

Negro Attitudes Found Hardening

By PETER KIHSS

A Harvard sociologist and student of Negro opinion believes that "5 to 20 per cent of the black population (from 1 to 4 million people) hold attitudes indicating a depth of estrangement and bitterness unique in American history."

Dr. Gary T. Marx, an assistant professor in the department of social relations, updating a widely circulated analysis published two years ago, says "the relative proportion is growing and increases noticeably among the young and those in the North."

But he also says "much of the anger which exists remains directed toward inclusion in the system." He reports that his 1967 conclusions that most Negroes favor integration, oppose indiscriminate violence and are "not consistently antiwhite or anti-Semitic" would seem still to hold in 1969, if perhaps not as strongly.

Study Undertaken in 1964

Dr. Marx had directed a University of California survey of attitudes in major Negro centers in October, 1964, under auspices of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

This was published in October, 1967, as a book, "Protest and Prejudice: A Study of Belief in the Black Community," by Harper & Row. In a foreword, Bayard Rustin, civil rights leader, affirmed that Dr. Marx's study "tells it like it is."

A revised edition is being published by Harper Torchbooks under the same title with a 27-page "Postscript" by Dr. Marx. The sociologist cites 15 later studies of Negro opinion in 1967 and 1968, involving two national and 34 city samples.

The recent samplings of Ne-

groes' attitudes, Dr. Marx says, indicate that "as in the 1964 study, a sizable proportion continues to be optimistic about the change that has occurred and the possibilities of future change."

He analyzes some of the findings as follows:

¶ Many Negroes believe riots as protests "help bring about change," but "the overwhelming majority prefer nonviolent to violent means other than in cases of self-defense." He adds, "in many cases this is for strategic rather than moral reasons."

¶ The "level of black dissatisfaction is quite high" as compared with whites, and grievances about "employment, housing, police crime, merchants, schools, garbage collection and recreation facilities re-occur across cities."

¶ Negroes' "concern over lack of adequate police protection and [over] police brutality continued to be high."

Consistent Findings Cited

Dr. Marx reports "a highly consistent finding has been the marked disparity between blacks and whites on certain items."

"Many of the interracial differences," he says, "with respect to ideas about the treatment of blacks; the amount of progress; the worth of demonstrations; integrated schools and housing; the cause, meaning and consequences of riots; and the type of ameliorative action required are astounding and can lead to deeply pessimistic conclusions."

"They indicate a profound lack of communication and the absence of understanding or compassion among a very large portion of the white public."

Dr. Marx says observers "generally" assuming that Negro

mass attitudes have changed may be forming impressions on the basis of dramatic acts and pronouncements by extremists "who may claim to speak on behalf of the masses and who may be adept at press relations."

"Given the press's desire for sensationalism, the more extreme and loudly pronounced a statement or action, the greater may be the media attention," he says.

"White inferences about the homogeneity of opinion among blacks are made easier by already existing patterns of racially stereotyped thinking."

But Dr. Marx says "the mass of moderate Negroes are not heard, except in public opinion polls or occasional local elections." He notes the electoral defeats of LeRoi Jones for a seat on Newark's Model Cities Neighborhood Council and of James Farmer for Congress in Brooklyn despite their celebrity as Negro activists.

"Between 1964 and 1968," Dr. Marx writes, "the relative power of the more militant groups seems to have greatly increased, yet the data summarized here suggests that there has not been a comparable increase in mass support."

"However, relatively small size need not imply a lack of effectiveness, nor does it have much bearing on the negative power to disrupt."

"Demands by radical blacks can pull more moderate leaders to the left and also by contrast make them more acceptable to the white establishment," he says.

He concludes: "Opinions are changing—if not fast enough for the most radical, certainly much too fast for the most conservative."