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Federal probe into police brutality begins

Bush calls out troops

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department yesterday opened a grand jury investigation in Los Angeles to determine if police officers who beat Rodney King could be charged with federal civil rights violations.

And last night, President Bush, citing "an urgent need to restore order" in Los Angeles, ordered 4,500 military troops to help bring peace to the riot-torn city.

"I will use whatever force is necessary to restore order," Bush pledged. "I guarantee you this violence will end."

Bush also put the 3,000 National Guardsmen patrolling Los Angeles under federal command. Another 1,000 federal riot-trained officers were arriving last night.

"We must respect the process of law, whether or not you agree with the outcome," Bush said. "In a civilized society there can be no excuse for the murder, arson and vandalism" that followed the verdict.

Rep. John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, said the federal troops might exacerbate the problem. "We must recognize that the situation may be made even more potentially dangerous and explosive by the very existence of the troops. We must always remember Kent State and Jackson State."

While demanding a restoration of law and order, Bush said that "Americans of all races were shocked" by the not guilty verdict delivered Wednesday.

"What you saw and what I saw in the TV video was revolting. I felt anger, I felt pain," he said.

Bush said Americans "waited for the system to work, and when the verdict came in they felt betrayed. Viewed from outside the trial, it was hard to understand."

However, he reassured Americans, "the verdict Wednesday was not the end of the process." He said he had directed the Justice Department within an hour of the verdict "to move into high gear on its own independent criminal investigation into the case."

He said, "I'm confident the Department of Justice will act as it should."

The federal investigation was begun under the supervision of Associate Attorney General Wayne Budd, who was sent to the West Coast on Thursday to join a team of Justice Department prosecutors who had monitored the trial.

Justice Department officials have made it clear that the investigation will also focus on the conduct of 15 other Los Angeles police officers who were present when King was repeatedly kicked and beaten with batons following a high-speed chase.

Incidents of police brutality are prosecuted by the Justice Department under a post-Civil War statute that forbids public officials from depriving citizens of their constitutional rights.

In a statement summarizing the federal effort to bring calm to the troubled city, Attorney General William P. Barr said, "Federal grand jury activity is under way today in Los Angeles. Subpoenas have been served. Evidence is being reviewed."

Bush said the military forces — Army and Marine Corps — had been put on standby earlier in the day, and said he was "committing

them to restore order" at the request of California Gov. Pete Wilson and Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley.

The military troops — 3,000 Army soldiers from Fort Ord and 1,500 Marines from Camp Pendleton in California — were mobilized from a

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"We've got to quit, we've GOT to quit. . . . We can all get along. We're all stuck here for awhile. Let's try to work it out."

— Rodney King

Death toll still rising

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Police stepped up arrests of looters, arsonists slowed their fiery rampage and residents in charred communities struggled to get food yesterday, the third day of rioting that killed at least 36 people in California.

Thirty-four people died in the 1965 Watts riots.

Attacks flared sporadically de-

spite an anguished plea from Rodney King, the once silent figure in the assault trial of four Los Angeles police officers. The officers' acquittal touched off the worst U.S. rioting since 1968.

"We've got to quit, we've GOT to quit," King said in a televised statement, his voice quivering. "We can get along here — we can all get along. We're all stuck here for awhile. Let's try to work it out."

"We'll get our justice," King said in his first public comments since the verdict. "They've won the battle but they haven't won the war. We'll get our day in court," he said in Beverly Hills.

His lawyer, Steve Lerman, spoke first, saying: "The killing, the burning, the looting and the chaos must stop now. . . . This must stop. He wants it to stop. Please don't kill yourselves in his name."

Mayor Tom Bradley and police officials said they were starting to gain control over the city after two nights of violence that followed the acquittals of four white police officers in the King beating case.

The number of injured climbed to more than 1,419. More than 4,393 people had been arrested and the damage estimate was put at \$550 million and rising. Authorities reported more than 3,767 fires.

One of the dead was killed in San Bernardino, 60 miles to the east. The rest were in Los Angeles County.

As night fell, sporadic disturbances continued. One motorist was assaulted at gunpoint. Officials shut down the Harbor Freeway in both directions after a shooting in South Central Los Angeles, where the rioting originated.

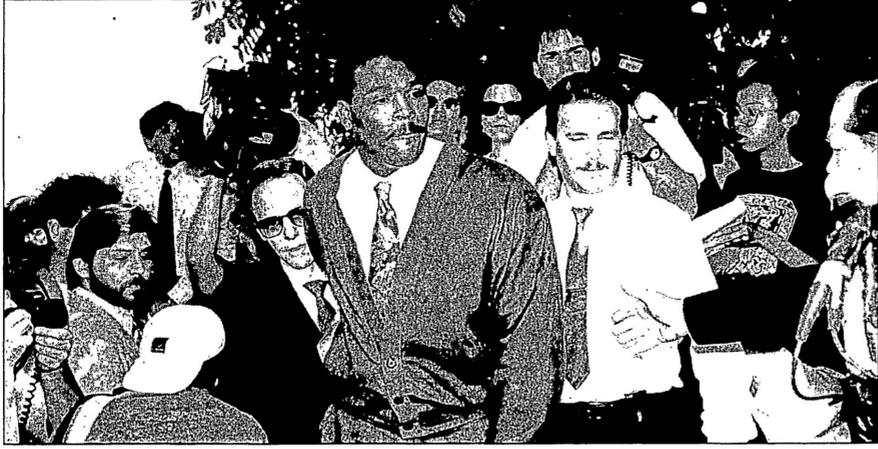
In an address to the nation, President Bush said 3,000 Army troops and 1,500 Marines would be sent in to help restore order, and thousands of National Guard troops would be placed under federal command.

