Finding aid for the Watts Riots records 0084

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USC Libraries Special Collections
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Title: Watts Riots records
creator: California. Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots
Identifier/Call Number: 0084
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Physical Description: 3.5 Linear Feet 6 boxes
Date: 1965

Scope and Contents
The collection consists of the report published by the governor's commission following the Los Angeles Riots of 1965, also known as the Watts Riots, and the supporting documentation. The report itself is titled, "Violence in the City—An End or a Beginning?: A Report by the Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, 1965". While the additional documents are primarily transcripts of testimony, the testimonies come from a wide range of people directly and indirectly involved in the riots, including Governor Pat Brown, Lieutenant Governor Glen Anderson, several leaders of the Los Angeles Police Department and National Guard, some business leaders, and many members of the affected communities. Some of the other documents include reports about different aspects of the communities and the riots, including arrests, damages, and employment. The commission was headed by John A. McCone, former CIA director. This is copy 7 of the report.

Historical note
The Watts Riots was a race riot that took place in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles from August 11 to 17, 1965, and that resulted in 34 deaths, 1,032 injuries, 3,438 arrests, and over $40 million in property damage. It was the worst riot in the city's history until the Los Angeles riots of 1992, and is considered by many to be a key turning point in the Civil Rights Movement.

The riots were sparked by the arrest of 21 year old Marquette Frye for reckless driving. The arrest took place blocks from his home, and his mother, when seeing her son forcibly arrested, began fighting with the police. During the arrest, hundreds of onlookers gathered to watch the fight, and rumors quickly spread through the neighborhood. By the evening of the following day, the neighborhood was in the grips of full scale rioting.


Preferred Citation
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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Watts Riot, Los Angeles, Calif., 1965 -- Archival resources
Reports
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History -- 20th century -- Archival resources
Riots -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Watts (Los Angeles, Calif.) -- Race relations -- Archival resources
California. Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots -- Archives

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