Book on D.C.'s April Riot Unveiled by Publisher

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By Leroy F. Aarons
Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Oct. 12—Publication of a detailed account of the spring riots in Washington, D.C., compiled and written by staff members of The Washington Post, was announced here yesterday by Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., publishers.

The 239-page volume, entitled "Ten Blocks From The White House: Anatomy of the Washington Riots of 1968," deals with the three-day outbreak in April after the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and a one-day disturbance on June 24 after the evacuation of Resurrection City.

The book represents the collaboration of two dozen Washington Post reporters and photographers. The project was overseen by Ben W. Gilbert, deputy managing editor, who wrote the text, assisted by Jesse W. Lewis, Jr., an editorial writer, and Leonard Dowie Jr., a reporter.

A major chapter of the book deals with a taped interview with three self-styled arsonists, who said they set numerous fires during the riot of April 4 through 6.

(This entire chapter, and portions of other chapters, make up today's issue of Potmac Magazine.)

The three men, who wore hoods during the hour-and-forty-minute interview on Aug. 8, claimed they were members of a black revolutionary organization which was formed with 25 members last February.

trigger the riots, but they felt they were instrumental in keeping the disturbances going by example.

Gilbert, commenting on the interview at a press conference here, spoke of the "chilling thought that future urban disturbances will be in the pattern of the Cleveland incident (in late July, in which black snipers clashed with policemen and ten persons were killed.)

"If there is a next time, perhaps guns would be used. How much of this is bombast and how much is real, we don't know," Gilbert added. "We're in the hands of events."

Other points in the volume, included:

• The restraint displayed by Washington police in the use of weapons may have averted gun battles with retaliating armed blacks.

• The rioting was less a reaction to the death fo Dr. King than a reaction to ghetto life and an opportunity to "clean up." Said one girl looter: "It had nothing to do with Dr. King's murder. The manager was nasty and mean, and the bastard overcharged.'

• Perhaps 20,000 persons participated in the outbreak. At least three out of four were blue-collar workers and more than half of those arrested were first offenders.

The book's first printing of 18,000 is sold out to dealers in advance, according to Morton Puner, vice president of Praeger. A second printing of 15,000 is in process.