

Are "Riot" Ingredients In 12th St. Mix, Too?

With the city still feeling tensions from racial unrest on the Eastside, merchants and residents of the 12th street area are divided on whether outbreaks could spread to the Westside.

Tony Vance, a businessman in the heart of the 12th street area said, "The Eastside situation was a fluke. That couldn't happen over here. The only chance for such an outbreak would be if a combination of 'junkies' who don't want to work any way, and underprivileged children got together and started something. The combination of the two is a sure prescription for trouble.

"The junkie is a known thief and the underprivileged child is just striking out at anything that he sees. He is often hungry and tired and there is no place for him to go. He has no supervision. He has no money and he is just generally neglected.

"When he starts to strike out at society, this gives the junkie an opportunity to steal and loot and there you have the makings of a major incident.

"Here on 12th street, we don't have any real problems with the youngsters, because all of the people around here are working and they don't want any trouble. The only reason some of them turned to hustling was because they couldn't find jobs in the first place. Now there is enough work to go around and everybody wants to keep things on an even keel."

A merchant who lives in the 12th street area, Oliver Harden, said: "There was really no need for the Eastside situation. There is an apparent lack of communications over there. City fathers should take a good long look at the Kercheval area.

"There is a good chance that all of this could have been avoided if the symptoms had been seen in time. For the most part, people in Detroit don't want another riot. It becomes a major bloodletting.

"I don't think that this kind of thing will happen over here because the residents of this area appear to be far too sensible for this kind of thing."

Another merchant in the

area had another view. "The Eastside was just the beginning. These young people are getting tired of being pushed around by the police department and those gouging store owners. The young generation is going to fight back with whatever they have available and they are not playing anymore.

"There have been rumors over here for the last three weeks that they were going to riot. I have even had people I didn't know call me and ask if they were fighting on 12th street. One day, and it won't be too long coming, it is going to happen."

Another young man, who identified himself only as a follower of Elijah Muhammad, said: "The Eastside thing was bound to happen. The black brothers are getting tired of being exploited by the white man. This is just the real beginning of a revolution that the white man will remember for years to come. The black man has been under his thumb for all those years and now a time of reckoning is about to come and he is going to have to pay for all his misdeeds.

"The same thing is going to break out all over the city and there won't be enough police to contain it like they tried to do on the Eastside. Just wait. It's going to happen."

Television repair shop owner Edward Scott stated, "There was a lot of frustration over there. Perhaps this is what caused that disturbance. Over here in this area, there have been rumors that there would be a riot. You hear them every few days. There is a good chance that it could happen. We have all the necessary ingredients like hate, frustration, bad attitudes and community unrest.

"But I personally think that if it happens, it will be a kind of spontaneous action, rather than something that is planned. There seems to be a lot of hostile attitudes among the youth around here and I think all it would take is the proper conditions to bring it all to the surface.

"There is a ten-block area south of Clairmount that looks like a tinder box to me. It seems like all it will take to make it explode is just

one major incident between some of these youths and the police department."

A 12th street youth, who reputedly exerts some influence over several of the gangs in the area, said: "If the Eastside riot had happened over here, we could have stopped it before the first half hour had passed. We don't like trouble and whenever we can avoid it we do.

"For an example, where my boys are, we try to keep down trouble, except when we are forced into it. We see the whiteys walking down the street and unless one of them gets out of line with us, he's safe.

"They can come in here and are treated like ladies and gentlemen as long as they conduct themselves as such. We aren't going to bother the merchants in the area because as long as they treat us fairly, we don't have a gripe. But just let them start to treat us badly and they will find out who runs this section of town.

"But on the other hand, we don't have this feeling just for whitey. We would do the same thing to another brother if he got out of line with us. We would have stopped that Eastside thing before it got out of hand if it had happened over here.

"As long as we are treated right, we won't start anything but if they mess with us, the whiteys will find out that we aren't non-violent and that we are not afraid."

Join Friends For Gala Day At Fellowship

Many friends joined members of Fellowship Chapel when their gala day activities were held in Wright Mutual Insurance Company auditorium on Sunday.

Directing the program was Mrs. Mildred Doby, music director of the church. Participating artists included Sonny Carter, the Celestones, Calvin Weems, Robert Harris Singers and Phyllis McNeal served as mistress of ceremonies.