

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: PRESS COVERAGE, RACE AND BALTIMORE BLACK
COMMUNITY'S PERCEPTION OF THE 1968 BALTIMORE RIOT
Akintomide Olayemi Adeloye, Master of Arts, October 2019

Thesis Chaired by: Jeremiah Dibua, Ph.D.
Department of History

The Baltimore riot of 1968 was a civil disobedience that lasted for eight days, from April 6 to April 14, 1968. The revolt was a result of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968. The assassination triggered what is now known as the Holy Week Uprising, a massive riot that occurred in Washington DC, Chicago, Baltimore, and many other cities across America.

This research investigated the press coverage, race, and black community's perception of the 1968 Baltimore riot. The research sought to analyze the different reactions, perceptions, and interpretations of the riot by the different races and how media organizations reported the civil unrest.

The research established that there was a bias in the media coverage of the riot. The research also established that although the assassination Dr. King was the immediate

factor responsible for the Baltimore 1968 riot, other reasons like Black oppression, segregation, social inequality, and unemployment were some of the enduring factors responsible for the riot as well.

The thesis explores the bias by the media in their coverage of the riot with the purpose of understanding and gaining new insight into how diverse races reacted to the Baltimore riot. This is because the riot had different meanings to different peoples across the racial lines.

Sources consulted for this research include newspaper articles, Maryland State archival documents, books, photography, and journal articles. Oral interviews conducted by the University of Baltimore in 2008 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. are also an essential primary source for this research. These interviews captured the firsthand accounts and experiences of several Baltimoreans across the racial line, both black and white, who witnessed or participated in the riot.

PRESS COVERAGE, RACE AND BALTIMORE BLACK COMMUNITY'S
PERCEPTION OF THE 1968 BALTIMORE RIOT

By

Akintomide Olayemi Adeloye

A thesis submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

October 2019

PRESS COVERAGE, RACE AND BALTIMORE BLACK COMMUNITY'S
PERCEPTION OF THE 1968 BALTIMORE RIOT

by

Akintomide Olayemi Adeloye

has been approved

October 2019

THESIS COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

_____, Chair
Jeremiah Dibua, Ph.D.

Francis Dube, Ph.D.

David Terry, Ph.D.

DEDICATION

To Late Mrs. Oluwatoyin Omobolaji Filani

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Firstly, I am grateful to God for strength and everything needed to complete this research.

I would also like to thank my Parents, Mr. and Mrs. Adeloye, for their love, sacrifice and support. Warm appreciation also to Wole, Kikelomo and Gboyega.

I also wish to express my gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Jeremiah Dibua, and my committee members Dr. David Terry, Dr. Francis Dube, and Dr. Brett Berliner, I am extremely thankful for your guidance and support during this research.

My appreciation also extends to Mr. and Mrs. Toluwalase, Mr. Deji Filani, Mrs. Abiola Ajao, Moses Odejobi, Ayo Ajayi, Abey Ajayi, Ayo Adegbite, Kayode Lawal, and Tellie Simpson, I am forever indebted to you all.

Finally, I am using this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Taiwo Adenuga, this work would not have been possible without your support and motivation. Thanks for making everything beautiful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Historical Antecedents: Survey of Black Experience in Baltimore before 1968.....	22
Chapter 3: The Baltimore riot of 1968.....	38
Chapter 4: Press Coverage and Racial Perception of the Riot.....	47
Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusion.....	79
Bibliography.....	86

Chapter 1: Introduction

The assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a foremost Civil Rights leader, and advocate for black rights was a significant blow to Black Americans across the United States of America. Using non-violence activism, Dr. King was able to bring national consciousness to civil rights issues, such as the denial of fundamental human rights, segregation, police brutality, and various abuses African Americans across the country experienced daily. His assassination dashed the hopes of many people who believed that through his exceptional leadership, things would get better for African Americans. However, prior to his death, Martin Luther King Jr.'s activism helped to result in the promulgation of the Civil Rights Act into law in 1964. This law officially ended segregation across America. Dr. King also contributed significantly to getting the Voting Rights Act passed in 1965. The Voting Rights Act secured the racial minorities the right to vote and was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Dr. King's death created a loss of hope for black Americans. His death ultimately created frustration and caused much anger among African Americans. The frustration eventually led to people taking to the street in protests in various cities, including Baltimore. According to Reverend Marion Bascom, a black Minister and school teacher in Baltimore, who witnessed the unrest, "there was so much hope in the community, and it was shattered by the untimely death of Martin Luther King, and the town went crazy. Not only Baltimore, but almost every city in the country experienced the same thing; it was almost as if blacks in every community had suddenly been inoculated with a hypodermic

needle and caught the disease of disturbance, so they began to set fires, and it was just horrible.”¹ The situation of things across many American Cities following Dr. King’s death was chaotic.

Baltimore was not the only city that experienced riot after the assassination of Dr. King in 1968. Like Baltimore, Washington, DC. was one of the most affected cities by the Holy Week Uprising. The availability of government jobs attracted thousands of people to the nation’s capital, with a significant number of blacks securing well-paying government jobs, with a pension at retirement.² Despite the new social class some blacks occupied, there was a shortage of housing facilities for the new migrants. Housing segregation in the city meant that blacks were cramped into the worst neighborhoods in the city. Since blacks could not leave the city, they filled the existing slums and overflowed into the neighboring areas, creating new slums.³

Moving to the suburbs was also difficult for blacks because many of them could not afford to buy property in the suburbs, and the Federal Housing Administration (F.H.A) failed to give loans to black people to buy these suburban homes. White people, on the other hand, could move out of the cities to the suburbs because they took advantage of the Federal Housing Administration loans that favored white people. One of the reasons

¹. Reverend Marion Bascom, interviewed by Katie Lambert, Jackie Spriggs, and Kerry Zaleski, November 4th, 2008. University of Baltimore. Transcript available at <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories1.html>

². Ben W. Gilbert, *Ten Blocks from the White House; Anatomy of the Washington Riots of 1968* (New York: F.A. Praeger, 1969), 1.

³. *United States Commission on Civil Rights Report* (Washington: Commission, 1959), 337.

why blacks were refused loans and prevented from moving into the suburbs was redlining. People living in a high-risk neighborhood were less likely to get a loan. However, what made a high-risk neighborhood was determined by the lenders tasked with giving out loans. The black neighborhood was classified as high risk while the white neighborhood was classified as low risk. Even when blacks had the financial capacity to move into the suburbs, they were met with fierce resistance and violence from white property owners who believed that the presence of blacks would devalue their properties and bring crimes and diseases to their communities. Not only was there mortgage discrimination against blacks, but real estate agents also refused to sell or rent houses to blacks in white-majority neighborhoods. However, from the 1940s and 1950s, real estate agents in Baltimore City devised the strategy of selling houses to blacks in Fulton Avenue, a white neighborhood; this policy was referred to as block-breaking or block-busting.⁴ Block-busting allowed blacks access into better buildings; however, it came at a very high cost. By 1956, residents of Fulton Avenue filed complaints against real estate agents involved in such acts to the Maryland Commission on Interracial Problems and Relations. They accused realtors of “putting in undesirable tenants with a view to frightening the residents into selling their properties at panic prices.”⁵ The policy of block-busting was not devised to assist blacks; rather, block-busting was devised to maximize profits for real estate agents. White properties were bought at cheaper rates, sometimes 50 percent

⁴. Kenneth D. Durr, *Behind the Backlash: White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940–1980* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 98.

⁵. Durr, *Behind the Backlash*, 99.

lower than the value of the property, and the properties were sold to blacks at prices much more than the market value, sometimes 50 percent more.⁶ Blacks were also made to pay excessive mortgages.⁷ The 1961 United States Commission on Civil Rights reported that “housing seems to be the one commodity in the American market that is not freely available on equal terms to everyone who can afford to pay.”⁸ Two different policies that were determined by race were attached to buying and selling properties in America during this period.

Education was also another area where blacks faced difficulties in Washington DC and many other American Cities. Housing segregation was one of the factors responsible for school segregation. Neighborhood schools created the problem of school segregation because school zones were drawn in a way that maintained racial separation between black and white schools. The differences in the quality of education between white and black schools were high. Schools in the black neighborhoods were of no match to their white counterparts. White schools had more resources, fundings, better buildings, newer books, and better teachers.

One of the factors responsible for the different qualities of white and black schools was property tax. Property tax is a critical source of funding for elementary and secondary schools in the United States, making up to 36.4 percent of generated revenue for schools

⁶. Durr, *Behind the Backlash*, 100.

⁷. Durr, *Behind the Backlash*, 100.

⁸. *United States Commission on Civil Rights Report* (Washington: Commission, 1961), 1.

across 36 states and the District of Columbia in 2013-2014.⁹ The low level of property taxes coming from black neighborhoods in Washington DC meant low revenue for public schools in black neighborhoods. Low money going into public education meant lack of adequate educational facilities. The inadequate educational facilities ultimately affected the quality of education blacks received as opposed to their white counterparts who had better resources and could also afford to send their kids to private schools. These problems of housing discrimination and educational inequality ultimately boiled over with the assassination of Dr. King on April 4, 1968.

The 14th Street and U Street were the ground zero of the civil unrest in Washington DC. 14th Street and U Street were the locations for blacks social activities during this period, so it was not surprising that when the news of Dr. King's assassination was announced on the radio, people gathered on the 14th and U Streets.

After the news of Dr. King's death was announced on April 4th, Stokely Carmichael, the radical civil rights activist who was against Martin Luther King's nonviolence approach to Civil Rights, ordered stores around the 14th and U Street neighborhood to close as a sign of respect for Dr. King. Carmichael told the crowd, "they took our leader off, so, out of respect, we are going to ask all these stores to close down until Martin Luther King is laid to rest. If Kennedy had been killed, they'd have done it."¹⁰ With the assistance of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) members,

⁹. "Lincoln Institute of Land Policy," LILP, January 02, 2019, , accessed March 20, 2019, <https://www.lincolninst.edu/>.

¹⁰. Gilbert, *Ten Blocks from the White House*, 17.

Carmichael was initially able to control the crowd; however, the crowd size increased, and things soon ran out of control. People started breaking into stores and began looting and setting stores on fire.

As blacks across the nation reacted violently to Martin Luther King's death, President Lyndon B. Johnson, pleaded to the nation for calm. His appeal for unity in the wake of King's assassination did little to convince the people who were angry at the system, which they felt was designed to oppress, exploit, and work against them. President Johnson met with Civil Rights leaders in the cabinet room, where he read to them a telegram from Dr. King's father, stating "Please know that I join in your plea to American citizens to desist from violence and permit the cause of nonviolence for which my son died not to be in vain."¹¹ President Johnson understood the frustration of blacks in America, whose favorite son was violently taken from them through an assassin's bullet. He told the leaders, "If I were a kid in Harlem, I know what I'd be thinking right now.... I'd be thinking that the whites have declared open season on my people, and they are going to pick us off one by one unless I get a gun and pick them off first."¹²

Chicago was another city that experienced severe riots after the assassination of Dr. King. In 1966, King planned the expansion of the Civil Rights Movement from the South to Northern cities. His Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), chose Chicago because just like Baltimore, Chicago experienced segregation in education, employment,

¹¹. Clay Risen, *A Nation on Fire: America in the Wake of the King Assassination* (NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 89.

¹². Risen, *A Nation on Fire*, 89.

and housing. On August 6, 1966, King led an open house march on a real estate office on 63rd Street, but he was met with fierce resistance from a white crowd who hailed bottles and bricks on the black protesters. Dr. King himself was hit by a rock.¹³

To some Chicagoans, Dr. King's death was personal. As noted by Lorraine Boissoneault "In 1966, a few years before his assassination, Dr. King lived in the poverty-stricken West Side in Chicago campaigning for an open house in the city."¹⁴ The death of Dr. King from a white assassin's bullet made blacks in Chicago to target white-owned businesses on Madison Street, Homan, as well as Kedzie Avenues, as a means of revenge for the slain leader. Glass windows were broken by rioters who carted away clothes, television sets, food, and liquor.¹⁵

In the 1960s, Black living conditions in cities were the same throughout the country. Blacks had to contend with issues that included segregation, unemployment,

¹³. Ron Grossman, "50 Years Ago: MLK's March in Marquette Park Turned Violent, Exposed Hate," *chicagotribune.com* (Chicago Tribune, May 11, 2019), <https://www.chicagotribune.com/opinion/commentary/ct-mlk-king-marquette-park-1966-flashback-perspec-0731-md-20160726-story.html>.

¹⁴. Lorraine Boissoneault, "Martin Luther King Jr.'s Assassination Sparked Uprisings in Cities Across America," *Smithsonian.com*, April 04, 2018, accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/martin-luther-king-jrs-assassination-sparked-uprisings-cities-across-america-180968665/>.

¹⁵. James Coates, "Riots Follow Killing of Martin Luther King Jr.," *Chicagotribune.com*, September 02, 2008, , accessed April 01, 2019, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/politics/chi-chicagoday-kingriots-story-story.html>.

police brutality, and poor housing facilities. When the news of Dr. King's assassination was announced, violent protest and looting started almost immediately.¹⁶

On page A1 of the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper for April 6, 1968, was an editorial which read in bold font "Unrest Rises in Wake of King's Death" and smaller font which read National Guard Moves into 16 Block Area of Chicago."¹⁷ This coverage of the event in Chicago two days after Dr. King's death was to explain how the city was reacting to the assassination.

Another editorial on the front page of April 7, 1968 issue, had the title, "Guard Called Out in Baltimore Riot; Three killed; U.S. Troops sent To Chicago, bolstered in D.C. Windy City Violence, Washington Looting and Burning Continue." In the April 7 editorial, *The Baltimore Sun* revealed that President Johnson sent 500 troops to Chicago at the request of Lt. Governor Samuel H. Shapiro. The newspaper also revealed that the Lt Governor referred to the riot as insurrection.¹⁸ Referring to the riot as an insurrection was not a fair assessment of the violent protests that occurred in Chicago after King's death. The rioters in Chicago, like every other American city that protested the assassination, only did it to bring attention to the years of neglect, abuse, and discrimination against blacks in America.

¹⁶. Ibid.

¹⁷. "Unrest Rises in Wake of King's Death National Guard Moves into 16 Block Area of Chicago." *The Baltimore Sun*, April 6, 1968.

¹⁸. "Guard Called Out in Baltimore Riot; Three Killed; U.S. Troops Sent To Chicago, Bolstered in D.C. Windy City Violence, Washington Looting and Burning Continue." *The Baltimore Sun*, April 7, 1968.

Before the 1968 riot, blacks in America were not at their desired place within American society; blacks experienced discrimination throughout the country. The control of the economy was solely in the hands of whites, and this caused racial discrimination against blacks because the control of capital and resources was essential to racism. Through de jure segregation policies, blacks were prevented from attending the same schools as white. Blacks also did their shopping in stores that were only patronized by blacks. For instance, like many other cities in the United States, Baltimore in 1968, was a segregated city.

