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Federal Funds Finance Anti-Riot Arsenals

Continued from Page 1A

of weapons and riot gear on hand, but it won't say what or how much.

Though most police officials were eager to discuss the latest gadgetry in their arsenals, Macomb County Sheriff Lester Almstadt was coy.

"I have a lot of riot equipment of my own," he said. "but I won't divulge what it is. It's the latest equipment.

"We don't want everybody to know what we have on hand. Every item we get is stamped classified and confidential. Of course, we hope we'll never have to use it."

Sheriff Almstadt valued his private cache at $20,000 to $60,000, and said it had all been acquired since the Detroit riot in 1967.

Oakland County is even more battle ready than Macomb. It already has North and South Oakland County Mutual Aid Task Forces funded by the federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA).

And the South Oakland County Tactical Mobile Unit (18 communities) received a $21,000 grant in 1970, which gave them, among other things:

- 25 riot helmets.
- 25 riot batons.
- 10 12-gauge shotguns.
- Four large Mace units.
- 48 gas masks, seven with communications gear.
- Five body armor suits.
- Two "pepper fogger" generators and pepper gas.
- A bus with protective screens and radio equipment.
- 200 sets of handcuffs.
- Special gloves, jackets and uniforms.

The special uniforms are necessary, a county law enforcement official explained, because "in a riot situation, we want the South Oakland unit distinct from other units."

A MACOMB COUNTY official gave a different reason for requesting the expensive new uniforms: "It gives the impression that the different police departments in the task force are co-ordinated. If rioters sense that you're not a well-organized force, they tend to take advantage of it."

North Oakland County (another 11 communities) has $35,000 worth of assorted riot equipment.

And the Oakland County Sheriff's Department has something else: Tucked away in a secret garage in a World War II Army surplus half-track (armored vehicle) which the department purchased for $2,800 in 1968.

"We can drive it right over the top of someone and pull him up through the bottom," Oakland County Undersheriff Lee Hazen said enthusiastically. "It holds about a dozen men." And sits in a garage somewhere, waiting for a sniper attack, or some future urban catastrophe.

The Oakland County mutual aid task forces have been called out several times — during youth disturbances last summer in Dodge Park on Cass Lake and more than a year ago in Royal Oak's Memorial Park, and earlier when Northland Center was troubled by loitering teens.

Outside Detroit, Wayne County has a couple of task forces, too. The Western Wayne County group received $30,355 from the federal government in 1971, for uniforms, radio equipment, a pepper fogger, an equipment truck, plates for shields and other riot supplies.

"We were called out during the Rouge incident," recalled Redford Township Police Chief Ed Glass. "Students at River Rouge High School went on a rampage and the town was under curfew for several days."

THE WAYNE COUNTY Downriver Mutual Aid Task Force has received two federal grants, one for $15,000 and another for $25,000.

The downriver task force's equipment includes a $1,000 video camera. Southgate Police Chief William Schaeffer said it is used "to see whether our tactics and strategy are feasible. We can use it to tell if police officers were overly reactive."

In 1969, Schaeffer said, there was an "alert" when a fight broke out at the state basketball finals in Trenton.

Oakland Undersheriff Hazen says monthly training drills are all-important.

"Once a year we have a simulation," Hazen said. "We run all the men through tear gas. Like I tell them, maybe they won't be so eager to set it off if they get a whiff of it themselves."

All three counties have taken advantage of or seek some of the federal Safe Streets Act money, but not to fight street crime as much as to prepare for urban riot situations.

Nyovich hastens to point out that riot control preparation represents only a small part of Macomb County's use of LEAA funds. "We've done so much. Macomb County Community College has a criminal justice training center that is the only one of its kind in the state," he boasts.

"Macomb has legal adviser programs, community service officers, liaison officers in high schools, police cadet programs, narcotics enforcement and education programs."

OAKLAND COUNTY director of criminal justice Ron McQuees said that most of his county's LEAA grants have been police grants. "We're trying to get the courts and corrections area enthused about the grants, but we haven't done much so far," he said.

LEAA, created under the omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, parceled out almost $700 million to programs like those in Wayne and Oakland counties in the fiscal year 1970-71, and it plans to spend even more. Yet crime continues to go up.

Many communities are looking for ways to get a larger slice of the pie, like Farmington Township (population about 43,000), which recently hired a full-time management consultant to prepare applications for federal police grants.

Bangladesh Chief Charges Massacre

By the Associated Press

Sheik Mujibur Rahman called West Pakistani troops "worse than animals" Sunday night and charged that they massacred three million people in East Pakistan before the province became independent Bangladesh.

He said the United Nations should try Pakistani leaders "the way German fascist war criminals were tried" after World War II.

Mujib, prime minister of the new nation, was interviewed in Dacca by David Frost on British television. The sheik called the action by Pakistani forces in the former province the "greatest massacre of a people in history."

"They are not human beings, they are uncivilized certain," he said. "All people have some animal qualities, but these people are worse than animals."

The sheik said 75 percent of Bangladesh's 85 million people now face starvation.

The Pakistan army arrested Mujib, 51, last March when it cracked down on his movement for autonomy in East Pakistan. Millions fled the province to India and India defeated Pakistan last December in a two-week war for the independence of Bangladesh.

Mujib was released by Pakistani President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who came to power after the war.

Bhutto's government seized control of 31 industrial firms Sunday, bringing to 32 the number of firms taken over since he assumed office. The announcement was made by Muhabir Hassan, finance and development minister, who said the government planned no further take-overs.

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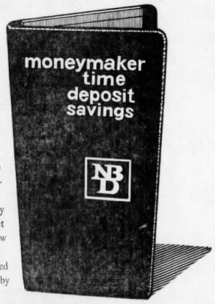

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