

Will Madison Lose Its Racial Cool?

Negroes feel they have been questioned and surveyed to death, but nothing is being done.



By SAMUEL L. ADAMS
(Of The State Journal Staff)

"How many white people get arrested for throwing away a cigarette?"

This question, emblazoned on a handwritten sign in Milwaukee recently, was symptomatic of a dread illness that is striking violently in various parts of the nation this summer.

Slum Negroes, at the bottom of the socio-economic heap and with little if anything to lose by rioting, are using "police brutality" as a rallying cry. The results? Burning, pilfering, and standdowns of police have replaced the non-violence that formerly characterized protests against racial discrimination.

Instead of turning the other cheek to the real and sometimes imagined wrongs, they have taken to threatening an eye-for-an-eye. The action generally has brought blindness in both Negro and white camps and large death tolls, injury, and destruction in Negro areas. Deaths in 1967 already total in the score and casualties are approaching 3,000, with some 90 per cent of the victims Negro.

Inherent in the message from the ghetto is the widespread belief that police arrest Negroes anytime they need a scapegoat; that the "system"—often symbolized by lawmen—keeps Negroes poor, unemployed, and uneducated; and that Negro ghettos are reservations that are frequently subjected to shake-downs from police and white bosses.

Some key political figures in Milwaukee and elsewhere have dismissed the complaints as coming from only a few agitators who stir up the masses.

But if the finding from interviews conducted by The Wisconsin State Journal have validity, some politicians are underestimating how widespread such attitudes are in slum neighborhoods. Perhaps they also underestimate the existence of police brutality among the minority of slum patrolmen. Nevertheless, the presence of ill-informed officials fails to justify the violence which seems to hurt the rioters and their cause most.

Despite pending federal anti-riot legislation, Watts-type revolts against this summer are burning out of control because non-violent protests failed to bring racial needs fast enough.

Why does it happen? Are the rioting

About the Author

Samuel Adams was twice nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for reporting as a member of the staff of the St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times—first for a series of stories on public accommodations in 1964 and then a year later for investigative stories that led to an indictment of two school officials for mishandling school funds, falsification of records, enrollment padding, and false grades for students who never attended classes.

He was awarded a Russell Sage fellowship for study at the University of Wisconsin and joined The Wisconsin State Journal as a part-time staff member last September.

A native of Waycross, Ga., Adams holds bachelor degrees from West Virginia State College (English) and Wayne State University in Detroit (journalism) and a master's degree in journalism from the University of Minnesota.

Negroes the same ones who in prior years turned the other cheek to the Bull Connor fire hoses in Birmingham and the Jim Clark and Al Lingo electric cattle prods in Selma and elsewhere?

Seldom do the triggering incidents fully explain the wide ranging grievances the Negroes have. In all of the riots, the participants believed some high-valued right of theirs had been violated and legally constituted authority would do nothing to correct or avenge the real or imagined misdeed.

Gang leaders in Tampa, Fla., when questioned about reasons for the recent

outbreaks there, said a policeman in their clear view shot a teenage burglary suspect after the youth had given up with hands raised against a wire mesh fence. The patrolman, however, said the escaping boy was shot before he reached the fence.

Civil rights leaders, as well as President Johnson, have warned that the revolts could come to almost any American city where Negro rights are denied and where the poor are frustrated in efforts to escape ghetto blight.

In Madison, however, informants say the city will not experience race violence this summer. Police, civic and government leaders, and the city's Equal Opportunity Commission are embarking on a long-range preventative program.

But some people tell of recent happenings in Madison that could have in the vernacular of the ghetto, "caused a more racially tense city to lose its cool."

ITEM: The June sun was bright and church was out when police cruisers screeched to a halt on Fisher St. in South Madison. The report was that a man had been pointing a gun. A curious crowd had gathered.

"Nothing serious happened because we have level heads here," commented a Negro postal clerk, one of the community's few men with the dual role of "mama" and "papa" for five children. "In some places the action of one of the policemen might have caused trouble. He must have been a rookie."

He said the officer angered a lot of people by insisting that evidence be given on the spot to prove the gun was loaded and that the gun was the same one that the man had pointed at neighborhood children.

"No one wanted an arrest, just a report in case something happened," he said. "But that guy tried to be policeman, judge, and jury, and he became pretty insulting."

ITEM: For years, State St. has been anathema for Negroes, according to the former head of the local NAACP. Many found trouble on State St., especially when out past midnight.

A widespread belief in the Negro community is that bigotry of police and some business operators caused a disproportionate amount of Negro arrests

on State St.," he said, admitting improvement in recent years. "If you are black and frequent the State St. area, you are more likely to be challenged by a policeman and many of us think it happens because the officers think we are there looking for white girls."

