

# Who Are the Rioters?

Following the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., many of the nation's cities suffered rioting. This again raised the question as to just who are the rioters. The following excerpts are from the report by the President's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders.

The typical rioter in the summer of 1967 was a Negro, unmarried male between the ages of 15 and 24 in many ways very different from the stereotypes. He was not a migrant. He was born in the state and was a life-long resident of the city in which the riot took place. Economically his position was about the same as his Negro neighbors who did not actively participate in the riot.

Although he had not, usually, graduated from high school, he was somewhat better educated than the average inner-city Negro, having at least attended high school for a time.

Nevertheless, he was more likely to be working in a menial or low status job as an unskilled laborer. If he was employed, he was not working full time and his employment was frequently interrupted by periods of unemployment.

He feels strongly that he deserves a better job and that he is barred from achieving it not because of lack of training, ability, or ambition, but because of discrimination by employers.

He rejects the white bigot's stereotype of the Negro as ignorant and shiftless. He takes great pride in his race and believes that in some respects Negroes are superior to whites. He is extremely hostile to whites, but his hostility is more apt to be a product of social and economic class than of race; he is almost equally hostile toward middle-class Negroes.

He is substantially better informed about politics than Negroes who were not involved in the riots. He is more likely to be actively engaged in civil rights efforts, but is extremely distrustful of the political system and of political leaders.

In regard to the structure of the family in which he was raised, the self-reported rioter, according to the Newark survey, was not significantly different from many of his Negro neighbors who did not actively participate in the riot. Twenty-five and five tenths percent of the self-reported rioters and 23.0 percent of the non-involved were brought up in homes without a male head of household.

Level of schooling is strongly related to participation. Those with some high school education were more likely to riot than those who had only finished grade school. In the Detroit survey 93 percent of the self-reported rioters had gone beyond grade school, compared with 72.1 percent of the noninvolved. In the Newark survey the comparable figures are 98.1 percent and 85.7 percent. The majority of self-reported rioters are not, however, high school graduates.

The Detroit and Newark surveys, the arrest records from four cities, and the Detroit arrest study all indicate that there are no substantial differences in unemployment between the rioters and the noninvolved.

Unemployment levels among both groups were extremely high.

Along with increased racial pride these appear to be intense hostility toward whites. Self-reported rioters in both the Detroit and Newark surveys were more likely to feel that civil rights groups with white and Negro leaders would do better without the whites.

The intensity of the self-reported rioters' racial feelings may suggest that the recent riots represented traditional interracial hostilities.

Respondents in the Newark survey were asked about relatively simple items of political information such as the race of prominent local and national political figures. In general, the self-reported rioters were much better informed than the non-involved.

# On Inter-Racial Front

# Priests Criticize Gov. Agnew on Race Stand

By A. E. F. WALL  
NC News Service

Baltimore — Maryland's Gov. Spiro T. Agnew is under attack from at least 30 Catholic priests in Baltimore's inner city.

The criticism was mounted after the Republican governor lectured a group of civil rights leaders on April 11, accusing them of being unwilling to repudiate "black racists." About half the civil rights leaders, most of them Negroes, walked out on the governor.

The 30 priests signed an open statement that called Gov. Agnew's remarks "intemperate" and insulting.

The statement follows: "Gov. Agnew's intemperate lecturing of the moderate Negro leadership hurts us deeply because it is an affront to men and women who have labored for many, many years to rid Baltimore of the evil effects of racism; because our people have been insulted by his attack on leaders who have been trusted.

"It goes without saying that we condemn burning and looting but we demand that, if any assignment of blame is made, white inaction over a long period of time must top the list.

"We commend the restraint and the responsibility of the military leadership and we heartily second their decision to place human lives above property values."

Priests who signed included Father Henry J. Offer, S.S.J., director of the archdiocesan urban commission and pastor of St. Peter Claver Church,

and Father Joseph Connolly, president of the National Liturgical Conference and pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Church.

"We demand that you retract your statement and begin developing a positive, constructive approach to the urban crisis through united leadership."

In Easter remarks during Mass at St. Peter Claver Church, Father Philip Berrigan, S.S.J., charged that Gov. Agnew's remarks suggested "racism" on the part of the governor.

Father Offer, in a statement, challenged the governor's comments in several areas. He quoted the governor's remark that "equal opportunity has not always been present for Negroes . . . but I say that we have come a long way."

Replied Father Offer: "The governor just does not understand. How does he know the Negroes have come a long way. A few have. He is trying to teach these Black Leaders when he should be asking them to teach him. The masses of black people have hardly moved at all."

Father Offer also said: "I doubt whether there are any black racists. It is hard enough trying to convince a black man that he is just as good as a white man, much less trying to convince him that he is better."

He responded also to Gov. Agnew's statement that the "fires were kindled at the suggestion and with the instruction of the advocates of violence."

