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Naptown is Wide Awake: A Historical Analysis of Community Perceptions of Police in Indianapolis from 1965-1975

By:

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Abstract:

In contemporary scholarship surrounding the police state, there has been a recent increase in the amount of research being conducted on the overall utility of a police state as well as perceptions of the police and their interactions with certain groups. These discoveries place emphasis on the shortcomings of contemporary policies and practices with an aim to garner change. Less is known about historical accounts of police function and proper analysis of these operations as foundations for current police departments. And the scholarship that does take this approach takes place in larger cities with historically aggressive and invasive police states, including Memphis, Detroit, and Chicago. Even less than that is the research examining the function of the police state and its discriminatory practices in smaller cities, such as Indianapolis. What is the language surrounding historical instances of police brutality? What does the history of police in Indianapolis tell us about the community at large? The purpose of this paper will be to outline and analyze the historical functions of the police in the Black community in Indianapolis through the eyes of those most affected.

The ultimate goal of this paper is to not shape a new paradigm around policing, specifically referring to the extensive, scholarly work that is out there regarding policing as a form of social control. Rather, this paper supports said scholarship and seeks to understand what that social control component looks like in the city of Indianapolis. What does the current literature say about these functions, and do they hold true in a place such as the city of Indianapolis? How can understanding the city of Indianapolis inform the function of other mid-level cities? These questions will be examined as well as a brief textual analysis of the Indianapolis Recorder, a Black run newspaper that was dedicated to bringing about the truth of

social inequality in the city. Through examination of the different articles released each week, one can begin to understand the language surrounding public safety within the city as well as the ways in which the Black community is often required to take matters of safety into their own hands.

Introduction:

In reviewing the scholarship surrounding Indianapolis and its history regarding police and their ties to the Black community, there is much left to be discovered. In truth, there is not a detailed history of police function and the overall public perception through a historical lens for the city. This paper will begin to fill that gap. Now more than ever there is a need for a critical examination of this history as it applies to policing and its harm to the community, specifically the Black community. As such, the focus of this paper will be on the Black community in Indianapolis. This analysis allows for a better understanding of resistance and the nuance that lies within it. Further, emphasis will not be on police action or comments on cases, but rather on the communities affected and how they supported each other when the state failed to do so. Lastly, this research supports and will take part in the centering of Black voices when it comes to the history of Black Indianapolis and their mobilization efforts amidst violence and injustice.

A Note on the Time Frame

The literature within this paper covers Indianapolis history as it applies to policing from the early 1920s all the way to 1980. Such a timeline is sweeping and meant to be encompassing. Outlining early functions of the department allows for an extensive, but well-connected history of the IPD, further leading to a better analysis of tensions between the Black community and the police. Regarding the textual analysis of the newspapers, the timeline of articles that are

discussed will be from 1965 to 1980. This time frame is at the heart of the Civil Rights movement as well as the rise of the Black Power movement. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, though a monumental moment, did not swiftly change race relations and grant immediate equality for Black people. Due to this lack of change, riots, protests, and overall civil disobedience is not only prominent but a common occurrence across the nation. A deep look into this time period reveals much about the Black community in Indianapolis and how it reconciles with the national movement that is happening around them.

Literature Review:

Much of what is known about Black life and interactions with the police in Indianapolis revolves around the quiet nature of the community. Understanding the Black community and its position in Indianapolis is imperative for fully recognizing the community response within the archived newspapers against police brutality amidst national change. The literature surrounding Indianapolis is not extensive and even less has been documented on historical, community perceptions of the police. As such, this review of literature will provide a brief look at Black life in Indianapolis amidst this time period, specifically through a general profile of the Black population in Indianapolis and a description of active Black organizations within the city. The integration of these two aspects of Indianapolis history will act as an overview of the city at large. The review will also provide existing scholarship surrounding the tension between the police state and the Black community. Understanding this provides background on how police function in communities such as Indianapolis as well as sets the stage for a more detailed look at police and community relations from the archive.

Black Life in Indianapolis: A Brief History

Understanding the history of the Black community in Indianapolis is no small feat. Much of this historiography details the slow but steady progression towards better lives for Black people in the city. This is done very well by Richard Pierce in his dissertation on Black community life in Indianapolis from 1945-1970. Focusing on housing, education, and employment, Pierce outlines the foundations of the Black community in Indianapolis that would evolve amidst changing times.

Indianapolis in the early twentieth century certainly has its points that set it apart as a city of the North. First, legal segregation was openly practiced not only in schools, but in restaurants, stores, and neighborhoods. In addition, while many other cities had one core district where the Black community resided, the Black community in Indianapolis consisted of at least three major neighborhoods, including those surrounding Indiana Avenue and around the west side of Indianapolis. Lastly, while many northern cities experienced some forms of racially motivated urban disturbances, Pierce (1996) notes that "Indianapolis remained remarkably calm" (p.2.) This fact can be explained by a number of correlating factors, including the presence of the KKK, which was founded in Indiana, quickly setting it apart from other Northern cities, yet again. In addition, when looking at Black organizations that were active during this time, there is an overall "inability to present a united front of protest" (Pierce, p.3.) This theme of autonomy within organizations would prove to be both a strength and a weakness for the Black community in Indianapolis.

