Newark councilmen spurn King's 'powder keg' tag

Newark Councilman Calvin D. West said yesterday he was "surprised and deeply disappointed" that Dr. Martin Luther King had called Newark a racial "powder keg" where there may be Negro violence this summer.

"Although I understand he was under pressure and simply ran down a routine list of cities which have a high number of poor and Negroes, he should have studied this area before making such a statement," West said.

TOTAL COMMUNITY

West, the first Negro councilman elected at large in Newark, said that his city is different from the other cities King mentioned.

"We have great problems, but we do not hide them under rugs," he said. "We attack

West   **Turner**

them and do so with the help of the total community, black and white."

Councilman Irvine I. Turner joined West in another statement yesterday which also argued against King's inclusion of Newark in his list of potential trouble cities.

"We have learned, and are increasing that knowledge daily," it said, "that people can live together in mutual understanding and harmony.

Rather than being a potential powder keg of racial unrest as Mr. King claims, Newark can continue as a showcase for others."

West and Turner said that while they respected King for his accomplishments, "we do not need prophets of doom to incite racial unrest where there is need for none. While we are not naive enough to believe that the Negro has reached his total goal of human understanding in our city, great strides have been made and greater ones are in the offing."

Police Director Dominick A. Spina said he saw nothing in the foreseeable future that would cause alarm.

"I deplore the fact that a man with the stature of Dr. King would make such a statement. Statements like these are unfortunate and do not lend themselves to the facts, which are that this city has seen much racial tranquility," he said.

"Such a statement tends to promote mass hysteria because it tends to raise emotional feelings in the community," Spina added.