Blacks in Baltimore could not eat in white restaurants. There were a handful of jobs for blacks in the downtown area. There were only maybe about a dozen attorneys, and they were not part of the Bar Association of Maryland, the State Bar Association. They were part of the Monumental Bar Association; they were separated. Nobody from the black community could go to the downtown department stores and shop in such a way that they can try on dresses or try on hats. None of that was allowed; you could browse, but that was it. So, it was a segregated city.¹⁹

All these racial inequalities and discriminations were factors responsible for the racial riots that engulfed the country in 1967. When the riot subsided in 1967, The Kerner Commission was set up to investigate the factors responsible for the 1967 race riots and provide recommendations on how to prevent future riots. The commission's findings concluded that riots occurred in America due to black frustration to unfavorable

¹⁹. Interview of Mayor Thomas D' Alesandro III by Fraser Smith of WYPR in May of 2007.

government policies, which includes unequal economic opportunities, housing, education, and other social services between blacks and whites.²⁰

In the years since Dr. King's death, there has been much research conducted on the riots across the country. Books like *A Nation on Fire: America in the Wake of King Assassination* by Clay Risen,²¹ *Baltimore a Political History* by Matthew A. Crenson,²² and *The Great Uprising, Race Riots in Urban America During the 1960s* by Peter B Levy,²³ have devoted only a few pages to the Baltimore riot. Medrika Law-Womack,²⁴ Jessica I. Elefenbien, Thomas L. Hollowak, and Elizabeth M. Nix²⁵ are the only research works I found at the time of this research that deals directly with the Baltimore 1968 riot. Medrika Law-Womack's Master's thesis titled "A City Afire: The Baltimore Riot of 1968; Antecedents, Causes, and Impact" covered the Baltimore 1968 riot generally. This thesis is a good source for general information on the Baltimore riot but not for the racial interpretation of the riot. Law-Womack's research was focused on the immediate events

²⁰. Philip J. Meranto, *The Kerner Report Revisited; Final Report and Background Papers* (Urbana: Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois, 1970), 5.

²¹. Risen, *A Nation on Fire*

²². Matthew A. Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017).

²³. Peter B. Levy, *The Great Uprising, Race Riots in Urban America during the 1960s*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

²⁴. Medrika Law-Womack, "A City Afire: The Baltimore City Riot of 1968: Antecedents, Causes, and Impact," Master's thesis, Morgan State University, 2005.

²⁵. Jessica I. Elfenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, and Elizabeth M. Nix, *Baltimore 68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011).

leading to the Baltimore Riot, media coverage of the riot, and the impact of the riot.²⁶ The same applies to Elfenbien, Hollowak, and Nix's; *Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City*. The book examined the causes and effects of the riot in Baltimore in the context of a painful period in American and Baltimore history.²⁷

This research examines the coverage, perception, and interpretation of the 1968 Baltimore Riot by the press, analyzes the racial dimension of the coverage and perception, and the Baltimore Black Community's perception of the riot. The Baltimore riot occurred because of years of neglect and inequality suffered by blacks in the United States. The struggle for equality caused racial tension between blacks who were demanding equality and whites who were not ready to relinquish their superior position and status. These divisions along racial lines were reflected in the way the Baltimore riot of 1968 was perceived and interpreted.

Methodology

This research examines the Baltimore 1968 riot and analyzes the racial interpretation and perception of the riot. The research also examined the historical factors responsible for the riot, media coverage of the riot, and the impact of the riot on the city. The state and city governments' responses and handling of the riot are also examined, including the infamous April 11, 1968, meeting between Governor Spiro

²⁶. Law-Womack, "A City Afire: The Baltimore City Riot of 1968: Antecedents, Causes, and Impact," i.

²⁷. Elfenbein, Hollowak, and Nix, *Baltimore 68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, x.

Agnew and Black leaders where the governor accused the Black leaders of inciting violence.

The primary sources include oral interviews, newspaper reports, commission reports, telegrams, and archival documents from the Maryland State Archives, Maryland Historical Society, and the Library of Congress. This research made use of oral interviews conducted by the University of Baltimore in 2008 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Martin Luther King's death. These oral interviews are essential because they gave a detailed first-hand account of the riot by several National Guardsmen, teachers, ministers, teenagers, housewives, business owners, and reporters who were members of the Baltimore community. Their first-hand account of the event is crucial for this research because the research examined the causes, consequences, and effects of the riot in Baltimore city. These oral interviews also helped in cross-referencing the information in the newspapers. The interviews were fact-checked by Lina Shopes, a past President of the Oral History Association, to make sure they are reasonably factual.²⁸

Secondary sources include books, journal articles, and theses written by scholars about the riot. These sources help in understanding the different approaches, perspectives, angles, and interpretations of the riot over the years by historians and

²⁸. Jessica I. Elfenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, and Elizabeth M. Nix, *Baltimore 68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), xix.

scholars. The primary focus of this research is on Baltimore, so a lot of the resources needed for this research was be sourced locally.

Literature Review

There are limited materials that deal directly with the 1968 riot in Baltimore. Since there were nationwide riots following the assassination of King, materials that deal with the riot in other places are helpful for the insights and perspectives they provide.

The Great Uprising: Race Riot in Urban America during the 1960s by Peter B. Levy examines over 750 urban riots in America between 1963 and 1972, which included the Baltimore 1968 riot. Peter Levy focused on the impact these uprisings had on Americans both locally and nationally.²⁹ The author focused elaborately on three specific cities, Cambridge and Baltimore in Maryland, and York, Pennsylvania, as case studies. The history of the black struggle for equality in America was discussed in detail so readers can understand the background of the struggle for civil rights. Levy also showed how conservatives benefited politically by constructing a misleading narrative of the causes of the riots.³⁰ This point is crucial to my research as it establishes that there are some misleading narratives of the Baltimore 1968 riot depending on who is giving an account of the event. For instance, the white press was a tool used by white politicians in protecting white supremacy, segregation, and violence against black people.³¹ Chapter

²⁹. Levy, *The Great Uprising, Race Riots in Urban America during the 1960s*, 13.

³⁰. Ibid., i.

³¹. Sid Bedingfield, *Newspaper Wars: Civil Rights and White Resistance in South Carolina, 1935–1965* (University of Illinois Press, 2017), 9.

five of Levy's book, "The Holy Week Uprising of 1968," examined the historical factors responsible for the riots across America. These factors include segregation, high level of black unemployment, police brutality, and redlining. Levy noted that the "Baltimore Holy Week Uprising grew out of long-standing black protests for equality and repeated bouts of white retrenchment"³². Other chapters like "The Dream Deferred", and "One Nation, Two Responses" examined the national response to and justification of both whites and blacks for the Baltimore 1968 riot and, ultimately, life after the riot. They also present a cautionary tale by challenging us to consider if the conditions that produced these 'Great Uprisings' are still predominant in American culture today. Levy explained that the white press and government officials accused black leaders like H. Rap Brown and Gloria Richardson of instigating violence. This accusation of the civil rights leaders is a deliberate attempt at constructing a misleading narrative that presented the whites as a victim of black violence. Levy's book provided this research with a rich historical understanding of the 1960s riots across America. It also provided this research with an insight into the factors behind the racial interpretation of the Baltimore 1968 riot. Levy also made use of oral interviews in his book, but his approach and analysis of the interviews were not significant from the perspective of how different races reacted to the riot. Levy provided this research with a historical understanding of race relations in America; the blacks' struggle for equality and how conducting a false narration of events can be beneficial to whites at the expense of blacks.

³². Levy, *The Great Uprising, Race Riots in Urban America during the 1960s*, 120.

A Nation on Fire: America in the Wake of King Assassination by Clay Risen, provided an insight into the riots in American cities like Washington, Chicago, and Baltimore. The week following Dr. King's death was a crucial moment in American history, and Risen gave a detailed minute by minute description of the uprisings.³³ The Holy Week Uprising of 1968 took place in over fifty states across America. Risen's description of events provided this research with an insight into the nature and scope of the riots but not the factors responsible for the riots in various American cities during this period of unrest in America.

Jessica I. Elefenbien, Thomas L. Hollowak, and Elizabeth M. Nix's, *Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, helped in understanding the events leading up to the turmoil and the aftermath of the riot. The authors also made use of annotated oral histories of members of the Baltimore community. This firsthand account of events provided a comprehensive case study of this period of unrest in Baltimore. This book is significant to this research because it examined the uprising's long-term causes and consequences on education, businesses, and the community. The book also examined the government response to the rebellion. Chapter five of the book examined Governor Spiro Agnew administration's response and handling of the Baltimore riot. One of the authors, Elizabeth Nix, a professor of history at the University of Baltimore and her undergraduate students, conducted over one hundred oral interviews and created an archive to preserve

³³. Risen, *A Nation on Fire: America in the Wake of the King Assassination*, 8.

the memories of people who witnessed the Baltimore riot firsthand.³⁴ These interviews are an integral source for this research as they gave an insight into how those interviewed felt about the Baltimore riot of 1968.

Howell S. Baum's *Brown in Baltimore School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism* is another import book to this research as it provides background study into the segregation of the school system in Baltimore. It also discussed the means, methods and approach blacks and civil right leaders employed in their fight against segregation in Baltimore

Ben W. Gilbert's *Ten Blocks from the White House; Anatomy of the Washington Riots of 1968* discussed the impacts, effects, and implication of the 1968 riot in Washington DC. Just like Baltimore, the assassination of Dr. King caused massive protests, destruction of property, looting, and even death in the nation's capital. This book provided a detailed, timely account of how events were unfolding in Washington from the moment the news of Dr. King's assassination was announced on radio until when the riot ended. Gilbert's book provided this research with insight into the riots that took place in other American cities in 1968.

Matthew A. Crenson's *Baltimore A Political History* provided a historical context and the political mechanics to the history of Baltimore city. The events of the 1968 riot

³⁴. Jessica I. Elfenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, and Elizabeth M. Nix, *Baltimore 68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple Univ. Press, 2011), xvi.

from when the first mob assembled on Gay street to the city and state response were also discussed in the book.

“A City Afire: The Baltimore City Riot of 1968; Antecedents, Causes, and Impact” by Medrika Law-Womack, which is an MA thesis, examined the events leading to the riot, as well as media coverage of the riot, and the impact of the riot. Her sources include newspaper articles, committee reports, books, and oral interviews. Although the focus of her research was more on the media coverage and not how the different races reacted to the riot, it provided this research with a window of how the media reported the unrest. Medrika Law-Womack’s research started from the immediate causes of the Baltimore riot, which is the assassination of Dr. King and did not significantly examine the historical antecedents of the riot. The assassination of Dr. King in Memphis was the immediate cause of the Baltimore riot, but there were deeper and long-rooted factors responsible for the unrest. Law-Womack’s thesis provided this research with an in-depth analysis of the media coverage of the Baltimore riot of 1968 and examined whether these coverages were fair and accurate.³⁵ Her comparison of the *Baltimore Afro-American* newspaper, *Baltimore Sun* newspaper, and the *Baltimore Jewish Times* also provided this research with a different insight into the different coverages and reporting on the Baltimore riot by these Baltimore based newspapers. The different reporting and analysis by these local

³⁵. Law-Womack, A City Afire: “The Baltimore City Riot of 1968: Antecedents, Causes, and Impact”, 7.

newspapers raised the questions of whether race might have influenced their coverage of the Baltimore riot of 1968.

United States Commission on Civil Rights Report of 1959 and 1961 provides a historical understanding of the gap that existed between the different races in the United States of America in the year before 1968. The bipartisan commission established by the federal government in 1957 was chaired by Dr. John Alfred Hannah. The commission was tasked with investigating the allegation that some American citizens were being denied the right to vote or otherwise deprived equal protection of the law because of their race, color, creed, and national origin.³⁶ Even though the committee's first report was in 1959 years before the Baltimore riot, it was the first essential step taken by the United States Congress to address the division and unequal protection of United States citizens by law. This report provided a historical insight into how blacks were systematically disfranchised because of their race. African Americans often found it difficult, and often impossible, to vote.³⁷ It was not until 1965 when the Voting Rights Act was signed into law that Blacks significantly overcame the racial barriers preventing them from voting.

This Thesis also consulted the *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder*, also known as the Kerner Commission Report. The commission was set up in 1967 by President Lyndon B. Johnson and tasked with investigating the causes of the race riots in the United States and to come up with recommendations on how to avoid future

³⁶. *United States Commission on Civil Rights Report* (Washington: Commission, 1959), ix.

³⁷. *United States Commission on Civil Rights Report*, 134.

occurrence of such riots in the United States.³⁸ The President tasked the commission to answer three questions: What happened? Why did it happen? What can be done to prevent it from happening again?³⁹ This commission report is significant to this research because some of its findings of the causes of the race riots in the country include white racism, segregation, and discrimination against the blacks in America. Had the recommendations made by commission been adopted by the United States government, the riots of 1968 might have been prevented. The Kerner Commission was established in 1967 because the implementation of the reports of the United States Commission on Civil Rights of 1959 and 1961 failed to prevent the race riots of 1967. The commission's report identified the racial division that has existed between the blacks and whites, and this division continued to move the country into a nation of two societies.

The Report of the Baltimore Civil Disturbance of April 6 to April 14, 1968, by the Maryland Crime Investigation Commission, provided this essay with adequate statistics about the cost of the riot on Baltimore City. The commission made use of information from the Bureau of Inspection Survey to identify the numbers of buildings and properties which were affected by the riot. The areas covered, as well as factors responsible for the riot, were also examined by the commission. This information provided by this

³⁸. Philip J. Meranto, *The Kerner Report Revisited; Final Report and Background Papers* (Urbana: Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois, 1970), 5.

³⁹. Susan T. Gooden, and Samuel L. Myers. "The Kerner Commission Report Fifty Years Later: Revisiting the American Dream." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 4, no. 6 (2018), 1.

commission was helpful to this research because they provide insight into the scope of the Baltimore 1968 riot.

Journal articles by Randolph Bergstrom titled "*Introduction*"⁴⁰ and *In the First Place: Civic Dialogue and the Role of the University of Baltimore in Examining the 1968 Riots* by Chris Hart⁴¹ both provided this research with the fact, emotions, scares, and the healing that have marked the forty years since the assassination of Dr. King. The University of Baltimore embarked on this project in 2008 to interview people who participated, witnessed, or affected by the Baltimore riot of 1968. These people had firsthand information, which is a rich primary source for any historical research.

Chapter Outline

The first chapter of this research is the introduction. It examines, amongst other things, civil rights issues, segregation in America, and the urban riots in America that followed the assassination of Dr. King. The second chapter surveys the Black experience in Baltimore before 1968. It examines the social conditions and the difficulties blacks in Baltimore had to navigate before the 1968 riot.

The third chapter examines the Baltimore 1968 riot. It discusses the riot itself and what occurred during the riot. The timeline of how the riot unfolded is discussed in this chapter. The fourth chapter focuses on press coverage and racial perception of the riot.

⁴⁰. Randolph Bergstrom, "Introduction." *The Public Historian* 31, no. 4 (2009): 11–12. doi:10.1525/tph.2009.31.4.11.

⁴¹. Chris Hart, "In the First Place: Civic Dialogue and the Role of the University of Baltimore in Examining the 1968 Riots." *The Public Historian* 31, no. 4 (2009): 48–53. doi:10.1525/tph.2009.31.4.48.

The racial interpretation of the riot and the Baltimore Black community's perception of the riot are examined in this chapter. The fifth chapter, which concludes the study summarizes the research and highlights pertinent issues raised in the research.

