



Racial Powder Keg: Negro-White Hostility Is Mounting in Cleveland

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reason: The "long history of negotiations with, and broken promises from, the local government," Mayor Locher accuses Mr. Weaver of unfairness.

"City Hall and the Cleveland business community are at odds."

The Inner City Action Committee, led by Chairman Ralph Besse of Cleveland Electric Generating Co., was created after the 1966 Hough riots to help the city cope with its racial problems. But after six months it severed relations with the mayor because "the city administration will not accept meaningful assistance and coordination." Mr. Locher accuses the businessmen of "playing politics with the well-being of the people of Cleveland."

City Hall and the responsible Negro leadership are at odds.

"Frequently when it's most needed, the Negro leadership just isn't there," the mayor charges. Leo Jackson, a Negro city councilman, replies: "I expect the mayor to be a decent, honest, sincere gentleman, but you can't be a gentleman and cope with the problems of this town. You've got to be a hard-fisted, practical guy who'll take risks."

Established Negro leadership and the Negro community are at odds.

A training program sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Urban League has flopped badly in its aim of getting Negroes into building trades jobs. Ernest C. Cooper, the Urban League director, says: "We were in the position of preparing people to be put on shelves." With this failure, the NAACP and Urban League dropped another notch in the esteem of Cleveland's Negroes. According to one civil rights specialist, "The NAACP couldn't mobilize a picket line of 10 people now."

The Negro community and the police are at odds.

Harrell Jones, a slender Negro identified by a grand jury as a leading figure in last summer's riots but never indicted, and who now works as a building maintenance man in Hough, assesses the current mood of the ghetto as worse than a year ago. The reason? "Police brutality," he says. Police Chief Richard Wagner replies: "We have no critics west of the Cuyahoga; we cannot appease those east of the Cuyahoga." Most whites live on the west side of the Cuyahoga River, which runs through the middle of Cleveland; most Negroes live on the east side.

Movement in the Schools

Still, Mr. Wagner has established a new community relations unit in the department and has opened eight new police athletic centers for slum youths. Also, there has been some movement in education. A new school board has initiated the construction of some new schools, the opening of more kindergartens, library and vocational classrooms, and the creation of a supplementary education center to draw white and Negro pupils for specialized instruction.

"The only bright spot I can think of is our schools," says Alan Kandel of the Jewish Community Federation.

There are other activists at work, but without much visible success. The Businessmen's Interracial Committee on Community Affairs is one exception but, says Mr. Cooper, a member, "they're involved mostly in long-range planning, not immediate action." Two wood-products trade associations have announced plans to rehabilitate a section of Hough, but the project is said to be stymied by slum landlords who have jacked up prices. Other public and private rehabilitation projects amount to a drop in the bucket.

Mayor Locher, for his part, has some plans he expects to reveal as election time approaches. He already has repaved some slum streets, installed new street lights, and hauled off the streets hundreds of junked cars. Soon he hopes to start a citywide rat control program, collect ghetto trash weekly instead of monthly, let some contracts for play areas and "vest-pocket" parks, and augment the city's supply of housing inspectors, policemen and medical personnel.

Money Problems

But all this costs money, and the mayor is having his troubles on that score. Voters defeated a city income tax in 1965. Last year the city council enacted a tax to be effective this past Jan. 1, but disgruntled citizens forced the levy to another ballot. Now it is to be held in May or June. "If the tax is defeated," says Mr. Locher, "then there will have to be a severe cutback" in his plans.

Anyway, the mayor is willing to move only so far. To him some specific recommendations for easing racial tension in Cleveland advanced by the Civil Rights Commission are "poppycock," and he is steadfastly loyal to his city officials. The Inner City Action Committee, in offering to supply the city with dollar-a-year men to unmarr the urban renewal tangle, insisted on the removal of the city's urban renewal chief, the mayor refused.

Mr. Locher is looking to Washington for some new help. The House has expected to pass soon a crash program to provide jobs for unemployed Negroes in 19 cities, and the mayor believes Cleveland will be one. But Mr. Kandel of the Jewish Community Federation, who has been in on some of the local planning, is not enthusiastic. "It's too late," he says. "They're talking about placing 2,000 people by June, and that's only three months away."

Less than two months away is the "doomsday" pinpointed by Ahmed. He is quite correct in predicting an eclipse of the sun on May 9, but authorities say the eclipse will be partial and won't turn the Cleveland sky dark. And Ahmed's forecast of revolt may be wildly exaggerated. But other events scheduled for Cleveland soon are likely to arouse racial tempers.

Enter Martin Luther King

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. will visit Cleveland soon to help prepare for simultaneous demonstrations this summer here and in other cities. The militant Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) has narrowed its search for a summer "demonstration city" to Cleveland, Oakland, Calif., and Newark, N.J. A spokesman here says it is "quite possible" that Cleveland will be the final choice.

"If CORE makes Cleveland its target city," says J. B. Stoner, vice chairman of the white-supremacist National States Rights Party, "we'll come to Cleveland to stage peaceful counter-demonstrations." Last summer, after a States Rights Party rally in Baltimore, the 1966 CORE demonstration city, whites and Negroes clashed in the street.

