

WATTS RIOT STUDY DEPICTED AS WEAK

Rights Panel Calls Report 'a Bitter Disappointment'

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 22 (AP) —The report by the Governor's commission investigating the Watts riots was "a bitter disappointment" that "prescribes aspirin where surgery is required," the Federal Government was told today.

"The report is elementary, superficial, unoriginal and unimaginative," said the California Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. "It offers little, if anything, in the way of a study of economic and sociological conditions not previously available in published reports of public agencies."

The committee accused Mayor Samuel W. Yorty and Chief of Police William H. Parker of "gross negligence" in advance of the Negro riots last August that left 34 persons dead and caused \$40-million in damage in the Watts area of Los Angeles.

The advisory committee consists of 14 Californians appointed by the Civil Rights Commission. Its head is the Right Rev. James A. Pike, Episcopal Bishop of San Francisco. Three members, including a Los Angeles municipal judge and a State Assemblyman, are Negroes. Such unpaid committees have been established in all states.

'White-Wash' Is Alleged

The report of the Governor's commission, led by John A. McCone, former head of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Atomic Energy Commission, was issued Dec. 20.

Reporting to the Civil Rights Commission, the advisory committee declared:

"The absence of constructive steps to avert a riot, and the lack of preparation for dealing with one when it occurred, constituted acts of gross negligence on the part of local officials, including Mayor Yorty and Chief of Police Parker."

The committee concluded, "refretfully, that the McCone commission in effect white-

washed Chief Parker and the administration of the Police Department."

It said further, "The attitudes and actions of Mayor Yorty prior to and during the riot contributed substantially to its existence and duration. In fact, throughout the city administration there has been a demonstrable lack of understanding and concern for the Negro community."

The committee noted that Mr. Yorty had been absent from the city during the riots and had since then visited Vietnam.

"Although our peripatetic Mayor appears to consider himself under a duty to advise the President concerning foreign policy, in the opinion of the committee he has shown little interest in, or capacity for, resolving issues of race relations in Los Angeles," it said.

Parker Aide Replies

"For years, police officials, and particularly Chief Parker, have turned a deaf ear to the complaints of Negro citizens of Los Angeles," the committee said. "Chief Parker has constantly refused to meet with Negro leaders, has challenged their right to represent their community and has disparaged the civil rights movement."

A Parker aide, Inspector Ed Walker, replied:

"They apparently failed to ascertain what the Los Angeles Police Department is doing in the field of community relations. We are working in it extensively and have assigned a number of people to it, including a full-time inspector."

"The committee sees fit for one reason or another to ignore what we are doing. I think this is a disservice to the community. Also, the statement that we refuse to hear complaints from Negroes is utterly false."

Mr. Yorty and Mr. McCone could not be reached immediately for comment.

An aide to Mr. McCone said, "I doubt that he will be interested in making any reply. He made his study and report, and that's it."

A Dissent Is Filed

One member of the advisory committee, Dr. Reynaldo J. Carreon Jr., a member of the Los Angeles Police Commission, filed a dissenting statement.

He said the committee re-

port generally "is expertly presented with the specific purpose of erroneously placing all the blame for the rioting, looting, killing and arson on the law enforcement agencies."

"Chief Parker, a national symbol of police honesty, discipline and integrity, has been made the principal target of senseless tirades," Dr. Carreon said. "His surrender to the forces of evil and civil disobedience, under any pretense, is impossible."

The McCone commission had said that Lieut. Gov. Glenn M. Anderson had hesitated before calling out the National Guard to help quell the riots. The advisory committee found this criticism "wholly unwarranted" and said the Guard had probably been mobilized more rapidly and efficiently than in any other instance of civil disobedience in United States history.

The committee endorsed the McCone commission's recommendations in education, employment and housing to prevent a recurrence of rioting.

If these steps "are treated as essential preliminaries to a more serious treatment of the issues, they will prove of substantial value," the committee said.

"If they are treated as a solution to the problem, more harm than good will have been accomplished," it went on.

The advisory committee made the following recommendations:

¶Immediate assignment of a Federal official to make decision on allocation of Federal funds in the Los Angeles area. Among other things, he would establish a crash program to help the unemployed find jobs, including new jobs created with Federal funds.

¶Immediate expansion of the Presidential Executive order relating to discrimination in housing."

¶That the new Department of Housing and Urban Development designate Los Angeles as an area for top priority attention."

¶That the United States Commission on Civil Rights schedule hearings in Los Angeles at the earliest possible date."

The committee said the Civil Rights Commission "must assume the responsibility abdicated by the McCone commission of determining whether justification exists for continued Negro complaints concerning police malpractices."