Chapter Two: Historical Antecedents: Survey of Black Experience in Baltimore before 1968

Slavery ended in the United States through the emancipation proclamation on January 1, 1863, and the Thirteenth Amendment of 1865. Former slave owners feeling defeated, frustrated every effort to fully incorporate blacks into American society. Blacks were not entirely accepted by white Americans as of equal standing; therefore, white Americans adopted policies to keep blacks close to the conditions they were before slavery was made illegal in the United States.

The abolition of slavery was a significant event in American history. After slavery ended, there were Reconstruction era amendments which were meant to give equal social and economic standing to the newly emancipated black Americans, but this new freedom of blacks was met with fierce resistance from former slave owners who were determined to prevent the elevation of black status in the country. The Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment of 1868, gave citizenship to the newly freed blacks, and the Fifteenth Amendment of 1870 gave blacks males the right to vote in an election. During reconstruction, blacks like James Martins, and B.F Randolph won elections in the Southern states. James Martins who had been a school teacher was an elected member of the South Carolina State House of Representatives from Abbeville County, while Benjamin F. Randolph, who served as an assistant superintendent of education under the Freedman's Bureau, was elected in 1868 as a member of the South

Carolina State Senate from Orangeburg County.⁴² With these new rights came a lot of resistance from the former slave owners who were against the elevation of their former slaves to the equal status of their former owners. Some white hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) targeted blacks and used intimidation and violence to disenfranchise blacks from voting and vying for electoral positions in the South. Political murder was also another tool of intimidation; Randolph was assassinated by three white men while on a campaign trail in 1868.⁴³ The Klan believed that they had to protect the white race by maintaining white supremacy, so their activities were totally against black equality.

The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments were reactions to the Black Codes that were enacted in the various Southern States between 1865 and 1866. These Codes, which include vagrancy statutes, pig laws, and harsh labor contracts, were means of restricting and suppressing freed African Americans' freedom. The Black Codes prevented blacks from obtaining equal status and equal rights while making sure blacks were available for cheap labor and were not paid equal wages like their white counterparts. The black codes privileged white Americans while they subjugated blacks. With these codes, white Americans had a full course of citizenship rights, while black Americans were denied access to the full panoply of citizenship rights.

⁴². Herbert Shapiro, "The Ku Klux Klan During Reconstruction: The South Carolina Episode," *The Journal of Negro History* 49, no. 1 (1964): pp. 35, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2716475>.

⁴³. Shapiro, "The Ku Klux Klan During Reconstruction", 35.

One of the tools employed in fighting against blacks' equal status was segregation. Segregation was a way of restricting black competition with whites, and it was to assert white superiority over blacks. Whites saw blacks as their bad counterparts who needed fixing and felt segregation was necessary to contain the dangers blacks posed. Most whites believed that blacks were not of equal intellectual capability as whites. In his report on race relations in America in 1944, Gunnar Myrdal stated that white Americans had two minds on race. While some Whites believed poverty among blacks was caused by years of mistreatments, others believed that poverty and other problems experienced by blacks were caused by their impaired moral characters, so discrimination and segregation were only reasonable.⁴⁴

Between 1860 and 1917, some policies of segregation were enacted in Maryland, which halted the advancement of African Americans in Baltimore. By 1866, after the civil war ended, thousands of ex-slaves and black soldiers who fought for the Union Army to defeat the Confederacy arrived in Baltimore. These new arrivals not only increased the numbers of freed blacks in Baltimore, it also increased the number of job competition between blacks and whites.⁴⁵ Baltimore, like other major Southern American cities, enacted Jim Crow laws that enforced racial segregation. These Jim Crow policies prevented Blacks from living in white neighborhoods. The policy also enforced segregation in public parks, public pools, and public transportation. The emancipation

⁴⁴. Howell S. Baum, *Brown in Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 3.

⁴⁵. Crenson, *Baltimore A Political History*, 276.

proclamation of 1863 by President Abraham Lincoln did little to bring about the desired reform for African Americans in Baltimore during this era. As the reconstruction era ended, white supremacy took control and began to introduce various segregation laws to subjugate blacks in the post-reconstruction period.

By 1909, people affected and concerned about the racial problems in the country came together to form The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) with the mission to ensure political, economic, social, and educational rights for African Americans. The Baltimore branch of the NAACP was headed by Lillie Mae Carroll Jackson from 1935 until her retirement in 1970. During her tenure as president of the association, Lillie Carroll Jackson and her daughter Juanita Jackson teamed up with Carl Murphy, and the *Baltimore Afro-American* Newspaper to advocate for the end of school segregation in Baltimore.

Some of the areas targeted with segregation were schools across the United States. Maryland was one of the states affected by segregation. Blacks in Baltimore City had to go through the problem of school segregation. White schools had advanced courses, excellent resources, and modern facilities. Black schools were overcrowded, not adequately funded, and understaffed. In some cases, facilities that were outdated or condemned in white schools were sent into black schools. These colored schools with these problems were unable to provide black children with the quality of education that could match or rival the education of their white counterparts.

Blacks in Baltimore came together and challenged school segregation in the city. Lille Carol Jackson, her daughter Juanita, and Carl Murphy challenged the segregation of schools and protested the discrimination laws in Baltimore by teaming up with Thurgood Marshall, who was a close associate of the Jacksons to challenge the separate but equal doctrine. According to the separate but equal doctrine which started in America after the reconstruction period, the states and local authorities could segregate schools according to race if the facilities provided were of equal status. However, these facilities were not equal, and it was expensive for the government to make them equal. So, it was on this premise of inequality that the NAACP decided to challenge the legality of segregation in Baltimore.

John Murphy established the *Baltimore Afro-American* Newspaper in Baltimore in 1892 to bring to national attention the issue of racism against blacks in schools, workplaces, stores, and housing. The *Baltimore Afro-American* newspaper also advocated for equal salaries for equal work for school teachers without regard to color or sex.⁴⁶ When Carl Murphy took over the newspaper from his father and became the editor in 1922, part of his objectives, just like his father, was to continue to use the newspaper to expose the educational, social, and economic ills of blacks in America.

Juanita Jackson had her university education at the University of Pennsylvania, where the level of racial stereotype was not as pronounced as that of Baltimore. In

⁴⁶. Hayward Farrar, *The Baltimore Afro-American: 1892–1950* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 32.

Philadelphia, she experienced racial freedom and interacted with other white students in her school. Upon her return to Baltimore in 1932, the level of discrimination in the city made her form the Baltimore City-Wide Young People's Forum, which organized the local buy where you work campaign, to protest employment discriminations against Blacks in Baltimore.⁴⁷

In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled in *Brown vs. Board of education* that states could not segregate public schools based on race. *Brown vs. Board of Education* declared school segregation to be unconstitutional throughout the United States of America and ended the de-jure segregation. After the 1954 Supreme Court judgment, Baltimore's school board unanimously voted to desegregate. This new policy ended the legal differentiation of white and black schools and let students transfer to any school, subject to space availability and administrative approval.

Prior to school resumption in September 1955, boards of education in ten Maryland counties decided to break the racial segregation by deciding to admit pupils to schools regardless of race and transfer students from one school to another to break the racial barrier. Under this new plan, black students were admitted or transferred to white-only schools while white students were admitted and transferred to black schools.⁴⁸ By 1955, 165 public schools in Baltimore City followed suit on the part to end segregation in

⁴⁷. Howell S. Baum, *Brown in Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 34.

⁴⁸. Fleming, G. James. "Racial Integration in Education in Maryland." *The Journal of Negro Education* 25, no. 3 (1956): 273. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2293436>.

the schools. By the 1954–55 academic year, black students were in twelve high schools and black children in thirty-nine of the 130 elementary schools in the city. In 1955-56, the number increased with black students in twenty-three high schools, and forty-eight racially mixed elementary schools in the city.⁴⁹

Another policy of segregation was redlining. In the 1930s, the Federal Housing Administration used a map created by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation to determine how to receive housing loans. The Home Owners Loan Corporation created a map of Baltimore and other major American cities and assigned areas considered as bad risk and low desirability on the basis of the race of people living in such neighborhoods. Black neighborhoods were marked with red line and considered high risk, and lenders were advised to exercise caution in issuing mortgages in such neighborhoods.⁵⁰

Blacks had always been restricted to live at the worst of places, they lived in the ghettos and slum areas, and were prevented from moving into the suburbs, and predominantly white areas in the city for fear that Blacks would bring crimes and diseases with them and devalue the prices of real estate in the areas they moved into. This was the case in 1910 when George W.F McMechen, a Yale-educated black lawyer and his school teacher wife, purchased a house on McCulloh Street, which by the time, was a white neighborhood. White residents of the neighborhood formed the McCulloh, Madison Avenue, and Eutaw Place Improvement Association to prevent other blacks from

⁴⁹. James, 274.

⁵⁰. Antero Pietila, *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2010), 70.

making such moves in the future. Milton Dashiell, a white lawyer who lived in the neighborhood and Councilman Samuel L. West, a white politician from the Thirteenth Ward, also proposed segregation legislation, preventing such move in the future.⁵¹ Most houses that were available to blacks in the ghetto areas were not only expensive; they were also overcrowded. These houses also lacked basic functioning facilities.

The civil rights leaders in Baltimore were very keen on avoiding rioting in every possible way they could. Unlike Harlem and Detroit where racial tension and Black grievances resulted into a full-blown riot in August and June of 1943, respectively, Baltimore avoided riot because the civil rights leaders in the city were able to devise and present peaceful protest as an alternative to riot. Instead of riots, the Citizens Committee was organized to carry out a peaceful march to the Governor's office in Annapolis to express the displeasure and anger of Blacks over discriminatory policies. These black leaders, including Carl Murphy, Lillie Carol Jackson, Junita Jackson Mitchell, her husband, Clarence Mitchell Jr., and other well-to-do people in Baltimore, submitted a petition on the difficulties of been black in the city. In their two hour meeting with Governor O' Conor on April 24, 1942, they demanded that actions be taken to address police brutality, set up a committee to investigate police administration in black neighborhoods, and, most importantly, appoint black uniformed policemen.⁵² Even though these demands would

⁵¹. Roger L. Rice, "Residential Segregation by Law, 1910–1917," *The Journal of Southern History* 34, no. 2 (1968): 180, doi:10.2307/2204656. Crenson, *Baltimore A Political History*, 340.

⁵². Howell S. Baum, *Brown in Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 41.

not end the years of abuse and neglect that blacks had experienced in the city, it was a step in the right direction for the civil rights leaders.

Many factors which included police brutality, unemployment, housing, and retail stores segregation were responsible for the massive race riot in the summer of 1967 in Detroit Michigan, but the immediate factor that triggered the July 23, 1967 riot was the ugly incident of police brutality between the Detroit Police Department (DPD) and the black residents of 12th Street and Clairmount Avenue after Police officers raided an unlicensed after hour club known as “blind pig” which was located at the 12th Street. The police expected to arrest just a few people in the club but were surprised because the club had more people in it that anticipated by the police force. This was because two local GI’s were celebrated for their safe return from the Vietnam war. The Detroit police arrested everybody in the club and transported them to the police station.⁵³

The problem with these arrests was that it was not an isolated case; these cases of arrest by the predominantly white police officers were a regular occurrence across black neighborhoods in Detroit. A group of police units known as the “Tac Squad or Big Four” were responsible for a series of unlawful arrests and harassment of blacks on the street of Detroit. They used racially charged terms and slurs like nigger to address blacks who they regularly stopped and searched for no justifiable reason. Most of the time, they asked for identification, and failure to produce one may lead to arrest and sometimes

⁵³. Max Arthur Herman, *Fighting in the Streets: Ethnic Succession and Urban Unrest in Twentieth Century America* (New York: P. Lang, 2005),76.

even to death.⁵⁴ The agitated crowd which had gathered across the street decided to express their anger and frustration at these police brutalities by looting a clothing store that was opposite the blind pig club. What followed was one of the deadliest and most destructive riots in American history.⁵⁵

Police brutality was another issue black had to contend with in Baltimore. The city's police force filled its ranks with white people and only had its first black officer in 1937. It will take another six years before black police officers could wear police uniforms. Black police officers were subjected to various forms of racial abuse; for instance, they were not allowed to ride in police cars; they were posted mainly as undercover agents and were subjected to racial slur during roll call by their white counterparts.⁵⁶ The use of excessive force when dealing with blacks by white police officers led to blacks being killed at an alarming rate. For instance, on February 1, 1942, a white police officer, Edward Bender, shot a black man, Thomas Broadus, for resisting arrest for riding in an unlicensed cab.⁵⁷ Broadus was the second victim of Bender. All these police officers faced little to no form of punishment for their actions. Bender was initially charged with murder but did not face any stiff penalty. He was later cleared of any wrongdoing, even though he prevented Broadus's friends from taking him to the hospital when he was wounded.⁵⁸

⁵⁴. Herman, *Fighting in the Streets*, 77.

⁵⁵. Herman, *Fighting in the Streets*, 76.

⁵⁶. David Simon, *Homicide: A Year on the Killing Streets* (New York: Holt Paperbacks, 2006), 111.

⁵⁷. Risen, *A Nation on Fire: America in the Wake of the King Assassination*, 170.

⁵⁸. Baum, *Brown in Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism*, 39.

In Detroit, just like Baltimore, police brutality was common, but it was not the only problem that was responsible for the 1967 Detroit riots; housing crisis and unemployment were other major issues blacks had to deal with during this period. Most of the houses blacks lived in were not in excellent or safe conditions. Blacks were prevented from buying or renting properties in white-dominated neighborhoods. Unemployment and lack of job opportunities for blacks were also high. During World War II, car companies in Detroit transformed to the production of warplanes, tanks, and other war equipment's which created huge demand for workers to produce these ammunitions for the United States war effort. After the war ended, the jobs that were created by the war ended. The post-World War II job downsizing affected job opportunities, thereby creating a massive unemployment crisis.

The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, also known as the Kerner Commission, was established in 1967 by President Lyndon B. Johnson to investigate the factors responsible for the 1967 riots. The commission was tasked with investigating what happened and Why? It was also to suggest what could be done to prevent riots from happening again and again.⁵⁹ The Kerner Commission, after their investigations and findings, made some recommendations to the government to prevent future crises and racial tension between whites and blacks in America. The commission recommended that the government do everything within its power to create a single society where both the

⁵⁹. Rick Loessberg and John Koskinen, "Measuring the Distance: The Legacy of the Kerner Report," *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 4, no. 6 (2018): p. 99, <https://doi.org/10.7758/rsf.2018.4.6.05>.

majority and the minority were equal. As stated earlier, whites had created a society where blacks were marginalized and isolated and where slums and ghetto were reserved exclusively for the blacks. The Kerner commission explained that unless these barriers and divisions were broken, there would always be a reason for unrest and protest across the country. This is because this apartheid system would pit whites against blacks. Blacks who had been dominated by whites would do everything in their power to win more ground and fight to attain equality as their white counterparts.