"It is a pattern of behavior and you can't document it," he added.

Marshall Colston, a University of Wisconsin Extension specialist with the Faculty Exchange and Anti-Poverty program, recalls a dialog about three years ago when an officer was called to quell a State St. disturbance involving a Negro and a white man:

"Will you tell him to stop calling me 'nigger'?" protested the Negro.

"Isn't that what you are," answered the policeman."

Only the minority of approximately 30 persons interviewed thought rioting might be triggered here from such an incident. Those who thought so agreed State St. is a likely trouble spot—a place where tempers might spark from some act perceived as racist.

Other opinions ranged from contempt for whites to the feeling that Madison is "one of the best."

A caretaker who was questioned while he was buying a blues record for his wife voiced the negative.

"Wisconsin is as bad as Alabama," he said. "The main difference being they tell you openly to stay in your place in Montgomery and they throw rocks and hide their hand in Madison."

David Simms, who rents an apartment above his East Side home to whites, says the opposite: "In general I think the Negro gets a pretty good break here when he doesn't try to bully his way through."

To keep racial peace, the Equal Opportunity Commission is polishing up a plan or giving police a bob-tailed course in community and human relations. Plans also call for interpreting the role of the policemen to ghetto residents.

Unlike Milwaukee and Chicago, Madison has a grace period, says the Rev. James Wright, whose three hats include the ministry, a business, and the commission.

Only a few decades ago, Milwaukee had only 8,000 Negroes, he pointed out. Then the city could have done something to prevent the development of its huge ghetto, he continued, "now they have more than 80,000 Negroes crowded in segregated housing."

Without a concentrated Negro ghetto, a city is unlikely to have rioting from Negroes. A contiguous mass of like-minded people is needed for spontaneous mass movements or mob action.

Madison's Negro population is increasing about 40 per cent each decade. If

the city continues to spread the incoming Negroes among whites in all areas of the metropolis, prospects for the build-up of a large Negro movement are low.

The city now has about 1,800 Negroes living mainly in three neighborhoods on the South Side, near Truax Field, and in the Marquette-Williamson Sts. area. Since passage of the 1964 fair housing ordinance, their spread has been to newly-desegregated districts throughout the city.

When the Greenbush community was razed for the Triangle Urban Renewal project, the city reached a cross road and the South Side became predominantly Negro after receiving many of the relocated families. The fair housing law and its enforcement by the Equal Opportunities Commission has slowed

this trend.

The State Journal found mixed opinions on the status of Negroes in Madison today, but the feelings are better than in most other Wisconsin urban communities: Race relations are generally good; housing is improving, although discrimination against Negroes continues in certain classes of housing in exclusive neighborhoods and in rentals with less than four units which are owner occupied.

Police relations and under-employment draw the most negative reactions from Negroes. Schools are considered top-drawer for Negroes of high socio-economic class, but schools obviously are less successful in reaching the needs of many children of working class and welfare families where the value of education is not engrained.

BOOKS

Causes of the Crisis

Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community? By Martin Luther King Jr. 209 pages. Harper and Row. \$4.95.

Black Power—White Resistance: Notes on the New Civil War. By Fred Powlledge. 282 pages. World. \$6.95.

Black and White: A Study of U. S. Racial Attitudes Today. By William Brink and Louis Harris. 285 pages. Simon and Schuster. \$5.95.

It is hardly news any more that the great civil rights coalition has broken down and splintered apart, that white resistance to further integration—whether community-programmed or sought by political means—has discernibly stiffened, or that Negro and white leaders seem to have "lost contact" with each other and with the inner core of a singly frustrated and violence-prone youth of the northern urban ghettos.

It is, everybody agrees, a terrible situation, likely to get worse before it gets better—if it gets better.

The causes of the present crisis, as these three books variously describe them, are fairly apparent. As the civil rights movement won its great moral victories in the South—victories that naturally raised Negro expectations

everywhere—white resistance on the substantive issues of equality, housing, education, and jobs, hardened. It hardened not so much because the white power structure was or is determinedly anti-Negro, but because a power structure, by its very nature, wants to hold onto its own, to keep things as they are.

It began to come clear that real progress on the substantive issues of equality—particularly in the urban North, the focus of civil rights concern since the Watts riot nearly three years ago—would require massive federal planning and funding. This has been effectively opposed, politically (local power structures do not welcome such encroachment), morally or prejudicially (90 per cent of white Americans disapprove of "special treatment" for Negroes, according to a Harris Poll in "Black and White"), and budgetarily (Vietnam comes first).

