

The watts riot



It is August 17 1965 and, we just went through the worst week of our lives things are finally starting to calm down. As we are going into town to see what is left, and to assess the damages, we try to understand how this got so out of control. In the course of seven days, 34 lives were lost and, more than 1, 032 were injured, the police had arrested 3, 438 people and, there are over \$40 million in property damages (Watts Riots 2013). This all started from what should have been a routine arrest by the police of young Black boy suspected of driving while intoxicated.

It all started the in the early evening on August 11, 1965 when police pulled over two brothers named Marquette and Ronald Frye just blocks from their house. As the police proceeded to give Marquette a field sobriety test that he failed, Ronald walked to their house get his mother, Rena Price. Marquette had been cooperating with the police when his mother showed at the scene until she started yelling at him for drinking. At this point Marquette pushed his mother and headed toward a crowd that had gathered. As the police tried to catch him, his mother began to attack the officers that were struggling with the brothers.

As the police began to use force to control the situation, the mother, and the crowd began to get hostile. Anger at the scene escalated and bitter incriminations from both sides followed (144 hours 2010). Both brothers and their mother were arrested. As the police began to withdraw from the scene a woman spit on an officer and was arrested. As the last car left the scene it was stoned by the increasing angry onlookers. The growing mob began stoning cars, pulling Whites from the cars and beating them and they also targeted a police command post that had been set up in the area.

By early morning the issues seemed all under control except for a few incidents of rock throwing and vandalism, twenty - nine people were arrested throughout the night (144 hours). Thursday August 12, 1965 a meeting was held between police and black leaders, due to actions from both sides the meetings failed to come to an agreement to stop the rioting. Police had cordoned off our city in attempt to limit the riot to one area. Later in the evening the National Guard was put on alert. At that time the crowd had grown to more than 1, 000 people. The crowds began setting fires, looting the stores, overturning cars, and attacking firemen.

It was very clear they were targeting only white businesses, pedestrians, and motorists. By midday the riot had tripled in size and the crowds were focusing on looting the stores in the business strict, assistance had all but disappeared due to firemen and ambulances refusing to enter the area out of fear for their lives. Around midday the National Guard had arrived but the rioting continued to increase. Soon the rioters were covering as far as 50 to 60. (Watts, 2013) Friday August 13, 1965 the riot continues the escalated and is now spread throughout the city the city is starting to look a foreign war zone that you only see on television.

There are block of burning building the National Guard are patrolling the street and Marshal law, and a curfew is in effect. You can still hear the shots ring from rioter shooting at the firemen attempting to put out the fires. On Saturday it was reported there more than 3, 000 National Guard on station throughout the city and this caused the rioting to begin to slow down. By Sunday most of the riot had ceased and all the major fires were under control. Wednesday August 18 1965. Thing have begun to calm down, and

the city is trying to go through and assess all the damages, luckily for me and myfamily, we have made it through with little loss.

As we look around the city, I am in disbelief that our citizens have caused this much damage and anguish to each other. I don't know if we will ever to fully recover both financially and emotionally. In all, more than 300 fires had been set, 34 lives were lost and more than 1, 032 were injured the police had arrested 3, 438 people and there are over \$40 million in property damages. It is time we as a people come together to make a change, we can't continues hurting each other. All we can do if attempt to move forward, learn from all this and make sure it never happens again