Mirroring patterns of white supremacy in cities such as Chicago, Detroit, and New York, Black people in Indianapolis were segregated within the spatial, economic, social, and political structures of the city. Though smaller than the cities mentioned, there was a significant Black population in the city of Indianapolis in comparison to the population of the city overall. By

1900, Black people accounted for 9.4% of the population in Indianapolis (Pierce, 1996.) But the presence of Black leaders and organizations was littered with fractious and inconsistent cooperation; on top of that included white rejection of many Black reform initiatives presented by community leaders. And this rejection did not just come from Klan initiatives. Many neighborhood associations which were the driving force behind residential segregation, consisted of law-abiding citizens who simply did not want to live near black residents.

Black Organizations:

A prominent part of the Black community in Indianapolis is the presence of multiple community organizations. Pierce argues that there were numerous groups for certain issues in the Black community, which presented positive and negative outcomes. Black residents often knew where to go when in need of assistance, but the groups themselves were quite disconnected and lacked a connecting force within the Black community. Yet despite this disconnect, there was still an emergence of Black leaders committed to achieving equality for the Black race. Community members such as Roy Wilkins, the executive director of the Indianapolis chapter of the NAACP, and Adam Powell, a Black politician, are just some of the names that were active leaders in their community during this time. Overall, the presence of segregation in the city meant that Black life had to cultivate amongst themselves. When faced with white resistance, Black people often created separate, yet similar, institutions that white people were eager to support if it meant less interaction with the Black population. This legacy carried all the way through the 60s with the Black Panther Party chapter in Indianapolis, with breakfast programs for school children. It is in these spaces that these programs served a dual purpose: “they provided a balanced, healthy meal and political nourishment” (p.61.) Often displayed as violent

and aggressive as an organization, a more in-depth look at the Panthers' everyday operations presents a clearer picture of their function and importance within the city.

Newspapers in Indianapolis:

It is important to note the pivotal role newspapers played not only in molding and articulating the need of the Black community in Indianapolis but bringing the community together by disseminating news by and for the people. Though a smaller city, Indianapolis had four Black-owned newspapers: The World, The Leader, The Freeman, and the Indianapolis Recorder. Due to the cities' mainstream, white newspapers failing to report on topics relating to the Black community in Indianapolis, newspapers such as these served the broader purpose of providing accurate information to the people. The Recorder, the longest-running Black newspaper, was known across the community, often presenting views and opinions in direct conflict with each other. Overall, Black citizens valued the role of the newspaper as a mechanism for giving voice to the people. In one issue, a writer for the Recorder, Andrew Ramsey, wrote to the Black population asking if he should cease reporting. What followed was a slew of letters to the paper detailing its importance. Pierce (1996) writes that one writer commented, "Your views may not be popular, but we need you to keep writing." Another said, "I don't always agree with you, but I always know you are writing what you believe. With you I always know what is going on in Indianapolis"(p. 65).

Police and the Black Community:

In addition to understanding Black life in Indianapolis and their forms of support, another prominent aspect of literature pertinent to this work is the legacy of the police and its harm toward the Black community. In addition, understanding these tensions provides background for seeing how this plays out in Indianapolis during the mid-20th century. The relationship between

the police and the Black community is one that can be traced all the way back to early America. There is extensive scholarship that supports this claim, tracing early slave patrols in the Antebellum South to the rise of Jim Crow and the subsequent construction of ghettos that are saturated with police presence. This history as well as the discussion of police as a form of social control as it applies to the Black community is outlined in Sandra Bass' article titled Policing Space, Policing Race: Social Control Imperatives and Police Discretionary Decisions. Throughout her work, Brass (2001) works to not only provide a detailed history of American police and their function as a tool for social order, but also argues that "the linkages between race, space, and policing become clear in reviewing the history of legally sanctioned racial discrimination and residential segregation of African Americans and the development of policing" (p. 158). Lastly, Brass notes the legacy of biased police practices as well as the massive amounts of discretion police carry. She further writes that the policing of race as well as space serves a broader purpose of social control of minority communities. This understanding of police is important for understanding the relationship between the police and Black citizens of Indianapolis. Agitation by the police within Black communities is a prevalent aspect of much of the second half of the 20th century in America. This understanding of the place sets the stage for police interactions with Black citizens in Indianapolis.

History of Police in Indianapolis

Creating a detailed history of police operations in the city of Indianapolis is no small feat, as much of the history of police practice and response have been lost to time. As such, existing literature provides a sufficient account of overall police practice and change throughout the years. What is evident from an examination of the current literature is the connection between the IPD and different political agendas. Secondly, the scholarly work on this topic confirms that

instances of police brutality against free Black people have had a space in police interactions long before they were filmed on phones.