At the same time, Negro leaders have come to see their victories as mostly token victories. This has coincided with a growing disillusionment with the possibilities of nonviolence.

In the South, nonviolence was the great moral sword of the civil rights movement, and for a time it galvanized the conscience of the nation. In the cities of the North, however, another lesson is being learned: nothing happens, nothing is done until a riot breaks out. This is nowhere more forcefully or bitterly documented than in Fred Powlledge's "Black Power—White Resistance."

It is a moral adage that violence accomplishes nothing, and like all moral adages, this one is neither universally applied nor always true.

Each of these books details at length with black power, that bugaboo for liberals dreamed up by the easy source of news copy, Stokely Carmichael. (Negroes may be more responsible here than the news media: according to a 1966 Harris Poll in "Black and White," Negroes rank Carmichael 15th in a list of 16 Negro leaders, just ahead of Elijah Muhammad.)

The books agree that if "black power" means separatism and black nationalism it will remain little more than a slightly menacing slogan. But if it means a serious and concerted drive for legal political and economic power, it might prove to be the most realistic and effective means for the Negro to bring himself into the mainstream of American life.

King, who remains the most popular of Negro leaders, advocates legal political black power. He also calls for a return to nonviolence, an alignment of Negroes and poor whites to force the massive federal poverty-civil rights program once advocated by the president. King is doubtless calling for a miracle. But he has called for miracles before, and helped them come to pass. Perhaps one shouldn't despair until he does.

These books, then, are storm warnings. William Brink and Louis Harris' "Black and White" is a succinct survey of American opinion (or Negro frustration and white apathy), particularly since 1963. Powlledge's book is a more personal report, primarily of Negro attitudes, primarily from the ghettos. He does not foresee the end of violence.

By ELIOT FREMONT-SMITH
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KING

Know Your Madisonian

Robert Winter Jr.

Robert W. Winter Jr., who's made a career of serving higher education in Wisconsin, spends much of his spare time working for better education for children.

Winter, in his role as assistant director of the State Universities Board of Regents, has allocated millions of dollars for the improvement and expansion of the nine institutions and the building of the two branch campuses to open this fall—two more branches will be opened in the next two years.

And Winter, who also has been in charge of the money for many years of the Monona Grove School System, was elected chairman of the School Board last week. He was named treasurer of the Nichols School Board in 1959 and when Monona Grove became an integrated district in 1961, he became treasurer of the larger organization.

What moves a man who works in education all day to spend his time in the same field?

"You know," he related recently, "I've always had a desire to do something like this. I've never worked in education on an institutional level, and serving on the school board gives me some insight into operating these institutions."

There are 3,500 children in the Monona Grove School System—three of them his own: Mark, who will be a senior in the high school; Marcia, a sophomore; and Scott, in sixth grade at Winnequah School. The Winters live at 713 Moygara Rd.

A native of Appleton, Winter came to the University of Wisconsin in the late 1940s after serving during World War II in the Pacific. He majored in accounting and received a bachelor of administration degree in 1950.

"I took this job with Eugene McPhee—the first man he ever had on his staff—and I've been here ever since," Winter began as an accountant and served as controller of the State College (later University) Board of Regents from 1951 to 1966. He became a certified public accountant in 1953.

In his position, Winter is primarily responsible in the areas of business and finance, and at a time when seven out of 10 students in higher education institutions are enrolled in one of the state universities, he deals in big money.

There were 8,248 attending the state colleges when he began working for the system, and he estimates that by the fall of 1968 there will be about 58,000. To provide housing and food services to these numbers, the State Colleges Building Corp., of which Winter is assistant secretary-treasurer, has spent in excess of \$100 million in the past 17 years.

Winter also is assistant secretary of the governing body of the state university system.

Outside of his educational responsibilities, Winter serves as treasurer of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church. He is a former president of the congregation and was on the building committee for the new church. He recently completed a term as vice-president of the East Madison Optimist Club, and he also is a member of the Wisconsin Society of Certified Public Accountants.

When he has a few free hours, Winter "golfs a little bit" on the public courses in the Madison area, and he bowls in an intercity league.

city of Wisconsin Extension specialist; David Simms, operating engineer, Mendota State Hospital; Harry Hamilton, Agronomy Journal editor, and his wife, a teacher; Percy Julian Jr., attorney and son of a Chicago millionaire chemist; Dr. N. O. Calloway, director, Comodore Nursing Home; Les Ritcherson, UW assistant football coach; Charles Hill, community services director, Madison Redevelopment Authority; Ed Parson, accountant, Wisconsin Power and Light;

Dr. Cornelius Hopper, University hospital neurologist; William Lester, director of experimental chemistry, and Noeland Penn, counselor, both UW; Wilbur Thomas, accountant, Dane County Mental Health Clinic; Sid Forbes, director of program planning, CUNA International; Hilton Hanna, executive assistant, Amalgamated Meat Cutters Union, AFL-CIO; John Renau, audiologist, Mendota State Hospital; Ted Johnson, the state's top civil servant; Robert Renau, assistant director of recreation, Mendota State Hospital; E. Gordon Young, assistant attorney general; Henry McClean and Jesse Nixon, social workers.