Another bone of contention was the low level of black employment. The commission recommended that more employment opportunities should be opened to African Americans who had the highest number of unemployment and underemployment. This is because unemployment was one of the leading causes of revolts and riots across America during this period. Before this period, even when blacks were employed, they worked as unskilled labor in high-risk areas with low pay and never in managerial positions. In the early 20th century, 90 percent of Baltimore male workers were in domestic service or unskilled occupations, where they had no potential for advancement.⁶⁰ In Bethlehem Steel Corporation, for instance, where Blacks were employed in large numbers, The United States Civil Rights Commission reported that blacks did not hold any managerial position, but held numerous positions in the most dangerous and worst paying jobs.⁶¹ Even when new jobs were created, and there were

⁶⁰. Hayward Farrar, *The Baltimore Afro-American: 1892–1950* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 87.

⁶¹. Levy, *The Great Uprising Race Riots in Urban America during the 1960s*, 135.

new openings as a result of retirement, death, and resignations, these new positions were filled by Whites, leaving Blacks at a severe economic disadvantage.⁶² Capital is not just crucial in constructing racial domination and oppression; it is also used in creating privileges. The control of the capital and other economic resources were used to construct white supremacy and were also used as a way of putting Blacks in a deprived position. Black access to capital was minimal due to lack of jobs, and without access to capital, Blacks found it difficult to escape their difficult economic position. In 1972, Blacks made up for 46 percent of the Baltimore population, yet only 12.3 percent of the businesses in the city were owned by Blacks, including 6 of the 1,396 manufacturing firms and 5 of 1,700 wholesale establishments.⁶³ The Kerner Commission recommended that the government should create more public jobs for Blacks, particularly at the local level.

As already pointed out, the strong resistance to housing desegregation came mostly from white homeowners who organized and moved to resist through legal and every other means at their disposal to prevent blacks moving to white neighborhoods even when blacks had the economic and financial resources to move from their overcrowded ghettos in the city to predominantly white neighborhoods. That was exactly what the Fulton Improvement Association did in 1945. The Fulton Improvement Association organized, mobilized, advertised in pages of newspapers warning real estate

⁶². Philip J. Meranto, *The Kerner Report Revisited; Final Report and Background Papers* (Urbana: Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois, 1970), 11.

⁶³. Levy, *The Great Uprising Race Riots in Urban America during the 1960s*, 135.

dealers from selling or renting houses to black people in the Fulton area claiming “the right to live in the manner we choose.”⁶⁴

Regarding housing discrimination, the Kerner commission made two recommendations; firstly, that the supply of housing suitable for low-income families should be expanded on a massive basis. Secondly, areas outside of ghetto neighborhoods should be opened to occupancy by racial minorities.⁶⁵ The commission also made recommendations on the relationship between the police and Blacks. It recommended reforms that included curbing the indiscriminate arrest and the use of excessive force on Black people. This will improve the relationship between the Black communities and reduce the rate of violent protests. All these recommendations were aimed at bridging the gaps between the White majority and the Black minority in America. These recommendations would not only reduce the tensions but would also drastically reduce the violence and protests in the country.

Even though there was a slight improvement in the struggle for black equality in the years prior to 1964, things were not at their desired position as there were still evident on inequality and discrimination everywhere. There was discrimination in education, employment opportunities, and housing. In the years after enacting the Civil Rights Act in 1964, Blacks across America went through many difficulties. Massive unemployment,

⁶⁴. Kenneth D. Durr, *Behind the Backlash White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940–1980*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 83.

⁶⁵. Meranto, *The Kerner Report Revisited; Final Report and Background Papers*, 47.

discrimination, and segregation among people of color in the country were still common occurrences. In Baltimore, for instance, the Black dream of equality cut across voting equality, employment opportunities, and an end to segregation.

Many factors can be attributed as the reasons behind the nationwide protests after King's death. In March 1968, the Kerner Commission submitted its report. The commission concluded that the unrests were not caused by a single factor but were caused by tensions that had built up over the years. One of the reasons the commission identified was the division and hostility between white and Black Americans. The commission blamed the condition created by white Americans as the primary reason for the unrest. It reported that "what white Americans have never understood, but what the Negro can never forget is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. The white institution created it, white institutions maintained it, and white society condones it."⁶⁶ The report also identified discrimination, segregation, unemployment, poverty, and black experience with police as reasons behind the unrest.

There were exemptions to the Jim Crow laws that existed in Baltimore in the 1860s. It was not as ferocious as those that existed in other Southern urban American cities. Some of these laws were enforced strictly while some were relaxed. For instance, Blacks in Baltimore were excluded from serving as witnesses in cases involving whites and excluded from serving on juries until the United States Supreme Court rule made this

⁶⁶. Philip J. Meranto, *The Kerner Report Revisited; Final Report and Background Papers*, 11.

illegal in 1867 because it violated the Fourteenth Amendment, which granted citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States. Segregation of schools, public pools, public parks, and stores were highly enforced, but segregation of public transportations in Baltimore was relaxed even though a 1904 Maryland law required railroad companies to have separate cars for both blacks and whites. This was because, in a pedestrian city like Baltimore, it was difficult for whites to avoid blacks, and enforcing these segregated transportation laws would cause delays for white commuters.⁶⁷

⁶⁷. Crenson, *Baltimore A Political History*, 279.

Chapter Three: The Baltimore riot of 1968

“A riot is the language of the unheard,” King explained years ago. “And what is it that America has failed to hear? It has failed to hear that the economic plight of the Negro poor has worsened over the last few years.”⁶⁸

Before the assassin bullet made its mark on the 4th of April, 1968, the situation of things was already precarious in Baltimore, and tension was at a dangerously high level. Part of the reason for this was because both whites and blacks had to struggle for the few available resources. A lot of people were out of jobs; companies were either leaving Baltimore or closing altogether. Between 1940 and 1942, Baltimore City experienced a significant increase in the number of people that moved into the city. Blacks were attracted to the city because of the available jobs in the steel mills, shipyards, and other jobs created by the Second World War. When the Second World War ended in 1945, most of these jobs created by the war efforts also ended, creating struggle and tension between both whites and Blacks trying to fill the available positions. Between 1950 – 1955, more people moved to the city even as steel and shipyards began to shrink, meaning more people were competing for fewer jobs.⁶⁹

On April 5, 1968, the day after the assassination of Dr. King, civil rights leaders in Baltimore City asked blacks both in the private and public sector to stay off work and schools the following day as a sign of respect to mourn the passing of Dr. King, a move

⁶⁸. September 27, 1966: MLK- A Riot Is the Language Of the Unheard 60 Minutes, YouTube, March 15, 2018, , accessed February 22, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_K0BWXjV5s.

⁶⁹. Risen, *A Nation on Fire: America in the Wake of the King Assassination*, 171.

that was supported by Mayor D' Alesandro III. Civil rights leader Walter Lively also called for a one-day general strike by Black workers.⁷⁰ Even though the atmosphere was tense as people were trying to come to grasp with the death of the civil rights leader, memorials and prayers were successfully held in his honor as students, both white and black, joined together in prayer and paid tribute to the slain civil rights leader.⁷¹ With the tension building up in the city, the question was no longer what will happen, but when will it happen.

The mayor and other city officials were in support of these various means of honoring the slain civil rights leader because they were doing everything they could to diffuse the tense atmosphere and buy as much time as possible to prevent a riot. The Mayor hoped the city would avoid the riot if things were kept under control until Sunday morning when black churches would open and try to convince their black parishioners to choose calmness over violent protests. In his interview with Fraser Smith of WYPR radio on May 2007, Mayor Alesandro said "My hope, at that time, was that if we could have made it to Sunday morning when the Ministerial Alliance and the black churches would be opened for services; If we could make it to Sunday morning, then we would have made it."⁷² The Mayor counted on his excellent relationship with blacks in the city to help diffuse

⁷⁰. Stephen J. Lynton, "Baltimore Sad but Peaceful as Negro and White Mourn," *The Baltimore Sun*, April 1968, B22

⁷¹. Ibid.

⁷². "Personal and Educational Purposes - Archives.ubalt.edu," , accessed August 18, 2019, <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/transcripts/ChambersTranscript.pdf>.

the tension. When Thomas D' Alesandro III was elected Mayor of Baltimore in 1967, the economic situation in Baltimore was already in dire condition. Industries that attracted people to the city for employment opportunities were either closing or leaving, unemployment was high, the crime rate was at a record high, and in 1968, Baltimore's murder rate was more than double the national average.

Nevertheless, the Mayor was able to effect some changes that improved the racial situation of the city. For instance, Mayor D'Alesandro's father, who was also a former mayor, also had an excellent relationship with blacks in the city; they were both supportive of the black civil rights push much as they could. Mayor Thomas D. Alesandro III appointed the first black City Solicitor, George Russell, and he appointed Marion Bascom, a black man to head the fire board and also introduced series of anti-discrimination bills to the city council, which included equal opportunities in public housing, education, and other public services.⁷³ Despite the Mayor being on the good book of blacks in the city, it was not enough to prevent the riot that broke out on April 6, two days after the assassination of Dr. King.

On the Thursday night of Dr. King's death until Friday, there was no problem in Baltimore. Mayor Alesandro III thought the city would be able to avoid problem altogether because he had all the activist groups, and black leaders, and city agencies that had contact with the public as acting as antennas, police agencies, fire departments, and

⁷³. "68: The Fire Last Time, Narrated By Sunni Khalid," , accessed August 19, 2019, <http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/archival-resources/documents/wypr-part-2.pdf>.

informers were spread across the city to search and look around for rumbling and discontent so that immediate actions could be taken to get ahead of any potential riot in the city.⁷⁴ The situation of things was calm in Baltimore City even till the morning of Saturday, April 6th, when Mayor Alesandro met with Governor Agnew. The Mayor, in his interview with Fraser Smith on WYPR radio, recalled telling Governor Agnew that he thought the situation looked too good, too calm that he was worried about how calm the city was. His fear was confirmed later that day because, by the evening, there was the first report of violence in Gay street area.⁷⁵

April 5, 1968, the day after the assassination of Dr. King, violent protests were occurring in Washington, D.C, and Detroit, and there was a rumor of a similar protest planned in Baltimore. The Maryland National Guards were on alert to prevent violence from spilling into Baltimore City, but no violent incident relating to King's assassination was recorded in the city on that day. On Saturday, April 6, after a memorial service in honor of Dr. King, violence broke out when stores in Gay street were attacked by angry mobs. The first major sign of disorder occurred at Gay Street. Gay street is significant in Baltimore's history. In the early 19th and 20th centuries, it was an important business and commercial hub in Baltimore City. It also housed some commercial buildings, which included Ideal Furniture Company, banks, insurance companies head offices, and other

⁷⁴. Michel Martin. *"Echoes of 1968: "Former Baltimore Mayor Looks Back. Interview of Mayor Thomas D' Alesandro III* (blog). National Public Radio (n.p.r), April 7, 2018. <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89427135>.

⁷⁵. Interview of Mayor Thomas D' Alesandro III, Baltimore '68: Riots & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore.

big shopping stores. Gay street also reflected the pride and economic stability for blacks, especially for those who migrated to Baltimore from the South after the Great Depression.⁷⁶ When Dr. King visited Baltimore in 1964, his motorcade drove through Gay Street. When the news of Dr. King's assassination got to Baltimore, Gay street served as the ground zero for protesters to gather and share their grief, and the gathering quickly turned into violent protests. By evening, two furniture stores, Ideal Furniture Company and Lewis Furniture Co. on Gay street, were set ablaze by angry mobs. What followed was looting, which spread to other parts of the city. All off duty police officers were ordered back on duty to try and contain the violence. Over the next five days, there was an increase in the number of people involved in the riot, as well as an increase in damages, death, and arrest. With more people involved, the government brought in more reinforcement to contain the violence that was spreading across the city.

Mayor Alesandro imposed a 10 pm curfew, and later that evening, through his address to the state, Governor Agnew declared a state of emergency, banning the sale of alcohol, sale of firearms, and bullets. He deployed the National Guard under the command of Major General George Gelston to strategic locations within the city and required additional federal troops from the President. The deployment of the National Guard did not stop the massive looting that took place on Gay Street because the guards

⁷⁶. Tiffany Ginyard, ed. "Remembering the Turmoil: In the Wake of the 40th Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's Assassination, the AFRO Looks Back at Past Riots to Better Understand the Plight and Struggle of African-Americans." *Afro American Newspaper*, April 2, 2008.

were easily overwhelmed and outnumbered by the of the rioters. Violence extended to Greenmount, North Avenue, Chester, and Pennsylvania Avenue, where stores were firebombed and looted. By the end of the day, there were over 250 fire alarms, three deaths, 70 people hurt, 100 arrests, and the medical staff of John Hopkins Hospital were asked to stay on duty all night.⁷⁷ There were more reports of looting and damages on Sunday, April 7.

More than 700 businesses were affected by the riot. By April 9, the cost of the riot was estimated at over 10 million dollars. By the end of the day, things were beginning to normalize as there were fewer arrests and a significant drop in the rate of looting and fire incidents.⁷⁸ The riot lasted for few more days, and by April 10, the riot was under control and peace, and calmness had returned to the city. The property damage was estimated at around \$13 million.⁷⁹ By the time the riot was over, six people were dead; one was shot by a bar owner, another killed by a police officer, and a woman died in a car accident with a police vehicle. Three other people died in fire incidents. Over six hundred people were injured, but only nineteen were severe and required hospital admission. Over six thousand people were arrested, many of whom were curfew violators.⁸⁰ One of the reasons for the high number of arrests was because the information about the curfew was not adequately spread and a lot of the people arrested did not receive the

⁷⁷. <http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/timeline/timeline.html>

⁷⁸. <http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/timeline/timeline.html>

⁷⁹. Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History*, 463. I

⁸⁰. Jane Motz, "Report on Baltimore Civil Disorders April, 1968" (Baltimore: Middle Atlantic Region American Friends Service Committee, 1968), 21.

information of the curfew on time; and those that were informed on time did not have enough time to stock up on food, water, and other essential supplies. The Governor imposed the curfew at 8:00 pm, and by 10:00 pm the National Guards were already on the streets.⁸¹

On Thursday, April 11, Governor Agnew invited some handpicked Black civil rights leaders to a meeting to address the crisis. In his address to the back leaders, he blamed and accused them for the riot in Baltimore. Governor Agnew condemned Stokely Carmichael's April 5, 1968, Washington D.C. comment, which stated, "We have to retaliate for the deaths of our leaders. The execution for those deaths will not be in courtrooms. They are going to be in the streets in the United States of America; Black people know that they have to get guns."⁸² He said by failing to publicly denounce Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown's comments to pick up arms against white Americans, the leaders aided and abetted the two militant civil rights leaders call for blacks to pick up arms against the whites. Many black leaders stood up and walked out in protest over what they described as the Governor's attempt to divide the black community.⁸³ Agnew's criticism of the Black leaders was unfortunate because they had been engaged in trying

⁸¹. Motz, 14.

⁸². "Governor Agnew's Speech to Baltimore's Black Community," accessed September 27, 2019, http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/timeline/Agnew_Speech_1968_to_Community_leadeers.pdf.

