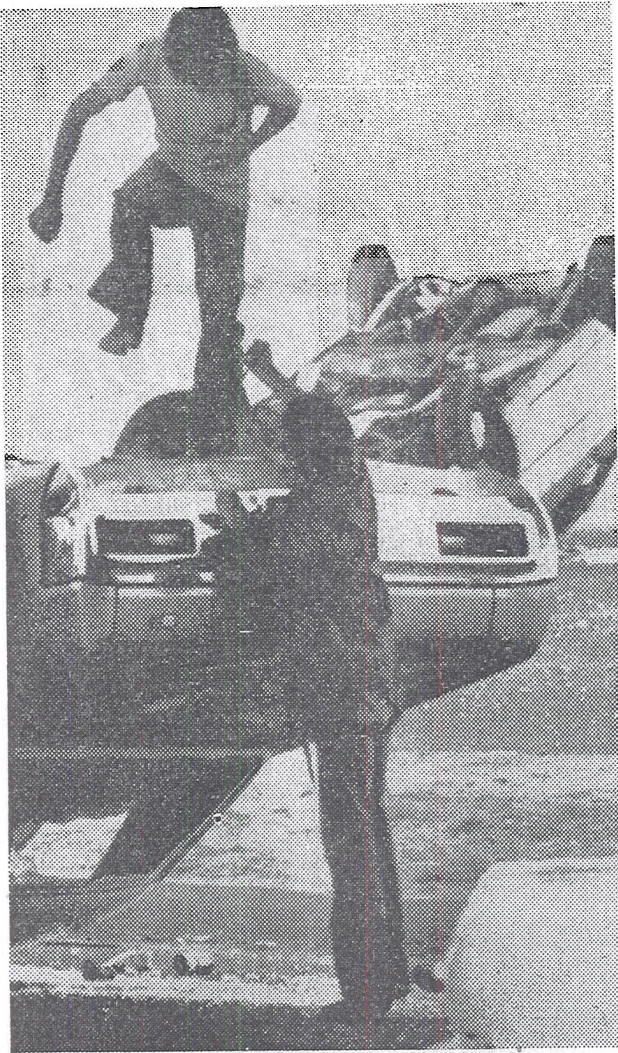
Although the war and other issues have figured prominently in disputes leading to group violence, the grievances of blacks and other minorities are becoming predominant and represent the central issue while the battleground appears to be moving to the prisons.

Pattern of Decline

The Justice Department, which for several years has been monitoring the trouble in the cities, counted for the first eight months of 1971 11 major civil disorders and 32 serious ones. This compares to 19 major and 49 serious disorders in 1970, in keeping with the pattern of decline since the major outbreak of riots in April, 1968.

Minor civil disorders showed an increase—133 through August of this year compared with 93 last year.

The Justice Department classifies a major disorder as one having all of the following elements: bombing; arson; use of outside policemen or troops; looting or gunfire; imposition of a curfew; more than 300 participants not counting the



Associated Press

A demonstrator on top of an overturned car during disorder in Albuquerque, N.M., in June. Albuquerque was one of the cities where major disturbances were widely reported outside the communities where they occurred.

police; more than 12 hours' duration.

A serious disorder has any three of the "major" elements, lasts more than three hours and involves at least 150 participants.

A minor disorder contains one to four of the "major" elements, lasts up to three hours and involves at least eight, but not more than 150, people.

Riots of the kind that occurred this year have become so commonplace that they are not widely reported outside the communities in which they occur, with the exception of major upheavals such as those this year in Jacksonville, Fla., Chattanooga, and Albuquerque, N.M. Before the late sixties, observers believe, 176 civil disorders in American cities in an eight-month period would have drawn considerable attention.

What has emerged this year, according to Dr. John P. Spiegel, director of the Lemberg Center for the Study of Violence at Brandeis University, is "microviolence," scattered fragments of violence.

Two years ago, authorities in urban affairs expressed the be-

lief that the day of the massive urban riots—on the scale of the ones in Newark and Detroit in 1967—was over, even though tensions and grievances in the central cities continued at a high level.

Reasons Are Listed

There were several reasons for this, including the following:

¶The riots did not bring massive response to alleviate slum conditions.

¶The police had developed better riot control techniques.

