

Placid Ohio City Hit By Unrest

ELYRIA, Ohio (UPI) — At least 40 persons have been arrested in connection with a continuing civil disturbance on the Elyria's southwest side where firefighters were shot at. Bands of youths roamed the streets and smashed store and automobile windows, police said today.

Gov. James A. Rhodes ordered the Ohio Highway Patrol into the racially-mixed area Wednesday night in an attempt to restore calm to this usually placid city of 53,000. But as one hurried police dispatcher said: "It looks like the same thing all over again. But it's spreading more into the city."

Rhodes's executive assistant, Tom Moyer, said the troopers were sent in at the request of Mayor Leonard P. Reichlin because "apparently they are concerned about the possibilities of looting."

At least three businesses about a mile from downtown, were burned and looted and several motorists were dragged from their cars and beaten, while some white residents took to the streets with firearms, police said.

"The situation might be over in a week if we're lucky," said Patrolman H.R. Riley, who also noted several black adults were also out trying to soothe passions. "Then again, we might not be lucky."

The 90 highway patrolmen, police and deputy sheriffs from Lorain County moved to regain a 30-block area on the city's southwest side which they had surrendered to gangs of black youths for nearly four hours Wednesday night.

Reports of firebombings, shooting, looting, rock-throwing and assaults were common throughout the night.

Authorities speculated the disturbances were set off Tuesday when Daryl Maxwell, 19, Elyria, a suspected burglar who is black, was shot and killed inside the Mayfair Bar by Patrolman Michael Killean, who is white.

Maxwell was unarmed when shot in the head by Killean, who has been suspended pending an investigation of the incident by City Solicitor J. William McCray. Wednesday afternoon about 100 blacks, lead by Maxwell's older brother, Walter, converged on City Hall and asked to meet with Reichlin, mayor here 10 years. Afterward, 13 blacks met with Reichlin and Safety Service Director James T. Tracey and struck a bargain.

Reichlin said the group complained about police harassment and a lack of recreational facilities in the city. They also insisted that police should have fired a warning shot to stop Maxwell, the mayor said.

"I felt some regret that I had not in the past paid more attention to the problems of the black community," Reichlin said after meeting with the black group.