⁸³. Internet Archive Search: creator: "WJZ-TV (Television station: Baltimore, Md.)". [https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator:\"WJZ TV+\(Television+station+:+Baltimore,+Md.\)\"&&and\[\]=year:\"1968\"](https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator:\).

to calm the mayhem. Some of these black leaders ignored their safety and went to these violent locations and tried to talk blacks out of protest. Mayor Alesandro was disappointed with Governor Agnew's criticism. As stated earlier, Agnew was a hardliner who was not totally in support of civil rights issues in the state. Mayor Alesandro was progressive on civil rights issues. The Mayor pushed through various legislations that would bridge the gap between blacks and whites in the city, and improve the social, economic life of blacks in Baltimore City.⁸⁴

His remark to the black leaders was surprising because he was considered a moderate candidate as opposed to his conservative democratic opponent, who was against housing reform laws. Governor Agnew was elected with a wide margin by both blacks and white. His action won him praise from many white conservatives who believe the Governor represented them well by saying what whites in the city have been afraid to say. His conservative address to the black leaders brought him national prominence among the Republican party and to the presidential candidate, Richard Nixon, who nominated Agnew as his running mate in the 1968 presidential election despite being a relatively unknown politician outside of Maryland.

The Baltimore riot started on April 6, 1968, and lasted for four days. At the end of the fourth day, the riot had created significant damage to the infrastructure, business,

⁸⁴. Marbella, Jean. "The Fire Both Times: Baltimore Riots after Martin Luther King's Death 50 Years Ago Left Scars That Remain." baltimoresun.com. Baltimore Sun, June 30, 2019. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/baltimore-city/bs-md-mlk-anniversary-riots-20180315-htmlstory.html>.

social, and economic structure of the city. Before the state and federal forces were able to bring the riot under control, it left six people dead, more than seven hundred people were injured, and over one thousand businesses were looted or destroyed.⁸⁵

⁸⁵.https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000015/pdf/report-balt-civil-distrub-comm-1968.pdf_access.pdf

Chapter: Four: Press Coverage and Racial Perception of the Riot

The press serves as an essential means of information to the people. The press acts as a link between a piece of information and the people. With a lot of events and information occurs all the time, the people need a source of information for these happenings, and since the people are not always available to witness such events first hand, they rely on the press to provide an apt and adequate report of such events truthfully and without bias. The press acts as eyes and ears for their intended audience on events and issues which they report. It is crucial for the press reports to be factual and accurate, as people tend to believe whatever information they contain.

Nevertheless, respective press organizations also have their own agenda, and some serve the interests of a specific audience. It is therefore not surprising that the press could become a tool for promoting different agendas and shaping public opinions on important issues. The problem with this type of reporting is that when it involves issues such as race and gender, there is a tendency for bias, misreporting, or total suppression of information.

A comparison of how two of Baltimore's most prominent newspapers, The *Afro-American*, which targeted a black audience and The *Baltimore Sun*, which targeted a white audience reported on the 1968 riot, will be done in this chapter. The American media was very influential in shaping public perception and opinion during the Baltimore 1968 riot. The coverage of the riot by newspapers varied based on their goals and mission as media coverage became a quest and desire to satisfy customers by only reporting on the issues that were of interest to their audience and subscribers, and report on such issues in a way

that will soothe the targeted audience. The coverage of black-owned newspapers was from a black-centered perspective, while white newspaper coverages were from a Eurocentric perspective. For instance, Elaine Tassy stated that the *Sun Newspaper* “prioritize stories about white victims over stories about black victims.”⁸⁶ It means they might sometimes ignore and suppress facts in favor of race. According to Hayward Farrar, in the 1950s and early 1960s, black communities and their concerns were rarely covered by the mainstream media. Even when they did, the coverage was sparse, negative, or trivial.⁸⁷

The white newspaper is written for whites and black newspapers for blacks, hence there is little to none mention of black news in white newspapers except when they committed a crime against whites.⁸⁸ In the United States, before the second world war, black newspapers attracted little notice from their white counterparts, even on issues of national importance.⁸⁹ The *Afro-American Newspaper* was established in 1892 to focus on the coverage of events and issues affecting Baltimore blacks, notably its crusade for racial reform in the first half of the 20th century.

During the 1968 riot, there was a lot of misinformation and rumors that complicated things and made the situation more dire in the city. For instance, there was

⁸⁶. Elaine Tassy, *How the Sun Lost Its Shine: A Newsroom Memoir* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2010), vi.

⁸⁷. Hayward Farrar, *The Baltimore Afro-American: 1892–1950* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), ix.

⁸⁸. Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff, *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation* (New York: Vintage, 2007), 13.

⁸⁹. Ibid

a rumor of cars full of black people heading down from Washington to Baltimore to cause more mayhem; however, the rumor was never proven to be true.⁹⁰ Another misinformation that circulated during the riot was that Stokely Carmichael, the founder of the Black Power Movement, was coming to Baltimore to drum up more support for the riot and cause more disruptions. Not long after, the rumor had it that Carmichael was already in Baltimore, and police was looking for him to get him arrested. This rumor again was ultimately found to be false.⁹¹ There was also rumor of sniper fire, which was never confirmed to be true.⁹²

The *Baltimore Afro-American* newspaper issue of April 6, 1968, with the title "Baltimore Shocked, Angered, Hurt, Grieved by Death of Dr. King," covered the city's reaction to the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. The front page of the news page of the newspaper captured the reaction of Baltimore City's elites and dignitaries to the death of Dr. King. The report stated that Mayor Thomas J. D' Alesandro III was mourning the death of the slain civil rights leader. He described Dr. King as a responsible leader of the nation, a churchman, and a distinguished citizen while also condemning and urging the society to get rid of the injustice, hatred, and prejudice which brought the death of the civil rights leader.⁹³ George L. Russell Jr., a black City Solicitor, described Dr. King's assassination as a personal loss, and one of the darkest periods in Baltimore City's history.

⁹⁰. Risen, *A Nation on Fire*, 178.

⁹¹. Motz, "Report on Baltimore Civil Disorders April, 1968", 4.

⁹². Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History*, 464.

⁹³. "Baltimore Shocked, Angered, Hurt, Grieved by Death of Dr. King." *Afro-American* (1893–1988), Apr 06, 1968, p.1.

Russell also called for sanity to return to the society. Senator Verda F. Welcome, a civil rights leader and the first black woman to be elected to the Maryland State Senate, described Dr. King's death as a tragic loss not only for colored Americans but all the American people and the world.⁹⁴ Madeline Murphy, a Black Community Action Commissioner, and a civil rights activist, Mrs. Juanita J. Mitchell, president of Maryland National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and James Griffin, chairman of Baltimore Congress for Racial Equality (CORE), all condemned the senseless assassination of Dr. King.

This April 6, 1968, issues also painted a picture of the reaction of a vulnerable, angry, sad, and confused blacks, who were shocked at the assassination of Dr. King, who believed in non-violence as a means of achieving racial equality in America. The newspaper report for April 6 was that of sadness with blacks still trying to come to grasp with the sudden death of the human rights leader, who was described by some as "one of the good guys."⁹⁵ Even though some blacks did not agree with his non-violence approach to civil rights issues, they still admired and respected him for what he stood for. The article indicated that blacks questioned the sustainability and effect of the non-violence approach to the attainment of equality if someone like Dr. King could be killed despite his nonviolence approach to civil rights issues. As one cabbie informed an *Afro-*

⁹⁴. "Baltimore Shocked, Angered, Hurt, Grieved by Death of Dr. King." *Afro-American* (1893–1988), April 06, 1968, p.1.

⁹⁵. "Baltimore Shocked, Angered, Hurt, Grieved by Death of Dr. King." *Afro-American* (1893–1988), April 06, 1968, p.3.

American reporter a day after King's death, "I don't see how we can keep talking about non-violence when something like this can happen."⁹⁶ He was saying the killing of King would only drum up more support for racial violence. The report also indicated that people like Carl Williams, an insurance salesman sitting in a Clifton Avenue bar and a middle-aged man sitting next to him while been interviewed by the *Afro-American* reporter believed that the death of Dr. King may be a wakeup call to every black American that, "no matter who he is, how big he is, or what he believes, if he wants his rights, he's going to have to die for them."⁹⁷

The *Afro-American*, report also captured black Americans reaction as they tried to come to term with the horror and pain that the death of Dr. King caused the black community. The papers April 6 report was at a vulnerable time in the black community, so it captured the true feelings of many blacks about the non-violence approach and the scramble to figure out the best way to approach racial inequality in the country in the post-King era.

There was a difference in the way *Afro-American* newspaper reported the reactions of Baltimore city elites and dignitaries to the King's death and how ordinary blacks reacted to the assassination. For instance, the April 6, 1968 newspaper issue published the names and political positions of these dignitaries in bold fonts for easy

⁹⁶. "Baltimore Shocked, Angered, Hurt, Grieved by Death of Dr. King." *Afro-American* (1893–1988), Apr 06, 1968, p.3.

⁹⁷. "Baltimore Shocked, Angered, Hurt, Grieved by Death of Dr. King." *Afro-American* (1893–1988), April 06, 1968, p.3.

identification and to capture the readers' attention while the same privilege was not extended to other black reactions. The elite reactions were also reported on the first page of the newspaper, while the reactions of blacks who were opposed to non-violence approach were written in smaller fonts and were placed on the third page where it could easily be skipped or entirely missed with the reader not even noticing such reaction. The arranging format was done to avoid sparking or galvanizing a riot from blacks in the city. The April 6, report was strategically organized on the pages of the newspaper, to project a strong condemnation of the assassination by the city leaders, and as a way of appeasing blacks from protesting. If blacks saw that city leaders were not taking the assassination of Dr. King with levity, they might be compelled not to resort to riot. This careful arrangement ultimately failed to prevent the riot that broke out in the evening of the day the newspaper was issued. The elitist orientation of *The Afro-American* newspaper was displayed in provocative language the newspaper used to describe the riot. For instance, the newspaper regarded the rioters as "Ghetto Dwellers," a description that did not represent the black race well.⁹⁸

As a twice a week newspaper, the *Afro-American* newspaper report on the riot was not as comprehensive and contemporaneous as other news organizations like the *Sun*, which was a daily issued newspaper. In April 1968, the month of the riot, the *Afro-American* only published papers four times that month, and the reporting were not quite

⁹⁸. "Special to the AFRO." *Afro*, April 6, 2018. <https://afro.com/black-press-baltimore-68-riot>.

current since they were mostly information that people were already familiar with through regular radio updates on the riot. *The Afro-American* report of the riot was not as comprehensive as compared to the other daily newspaper, the *Baltimore Sun*, radio, and television stations.

The front page of April 7, 1968, newspaper issue had a headline written in Bold letters in the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper to capture the readers' attention. The headline read 'City curfew imposed; Agnew send troops as unrest spreads' One Killed, 70 Hurt, 100 Arrested as Violence, Looting Flare in Downtown Area; Fireman Report 250 Alarms."⁹⁹ This report provided an insight into the government's first actions and response to the riot and violence that erupted in Baltimore. Information provided includes the imposition of curfew and the deployment of National Guards on the streets of Baltimore to restore law and order. The number of troops deployed, the number of people killed as well as their race were also included in this report. A detailed account of how the law enforcement officers handled the riot was also discussed in the report. For instance, on page 10 of the newspaper, there was a picture of police officers in full riot gears patrolling the troubled Gay Street. There was also the picture of the Ideal furniture Department store in flames. The report equally contained the information about the arrival of some 6000 National Guards on the streets of Baltimore to contain the riot and restore peace,

⁹⁹. 'City Curfew Imposed; Agnew Send Troops as Unrest Spreads' One Killed, 70 Hurt, 100 Arrested as Violence, Looting Flare in Downtown Area; Fireman Report 250 Alarms.' *The Baltimore Sun*, April 7, 1968.

law, and order to the city. There was also information about the curfew terms and travel ban.

On April 8, 1968, the *Sun* newspaper contained the report of 1,900 U.S. troops patrolling the City; City officials Plan for another curfew to contain the spread of violence. This report contained Governor Agnew's request for federal support from President Johnson because the security apparatus in Maryland were not enough to contain the violence that was taking place in Baltimore City and its environs. According to the report, by the second day of the riot in Baltimore, four people were dead, with 300 injured and 1,350 arrests made. There was also the picture of firemen trying to contain an out of control fire on Harford avenue.

On April 9, 1968, three days after the riot began in Baltimore City, the *Baltimore Sun* published a report titled "Federal Forces Rises to 4900 as Violence Fan Out from the Slums."¹⁰⁰ Using the word "slum" to describe black's living situation in such a sensitive period projected a negative image of blacks in the City. It by no way contributed to the equality, which blacks were fighting for with the riot, as such headline gave readers the impression that blacks were solely responsible for the violence in the city, which was not the case as there were reports of white violence as well. On Pratt and Pulaski streets, four cars driven by blacks were attacked and stoned between 3 p.m. and 3: 45 p.m. by white mobs, there was also a report of a confrontation between white gangs and blacks around

¹⁰⁰. "Federal Forces Rises to 4900 as Violence Fan Out from the Slums," *Sun (Baltimore)*, April 9, 1968, A1.

3 p.m. on April 9.¹⁰¹ About 250 young, and tough-looking whites shouting “white power” clashed with a group of blacks.¹⁰² Police officers succeeded in keeping the groups apart initially, but by 3.35 p.m. at McHenry and Payson streets, a fight broke out as two of the white youths attacked two blacks and police arrested these two white youths.¹⁰³ There were also the deliberate choices of words been used to describe the whites and blacks in this report by the *Baltimore Sun*. Derogatory words like “Slum (a thickly populated, run-down place to live) and mobs (a criminal gang, disorderly people, bent on or engaged in lawless violence) were used to describe blacks throughout this report.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, the group of whites that attacked blacks on McHenry and Payson streets were described as “gang” by the newspaper.

On April 10, an article written by Edward G. Pickett titled “Negro Peace Meeting Disperse by Troops” in the *Baltimore Sun* stated that a peace meeting was called by black leaders to end the violence that had plagued the city for days, but Pickett doubted the true intention behind the calling of the peace meeting. His reservation over the true intention of the meeting was expressed by his coverage and report of the meeting. In his report of the events that transpired between blacks who showed up for the meeting and the federal troops who prevented the meeting from initially taking place, he put the word

¹⁰¹. Ibid, A9.

¹⁰². Ibid, A9.

¹⁰³. Ibid, A9.

¹⁰⁴. www.dictionary.com

“peace meeting” in quotation signaling his reservation over the real motives behind holding a meeting at such a sensitive time.¹⁰⁵

The Evening Sun started its report on the Baltimore riot on April 5 with a race-baiting piece titled, “Arming Urged by Carmichael.” According to the report, Stokely Carmichael urged blacks to pick up guns and ammunition and take to the streets of Baltimore to revenge the death of Dr. King. He was quoted as saying, “kill off the real enemy, we have to retaliate for the death of our leader.”¹⁰⁶ The article stated that Carmichael blamed President Johnson and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, along with other white populations, for the death of Dr. King. He blamed Kennedy for not doing enough to prosecute those responsible for the earlier death of other civil rights leaders when he was the Attorney General. The Baltimore *Sun* newspaper publishing such a racially filled article like this in such a volatile situation, a day after the death of Dr King, when the situation was tense amounted to race-baiting. With such article the only message the white readers might take from it was that white lives were in danger, and blacks were coming to attack whites as revenge for the death of Dr. King. Newspapers have a strong influence on spreading information, but an article like this will only encourage more violence thereby worsening an already chaotic situation in the City.

