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CIA Ex Agent to Direct Riot Conspiracy Probe

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WASHINGTON — President Johnson's riot commission yesterday selected a former officer of the Central Intelligence Agency to find out whether recent city riots were planned. He is Milan Carl Miskovsky, now a Treasury Department lawyer, who was with the CIA from 1951 to 1964, first as an intelligence officer and later as assistant general counsel.

Commission chairman Otto Kerner announced the selection of Miskovsky at a White House press conference and said the former CIA agent would oversee "independent inquiries" to determine whether a conspiracy was involved in riots that tore through a score of cities this summer.

Officially, Miskovsky, who won the CIA's Certificate of Merit in 1962 and Medal of Merit in 1964, will have the title "director of investigations for the national advisory commission on civil disorders." It was reported that his job will be to supervise the commission's investigation—under way since late July—and coordinate the probe with information being gathered by the Justice Department and state and local police agencies.

In announcing the appointment, Kerner, the governor of Illinois, said it "seems logical" that there was a conspiracy behind the riots. But he said the commission has yet to find any evidence that this was the case. Kerner did not mention it, but in testimony last month before the commission, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover said he was convinced there was no evidence of a conspiracy to foment riots.

Kerner said the 11-member commission, which has heard testimony from 75 witnesses, including the mayors of New York and Detroit—cities hardest hit by this year's riots—would deliver its interim report to President Johnson "as soon as possible" with recommendations for "immediate help" to thwart further civil disorders.

new legislation, the commission in its interim report will probably call for "short-range" assistance to low-income areas from such sources as private industry and universities which are located within the cities, Kerner said.

Saying that most of the recent violence began with rock-throwing by Negro youths 14 to 16 years old, Kerner said that universities, in particular, should take a "greater interest" in encouraging students to tutor potential high school dropouts.

Kerner cited inadequate education and housing and a lack of jobs as factors in recent riots, but the Illinois governor said that the prime cause of the riots was "a sense of deep inferiority" felt by slum Negroes. This feeling of inferiority, said Kerner, springs from poor Negroes being repeatedly turned away from decent jobs and housing.

"I think this is the basis of the whole thing," said Kerner. "And the white community of the United States is not aware of the existence of this problem—not aware of how deep and sensitive it is."

Not until the psychic pattern of inferiority among ghetto Negroes is eradicated will the cities be free of the threat of more civil disorders, Kerner said.

The Illinois governor was accompanied at the White House news conference by Mayor John Lindsay of New York City, who is vice chairman of the commission.

Neither Kerner, a Democrat, nor Lindsay, a Republican, referred to urban legislation now pending before Congress.

They sidestepped queries about a reported push by some commission members for full-year funding of the Neighborhood Youth Corps at last summer's level. And neither mentioned the embattled antipoverty program which is expected to undergo a severe test in the House next month.

For the immediate future, the commission will continue its investigation with a detailed probe of 25 to 30 cities affected by riots, Kerner said. This will involve getting "minute-by-minute, development-by-development" knowledge of the riots—why they occurred and how they can be averted, he said.

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