Outrage over Wednesday's verdict continued around the nation. San Francisco remained under a state of emergency after an outbreak of vandalism and looting Thursday. Nevada Gov. Bob Miller activated the National Guard in Las Vegas in response to violence, including the death of a young person whose body was found in a burned-out store.

In Los Angeles, Day 3 of the siege began with eye-burning brown smoke hanging over the city. A nervous calm fell over the region.

The city remained under a dusk-to-dawn curfew. Many schools and malls were closed. Freeways were quiet at the peak of what normally would be morning rush hour. Air-

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Associated Press

PLEA FOR PEACE — Rodney King, whose videotaped beating by four Los Angeles po-

lice officers sparked a national debate on police brutality, begged the public in a tele-

vised statement to stop the violence. "We'll get our justice," King said.

200 VCU students rally peacefully

By Cynthia Barnes
Staff writer

Virginia Commonwealth University students paused to burn a U.S. flag in the middle of Broad Street during a march to protest the Rodney King case verdict yesterday.

About 200 VCU students marched down Broad Street in a demonstration that organizers say is a preview of a larger one next week.

Students clapped and cheered as the flag, smothered with rubbing alcohol, smoldered outside 6th Street Marketplace. Some tore pieces of the charred flag and displayed it on their clothing.

Juno Pritchard, a student who draped a piece of the flag around his neck, said that he had no respect for the U.S. flag.

"This is not my flag," he said. Maquita Alexander, a junior, said that she thought the flag should be burned because it does not represent blacks.

"Black people are not represented by American government," she said. "We are not protected by anybody. Black people are now an open market" for abuse.

The 1 p.m. march was a spur-of-

the-moment action following a protest rally at the university organized by the Black Caucus and other student groups.

The group began at VCU, just west of downtown Richmond, and went to the state Capitol. The students expected to hold a sit-in, but Capitol Police said the marchers were trespassing because they didn't have a parade permit.

During the commotion, one student went to City Hall and got an application for a parade permit. Steve Johnson, a VCU senior who led the march, promised to return the form for a march next week that will include other colleges and community organizations.

Johnson said the students sent a message just by sitting on the Capitol steps.

"The police tell us we did not go through the system. They did not go through the system when they beat Rodney King," he said. "We wanted to show them that we can defy the system just like they did."

As students shouted "We pay taxes and attend a state institution," Dr. Njeri Jackson, a VCU political professor, called for silence.

She told the students that because they did not have a parade permit, they would have to decide how big a price they wanted to pay for their civil disobedience. They could be arrested if they disobeyed the law, Continued on page 3, col. 5



Staff photo by Dan Currier

STUDENT PROTEST — Steve Johnson, who organized a rally of fellow Virginia Commonwealth University students, spoke at the state Capitol yesterday after a march down Broad Street.

Today's index

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The weather

Breezy and very warm today; high near 90. A 40 percent chance of a shower or thunder-

storm tonight; low in the lower 60s. Cooler tomorrow; high in the mid-70s. Data, page A-2.

Tomorrow's features

Lifestyles . . . State law mandates the investigation of child abuse allegations and the vast majority of cases are declared unfounded. But parents whose names are "cleared" still feel the shame of suspicion.

Metro . . . A generation or so ago, gum chewing or talking in class were some of the biggest problems in public schools. Now it's drugs and weapon possession, and school officials are trying to cope.

Man hijacks city cab, drives it into police headquarters

By Battinto Batts Jr.
Staff writer

A man hijacked a cab downtown last night, then drove through the front door of the Richmond police headquarters, officials said.

No one was injured in the 10:23 p.m. accident.

The Manhattan Cab driver, David Collins, 63, said he was making a U-turn at Eighth and Leigh streets when a man approached the car, opened the door and pulled him out.

"He said, 'Get the [expletive] out of the car,'" Collins said. "So I did." Collins ran a block to the police

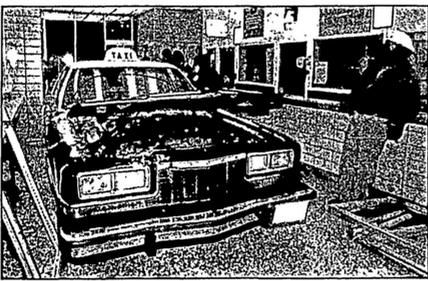
station to file a report.

When he got there, he saw broken glass everywhere — and his cab parked in the lobby. Officer Holly Fernandez was working at the information desk.

"It was like, 'BOOM!' " she said. "I thought it was a bomb."

Police identified the man as Terry Edney, 39, of the 400 block of Hancock Street in North Richmond. Edney, who told officials he is unemployed, was charged with robbery. Collins has been a cab driver for 43 years.

"I've been robbed and I've been shot," he said. "But never this."



Staff photo by Clement Britt

DRIVE-UP SERVICE? — David Collins found shattered glass — and his stolen cab — when he went to the Richmond police station.