Hill Cautioned
On Its Approach
To Ghetto Riots

By Jean M. White
Washington Post Staff Writer

A warning that the Nation faces only greater disaster if white Americans say "to hell with it" in the face of Negro ghetto uprisings was sounded yesterday before Congress.

It came from Daniel P. Moynihan, specialist in both the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations. He appeared as a witness before a Senate subcommittee looking into a "social accounting" system to evaluate national programs and needs.

Moynihan said the Nation could "slip into a state of serious reaction" unless leaders marshal a sense of urgency in facing up to the problem of "lower-class disorganization" and violence.

Says It Could Happen

To meet violence with "indifference" or punitive measures would be "the worst thing we can do," he warned and then added:

"But we are capable of it. It's all around us."

Moynihan, director of the Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, told the Senators that it "was time to be honest" about Negroes and city violence. He spared no one in his remarks—Negroes, white middle-class, Congress, Administrations, liberals, conservatives.

It is a mistake to feel that you can deal with Negro rioters as "rational, reasonable people," Moynihan told the Senators. Instead, it is much like dealing with "minor children," he said.

"We made it that way," he emphasized.

'Urban Lower Class'

Negroes are today's urban lower class, he said, and their experience is close to that of his own forebears, the Irish Catholics in 1840s who came from rural Ireland and fell into social and personal disorganization. Drunkenness was their 19th century equivalent of today's drug addiction, he said.

When you have a large, disorganized lower class, he said "you're going to have violence" with people destructive of society and themselves.

"You will never solve the problem of race until you

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WHITNEY M. YOUNG JR.

... warn against punitive action against Negroes in the wake of rioting

DANIEL B. MOYNIHAN

solve the problem of class," Moynihan observed.

As for the white liberals—and he emphasized that he himself was one of them—Urbanologist Moynihan said they were remiss for not condemning violence as destructive but "legitimizing" it with subtle shadings.

In this, Moynihan said, the liberals have behaved somewhat like the Southern aristocrats told their slaves: "It's all right. You can break out tonight."

Moynihan said the "social radarscope" had picked up the signals of social disorganization among the Negro lower class but the Government had done little to remedy the ills. He pointed to figures on welfare dependency, crime, and broken families.

He compared those who raise cries of "law and order" and talk of repressive measures to the stereotyped British colonial officer who won't be budged and keeps crying: "Don't flinch."

Moynihan's remarks came as alarmed members of the House and Senate came up with a flurry of proposals in the wake of the Detroit and Newark riots. They pointed in two directions: beefed-up laws to squelch rioters and mob rule in the streets, and measures to expand social programs to help the ghetto poor.

Sen. Fred R. Harris (D-Okl.), chairman of the subcommittee which heard Moynihan yesterday, is co-sponsor with Sen. Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn.) of a resolution to set up a Special Commission on Civil Strife to investigate bigotry rioting.

Yesterday Mondale posed the problem facing Congressmen this way:

"We will be damned whatever we do. From one side will come the cry that any attempt to make immediate improvements is a reward for violence. On the other side, we will face the fact that suppression with remediation is a clear invitation to greater trouble."

As he made that remark, these were among the proposals that came out of the House and Senate yesterday:

• Led by Rep. James G. O'Hara, a Detroit Democrat, 38 House members proposed the Federal Government allot $300 million to train and equip local police to control riots.

• Sen. Thrusdon B. Morton (R-Ky.) proposed that President Johnson be authorized to transfer up to 10 per cent of all urban funds to potential riot cities to form a "citizens' corp" of the unemployed to work at various projects.

• Legislation was introduced by Rep. Roman C. Pucinski (D-Ill.) to make looting a Federal offense punishable with a ten-year jail sentence.

• Sen. Abraham Ribicoff (D-Conn.) urged the President to distribute $6 million to riot-struck cities from his executive emergency relief fund and Congress give full funding to existing urban-aid programs.

Meanwhile, Cincinnati Councilman John E. Held told Congress his city "is in deep and serious trouble" and its citizens "scared and disgusted." He testified before the ad hoc House Subcommittee on Poverty that was introduced by Rep.

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