One of the duties of the media houses is to be factual in what they publish because many people tend to believe their reports, but the Baltimore *Sun* published some articles

¹⁰⁵. Edward G. Pickett, "Negro Peace Meeting Dispersed by Troops," *Sun (Baltimore)*, April 10, 1968, A9.

¹⁰⁶. “Arming Urged by Carmichael,” *Evening Sun (Baltimore)* April 5, 1968, A1.

that made serious claims during the riot but failed to provide evidence to support their claims. For instance, on April 11, the *Sun* published an article titled “Riot Planned in Advance Mayor Says.”¹⁰⁷ Mayor D’Alesandro, at a press conference, said he believed the Baltimore riot was planned in advance without providing any evidence to back up his claim. Other city leaders like Delegate Allen B. Spector also supported the claim of the riot been planned but also failed to provide any evidence supporting such claim, but the *Baltimore Sun* still went ahead to publish such a report with little to no evidence to support this claim. The reason why it is crucial to back up such claims with evidence (fact-checking) is that politicians over the years had been known to make political statements that would absorb them from any wrongdoings in certain situations. This was the case with Mayor Alesandro’s statement; he claimed the riot had been planned at such a crucial time, which happen to be when the city leaders were receiving criticism for their handling of the rioters. It means the Mayor might have made such statement to divert attention and criticisms away from him.

Most of the newspaper coverage of the riot were focused on the lootings and destruction of properties that followed. Only a few found it necessary to explain black frustration over their marginalized situation and the conditions that led to the riot. The *Evening Sun* favored fiery images of destruction, scattered fires cloud, shops and warehouse on fire in Harford Avenue and Federal street, streets littered with rocks, and

¹⁰⁷. “Riot Planned in Advance, Mayor Say,” *Evening Sun* (Baltimore) April 10, 1968, A1.

pictures of police officers arresting blacks on April 8 and 9, 1968 issue. The images also included the picture of blacks arrested for violating curfew.¹⁰⁸

The *Sun's* coverage of the riot was not totally from an objective perspective; although the paper tried to adopt somewhat of a neutral perspective, that was not really the case with their reporting on the riot. They gave descriptions of the riot and explained the background to the riot through their various editorials, but they were unable to avoid the use of provocative languages, and the approach of some of their reporters like Edward Pickett to the coverage of the riot was not from a neutral perspective.

The *Baltimore Jewish Times* coverage of the 1968 riot was from a different perspective compared to other major news outlets in Baltimore during the riot. Unlike *The Baltimore Sun*, whose position on the riot was not clearly defined, *The Baltimore Jewish Times* was the only newspaper that was relatively objective in its reporting on the riot. The newspaper offered a fairly unbiased coverage of the Baltimore riot of 1968. Even though the majority of the small businesses that were targeted and destroyed by rioters were Jewish owned businesses, the newspaper was relatively utterly detached from the situation surrounding the riot and did not condemn the whole black race for the reckless actions of a few blacks. In the piece titled "What's the Answer?" by Bert F. Kline, all blacks were not blamed for the riot, "Blacks cannot be grouped together as being entirely

¹⁰⁸. "Baltimore A City of Strife and Turmoil," *Sun (Baltimore)*, April 8, 1968, A 18.

responsible for this outburst just because of the color of their skin. What we must remember is that all blacks were not in favor of the lawlessness.”¹⁰⁹

The *Baltimore Jewish Times* also explored the factors responsible for the 1968 riot, demanding an investigation into the sociological factors that were responsible for the violent outburst. Interestingly, Jews also have a history of oppression and discrimination in the United States, so they understood the reasons for the demand by blacks for better life, better schools, and equal opportunities like every other white American. The *Jewish Times* explained that something must be done by the government to improve the lives of blacks in the city or else America would continue to face revolution.¹¹⁰

On the April 19, 1968, issue of the *Baltimore Jewish Times* was a piece titled “The Baltimore Riot,” by M. Hirsh Goldberg. Goldberg frowned at the senseless destruction of Jewish businesses in the city during the riot but expressed that the only way forward after this destruction was for Jews to understand that not all blacks supported violence and only a few percentage of blacks in Baltimore City participated in the riot. He noted that “if 20% of Baltimore blacks had participated in the riot, the damages would have been much worse than that because they would have wrecked much greater destruction on the city.”¹¹¹ He expressly stated that those responsible for the damages should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law, but Jews should not prosecute all blacks in their

¹⁰⁹. Bert F. Kline, “What’s The Answer?” *Baltimore Jewish Times* Editorial, April 12, 1968, 8.

¹¹⁰. Ibid.

¹¹¹. M. Hirsh Goldberg, “The Baltimore Riot,” *Baltimore Jewish Times* Editorial, April 19, 1968, 19.

minds.¹¹² He likened the discriminatory conditions, laws that blacks were subjected to in America to what Jews experienced in Hitler's Germany. He thereby urged Jews in America to support blacks' plea for Justice.¹¹³

The Whites' perception and interpretation of the riot fall into two different categories. Some whites were in support of the black quest for equality in the state and country, and some believed that blacks in the city were making unrealistic demands. The second group of whites believed that they did not have to inconvenience themselves to create an enabling environment for blacks in Maryland.

The support for a better life and equality for blacks cut across the racial lines; it was not limited to the black community alone; blacks found allies in the white community as well. Some whites saw segregation as evil and were committed to rooting it out of the American society, while some felt that blacks were asking for too much. The *News American* newspaper explained that some white Baltimoreans understood the black requests for equality as what sociologists described as the "revolution of rising expectations." This means when people get a little bit, they want more.¹¹⁴ This was the same way some whites felt about the black demands in Baltimore.

Following the death of Martin Luther King Jr., blacks in Baltimore City felt robbed of their most precious possession. Peter Levy noted that "The overwhelming feeling in

¹¹². M. Hirsh Goldberg, "The Baltimore Riot," *Baltimore Jewish Times* Editorial, April 19, 1968, 19.

¹¹³. Ibid.

¹¹⁴. "68: The Fire Last Time, narrated by Sunni Khalid," accessed September 27, 2019, <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/archival-resources/documents/wypr-part-2.pdf>.

Baltimore's black community following King's death was one of deep sorrow and anger."¹¹⁵ Majority of blacks supported the riot because it was a way to challenge the unfavorable institutions which had failed to understand the plight of blacks over the years. Blacks also supported the riot because they believed that the outcome would help to transform their lives, and it was a step in the right direction.

Contrary to the belief that whites were the victim of a black incited violence in the Baltimore riot of 1968, the riot also affected blacks and everybody living in the city. This gives another perspective of the riot as also an economic riot instead of a riot that was all about race.¹¹⁶ In an interview, Dr. Louis L. Randall (M.D), a black and the first African-American physician in Baltimore explained that he was at the hospital delivering a baby when the riot began. When he saw the violence, looting, fires, and chaos happening around the city, he ran to protect his house in West Baltimore from been touched by angry protesters. He also bought a gun to protect himself because the rioters were attacking anybody who looked wealthy without regard for their race. Anybody who looked like he or she had money was targeted by the rioters because they represented a symbol of oppression and lack of equal opportunities. With the chaos and confusion of the riot, everything was being attacked, and it was part race, part confusion.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵. Levy, *The Great Uprising Race Riots in Urban America during the 1960s*, 156.

¹¹⁶. "Memories of the Riots Captured on Tape," NPR (NPR, April 7, 2008), <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89427141>.

¹¹⁷. Interview with Louis Randall (M.D), Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

To Lillie Hyman, an eighteen-year-old black high school senior in Edmond Son Village, King's death brought hopelessness, and the riot that followed was as if the world was ending. It was heartbreaking.¹¹⁸ Juanita Crider, a seven-year-old black girl who lived in East Baltimore in 1968, remembered coming home from school on April 4th and seeing the mood of both her mother and grandmother. She remembered her grandmother crying and exclaiming, "oh no, Dr. King is dead; what are we gonna do?" Like many other black families during this period, the Crider family had a picture of Dr. King, John F. Kennedy and Jesus Christ on their mantelpiece; because they have come to see Dr. King as a savior like Jesus Christ, who was going to end the black sufferings in America.¹¹⁹

There was also the interview of Ruth Stewart, a black woman who participated in the looting that ensued after the riot began. According to Mrs. Stewart, she participated in the looting because no one was opening the stores to let anyone buy anything, so they had to rip the doors of the stores open to get what they needed.¹²⁰ Mrs. Stewart, like other people, did not know what was going to happen from that point on, so they had to prepare for uncertainty. To her, it was all about survival, so she took only the things her family needed, like baby food, milk, cereal, and diapers to prepare for the uncertainty

¹¹⁸. Interview with Lillie Hyman, Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

¹¹⁹. Interview with Juanita Crider Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

¹²⁰. Interview with Ruth Stewart 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

that may come with the riot. To Mrs. Stewart, the riot that ensued after the death of Dr. King was an act of revenge from blacks against an oppressive system designed to subjugate blacks in every possible way. Blacks were compelled to join the riot and looting because it was blacks sticking with blacks, and failure to join in the riot would attract condemnation and rebuke from other black neighbors. According to Mrs. Stewart, Martin Luther King's death made a huge difference in blacks' life. Racial laws in the city were loosened a bit when whites saw that blacks were not going to stand still for anything anymore.¹²¹

To Melvin Douglas Williams, a black man, it seemed whenever a black man reached a point of prominence in America, something bad always happened to him. This was the case of both Malcolm X and Dr. King, and according to Mr. Williams, this was a deliberate attempt to make black ignorant because there was much money to be made out of the ignorance of the people.¹²² In view of this, the Baltimore riot that ensued after King's assassination was an opportunity for an oppressed people to vent anger, and to make people understand how blacks really felt with the assassination of their leader. Sunday, April 7, 1968, seemed a day that just being white was a wrong complexion.¹²³

Rosalind Terrell, a black twenty years old young mother by the time of the riot, described Dr. King's death as losing a family member. She did not play an active role in

¹²¹. Ibid.

¹²². Interview with Melvin Douglas Williams, Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

¹²³. Ibid.

the looting, but she understood why people rioted. King's death created the feeling in her and among other blacks that it was like taking their hope away. Dr. King, to her and other blacks, was the hope, a real chance at equality, and with his death, there was an internalized feeling that the chance for equality was taken away, and blacks were never going to be equal with whites again. To her, blacks were never going to be judged by who they were but rather by what white America perceived them to be.¹²⁴

Charles Bud Stevens, a white rent collector in the black neighborhood, expressed that the only thing that felt unusual was that the rioters were damaging their own neighborhood, because if they burned the cleaners shop, the cleaners had also had black cloths in his store, if they destroyed a grocery store blacks were the ones who would not have any store to do their shopping. Mr. Stevens understood that blacks were frustrated, angry with the assassination of Dr. King, and wanted to get that anger out in one way or the other and did not care how they did. They just wanted to make a statement.¹³¹

William Donald Schaefer, a white man and the President of the Baltimore City Council in 1968 in his interview with Fraser Smith of WYPR, expressed the optimism and feelings within the levels of the government that because Mayor Alesandro was liked by everybody, both blacks and whites, that maybe Baltimore would escape riot in 1968.

¹²⁴. Interview with Rosalind Terrell, Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

¹³¹. Interview with Charles Bud Stevens by Sarah Mendiola, Tiffany Douglas, and Chris Monte, Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

Schaefer believed those who criticized the Mayor for not been tough enough on the people that rioted might be right to do so, because even though the Mayor was a friend of the black community, he was not as tough as his father Thomas D' Alesandro Jr. who would let people know every time anything was wrong. Schaefer described Mayor Alesandro as a very nice man, and maybe once in a while a little too easy.¹³² He went further to explain that Governor Spiro Agnew made himself the hero of the riot and got himself the Vice presidency because of his toughness during the riot of 1968.¹³³

Jack Bowden and Susan White-Bowden were television reporters for WMAR-TV Channel 2. They were both white and were colleagues during the Baltimore riot of 1968. They noted that television stations had mostly white staff, and very few blacks were employed by Channel 2.¹³⁸ This lack of diversity also reflected in the way news was covered and reported by the television stations in the city. But during the 1968 riot there was a particular case which was an exception according to Jack Bowden; there was a confrontation between the National Guards and a group of black people, the situation was tense, and it was obvious the situation would result into a violent clash between the two groups, but Wiley Daniels a black reporter from Channel 13 was able to defuse the situation. According to Bowden who witnessed the event, Daniels got up on a bench and

¹³². Interview with Governor William Donald Schaefer, Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

¹³³. Ibid.

¹³⁸. Interview with Jack Bowden and Susan White-Bowden, Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

did what a reporter was not supposed to do; (get involved with news, reporters are supposed to report and not participate in news events) and he became part of the story and was able to diffuse the situation. Daniel's heroic act was mentioned on-air that night by Jack Bowden in his television news report.¹³⁹ This was incredible because Channel 2, a majority white station, allowed their reporter to talk about another reporter who was a black man from another television station in their news for such a heroic act of preventing potential violence. Susan White- Bowden also from Channel 2, stated that during the riot she tried to go into the streets to talk to the families, mothers who were trying to get people off the street and out of the harm's way when the riot was going on, and people that were affected by the riot but she was prevented from doing so because women were not allowed to cover violent stories at that time. Instead she was sent to the state office building near the Fifth Regiment Armory to do a story about the advisability of dying baby chicks for Easter.¹⁴⁰

The Pats family was also significantly affected by the riot. Their family business and home were completely destroyed during the riot. According to Sharon Pats Singer, who was 16 years old and Betty Katz Nelson (Sharon's sister), who was 13 when the riot occurred, the event of 1968 was the end of their life, as they knew it. The family which was Jewish, owned a pharmacy store on 800 block of West North Avenue in Baltimore.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹. Ibid.

¹⁴⁰. Ibid.

¹⁴¹. Interview with Sharon Pats Singer & Ida Pats, Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

When the riot started, the family thought because of the trust and relationship they had with their community nothing bad would happen to their business. This was because the store served as a kind of multipurpose store, where people could buy their liquor, cash cheques, and also do taxes during tax season. The store also gave merchandise on credit to people who did not have money to buy their toiletries or to get whatever they needed. Even when the family was advised to get out of the neighborhood to safety because of the tensed situation created by the assassination of King by a black woman named Brooke, the family never thought anything was going to happen to them.¹⁴² When the riot began, the family store and apartment, which was also located on the second floor of the building were firebombed, and the family lost everything they owned, and according to Sharon Singer “that was the end of her life as she knew it. After that she had nothing, she had no cloth, and had to use her cousin’s cloth.”¹⁴³ The family was separated as a result of the destruction, and Sharon had to live with a family member. All these personal losses did not get to Mrs. Singer until when she got to school, and one of her classmates, a black girl name Debbie stated that “they got exactly what they deserved.”¹⁴⁴ To Sharon Singer, this statement meant her classmate took the “us versus them stand,” and it made blacks the victim, while completely disregarding, what people like her family had tried to do to help the community and zero compassion for the loss of the family’s source of livelihood.

¹⁴². Interview with Sharon Pats Singer & Ida Pats, Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

¹⁴³. Ibid.

¹⁴⁴. Ibid

She stated that when she heard her classmate utter such a statement she broke down into tears. She cried because the whole incident was traumatic for her and her family.