KKK Presence in Police Activity: 1920's-30's

A history of the police state in Indianapolis would be incomplete without a discussion of KKK presence in the political arena during the early 1920's. Stanley Warren (2007), an author in Indiana's African American Heritage points out that some historians who study the operations of the KKK in Indiana claim that the Klan was not a major factor in increased segregation practices. (33) Warren (2007), in his chapter titled *The Evolution of Secondary Schooling for Blacks in Indianapolis,* asserts that much of the progress towards full segregation occurred "when the Klan was making an indelible political imprint on the city and state" (p.34.) Growing dissatisfaction of Black people in white spaces increased with increased Klan presence in political operations. This becomes even more apparent through Pierce's analysis of the 1926 local elections. The Klan had been rumored to be associated with the state's Republican party, with obvious denial by Republican party officials. The Klan, "equally aware of the negative effect their association could have on Republican efforts, denied any affiliation with the Republican party" as well (p.75.) Yet party rallies always encompassed Klan ideology, with Pierce, in his dissertation, quoting George S. Elliot stating, "We are here in the interest of the United Protestant Clubs of Indianapolis" (p.75.) Support for the Klan was strong enough that "public officials, even those who opposed the hooded order, were forced to accommodate Klan requests for parade permits, police protection, and use of public grounds" (Cobin, 1994, p. 162.) It is here that the police state, in response to white militia groups, remained supportive and protective of the Klan's hateful ideology towards Black people, Jews, and Catholics, exemplifying once again, the lack of apoliticism in the historic IPD that would carry into the contemporary.

The Klan, acting as political agents of the local government, drove their agenda into many facets of Indiana political life, including police activity. The biggest campaign of the period led by the Klan was the fight for prohibition. Klan initiatives argued that raids were the only feasible measure to stop the illegal trade of alcohol. Claiming that the police were responsible for "[tipping] off bootleggers, and ultimately diminishing any chance of success of recent liquor raids in the area, there was an insistence on gathering their own information on those in the illegal trade and would then put pressure on local law enforcement to act. (Cobin, p.167)

Arguing that the construction of the police state is in direct line with the "political economy and incorporates the whole of the legislative and administrative regulation of the community," Neocleus arguments are supported when analyzing Klan activities with police and the overall ties to Indianapolis government. (Neocleus, 2000.) The activities of the Klan and their influence on police practices were major factors in increased policing of Black neighborhoods as well as the overall segregation of Black people in education. But ultimately, direct, Klan influence did not last, mostly due to the conviction of their leader Dwight C. Stephenson for murder and rape. And with the growing population of Black people, the Black vote soon grew and shifted away from the Republican party that was pandering to the Klan. What remained was a segregated city with a police force looking to rebuild its image and social standing in the community.

A Period of Change: 1948-1978

The period of 1948-1978 would prove to be a period of massive restructuring of the IPD, and this time period is central to the following work. This period of change is examined in great detail by William Selke and Harold Pepinsky in their article of the politics of police reporting.

Through focusing on this thirty year period, both authors analyze the changes within the IPD as well as the corresponding change of American law enforcement overall.

It was in 1948 that the newly appointed police chief in Indianapolis, Chief Rouls, announced a "war on crime" (Selke, 1982, p.329.) With mayoral support, the IPD issued a crackdown on illegal actions, including those performed by minors as well as a "heavier traffic enforcement, especially against speeders" (Selke, 329.) This combined with a stark in police personnel meant a rise in the theme of professionalism. These reforms were meant to legitimize the police and gain support from the community. In addition to these measures, IPD began to stress the importance of "responsiveness" and would encourage "citizen participation in crime control" (p.335.) By 1960, the police and the citizenry were being "locked into a symbiotic relationship in which police funding rested primarily on data about reactive police work supplied by citizens." This points to the overall function of police, as argued, again, by Neocleus: to maintain social order.

Other initiatives were put into place during this 30 year period that ultimately failed to reduce crime, as outlined by Selke and Pepinsky:

The creation of a twenty-man Homicide Squad (Indianapolis News, January 22, 1948, p. 1), more officers put on foot patrol (Indianapolis News, February 6, 1948, Sec. II, p. 1), walkie-talkies (Indianapolis News, August 24, 1948, p. 1), tear gas to subdue drunks (Indianapolis News, May 14, 1948, p. 22), stripping corporals of rank (Indianapolis News, January 7, 1. (p.332)

To deflect further criticism of their failure to control crime, IPD and the prosecutor's office chose to revert to proactive policing yet again, cracking down heavily on gamblers and

prostitutes. This directly correlates with arguments made by Alex Vitale and his book The End of Policing. For Vitale, police, both historically and presently, is not well- suited to stop the kingpins, murderers, and drug distributors, but rather work to police the homeless, sex workers, and dealers.

