

Riot in Newport Puts End to Jazz Festival

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Newport, R. I., July 3 [Special]—The Newport city council declared a state of emergency for this island resort community Sunday after a night of destructive rioting by thousands of men and women



Del Sesto

drawn here by the 8th annual Newport Jazz Festival.

Convening at noon in a special session, the council barred visitors to the city until further notice, halted all liquor sales, and revoked the entertainment license under which festival performances were to have been given Sunday night and Monday.

Governor OK's Action

The council action was taken with the approval of Gov. Christopher Del Sesto and Col. Walter Stone, state director of public safety, who attended the session. State police set up roadblocks on the two bridges from mainland and established guards on ferryboats, turning back all persons not residents of the



[AP Wirephoto]

State trooper firing tear gas at jazz festival riot.

island except those with legitimate business.

Police, national guardsmen, marines, and navy shore patrol officers patrolled littered streets to maintain order. Sullen young people milled by the hundreds in the streets and on nearby benches, many of them sipping beer from supplies they had brought with them or obtained Saturday.

Damage in Thousands

Damage from the rioting will run into thousands of dollars, city officials said. Hundreds of windows were smashed, including windows in the homes of wealthy summer residents along Bellevue place. Empty beer cans, whisky bottles, bricks, rocks, and limbs of trees—all used as weapons in the riot—were strewn on streets, sidewalks, and lawns.

Authorities released 170 rioters picked up during the melees but decided to hold at least 15 for trial on charges ranging from drunkenness to assaulting police.

Directors of the festival, a non-profit organization which has been staging the annual jazz performances since 1953, voted to sue the city for 4 million dollars for canceling three festival events.

Louis L. Lorillard, presi-

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BAR VISITORS TO NEWPORT AFTER RIOT

Close Jazz Festival, Ban Liquor Sale

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dent of the festival, said the directors had voted to institute the suit as soon as possible.

"This means the end of the festival forever," he said. Lorillard, a member of the wealthy tobacco family, issued a formal statement blaming the disturbance entirely on non ticket holders and promising refunds by mail to holders of tickets for the canceled performances.

The rioting began while the Saturday night performance was in progress before an audience of 15,000 in a walled, open air arena in the city's Freebody park. Thousands of persons who had hoped to buy tickets had been turned away for lack of room.

Estimate 12,000 in Riot

Police said the disorders apparently grew out of resentment by some of those turned away, plus anger at attempts of authorities to break up beer drinking parties on the beaches. It was estimated at least 12,000 persons took part in the rioting.

Open fighting broke out with an attempt by the mob to crash the arena gates. This was repelled by police but the riot then spread to the rest of the park, adjoining streets and nearby beaches.

City Manager George Biston telephoned to Gov. Del Sesto for help. The governor dispatched 100 state police and ordered out three companies of national guardsmen. He also hastened from Providence to Aquidneck island, on which Newport is located, and took personal charge of a riot control headquarters he established in Portsmouth, at the north end of the island.

Sends 50 Marines

The commandant of the Newport naval station, where President Eisenhower is scheduled to arrive Thursday for a vacation, sent 50 marines into Newport, along with several shore patrol squads.

Local authorities called firemen into action with high pressure hoses. Neighboring towns sent both police and firemen. The forces of law and order exceeded 500 at the height of the rioting.

State police decided to break up the mob into two parts, a maneuver in which they used both tear gas and hoses. Four thousand rioters were driven to the beaches, where many of them slept all night. Another segment of rioters was driven into the downtown area. The rioters retreated slowly, yelling derisively and hurling such missiles as came to hand.

Treat 50 in Hospitals

Hospitals began filling up with the injured. It was estimated that 50 persons were treated for various injuries, most of them cuts from flying glass.

Police cars did a shuttle business between riot scenes and jails. The city jail, the county jail, and the jail in the Portsmouth police barracks were filled to their respective capacities.

It was 5 a. m. before authorities were able to report the situation under control. The performance, which was not interrupted by the rioting, continued until 1:30 a. m. By that time, streets in the vicinity of the park had been cleared and the audience was able to disperse in good order.

Such jazz artists as Dakota Staton, Sara Vaughn, the Ray Chester Group, the Horace

Silver quartet, and the Oscar Peterson jazz trio had been among the performers.

The Sunday matinee performance was ready to begin when the council decision to revoke the festival permit was reached. It was decided to allow the matinee to be held, with the cancellation applying to the Sunday night and Monday performances. National guardsmen kept order in the park thruout the afternoon.



[AP Wirephoto]

Action during riot at jazz festival in Newport, R. I. The Associated Press caption said scene shows a state trooper striking a rioter, who was knocked unconscious by blow and taken into custody.

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[AP Wirephoto]

A spectator at Newport, R. I. jazz festival being hustled off by police after riot broke out when 12,000 youths were unable to gain admittance.

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