Stuart Silberg, a white Jew, whose father owned Manhattan Drugstore at Rutland and Monument streets that were damaged during the riot, explained in his interview on 15 June 2007, that he felt violated by the way people handled the assassination of Dr. King. He said it was a wrong perception that only the people that understood Martin Luther King or believed in his cause by color felt violated, but he was white and felt violated because of the tragic and horrible memories the family experienced with losing his father's business. Also, the rioters did not represent what Dr. King stood for; people were more concerned about looting that they ignored Martin Luther King's policy of non-violence. Silberg believed the death of King would have been a great moment to create a community that was inclusive to both whites and blacks, a moment to enlarge the community, but the people lost it. The riot according to him, created more division, anger, distrust, lack of respect, and hate that still manifests in the city till this present day.¹⁴⁵

When the riot started in Baltimore, there was a mix reaction among the white community. Some saw the riot as inevitable, and some believed that the government was doing enough to integrate blacks into the society, but that blacks were not satisfied because the process was not fast enough and as quick as blacks wanted it to be. Leonard J. Kerpelman felt that the National Guard without leniency should have shot to kill on the

¹⁴⁵. Interview with Stuart Silberg, Baltimore 1968: Riot & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories3.html>

first day of the riot, to send a message of deterrent to those planning to join the looting and other violence associated with the riot.¹⁴⁶

After his verbal attack on black leaders at his office in Annapolis, Governor Agnew received numerous telegrams and letters of support from some white constituents who shared his view on the riot, and those who were against his remark also sent telegrams expressing their displeasure at the governor's remark. Some whites commended the governor through correspondence, chastising the black leaders for causing the riot. Over 385 employees of the *Baltimore Sun* signed a letter endorsing the governor's position in his meeting with the black leaders. However, on April 12, 1968, *The Baltimore Sun*, in an article titled "No Governor" emphatically disagree with the governor's remark and urges him to be sober, reflect, and have a second thought on his actions. The report also urged Governor Agnew to try to mend his mistake as best as he could."¹⁴⁷

Blacks, on the other hand, felt betrayed because their vote helped get Agnew elected as the Governor of the state. Black people voted for Agnew as against the Democratic party candidate, George P. Mahoney, who ran an anti-open housing desegregation campaign. Mahoney's slogan was, "Your home is your castle; protect it."¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶. Thomas B. Edsall, "White Liberals Concerned, Outrage Over Rioting," *The Evening Sun*, April 11, 1968, p. F12.

¹⁴⁷. "No, Governor," *Sun* Editorial (Baltimore), April 12, 1968, p. A10.

¹⁴⁸. Gilbert Sandler, "Now Agnew's Home Is HIS Castle," *baltimoresun.com*, October 24, 2018, <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1993-03-16-1993075203-story.html>.

This slogan represented the symbol of segregation to the black people, hence their decision to vote for Agnew.

State Senator Frederick Malkus, from the Sixteenth District, sent a letter on April 12, 1968, in which he complimented the Governor's remark. He described Agnew's action as calling a "spade a spade."¹⁴⁹ Barbara E. Satterfield of Baltimore agreed with the Governor's rebuke of black leaders. In her April 15, 1968 letter to the governor, she praised him for his handling of the meeting and stated that if blacks were "responsible thinking people," they would understand the Governor's position, and he would not lose black votes. She stated that "You stated that you knew you were committing political suicide. This may be true where Baltimore City is concerned, with its large Negro population, but all of their votes may not be lost either if they are responsible thinking people."¹⁵⁰

Mrs. Satterfield also criticized those who had a problem with the timing of the Governor's remark. She called them "peace-makers and pacifists" adding that the governor was right to speak up at the time he did because the public attention was focused on the issue that time and the people were listening more, and "that was the best time to say what needed to be said when it will be heard the most." She stated that whites were fed up with each new concessions that were made to pacify the unruly

¹⁴⁹. Maryland State Archives, Governor General file, MSA SC 2221-12-41, (Annapolis, Maryland: Maryland State Archives, 1993).
<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000000/html/00000001.html>.

¹⁵⁰. Ibid

minority at the expense of the white majority who were being played for a fool by their leaders who seem to have wool over their eyes.¹⁵¹ She also praised the Governor as a man and not a politician, because he said what no one was bold enough to say. According to her, the Governor “said what every man on the street wanted to say but could never be heard, and what no other official has the guts to say for fear of losing votes.”¹⁵² Mrs. Satterfield was of the opinion that the white Maryland majority was behind the Governor, and those who did not speak out their support publicly were only scared to do so out of the fear for backlash and attack from the rioters.

There were other telegrams which encouraged the Governor to be more aggressive in his handling of the riot. In his telegram to the Governor on April 8, 1968, Herbert A. Lowe Sr. encouraged the governor to authorize the police and federal troops to shoot to kill as that would be a deterrent to other rioters. He urged the governor to make an example of a few to save the rest of the people.¹⁵³ C.W. Algier urged the governor to take a drastic step to stop the riots. His telegram even encouraged the governor to forget the black votes if that was what was holding him back as there were white voters who the governor could rely on depending on how he handled the riot.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹. Maryland State Archives, Governor General file, MSA SC 2221-12-41, (Annapolis, Maryland: Maryland State Archives, 1993).
<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000000/html/00000001.html>.

¹⁵². Ibid

¹⁵³. Ibid

¹⁵⁴. Ibid

On May 9, 1968, Clifford C. Miller of Baltimore wrote a letter to Governor Agnew; just like Mrs. Satterfield, he commended the governor for his boldness and nerve to speak the truth to the black civil rights leaders. He also commended the governor for defending the law and stated that much progress had been made in providing opportunities for the black community.¹⁵⁵ The only thing he disagreed with was the governor's attack on the black leaders. He noted that the governor attacked the civil rights leaders because he failed to see things from the black people's perspective and failed to understand the difficulties they faced as people of color in America. He suggested that instead of holding the civil rights leaders as responsible for the riot, the governor should thank them for risking their safety by going out on the day of the riot to calm down the situation. He stated, "You should have shown an awareness of the fact that it requires a high order of citizenship and a special brand of courage to face an inflamed mob with an appeal to cool it. In this connection, your statement had a niggardly quality."¹⁵⁶ He said Agnew's attack overshadowed the purpose, effectiveness, and intention of the April 11 meeting.

Mayor D' Alesandro was one of the first people to condemn the governor's remarks to the black leaders. He described it as somewhat inflammatory in a period when reconciliation and harmony were needed to unite the city.¹⁵⁷ An editorial piece aired on April 12, 1968, on WJA-13 TV, titled "Baltimore 'Governor Agnew Misunderstanding,' "

¹⁵⁵. Ibid.

¹⁵⁶. Ibid.

¹⁵⁷. Matthew Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 466.

stated that, Agnew misunderstood the reasons for the riot. The governor holding the black leaders responsible for the 1968 riot was not the right approach to the already delicate situation in the city. Pointing an accusing finger at the black leaders would only end up dividing the city the more, by pitting whites and blacks against each other. The editorial explained that by making the black leaders scapegoat for the riot, the governor's action had divided the community when it needed to be united.¹⁵⁸

In her June 11, 1968, reaction to the governor's speech, Mrs. Jim Cox of Baltimore wrote a letter to Agnew condemning his address to the black civil rights leaders. She condemned the harsh tone and the lack of sensitivity the governor used in his address. She called Agnew's approach, "poor psychology."¹⁵⁹ She also castigated the governor for failing to agree that white racism was a significant problem in the city and for saying in his speech that he would not endorse the Kerner Report, which identified white racism as the main factor responsible for the unrest in the country during the period. The reason for the governor's position on the Kerner Report she suggested was because he was a white man with a black audience.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸. "Is Baltimore Burning?" Is Baltimore Burning? MSA SC 2221-12, n.d.
<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000000/html/00000001.html>.

¹⁵⁹. "Is Baltimore Burning?" Is Baltimore Burning? MSA SC 2221-12, n.d.
<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000000/html/00000001.html>.

¹⁶⁰. "Is Baltimore Burning?" Is Baltimore Burning? MSA SC 2221-12, n.d.
<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000000/html/00000001.html>.

Delegate Floyd B. Adams from the second Legislative District Baltimore City, expressed his displeasure at how the riot was perceived and interpreted by Governor Agnew and those who shared his view. Firstly, Floyd pointed out the vital role which the black civil right leaders played by coming out to dialog with the rioters and trying to stop the massive lootings and destruction of properties that ensued after the riot began. Secondly, he pointed out the fact that most of the people who sent telegrams to the governor supporting his remarks were those who believed blacks in the state did not deserve equal opportunities as the whites. "I think we can prove that Maryland has many bigots who truly believe that Black people do not need fair employment or equal employment. There are many White people who believe that slum housing is okay for Black people. There are too many Whites that believe Negroes do not need to be educated." ¹⁶¹

Adams also expressed the black community's frustration at been exploited, at been given broken promises, and been unheard by the government. He identified a lack of decent jobs, the attitude of the White community towards the black community, and poor educational facilities as part of the major factors responsible for the riot.

There was also the suggestion to the Mayor by Councilman Thomas Ward to use more force in dealing with the rioters. He described the rioters as looters and suggested that more force should be employed in dealing with the rioters in the future. "I suggest in

¹⁶¹. "Is Baltimore Burning?" Is Baltimore Burning? MSA SC 2221-12.
<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000000/html/00000001.html>.

the future that you handle looters (who were certainly not children) the only way looters understand...with force.”¹⁶² By making such a suggestion to Mayor Alesandro III, Thomas failed to display empathy to the plight of blacks.

A lot of the reactions to Agnew’s address stemmed from the public perception of the riot. There were many people across the racial lines who were genuinely concerned about black peoples’ place and condition in American society, as evident from the rebuff of the governor’s handling and position on the crisis. There were also people who did not attach much significance to the death of Dr. King. Alfriend Hunter believed “the assassination of Kennedy’s, of both Kennedys’ was really important, but the assassination of Martin Luther King was not necessarily so important.”¹⁶³ Hunter attributed the reason for the 1968 riot as “Frustration and Opportunity.” The frustration that the assassination of Dr. King did not do the equal right movement any good and an opportunity to make the riot a big deal.¹⁶⁴

The oral interviews of the blacks that were consulted for this research confirmed the dire conditions of blacks in Baltimore City during this period. One of the factors that were consistent in all the interviews was the unequal, unfavorable conditions black found themselves in 1968. They were denied that basic civil rights which would have taken them

¹⁶². Matthew Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 465.

¹⁶³. Interview with Hunter & Barbara Alfriend, Baltimore '68: Riots & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. December 8, 2006.
<https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories1.html>

¹⁶⁴. Ibid

out of difficult situations. The Baltimore riot of 1968 had so much support among blacks because they saw it as a catalyst that would help transform their conditions in the city.

The black community in Baltimore city was significantly affected by the death of Dr. King. They empathized with the demonstration, and they used the riot to voice their frustration. To blacks in Baltimore, the riot was reflection, a representation of their feelings towards the white oppressive system. They saw the riot as not just a way of protesting against Dr. King's assassination but also as a way of protesting against the wrongs that have been done to them over the years. To them the riot was a means to empowerment.

The whites that reacted to the riot did not see the riot the same way blacks in the city saw it. The white community felt that blacks were asking for too much. Some of them blamed the blacks as been responsible for their own predicaments. They were not as sympathetic toward the black plight as blacks themselves. For some whites, a lot has been done to improve black lives, but blacks were not satisfied with the improvement. Some were also not ready to completely alter their life or give up their privileges to accommodate the blacks.

There were also some Liberal whites who supported the black plights. Although they supported the black plight, there were limitations to their liberalism. Some whites were not fully in support of the way blacks expressed their frustration through the riot. This position was reflected in how the *Baltimore Sun* reported the riot as compared to the *Baltimore Afro-American* and the *Baltimore Jewish Times*. Some no longer share the racist

position on black development in the city; they were welcoming, accommodating, and they began to see the situations surrounding racial inequalities from a black perspective. They understood the sacrifices blacks made every day to improve their educational, social and economic position. Some white Baltimoreans supported the 1968 protest and were in support of Blacks' advancement and equality. Governor Agnew failed to understand the Black plight because he had no idea of the difficulty blacks had to navigate through daily. Agnew had no idea of the black experience in Baltimore.¹⁶⁵ Agnew was in support of the civil rights movement in the South, he was opposed to racism and believed blacks in the South should have some rights and freedom but when civil rights activities turned their sight on the North and blacks wanted equal opportunities such as good housing, and voting rights, Agnew opposed it.¹⁶⁶ Instead of being neutral in the riot, Governor Agnew accused the Black leadership of inciting the 1968 violence. Many of these white were supportive of the black cause in the city, which was why they frowned at Governor Agnew's remark to the black leaders after the 1968 riot. Many of them made their displeasure known through the series of letters and telegrams that were sent to the Governor in the days following his race-baiting remarks.

The newspaper report of the riot portrayed a picture that whites were the only victims of the Baltimore 1968 riot, but that was not the case. According to the oral interviews conducted by the University of Baltimore, there were blacks whose lives were

¹⁶⁵. Clay Risen, *A Nation on Fire: America in the Wake of the King Assassination* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 174.

¹⁶⁶. Ibid.

changed completely by the events of the 1968 riot. The 1968 riot contributed to the enmity that existed between blacks and whites in the city till this present day. According to Mayor Kurt Schmoke, Baltimore after the 1968 riot became a tale of two cities, there streets that housed some of the best city blocks in urban America and not far from those are some of the worst city blocks in America.¹⁶⁷ This difference between these city blocks is some of the effects of the riot on the city, even fifty-one years after the riot took place.

¹⁶⁷. "Former Baltimore Mayor Looks Back." NPR. NPR, April 7, 2008.
<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89427135>.

Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusion

"Life for us after the disturbances is still trying to learn each other as human beings." Rev. Marion Bascom.¹⁶⁸

Before the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968, blacks in America had been subjected to different kinds of rules that only applied to them. These rules subjugated blacks and relegated them to inferior and inhuman positions while white enjoyed higher social, economic, and educational status. When the American civil war ended in 1865, the country was ushered into the era of reconstruction, where the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments were passed to absorb the newly freed slaves into the American society. These new laws were passed to make life a little bit easier for the newly emancipated blacks, but the former slave owners were against the idea of having to be of equal status with their former slaves, so some new sets of Jim Crow laws were adopted in the South to take away these newly found freedoms from black Americans.

Given the number of violent race riots that were rocking America in the 1960's, it was only a matter of time before Baltimore experience its own riot. Baltimore, like every one of these America cities, had a large black population, which was socially, economically, and educationally, severely affected by racism and segregation. Over the years, blacks in Baltimore had been subjected to different kinds of racial inequalities. For

¹⁶⁸. Interview with Reverend Marion Bascom, Baltimore '68: Riots & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore. December 8, 2006.
<https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oral-histories/oral-histories1.html>

instance, blacks in the city cannot live in the same neighborhood as whites; blacks lived in segregated ghetto areas with overcrowding and the worst housing facilities. Black attended segregated schools, and they could not shop in the same store as whites. All these frustrations built up over the years, and with the death of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, blacks in the city had reached their breaking point and decided to rebel against an oppressive system that did not seem to care about them. Even without the death of Dr King, with the situation of things in the city during this period, sooner or later a riot would have most probably taken place at a point in time, but the death of Dr King served as a catalyst that transformed the racial problems and segregation in the city of Baltimore to a full-blown riot in 1968.