Closing Out the Period: The Birth of Crime Statistics in the IPD

Through this period emerged the concept of crime statistics. Advertised as unbiased, statistical data that can measure crime and hopefully prevent it, crime statistics became a main aspect of the IPD process. Sarah Brayne, author of Predict and Surveil: Data, Discretion, and the Future of Policing, discusses this representation of statistical methods of policing as "the answer to constrained resources and claims about police bias and discrimination." (Brayne, p.6) However, as Brayne argues, these statistics are simply an indication of the amount of discretion police officers have when assessing crime as well as prevention. Selke and Pepinsky are sure to discuss this as well by quoting Sir Josiah Stamp regarding official statistics: ". . . what you must never forget is that every one of these figures comes in the first instance from the . . . (village watchman), who just puts down what he damn pleases" (1929, pp. 258-259). Nevertheless, Indianapolis indeed takes part in the "modernization" of police in America by opting into crime statistics as the method for tracking potential areas for crime.

The end of the period marked more obstacles for the IPD. In 1974, *The Indianapolis Star*, another newspaper, began an investigative report on IPD corruption, with updates on every front page every day from the start of the year all the way to the beginning of July. Information was collected "from as many as 45 disgruntled IPD officers." It was found that "payoffs, case fixing, and shakedowns were said to be a routine part of vice enforcement, and allegations extended to

the skimming of police charity funds and associations with known burglars" (p.337.) This would not be the only time IPD would be accused of incompetence, as we will see later.

The literature above accomplishes the task of conceptualizing police function overall but is also specific to the locale in question. Through this, one can gain a better understanding of the role of the police and their position in the city. However, what is missing from all the pieces of literature is an in-depth look at public perceptions of the use of police and how the public responds to instances of injustice. With this in mind, we move to the historical analysis of the Indianapolis Recorder.

Methodology

Making sense of public perceptions of the effectiveness of the police requires a great deal of analysis. But many instances of misconduct in IPD are, as previously mentioned, not as well documented, as many police reports are not accessible through public records or were lost in transitional periods with new police chiefs. The current literature surrounding Indianapolis certainly provides an overview of police and community relations to a point, but what is missing are the voices from the actual community under analysis. For this reason, the unit of analysis for this work is issues of the Indianapolis Recorder ranging from 1965-1980. In terms of how the archived newspapers were surveyed and chosen, a survey of articles from every five years was examined as well as any further research necessary for better understanding a certain story or if a story was present in multiple issues. From this survey, I compiled articles that supported overall patterns within the collection of issues around the time period. The patterns are listed here:

- Language Surrounding police perception
- Police and Mental Health
- Black Power in Indianapolis

- NAACP Involvement
- Protest in Indianapolis

What will be discussed are the detailed stories and issues from the Recorder that document the function and nature of the police in the Indianapolis community. Additionally, an analysis of these findings will reveal overall patterns within the language surrounding the IPD from the voices who suffered the most under its control. Through focusing on the post-Civil Rights era from 1965 to 1980, this textual analysis will work to understand the language surrounding public safety, how the Black people of Indianapolis responded to instances of police brutality and violence, and, hopefully, develop a concise history of community response within the city.

The purpose of using this form of analysis is two-fold. Firstly, the analysis of patterns in the sample of newspaper articles will establish overall themes of authentic, Black perceptions of police at the time, as well as how information was reported to the community at large. Secondly, a look at the language surrounding these police interactions and Black people is indicative of the failures of the police state regarding preventing crime or keeping peace in the local community. The hope is that combining these methods will provide an adequate representation of not only the IPD but make the argument that the true function of the police state is that of fear and order rather than protection.

The Indianapolis Recorder: A Brief Introduction

Founded in 1895, The Indianapolis Recorder is Indiana's longest-running Black newspaper, with weekly news reported even today. What started as a weekly church newsletter soon one of the top African American publications in the nation. In 1897, the Recorder moved from the church bulletin to a weekly newspaper, reporting on local news in the Indianapolis

community as well as national events affecting the Black community. In the early decades of the 1900s, the Recorder reported on community organizations and businesses, heralding the achievements of Black people across the state. In addition, news stories and editorials on the socio-economic and political climate that affected the daily lives of its community became more prominent, becoming major advocates of Black participation in World War I, assuming that Black participation would bring better jobs and a better quality of life for patriots and their families. Instead, the end of the war brought an escalation of lynching and race riots, and the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. The Recorder and other Black reporters began to write extensively on these activities. The Recorder continued to report on the Civil Rights actions of prominent figures, including A. Philip Randolph, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, Thurgood Marshall, and John F. Kennedy. During the 1980s and 1990s, the Recorder continued its extensive reporting of Indiana Black Expo and the Circle City Classic, two nationally recognized events that take place in Indianapolis every year. The newspaper continues to publish, moving most of its operations to an online platform. The Indianapolis Recorder stands as the longest Black-run newspaper in Indiana and it the fourth oldest surviving paper in the nation.

Why The Recorder?