The Ku Klux Klan is preparing for an organizational meeting in this city in a few weeks. There are reports that the American Nazi Party intends activity here this spring. At the other end of the political spectrum,

some authorities expect Communist operatives to be active here this year; the grand jury investigating last summer's Hough riots found evidence of Communist Party participation.

Local organization is proceeding on both sides of the color line. The United Black Brotherhood (UBB), formed last fall and regarded by Police Chief Wagner as "militantly racial," is actively involved in the "dialogues" that present Ahmed and others to the Negro community. The supposed aim of the "dialogues" is to steer militants away from violence and toward peaceful protest.

But police say the effect is to unite Negroes under the UBB banner.

Lewis Robinson, identified by a grand jury as a leader in last summer's riots but never indicted, and now a participant in the "dialogues," says of them: "We've had factionalism. Now we want to pull all these things together." He views rioting as "productive and good, a warning that drastic measures must be taken."

Harrell Jones also believes Negroes should crowd into a single group for "political" purposes. He plans to strike out on his own this month to organize such a group.

White Organizing

An organizing drive among whites is being planned by Robert Annable, chairman of the Cleveland-based National Christian Conservative Society and also head of the North American Alliance of White People. Mr. Annable, who believes that Negroes are "culturally and intellectually inferior," will begin holding rallies in May. William Murphree, vice president of the White Citizens Council of Ohio, subscribes to many of Mr. Annable's beliefs and also plans rallies.

The special targets of all these racial organizers, whether they admit it or not, are the youngsters of this "city of nations," most of whom live in neighborhoods that are sharply segregated along nationality as well as racial lines. Murray Hill is largely Italian, Sowinski Park largely Polish, Hough largely Negro, and so on.

As the pressures of social change have mounted, what once were youth clubs have become gangs and now, say social workers and police alike, they are turning more viciously racist. "We know that white and Negro youth gangs now are clashing," says Mr. Kandel, "and we didn't have that before."

In Collinwood, a white neighborhood next to the Negro Glenville section, a young fellow in his twenties says: "When the civil rights groups said they were going to march this summer in our neighborhood, a bunch of the guys in our club decided to form vigilante groups." The "club" he refers to is a neighborhood social club. Mrs. Hanserd of the Welfare Federation says, "We keep hearing there's a buildup of guns in the Collinwood area."

"Chain Gang" Target Practice

In Sowinski Park, members of the White Chain Gang recently have acquired shotguns. They're practicing with the guns in the basement of one member's home, shooting at paper targets they call "niggers," a social worker says. "The purpose for the guns, they say, is to defend themselves against the Negroes when the riots come again this summer."

In another white section, on the western fringe of Hough, signs tacked on telephone poles and painted on buildings warn "Nigger, this is Alley Rat territory, keep your ass out," or urge "Wallace for President." This is the work of the Alley Rats gang whose members, social workers say, have attended meetings of the American Nazi Party in Detroit and Pittsburgh. The Outlaws, a Cleveland motorcycle club, is reported laying plans to attack the Checkered Cherubs, a Negro motorcycle club.

The United Black Brotherhood, whose strengthens have been found by police to contain fire bombs, has begun within the past few weeks to instigate some Negro youth gangs in "guerrilla warfare." Police Chief Wagner says the UBB has made contact with the Ponderous, a 200-member group preoccupied until recently with vandalism but now turning increasingly anti-white.

A similar turn, says the police chief, has been detected among other Negro gangs, such as the Delamores, the Devil's Disciples and the Marquis. "They're getting away from gang activity and are forming militant racial organizations," Mr. Wagner declares.

Interco Inc. Holders Vote Stock Increases

Boost in Common and Preferred Creation of a New Preferred To Enable Further Diversifying

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

ST. LOUIS — Interco Inc. shareholders cleared the way for further diversification of the company by voting to increase authorized common by four million shares, and the existing preferred by 327,066 shares in addition to creating a new preferred issue of one million shares.

However, aside from a pending acquisition of Sam Shainberg Co., Memphis, Tenn., operator of 79 junior department stores, for 410,000 shares of the present preferred, Interco isn't seriously studying any possible acquisitions, Norfleet H. Rand, vice chairman of the board and treasurer, said after the meeting.

Since 1964, Interco has pursued an active diversification program. It operates 210 junior department stores, eight women's clothing factories and six retail hardware stores plus shoe manufacturing and retailing operations. "We're interested primarily in the soft goods, although we'd consider any field that looked promising," Mr. Rand said.

Sales and earnings in December and January, the first two months of the company's fiscal year, showed an improvement over the similar period a year earlier, the executive said. And there will be "an improvement" for the quarter ended Feb. 28 from the first period of fiscal 1966, when Interco earned \$3,861,227, or \$1.09 a share, on sales of \$108,629,944, excluding results of Idaho Department Stores Co., acquired in February 1966.

Mr. Rand also predicted higher sales and earnings for the year ending Nov. 20, even without a contribution from Sam Shainberg Co. On a pro-forma basis for last year, for instance, Shainberg would have contributed 18 cents a share after preferred dividends. Interco's reported earnings of \$11,084,000, or \$3.81 a share, on sales of \$462,100,000, results of Idaho Department Stores Co., were included only for nine months.