



It was a "hometown riot" of classical conformations. Some 20,000 black Washingtonians, two-thirds of them under thirty, burned, looted, scavenged their white-owned neighborhoods in "disorders" sparked by the murder of Martin Luther King but stoked by long-term hatreds. The Washington Post, which had some 36 reporters and photographers on the scene, presents here a highly readable collation of day-to-day and post-riot coverage, the results of a computerized study, and

an analysis of this riot in terms of the factors named in the Report of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders. Gilbert, a deputy managing editor, headed the Post team, and in this report seems to have missed nothing. First on the scene (the riot started at 14th and U Streets, a busy intersection) was SNCC leader Stokely Carmichael, initially a peaceful "pied piper" who ordered merchants to shut down their shops "to show respect." who repeatedly told the crowd he was gathering to "go home," and who departed in a Mustang when the looting finally began. Then, the police, particularly the special riot units who behaved with commendable "restraint," and later federal troops who guarded already looted storefronts with bayonets. The rioters, of course, were there throughout, and Post reporters interviewed them on the scene, in the jails and later in their living rooms. Washington's black mayor was on hand too, but without much effect, for the "polarization of black Washington and white Washington" could not be straddled by one man. In effect, this divisiveness was the guilty party, and certainly The Post blames no other major factor,

but ably presents the data. Dynamic reporting--a case study of contemporary significance.