When thinking about the purpose of this paper and the sources necessary for constructing a proper narrative surrounding police and the community, the Indianapolis Recorder stands as the best source for analysis. As previously mentioned, Indianapolis had four Black run newspapers during the early 20th century. However, by 1898, The Freeman had stopped publication and the World followed suit soon after in 1925. Considering the time period of this paper, a newspaper that was still publishing in the middle of the 20th century was a requirement. Further, the creation

of the Recorder came at a time when most of the news surrounding Black issues were national events. George Stewart, the creator of The Recorder, believed that the Black community of Indianapolis needed a source that placed emphasis on local news, one that would be an effective vehicle for articulating African American concerns. Lastly, much of the Recorder published conflicting arguments, no matter how unpopular in the community, limiting bias whenever possible. With this in mind, The Indianapolis Recorder serves as an excellent source for finding not only the language of police perceptions, but also centers Black voices and thought, a vital part of this project.

Results: Patterns in the Research

As previously stated, the current literature surrounding police and the Black community in Indianapolis is sparse, to say the least. Further, analysis surrounding the language of this public perception has been left to the archived issues of the Indianapolis Recorder. For this reason, what follows is a presentation of patterns found in the sample of articles from the Recorder ranging from 1965- 1975.

The Language Surrounding Police Perception

When looking at this time period, there is much that can be said about the patterns of language surrounding police brutality. Throughout all of the 60's, much of the Indianapolis Recorder had numerous issues reporting on cases of police brutality, both in and out of Indianapolis. In the year 1965, the Recorder had around 46 issues that had discussions surrounding police brutality. Writing often as the forgotten city amidst turmoil, many of the headlines write about the lack of change in conditions despite the Civil Right Act of 1964. In one issue in July of 1965, Andrew Ramsey, a long-time columnist for The Recorder and teacher at

the local Black high school wrote that "police brutality is still one of the ugly facts of life for negroes in Indianapolis and elsewhere in Indiana." He further writes the role of the NAACP in these police brutality cases, writing that the Indianapolis branch is working diligently to fight them as well as protest. The Recorder also reported on places outside the city, often commenting on the abuses in neighboring cities such as Muncie and Evansville and as far as Chicago and St. Louis.

At this time, overall perceptions of the police are what is to be expected: negative. Again, Andrew Ramsey writes in a June 1965 issue that though the "Ghandian philosophy" adopted by Martin Luther King Jr. certainly served its purpose for the Black community, the Black man of the day is "tired of turning the other cheek" (p.5). Further, he alludes to the rise of the "inarticulate Negroes who are the hardest hit by discrimination and by police brutality" (p.5). Other articles become even more overt when discussing the incompetence of the police in other states. For example, in a March 1965 issue, Pat Stewart calls the Alabama police "redneck deputies" in response to violence that occurred a couple of weeks before (p.1).

As time goes by, the language surrounding police and their function in the Black community begins to gain more nuance, specifically around the overall use of police as it pertains to the Black community. In a June 1970 issue, a reader who wrote into the Recorder discusses the ways in which Communism is not the problem facing America, but rather police brutality. They write:

"I must say here that Communism did not create roach laden rat-infested ghettos; it does not compel black men to fight and die in Vietnam for the freedom they are denied at home; it has not burned and hanged thousands of Black people because of the pigmentation of their skin; it did not create discriminatory job practices, segregated educational and transportation facilities.

Those who have suffered brutality have not suffered from communist brutality but rather American police brutality" (p.9)

While there is certainly a clear mistrust of the police and its ability to protect the Balck population, much of the conversation about possible solutions was around reform of the institution when looking at issues of the Recorder. In September of 1980, the Recorder reported that due to deep mistrust between the community and law enforcement, there would be a series of Police/Community Relations seminars throughout Marion County. The seminars were meant to increase dialogue between the two groups as well as increase an understanding of different viewpoints. As previously stated, reforms such as these were prominent throughout the period of 1948-78 in Indianapolis, with not much changing but rather evolving to fit the new language surrounding the Black community: from overt anti-Blackness to the overall criminalization of the community at large.

Police Brutality and Mental Health

Pulling Out a Story: Case of Thomas Washington

Another aspect found upon review of one of the biggest cases of police brutality that would affect the following years of reporting on police brutality in Indianapolis was the case of Thomas Washington in 1965. In August of 1964, police were called to the home of Thomas and Mary Washington. Mary made the call because her husband, Thomas, had been released from Methodist Hospital and was not well. At the time of the call, Mrs. Washington had stated that "he was a little out of his mind—walking the floor, talking, singing and preaching so I called the police on Tuesday, Aug. 17, asking for help in getting him back in the hospital." Upon the arrival of the police, officers reported that Mr. Washington became irrational, so he was arrested for

disorderly conduct and taken to prison. With the promise of sending Mr. Washington to the hospital after he was processed, the officers took him to the county jail and stated they would call Mrs. Washington once he was sent to the hospital. After no call that night, Mrs. Washington contacted the police department and was told that Washington had been held for disorderly conduct while in jail and would be released after his court hearing the next morning.