# Inter-religious Drive Helps To Feed Hungry after Riots

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — An interreligious urban coalition became the official food distribution agency for thousands of people here during and after the violence which erupted following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King.

Tons of food poured into five depots for dispatch to 30 ghetto distribution centers. The food came from Catholic, Protestant and Jewish individuals and groups in suburban Washington.

Hundreds of volunteers were involved: seminarians, priests, nuns, Negro and white clergymen, Christian and Jewish laymen. They worked through sleepless nights in depots, unloading trucks and manning tele-

phones. They labored at chapels and at storefront churches.

Three key persons took part—Father Geno Baroni, Catholic Archdiocesan director of urban affairs; Rev. Philip Newell, director of the Council of Churches' Urban Institute and Mr. Newell's associate, Rev. Ernest Gibson of the First Rising Mount Zion Baptist church.

Mr. Newell credited previously established lines of communication as a reason for the success and rapid initiative of the plan. "It worked only because we all knew each other first," he said, "and that goes for the bishops and the Negro Baptists, and the guys in the seminaries."

Rev. Joe Gibson, pastor of the Nash Methodist church in North East Wash-

ington, said that churchmen had been meeting for some time to discuss what might be done to prepare for the summer.

Church executives, he added, met every Tuesday morning and a network of contacts to be used in any crisis had been developed.

When the violence broke out, and continued, food services in many parts of the capital abruptly stopped. Many stores were not open.

Contacts were mobilized to handle the food which was being donated by suburbanites. The depots set up were at Keller Memorial Lutheran church, St. Stephen's and Incarnation Episcopal church and St. Martin's, St. Anthony's and St. Augustine's Catholic churches.

The degree of efficiency led Mayor Walter E. Washington to make it the official distribution means. After the government became involved, the efforts were centralized. Centers received food by truck from a facility at the Junior Village, and there were many complaints of slow delivery or no deliveries at all.

Father Baroni indicated that he felt some delays resulted from the Welfare Department's procedure of cataloging the food stuff which went in and out.

Despite the delays which resulted after the program was centralized, the success of the emergency work was obvious.

# Albany Diocese Creates Racial Justice Fund

ALBANY, N.Y. (NC) — The Albany diocese will spend \$100,000 of its Diocesan Development Fund to improve "the condition of the Negro in the diocese."

The pledge was made by Bishop Edward J. Maginn, apostolic administrator, in a surprise announcement at ceremonies memorializing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The money will be administered by a newly established Commission on Racial Justice. "I make this commitment, confident that our Catholic people share this love and concern," the bishop said.

Governor Nelson Rockefeller said his staff would be delighted to "meet with representatives of the bishop to determine if this gift can be used as seed money, together with federal or state monies, to develop projects in the 15 county area of the diocese of Albany."

Bishop Maginn said the decision to appropriate the money was made after discussion with persons involved in the diocesan social action and development programs, the priests' senate and diocesan officials.

# Kennedy Explains His Receiving Baptist Communion

Washington — (NC) — Sen. Robert Kennedy, presidential candidate who raised Washington eyebrows by receiving communion at a Baptist church here, told newsmen that he meant the reception of a cup of grape juice and a biscuit as "a gesture of fellowship" and not as sacramental communion.

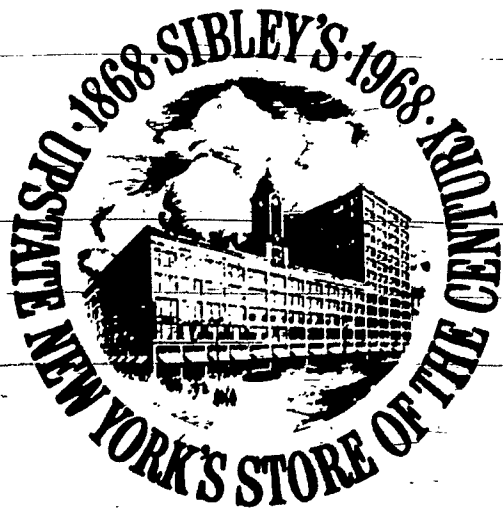
The senator's explanation was relayed to newsmen through Frank Mankiewicz, press assistant to Sen. Kennedy, after newsmen asked why the senator received communion at New Bethel Baptist Church here after touring parts of Washington's riot-torn ghetto.

An expert in ecumenism, asked to comment on the incident, explained:

"The whole question of intercommunion involves a complex of theological questions which are the subject of ongoing bilateral consultations between the Catholic Church and a number of other churches.

"The present discipline of the Catholic Church is in a document issued by the Vatican's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. This document was issued in May 1967, and specifies that Catholics may be allowed to attend occasionally the liturgical services of other brethren if they have reasonable ground . . .

"This participation, from which reception of the Eucharist is always excluded, should lead the participants to esteem the spiritual riches we have in common and at the same time make them aware of the gravity of our separation."



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