

APRIL RIOTS

Conditions here since the early April riots have significantly undermined the economy of this community. We estimate that we lost \$40 million in tourist spending in April and May and our figures are still running behind what they should be. A great many business enterprises in the District, particularly in downtown Washington, have suffered substantial reductions in their volumes. Some have already closed and others may have to do so in the very near future unless conditions improve.

The cut back of tourist spending and those of residents in the central area has and will be reflected directly in revenues collected by the District of Columbia, and I am fearful that conditions will get worse since almost daily we receive comments and letters from business people of the District similar to one received yesterday which ended by saying, "I don't know how we can continue to do business in Washington, D.C."

On May 10th, with the approval of my Board of Directors, I wired the President of the United States as follows:

The safety of people and property in this city must be assured. This requires all citizens to observe the rights of others. Business and citizens must fully recognize and observe their responsibilities to maintain law and order. National and local government must assure such conditions and protect all citizens against lawless elements.

Clearly, Washington's law enforcement processes cannot adequately fulfill this function at this time. Scheduled demonstrations will place additional demands on the police establishments. It therefore is essential that the number of law enforcement personnel on the streets be augmented now.

We urge appropriate officials to order this done immediately.

This is the end of my telegram.

Subsequently, the President recommended the addition of 1,000 policemen to the Metropolitan Police Department. On June 4th I wrote the President and transmitted "compliments and appreciation for the decision to increase the Metropolitan Washington Police Department by 1,000 additional officers." I also reiterated our concern about the maintenance of law and order here but pointed out that while his recommendation was a step forward, it would require a considerable amount of time before it could be fully implemented inasmuch as appropriations were needed and recruiting and training facilities would have to be expanded. I invited the President's attention to my telegram of May 10th, stating that we renewed our suggestion and earnestly requested that steps be taken to assign 1,000 military police to the Metropolitan Police Department immediately so that a high degree of law and order could be reestablished at the earliest possible time.

Please understand, Mr. Chairman, that we in the Board of Trade believe that most of our responsible officials and the Metropolitan Police Department are sincerely dedicated; to reducing criminal activity and again making our homes, our businesses and our streets safe for all of us. We compliment them for their service in the face of the serious law enforcement handicaps they must deal with.

Hopefully, some of these handicaps are being lessened or eliminated. It also now appears that the Metropolitan Police Department will be enlarged. But, meanwhile it is of paramount importance that steps be taken now to reduce crime by augmenting the number of law enforcement officers on the streets as we have asked the President to do. We