According to Mr. Washington, he was beaten while in lockup and sent to a "closet-size room" and was forced to stay there without food or water until taken to court the next morning. After being taken to the Marion County jail after his hearing, he became very ill and was sent to the general hospital. Upon further examination, it was found that Washington had 6 broken ribs and a punctured lung and had stated he received these injuries while in lock up. Washington spent the week in intensive care and returned home in great pain and confined to his home. The disorderly conduct charge was dismissed soon after by Judge William Sharp, but in a report absolving all of the officers, the police chief at the time, Chief Noel Jones, stated that a "review of all written reports failed to indicate that excessive force was used by any police officer during this arrest 'except when he was restrained from injuring himself in the door of the jail cell.'" (2, October 1965.)

Due to the Recorder's interest in the case, Washington was able to secure legal aid, something that is not promised to many Black people in the face of police brutality cases and was the only newspaper to ever publish the story. Attorney Rufus Kuykendall accused Chief Jones of "whitewashing the whole matter," arguing that there was a clear presence of excessive use of violence and that officers should have been charged. Jones was responsible for absolving the officers of any wrongdoing, stating that "a review of all written reports failed to indicate that excessive force was used by any police officer during this arrest 'except when he was restrained

from injuring himself in the door of the jail cell." What followed was extensive reporting from the Recorder providing updates, help from the NAACP, and a call for a FBI probe to be sent to Indianapolis to conduct an investigation of IPD.

Black Power in Indianapolis

Another prominent part of reporting during this period is an emphasis on Black power and resistance amidst talks of Civil Rights. As previously mentioned, much of the Black community in the city of Indianapolis remained relatively quiet in terms of full-on civil disobedience. But in any community, there will be differences in thought. This is especially true when looking at the presence of Black power ideology within the city. There are numerous articles and interviews with different members of the Indianapolis community and elsewhere that hold sentiments of the Black Power movement of the 1960s. Adam Powell, a prominent politician at the time, writes that Black power has come to mean "whatever any newspaper columnist, editorial writer, civil rights leader or white racist wants it to mean." Outlining famous ideologies, including those of A. Phillip Randolph, Martin Luther King Jr., and Stokely Carmichael. He then proceeds to outline his understanding of Black Power:

> Black power is not anti-white. Black power includes everybody who wishes to work together, vote together and worship together. Black power makes no moral judgment about white people. It simply re-affirms the integrity and self-respect of Black people" (p.3).

Reporting on the Black Power movement elsewhere, one September 1966 issue contains an article that reports on the possible creation of a third "Black" party at the National Convention. This group, proudly stating Black power, is reported by the Recorder stating that the

"elimination of "Uncle Tom's" as leaders of the Black community, as well as expressing the overall need for Black mobilization (p.1).

The Recorder is also sure to address the criticisms of the Black Power movement as well. In a July 1966 issue, the Recorder reports much of the criticism, including critiques made by Roy Wilkins, the executive director of the NAACP, who stated that Black power is a "bad choice of words. It implies antiwhite and we don't want anything to do with it" (p.3) Further in this article are more common critiques of the movement made by members of the Black community, including King's and the late Senator John Lewis' sentiments on the phrase.

Association with the Black power movement and specifically, with the Black Panthers often meant increased exposure and interactions with law enforcement. In a May of 1968 issue, The Recorder reports that Civil Rights groups were planning to march the City County Building after the wrongful arrest of two Black men, Melvin Johnson and Eldridge Morrison Jr., alias Omar Shabazz, who were accused of assaulting a police officer. Shabazz was not only fined but forced to spend 120 days in jail for disorderly conduct while walking with another person near Monument Circle in downtown Indianapolis. His involvement with the Black Panthers soon came into question and was given additional conviction for alleged participation in a plot to "shake up the white power structure" by assassinating Chief Churchill, the police chief at the time" (p.1).

Upon further look into his conviction, The Recorder reported comments from Shabazz's lawyer. In his brief, Mr. Fasig makes clear that the verdict resulted from a framing operation led by the questionable actions of an undercover agent named Al Watkins. He not only argues that Watkins lured Shabazz and Johnson into a burglary scheme while undercover but questions the legality of using the tape framing the two men in the proceedings. Fasig goes on to state that In

their zeal to find evil conspirators, they (Churchill and Pearcy) hastily conducted, at fantastic cost to the public" (p.16). It is important to note that shortly after the conviction, Watkins was fired from the police department and rehired as a civilian employee for, among other things, lying about his age to join the police department.

NAACP Involvement

One of the biggest patterns that can be found throughout each news story or case of police brutality is the presence of the Indianapolis chapter of the NAACP. This is true for both of the stories mentioned. But this is not all that the Indy chapter took part in as an organization. In this June 25th, 1966 issue, the Recorder reports that the Indianapolis chapter of the NAACP will select delegates to represent the chapter at the annual convention. The agenda for the convention included a Legal Redress Committee focused on police brutality and harassment. Not only is there a chapter of the NAACP, but Indianapolis is active and a part of the organization on a national level.