¶The damage inflicted was largely in neighborhoods where the minorities involved would have to continue to live.

¶There was a new sense of purpose and direction in the central cities involving political power and community development rather than protest, which was moving into the hands of a small number of radicals who lacked a broad base of support.

The pattern was for the riots to spread to the smaller cities, where trends generally lagged a year or two behind those in the large urban centers. In few cities were there repeats of major riots.

According to this belief, then, the extent of unemployment, poverty or other grievances was no important indi-

cator of the extent of disorders. This summer, the belief was put to a test as economic conditions, already severe in the central cities, worsened.

The National Urban Coalition established a commission, headed by Mayor Lindsay of New York and Senator Fred R. Harris of Oklahoma, to take a look at the cities and evaluate conditions as they had developed since the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (the Kerner Commission) issued its report in 1968.

"Our basic finding," the Lindsay-Harris commission said in a draft of a report to be published soon, "is that, despite the Kerner report's widely accepted findings that one major cause of the ghetto rebellions of 1960's was the shameful conditions of life in the cities, most of the changes in those conditions since 1968 have been for the worse."

"Housing is still the national scandal it was then," the report continued. "Schools are more tedious and turbulent. The rates of crime and unemployment and disease and heroin addiction are higher. And with few exceptions, the relations between minority communities and the police are just as hostile.

"People are angry. Perhaps they are angrier, even, than they were four years ago.

But their anger no longer seems to be the helpless kind that can express itself only by smashing and burning. We heard only a little talk of burning.

"The most striking point most of those we spoke with made was that they had no faith at all in 'the system'—the Government and the private wielders of power—as a protector or provider. This disenchantment has plunged many into cynicism or apathy or despair.

"But in others it has inspired a new tough pride, self-confidence and determination.

"Every place we visited we found at least a hard-headed cadre who knew that the people will have to rely upon themselves for most of whatever they get."

Some who have given up on the system—blacks and whites who have been radicalized—have given rise to terrorist groups which appear to be fragmented and scattered.

Since July, 1970, the International Association of Chiefs of Police has compiled on the basis of national surveys the number and nature of police casualties and bombing incidents. There are no prior statistics to provide an accurate comparison or trends, but it is believed that the number of very destructive bombings has peaked while the number of incidents involving explosives has increased.

The number of policemen killed or wounded in ambush has increased.

From July 1, 1970, to June 1, 1971, the last period compiled, the association's bomb data center recorded 1,425 bombing

incidents, resulting in 15 deaths and 155 injuries.

A spokesman for the association said: "It used to be that only the hardened elements set off bombs, but now it's gotten to be general. All kinds of people are fooling around with explosives."

In the 13-month period ending July 31, the association's police weapons center reported that 116 policemen, 462 suspects and 6 other persons were killed in violent clashes of various kinds. At the same time, 965 policemen, 457 suspects and 16 others were injured.

In January, at the end of the first six months of the study, it was concluded that unprovoked ambush attacks represented the largest single cause, 25 per cent, of police deaths, and that civil disorder and protests represented the largest single cause, 36 per cent, of police injuries.

A similar pattern has prevailed this year, according to the reports.

Scattered Alienation

The ambush attacks do not show any signs of an organized campaign of terror but, rather, scattered alienation toward the police.

Statistics have not been compiled that would show the picture of violence on the college campuses and high schools for 1971. But some who are compiling the data say that, while there has been a general decline in the protests and demonstrations over all, the last school year saw a rise in racial clashes in high schools, many of them involving violence, and it is feared that there may be more this year.

The rise in terrorism, according to Mr. Cutler, who directed the Eisenhower commission, stems from what he describes as the Government's failure, "perhaps our inability," to make reforms recommended by his commission and others and from continued incidents such as the recent one at the Attica Correctional Facility in New York.

"A few more Atticas and I am afraid that [terrorism] is really going to go off," Mr. Cutler said, explaining that such incidents cause a substantial portion of citizens to sympathize with those in revolt against government.

John Naisbett, president of the Urban Research Corporation in Chicago, suggested that prison conflict had become the "theater" for the central cities.

"Look at the list of demands made by the prisoners at Attica," he said. "Better education, narcotics treatment, legal assistance, better recreation, more black workers, the search for dignity. These are the demands of the ghetto."