At least four police officers struggle to control a suspect during the peak of the August, 1965, rioting. In the background, another policeman tensely stands guard with a shotgun to hold back the angry, surging mob that was attacking passing motorists and looting stores. Long Beach Independent, Press-Telegram Staff Photo.
This photograph taken during the first night of rioting shows a laughing crowd pressing against a patrol car while police officers attempted to disperse the mobs plaguing South Los Angeles. Associated Press Wirephoto via Wide World Photos

minutes later, the circle of curious onlookers had grown to a crowd of nearly 300 persons clamoring for vantage points to see what was happening.

The Fryes reached the scene coincidental with the arrival of Minikus' motorcycle partner, Bob Lewis, the patrol car sent to transport Marquette Frye to jail, and the tow truck that would impound the automobile.

The sequence of events was important because the things that transpired at the scene were to spark the rioting. The California Highway Patrol handling of the arrest later was to be scrutinized minutely.

Almost as many variations as to what happened as there were people in the crowd were to emerge after the incident.

Police Chief William Parker believed that the affair would never have gotten out of hand if his men had handled the situation.

"I believe that if our officers had made this arrest," Parker later said, questioning the experience of California Highway Patrol officers, "which marked the beginning of this (violence), that this riot would never have occurred."

Mayor Samuel Yorty also charged the C.H.P. officers with "bad judgment" and questioned their training.

The commissioner of the California Highway Patrol, Bradford Crittenden, retorted by declaring that his officers "are the best-trained law enforcement men in the world" and branded the Parker and Yorty charges as "unwarranted."

"Particularly is it difficult for me to understand why," Crittenden said after the charges were made, "if any men are so poorly trained and qualified as he
A Negro wounded in the head by a National Guardsman lies on the street while a soldier opens a first aid kit. The man, a passenger in a car on which troopers fired when it went through a roadblock, was dead on arrival at a hospital. The driver of the automobile also was killed. Associated Press Wirephoto via Wide World Photos
Holding two guns, a police officer questions a youngster found in a grocery store in the riot area. Police said the child told them he "was just browsing" after looters fled from the store. United Press International.

children, Ricky, 11, and Ronald, 13, who miraculously escaped injury.

The coroner’s jury that later ruled the death “justifiable homicide” received evidence that Flores’ blood contained enough alcohol for him to be regarded as intoxicated. Nevertheless, the man’s family reported that Albert and Richard went to the troubled section to take the latter’s in-laws to safety.

Fireman Warren E. Tilson, 31, died tragically when a wall collapsed on him while battling a market fire set by rioters at 120th Street and Central Avenue.

Surviving him was his wife, Carole, an expectant mother.

The day-long rioting was to continue into the night despite the curfew and increased number of troops, whose numbers were to reach 13,000 by midnight Saturday.

National Guardsmen began riding on fire trucks to protect firemen from snipers and rock throwing mobs.

Troops and law enforcement officers waged a gun battle with rioters against the backdrop of blazing buildings during Saturday night’s biggest fire. The blaze engulfed stores on Broadway between 46th and 48th Streets and because of the gunfighting, firemen were forced to stand by as the buildings were destroyed.

While the curfew cleared the streets of the immense mobs which roared the previous nights, smaller groups of arsonists and looters made their way fanatically and furtively through the area.

Blasts of gunfire frequently broke the stillness of the warm night.

Sniper fire began to plague the Watts police station, 1526 East 103rd Street, from the second floor of an adjoining building. Troops fired back and the harassment stopped.

Investigators later found the body of Andrew Houston, 41, dead from gunshot, in the building along with two loaded rifles. He had arrived in Los Angeles only two weeks earlier from his native Louisiana.

Despite the increased number of troops supplementing the law enforcement officers, the frequent armed patrols, and the reports of rioters being shot, the looters furtively and fanatically continued to pillage stores. It was almost as though they were tempting death.

Many of the deaths, even though coroner’s juries later ruled them “justifiable,” had pitiful aspects.

William V. Caston, 37, a widower and a Negro, was discovered in a liquor store at 4981 Compton Avenue at approximately 9:45 p.m. holding a revolver, identified by the shop’s owner as one he left in the premises.

When Caston failed to drop the weapon at their command, Police Officers Nicholas Bakay and Charles C. Hudson fired. Caston fell mortally wounded.

With Caston at the time, police reported, were his son, Larry, 12, and the boy’s cousin, Henry Burroughs, 15. The youths were not hurt.

“They were my father,” police quoted Larry as saying.

“I went into the liquor store with my father.”

The cousin’s statement to police also was read into the record at the inquest where Caston’s death was held to be “justifiable homicide during a riot in which he was committing a felony.”

“I went into the liquor store with my uncle and Larry,” police said. Henry Burroughs told them. “We went in to steal stuff. My uncle found the gun inside and then the officer came and shot my uncle. My uncle was holding the gun in his hand and I guess he was trying to get away.”

Caston, also known as William V. King, was a native of Louisiana, had resided in Los Angeles for 18 years,
POLICE, MUSLIMS IN
TEMPLE GUN BATTLE

A New Battlefront in Riot Area

23 NEGROES JAILED
IN SYMPATHY RIOT

NEGRO WOMAN SLAIN

It's Still
No Change

NEGLIGENCE

A Negro woman was accidentally killed in a drafty room by a falling glass door. The accident occurred at the Los Angeles General Hospital where she was taken for treatment. The hospital announced that the woman, who was 50 years old, had been found dead by her husband. The husband, a Negro, was taken to the police station where he was questioned. The police said they were trying to determine how the accident happened. The husband said he had been sleeping in the room when the accident occurred. The police said they were looking into the matter.

Rod Spies

8 Injured
As Officers
Hunt Arms

HUNDREDS OF SHOTS FIRED

Police have arrested 23 Negroes in the shooting of a Negro woman at the Los Angeles General Hospital. The woman, who was 50 years old, was taken to the hospital by her husband. The police said they were looking into the matter.

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