The NAACP certainly played a major role in cases of brutality both in Indianapolis as well as all over Indiana. Not only did they take on cases of police brutality and provide support to the families, but they also provide legal aid as well as report updates on the case to the rest of the community, updates that are then reported by the Recorder, often being the only newspaper to do so. It is a very well-oiled system, providing another example of the ways in which Black people in Indianapolis, historically, have had to foster their own support networks in order to provide safety where certain state apparatuses fail to do so.

Another example of the NAACP's involvement in seeking justice for police brutality victims is with the tragic killing of 19-year-old Byron Richardson in May of 1975. Richardson

was stopped for a traffic violation, and a high-speed chase ensued shortly after. There was a lot of controversy around the shooting given that the police officer who fired the weapon claimed that the gun was discharged accidentally. For this reason, the NAACP called for an investigation into the IPD. In the June 7th issue discussing the case, the Recorder shares aspects of a letter sent by the NAACP to the mayor as well as the police chief at the time, Kenneth B. Hale, following the incident. Written by A.D. Pinckney Jr. president of the Indianapolis NAACP, and Williard B. Ransom, the NAACP's legal redress chairman, they write:

"In the past, the Indianapolis Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has been alarmed at the shootings of black citizens by white members of the Indianapolis Department— most under very questionable circumstances. The NAACP views the latest killing of a black citizen as a reprehensible act without any justification" (p.13).

The two further write that the killing of Richardson signified an "irrational racist attitude, harbored by some members of the police force," as well as the overall indication of improper training in the use of firearms" (p.13). These sentiments, reported by The Recorder, shed light on the ways in which groups such as the NAACP are able to support their community as a coalition, often due to the fact that the story would probably be forgotten or not even reported by the mainstream media.

Protest In Indianapolis:

When looking for protests that occurred in the Black community of Indianapolis, what is found is another complex and revealing story. One instance of overt protest that can be found is in a May of 1968 issue of the Recorder. By this time, there were numerous failed attempts by the administration to act upon the numerous complaints made by Black citizens against the police

department. George P Stewart II writes that there were seven open cases of police brutality that were under investigation with no positive action taking place. The meeting was prompted after a Black man was alleged to have been shoved through a glass window after fighting with police officers at a local restaurant. 20 Black activist leaders, including the chairman of the Radical Action Project, Charles Hendricks, planned a meeting with the mayor to discuss, but the mayor delayed the scheduled meeting as the leaders were told mayor had left for the day. After another unsuccessful meeting with the mayor, Hendricks is quoted as saying, "If our only resource is to fight back, then we'll fight back" (p.1). These sentiments continue to appear in different issues. In an August 1967 issue, Baron Harris attempts to outline the anger and frustrations that come with declaring Black Power. They write that "Today's B**lack** man is an angry B**lack** man and will die for what he thinks is his just rights under the flag. He's no longer complacent and will stop at nothing to attain his end" (p.11).

Protest becomes a more active resource for the Black community to come together in the 70's. On June 7, 1975, a Recorder issue documents a protest for June 8th after the shooting of 19-year-old Byron Richardson by white police officers early that May. Richardson was stopped for a traffic violation, and a high-speed chase ensued shortly after. There was a lot of controversy around the shooting given that the police officer who fired the weapon claimed that the gun was discharged accidentally. In addition to the call for an investigation made by the NAACP, a rally was held June 8th at the Indiana World War Memorial and was advertised to the Black community as "a visible demonstration that the black community of Indianapolis will no longer tolerate indiscriminate police shootings on the streets of Indy" (p.1). Organizers of the protest were a mix of community leaders that ranged from clergy to organizational leaders. Comments included those from Dr. White, an organizer for the protest, is also quoted stating, "Indianapolis

police have treated black citizens with disrespect and cruelty for decades and there is no sign of change" (p.1).

It is important to remember that in finding these common themes, one can begin to understand the ways in which police interactions with the Black community are almost always dangerous, harmful, and overall, repetitive. Numerous issues surrounding instances of brutality and misconduct led by the police span all across this period, with little change in the structure of the department. Because of this, one can begin to see the ways in which agitation and frustration increase within the city, leaving the community with limited options other than outright opposition.

Discussion: Making Sense of the Patterns from the Recorder

Based on the findings presented from the Recorder, there is much to be said in terms of analysis regarding the function of the Recorder as a tool for not only information dissemination, but also mobilization of the community at large.

Analysis Point 1: Language and Police Perception:

A general, as well as unsurprising, finding found while surveying the different issues of the Recorder during this time, unsurprising finding found through surveying The Recorder during this time is the idea that the language surrounding police violence within the Recorder supports the idea that there is an overall negative perception of the police within the Black, Indianapolis community. Further, the language in the Recorder supports the argument that the police do not serve and protect but are a direct extension of government action and belief.