The migration of Negro professionals to Madison has been underway since 1960, informants say.



ROBERT W. WINTER JR.
—Photo-sketch by Edward Schumann

Negroes Face Under-employment

Under-employment has replaced unemployment as the foremost problem facing Madison Negroes, despite a continuing high rate of joblessness among the bottom rung.

Most Negro men of South Madison, a predominately Negro area, moonlight to make ends meet, according to Merritt Norvell, relocation director of the Madison Redevelopment Authority.

"And these people feel they have been questioned and surveyed to death, but nothing is being done to change things," Norvell said.

Madison's median income is about \$7,000. Non-whites earn more than \$2,000 less. Yet their education—low for both whites and blacks—is higher than that of their white neighbors. Only 59.9 per cent of South Madison adults completed high school.

"Education would be one way of breaking the cycle, but a man working two jobs doesn't have time, or he doesn't know how, to help his kids with their school work," declared Norvell.

He said 28.2 per cent of the households—17 above the national average—are headed by mothers, and these families, with about four children each, are the largest and the poorest in the area.

Sometimes the under-employment is related to universal (not racial) determinants, such as the history of Negro employment and/or his refusal to accept the insecurity of change.

A 37-year-old father of nine children, for example, turned down a promotion to foreman because he could earn more than the starting foreman's pay by putting in a good deal of over-time as a truck driver.

"I would have had to take a cut from \$160 to \$135," he said. "I was held down by color when I started. . . . They were known to be prejudiced. I can't afford to change now."

To meet this reluctance, firms have turned to recruiting young employees and new college graduates for management trainees. But few tapped in Madison are home grown.

The largest employers of Madison Negroes are a meat packing firm, a machine tool and die firm, the University of Wisconsin, and the Veterans Administration. Most of the packing house Negroes are in the sanitation department and they are not willing to transfer to other positions that might place them at the bottom of the seniority and job tenure heap, Negroes say.

To enable more men to give up second jobs so that the male influence will be felt more in the homes, Norvell said full day care for working parents is needed. Then more wives may hold jobs.

"Seventy-seven parents (in the South Side area) need this service," he said. A Mayor's Community Service Commission, comprised of social agencies, is being set up to coordinate services in the South Side, the Truax, and the

Williamson St. areas. In these communities, economically deprived whites require more health services than their Negro counterparts. Well over 95 per cent of the welfare load of the city is white.

The upper strata jobs that go to Negroes are won by outsiders who either came to Madison for professional education or who came specifically for the position.

Several Negroes said the Madison School system is one of the best for the middle class child, but that it fails those who are less well off, especially the Negro poor. A paper on Educational Technology by University of Wisconsin education curriculum specialist H. Milard Clements generally supports this view.

Madison public schools have about four Negro teachers and no Negro counselors.

"White counselors and teachers generally don't take the time and effort needed to help the deprived," complained Marshall Colston, of the University of Wisconsin Extension.

Only a half dozen Negro graduates of local schools attend the University of Wisconsin. One-fourth do not finish high school.

Those who do complete their schooling here and attend college do not wish to remain in Madison, says Muriel Simms, a University senior. She got the feeling about five years ago that "there's nothing for a Negro teenager to do" socially, though Madison might be a good place for an older Negro to settle down "if he likes to be by himself."

Richard Harris, the Madison native who tries to provide social outlets at the South Side Neighborhood Center, says the young people seem to be the angriest. Some who either withdraw or are excluded from school socials gather at the neighborhood center to voice anti-white invective that makes the words "white boy" and "hunky" as insulting as the word "nigger."

Less formal schooling is normally needed for operating small businesses like service stations and neighborhood stores. Yet business attracts few Madison Negroes. The city has a Negro-owned grocery store on the East Side, two University area shoe-sandal shops, and a barber and beauty shop, a service station, a beer tavern, and record shop on the South Side. The city also has a Negro building contractor. Only five families operate these businesses.

Except for Harris, informants knew of no home-grown college-trained professional in a key position. Frequently named are the following who came to Madison from other cities:

Norvell; James Wright, businessman and member of the Equal Opportunity Commission; Marshall Colston, Univer-