Stokely Carmichael and his Black Power associates believed that black militancy was the only way for blacks to achieve equality in the country, especially after the assassination of King, the conveyor of non violence movement. Many black civil rights leaders disagreed with violence as a way of challenging segregation, inequality, and racism in America. Leaders like Delegate Aris T. Allen rejected the idea of violence, force, lawlessness, rioting, and looting because violence was not Dr. King's approach to civil right issues.¹⁶⁹

The general perception among the black community towards the government and the white community was that of frustration and resentment because the leadership of

¹⁶⁹. "Is Baltimore Burning?" Is Baltimore Burning? MSA SC 2221-12, n.d.
<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000000/html/00000001.html>.

the country had failed to represent the black interest, and the whites failed to acknowledge that blacks as having equal intellectual and moral standing. Many people within the white community disagreed with the narration and insinuation that held whites as responsible for the difficulty blacks faced. They maintained that Blaming the white community for all the difficult situations and conditions was not a fair assessment of the situation because “the country does not guarantee that everyman will be successful.”¹⁷⁰

The death of King in 1968, generated a lot of media reports not only in the United States but the world in general, but most of the coverage of the riots that ensued after King’s death was polarized along racial lines. The TV news anchors, which were mostly whites, portrayed whites’ victims of black impatience. They maintained that the integration would have eventually happened in the country without the riots that engulfed the nation in the 1960s.

In the months following the riot, various committees were set up to look into the factors that were responsible for the riot. On June 4, 1968, The Maryland Crime Investigating Commission headed by Dr. Williams E. Peterson released their report on the riot. The commission explained that “social and economic conditions in the looted areas constituted a clear pattern of severe disadvantages for blacks compared to whites.”¹⁷¹ The commission also supported the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders finding of 1967, that blacks were at a severe disadvantage in education, unemployment, and

¹⁷⁰. Ibid

¹⁷¹. “Report of the Baltimore Civil Disturbance of April 4, 1968” (Maryland Crime Investigation Commission, June 4, 1968), 2.

housing as compared to whites. The Maryland Crime Investigating Commission arrived at the conclusion that “the riot in Baltimore must be attributed to two elements.... ‘white racism’ and economic oppression of blacks. It is impossible to give specific weight to each, but they gave clear cause for many of the ghetto residents of the riot.”¹⁷²

When the Baltimore riot ended, some people across the racial lines, both white and black, came together united to address the problem of segregation. Instead of laying blames, clergymen across the city preached for forgiveness and urged the city to come together to have a common goal of unity. In an article in The *Baltimore Sun* on April 11, 1968, stated that the immediate job in Baltimore after the clash was for the city to come together and address the issue of racial division between whites and African Americans within the City. For this to happen, the article suggested that the notion that Baltimore had moved fast or far enough in race relations must be ignored. The article explained further that Baltimore could not look itself in the eye and say the city had done enough for the Blacks. It noted that Blacks had gone the extra mile to improve themselves by enrolling in colleges and high schools to earn diplomas and degrees, and they abide by the rules and regulations needed to have a piece of the American Dream.¹⁷³

On Sunday, April 14, 1968, 800 people of many faith walked across Baltimore streets to decry racism. A group of 25 clergymen came together for what they called “possession of penance,” which was aimed at shaming racism. Eight hundred people of

¹⁷². Ibid, 27.

¹⁷³. "After the Clean-Up," Sun (Baltimore), April 11, 1968, p. A14.

many faiths, many of them white, attended, and 400 of them sign a petition to Governor Agnew to retract his accusation of the black leaders as responsible for the riot because the governor statement did not represent the white community. The possession of penance gathering according to the organizers had two purposes; which were to “repent of our past failure and sin, apathy, unconcern, and false pride and secondly, to commit to the principle for which Martin Luther King Jr. died, justice for all men, black and white, freedom for all men rich and poor.”¹⁷⁴ This march probably also helped turn more whites from pro-segregation supporters to anti-segregation supporters.

Recovery efforts began immediately after the riot ended, and the security operatives were able to guarantee the safety and contained violence on the street of Baltimore. Many grocery stores were looted and severely damaged during the riot. As a result, when the riot ended, there was a shortage of food in the city. To relieve tension, the Community Action Agency handed out food items and aids to those affected at eight distribution centers across the city.¹⁷⁵ Soon businesses opened, and curfew hours were reduced. Many of those stores were relocated to other locations while some never reopened because of the damages suffered during the unrest.

One of the people that benefitted from the riot was Governor Spiro Agnew, who was nominated as the Republican Party’s Vice-Presidential Candidate in 1968 because of

¹⁷⁴. Weldon Wallace, "800 of Many Faiths Walk to Decry Racism," *Sun* (Baltimore), April 14, 1968, p. 22.

¹⁷⁵. Ashworth, George W. "Baltimore reaches for discovery." *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 11, 1968, 3.

his tough stance towards the rioters and the city's black leaders. Agnew, at the now-infamous meeting, accused the black leaders as responsible for the riot. His race-baiting stand proved successful among white Republicans who sent him telegrams, letters, and over 9000 calls supporting his tough stand in the riot.¹⁷⁶ Agnew's post-riot words caught the attention of Richard Nixon, who chose him as his running mate for the 1968 presidential election.

According to Mayor Kurt Schmoke, because of the 1968 riot, Baltimore City was scarred both physically and psychologically even 51 years after the riot.¹⁷⁷ After the riot the areas that were affected were rebuilt, the downtown area and the harbor were rebuilt, but the psychological aspect was and still remains a work in progress because the riot created tension, distrust, and division among whites and blacks in Baltimore City that is still evident till today. For instance, another violence rocked Baltimore City of April 27, 2015, following the death of Freddie Gray, a black man who died on April 19, 2015, after sustaining spinal injury while in police custody. Many people claimed his injury was a result of police brutality, while others believed that it was as a result of an accident. Again, this violence happened because of blacks' lack of trust in the city police system, which had been oppressive in the past. Issues of oppression, racism and high level of unemployment among blacks are still prevalent in Baltimore City. Indeed, many of the

¹⁷⁶. Levy, Peter B. 2013. "Spiro Agnew, the Forgotten Americans, and the Rise of the New Right." *Historian* 75 (4): 707–39. doi:10.1111/hisn.12018.

¹⁷⁷. "Former Baltimore Mayor Looks Back." NPR. NPR, April 7, 2008. <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89427135>.

city's unresolved racial distrust, social and economic differences remain, and this will continue to be a source of tension and racial animosity until solutions that ensure equality and empowerment of blacks are implemented.

Bibliography

Ashworth, George W. "Baltimore reaches for recovery." *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 11, 1968.

Baltimore '68: Riots & Rebirth Collection, University of Baltimore.

"'68: The Fire Last Time, Narrated by Sunni Khalid." Accessed September 27, 2019.
<https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/archival-resources/documents/wypr-part-2.pdf>.

"Baltimore Shocked, Angered, Hurt, Grieved by Death of Dr. King." 1968. *Afro-American* (1893–1988), Apr 06, 1.

Baum, Howell S. *Brown in Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010.

Bergstrom, Randolph. "Introduction." *The Public Historian* 31, no. 4 (2009): 11–12.
 doi:10.1525/tph.2009.31.4.11.

Boissoneault, Lorraine. "Martin Luther King Jr.'s Assassination Sparked Uprisings in Cities Across America." *Smithsonian.com*. April 04, 2018. Accessed February 21, 2019.
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/martin-luther-king-jrs-assassination-sparked-uprisings-cities-across-america-180968665/>.

Crenson, Matthew A. *Baltimore: A Political History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017.

"City Curfew Imposed; Agnew Send Troops as Unrest Spreads' One Killed, 70 Hurt, 100 Arrested as Violence, Looting Flare in Downtown Area; Fireman Report 250 Alarms." *The Baltimore Sun*, April 7, 1968.

Coates, James. "Riots Follow Killing of Martin Luther King Jr." *Chicagotribune.com*. September 02, 2008. Accessed April 01, 2019.
<https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/politics/chi-chicagodays-kingriots-story-story.html>.

"Dr. King is Felled by Rock: 30 INJURED AS HE LEADS PROTESTERS Many Arrested in Race Clash Marchers Come to King's Assistance Police Remove Heckler." 1966. *Chicago Tribune* (1963–Current), Aug 06, 1.

Durr, Kenneth D. *Behind the Backlash: White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940–1980*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

Edsall, Thomas B. "White Liberals Concerned, Outrage Over Rioting." *The Evening Sun*. April 11, 1968.

Elfenbein, Jessica I., Thomas L. Hollowak, and Elizabeth M. Nix. *Baltimore 68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple Univ. Press, 2011.

Farrar, Hayward. *The Baltimore Afro-American: 1892-1950*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998.

Fleming, G. James. "Racial Integration in Education in Maryland." *The Journal of Negro Education* 25, no. 3 (1956): 273. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2293436>.

Gartrell, John. "Is Baltimore Burning?" Anna Murray Douglass MSA SC 5496-051245. Accessed February 21, 2019.
<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000041/html/00000001.html>.

Gilbert, Ben W. *Ten Blocks from the White House; Anatomy of the Washington Riots of 1968*. New York: F.A. Praeger, 1969.

Ginyard, Tiffany, ed. "Remembering the Turmoil: In the Wake of the 40th Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's Assassination, the AFRO Looks Back at Past Riots to Better Understand the Plight and Struggle of African-Americans." *Afro American Newspaper*, April 2, 2008.

"Governor Agnew's Speech to Baltimore's Black Community" Accessed September 27, 2019. http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/timeline/Agnew_Speech_1968_to_Community_leadeers.pdf.

Grossman, Ron. "50 Years Ago: MLK's March in Marquette Park Turned Violent, Exposed Hate." *chicagotribune.com*. Chicago Tribune, May 11, 2019.
<https://www.chicagotribune.com/opinion/commentary/ct-mlk-king-marquette-park-1966-flashback-perspec-0731-md-20160726-story.html>.

"Guard Called Out In Baltimore Riot; Three Killed; U.S. Troops Sent To Chicago, Bolstered in D.C. Windy City Violence, Washington Looting and Burning Continue." *The Baltimore Sun*, April 7, 1968.

Hart, Chris. "In the First Place: Civic Dialogue and the Role of the University of Baltimore in Examining the 1968 Riots." *The Public Historian* 31, no. 4 (2009): 48–53. doi:10.1525/tph.2009.31.4.48.

Herman, Max Arthur. *Fighting in the Streets: Ethnic Succession and Urban Unrest in Twentieth Century America*. New York: P. Lang, 2005.

Internet Archive Search: creator:"WJZ-TV (Television station : Baltimore, Md.)",
[https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator:"WJZ-TV+\(Television+station+:+Baltimore,+Md.\)"&&and\[\]=year:"1968"](https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator%3A%22WJZ-TV+(Television+station%3A%3ABaltimore%2C+Md.)%22&&and[]=year%3A%221968%22).

"Is Baltimore Burning?" Is Baltimore Burning? MSA SC 2221-12.
<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2200/sc2221/000012/000000/html/000000001.html>.

Law-Womack, Medrika. *A City Afire: The Baltimore City Riot of 1968: Antecedents, Causes, and Impact*. Master's thesis, 2005.

Levy, Peter B. *The Great Uprising Race Riots in Urban America during the 1960s*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Levy, Peter B. 2013. "Spiro Agnew, the Forgotten Americans, and the Rise of the New Right." *Historian* 75 (4): 707–39. doi:10.1111/hisn.12018.

"Lincoln Institute of Land Policy." LILP. January 02, 2019. Accessed March 20, 2019.
<https://www.lincolnst.edu/>.

Loessberg, Rick, and John Koskinen. "Measuring the Distance: The Legacy of the Kerner Report." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 4, no. 6 (2018): 99. <https://doi.org/10.7758/rsf.2018.4.6.05>.

Lynton, Stephen J. 1968. "Baltimore Sad but Peaceful as Negro and White Mourn." *The Sun* (1837-1993), Apr 06, 2.
<https://search.proquest.com/docview/533954733?accountid=12557>.

Marbella, Jean. "The Fire Both Times: Baltimore Riots after Martin Luther King's Death 50 Years Ago Left Scars That Remain." *baltimoresun.com*. Baltimore Sun, June 30, 2019. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/baltimore-city/bs-md-mlk-anniversary-riots-20180315-htmlstory.html>.

Martin, Michel. "Echoes of 1968: 'Former Baltimore Mayor Looks Back. Interview of Mayor Thomas D' Alesandro III (blog). National Public Radio (n.p.r), April 7, 2018.
<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89427135>.

"Memories of the Riots Captured on Tape." NPR. NPR, April 7, 2008.
<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89427141>.

Meranto, Philip J. *The Kerner Report Revisited; Final Report and Background Papers*. Urbana: Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois, 1970.

Motz, Jane. *Report on Baltimore Civil Disorders, April 1968*. Baltimore: Middle Atlantic Region American Friends Service Committee, 1968.

"No, Governor." *The Baltimore Sun*. April 12, 1968.

"Personal and Educational Purposes - Archives.ubalt.edu." Accessed August 18, 2019. <https://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/oralhistories/transcripts/ChambersTranscript.pdf>.

Pickett, Edward G. "Negro Peace Meeting Dispersed by Troops." *Sun* (Baltimore). April 10, 1968.

Pietila, Antero. *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2010.

Rice, Roger L. "Residential Segregation by Law, 1910-1917." *The Journal of Southern History* 34, no. 2 (1968): 179. doi:10.2307/2204656.

Risen, Clay. *A Nation on Fire: America in the Wake of the King Assassination*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2009.

Roberts, Gene, and Hank Klibanoff. *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation*. New York: Knopf, 2007.

Sandler, Gilbert. "Now Agnew's Home Is HIS Castle." *baltimoresun.com*, October 24, 2018. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1993-03-16-1993075203-story.html>.

September 27, 1966: MLK-a Riot Is the Language Of the Unheard Minutes, 60. YouTube. March 15, 2018. Accessed February 22, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_K0BWXjV5s.

Shapiro, Herbert. "The Ku Klux Klan During Reconstruction: The South Carolina Episode." *The Journal of Negro History* 49, no. 1 (1964): 34–55. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2716475>.

Simon, David. *Homicide: A Year on the Killing Streets*. New York: Holt Paperbacks, 2006.

"Special to the AFRO." Afro, April 6, 2018.

<https://afro.com/black-press-baltimore-68-riot/>.

Susan T. Gooden, and Samuel L. Myers. "The Kerner Commission Report Fifty Years Later: Revisiting the American Dream." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 4, no. 6 (2018): 1–17. doi:10.7758/rsf.2018.4.6.01.

United States Commission on Civil Rights Report. Washington: Commission, 1959.

United States Commission on Civil Rights Report. Washington: Commission, 1961.

"Unrest Rises in Wake of King's Death, National Guard Moves into 16 Block Area of Chicago." *The Baltimore Sun*, April 6, 1968.

Weldon, Wallace. "800 Of Many Faiths Walk to Decry Racism." *Sun* (Baltimore), April 14, 1968.