


MEMORANDUM

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FYI

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 3, 1973

FOR: DAVID GERGEN

FROM: STEPHEN BULL 

While driving to work this morning I heard a news broadcast that began as follows: "This morning the Governor of New Jersey called out National Guard troops to..." For a fleeting moment I thought the remainder of the sentence would be "prevent looting and protect property in the wake of another in a series of riots sweeping the nation." Fortunately, this was not the case. The conclusion of the sentence was "...help remove debris following sudden torrential rains."

The significance hit me right after the report. It was just a couple of years ago that race riots were so common that you would take a news report of one matter of factly. It has been so long since National Guard troops had to be used to control riots (the recent prison riots obviously excluded) that people have forgotten that they even existed. The climate in this country was considerably different a couple of years ago, and Haldeman and Ehrlichman both attempted to make this point in the Watergate hearings. The President has changed the mood of this country, so much so that we've forgotten how volatile the situation used to be.

The reason I was compelled to give you this personal observation in writing is merely that it might be useful as an illustration of a positive accomplishment that you could use in the talking papers you do for Administration spokesmen.