The existing literature certainly makes clear that the function of the police is not to serve and protect, at least when it applies to the Black community. This can firstly be seen through

Klan initiatives of the 1920s throughout Indianapolis as well as Indiana. As previously stated in the literature review, though some historians of Indianapolis argue that Klan activities were not a major factor of racial oppression by the state, Warren (2007) asserts that much of the segregation practices carried out by the local government took place during a time when the Klan was heavily involved in the political arena. Understanding that the police act as an extension of state operations, as argued earlier by Brass, these events certainly lay the foundation for discriminatory practices as well as people within the police department.

Further, many of the stories of police brutality during this period in Indianapolis simply outline the ways in which the police are not equipped to serve the community they are tasked to protect. This is evident when reflecting on the case of Thomas Washington. Knowing that her husband was in desperate need of care, Martha is quoted stating that, "he was a little out of his mind—walking the floor, talking, singing and preaching so I called the police on Tuesday, Aug. 17, asking for help in getting him back in the hospital" (p.2). Thinking the police would help, she called with the hope that the police would be able to deescalate the situation. But what followed was an arrest, severe injuries that would affect him for the rest of his life, and ultimately no justice for the acts committed against him. Police even today are not trained to handle and deescalate mental health episodes. This lack of training compounded with the overt racism within the IPD at the time meant that members of the community such as Thomas Washington stood no chance against police violence and corruption. Ultimately, the language of the community is clear: the police are not serving and protecting, and the voices of the people affected support this claim.

Analysis Point 2: Black Power and its Consequences

Another aspect of the findings that deserves deeper analysis is the role of the Black Power movement and the consequences of association. This association was not only scrutinized in Indianapolis but was also grounds for subsequent incarceration and violence.

The Black Panther Party, an organization that fully adopted the ideologies of the Black Power, was not founded as a chapter in Indianapolis until 1969. Yet Black Power was a part of the rhetoric of the Recorder as well as members of the community long before then. This is evident when reading the sentiments of Adam Powell, who shares his beliefs about what Black power means for the Black citizens of Indianapolis. Shedding light on the injustices that his population was facing at the time, he writes that to demand equality is "to seek Black power, what I call audacious power — the power to build Black institutions or splendid achievement" (p.3).

While some people within the Black community of Indianapolis certainly agreed and supported the sentiments made by community members such as Adam Powell, there were others within the community who actively fought against the cries for Black Power. For example, Lillian Smith, author of Works on Negro Equality, left the advisory board of CORE, Congress of Racial Equality, due to their adoption of Black Power sentiments. She is quoted in a July 1966 issue of the Recorder stating that the leaders were the "new killers of the dream" (p.2). Further, she argues that Black Power and its adoption means the "use of violence in affecting racial change" (p.2). This discourse outlines a number of points that must be addressed. At the time when Black Power is taking shape in the city of Indianapolis, many community leaders from earlier years are still an active part of mobilization efforts against inequality, including police injustice. But it is important to note the generational differences here. Early members of the Civil Rights Movement adopted many different methods of civil disobedience to garner change. Additionally, many of the older generation understand the vicious retaliation that can come from attempting to

dismantle racism. Black Power was a dangerous idea, one that could end in death. But after years of calls for reform, many within the Black community of Indianapolis were tired.

But disagreements within the community were not the only responses to the idea of Black Power. This is evident when looking at the wrongful imprisonment of Omar Shabazz. Through his association with the Black Panthers, Shabazz quickly became a target for wrongful conviction. The entrapment tactics led by the undercover agent, Al Watkins, represent a common trend of the time period. It reflects a long trend of framing members of a movement in order to suppress action as well as garner fear for anyone who chooses to take part. This deliberate action to "trap local Black Power advocates" received a lot of pushback from the Black community, and further confirms the pervasive nature of the police department. Stories such as Shabazz's act as a clear example of the suppression of the Black Power movement in Indianapolis, and it further confirms the need to report on it. The Recorder, through printing not only the discourse surrounding Black Power at the time, aids in the retelling of the history regarding police violence in the city of Indianapolis. Further, exposing the community to more than one way of making sense of what is going on is important for community health and supporting the people at large.

Analysis Point 3: NAACP Participation

A third point of analysis worth discussing when examining reports of the Recorder surrounding police violence against the Black community is the role of the NAACP throughout each instance of police brutality. NAACP and their work in this community is prominent. But more than that, they are responsible for supporting the community when the police are the direct perpetrators of violence. In Pierce's analysis of the role of Black organizations in the Indianapolis community, what is made clear is that amidst severe oppression. the Black community of Indianapolis responded with the creation of networks or organizations to "ease

their discomfort and to satisfy their needs." (1996, p. 31). Pierce also details some of the actions championed by the group, including the pressure the organization put on Hooks Drug store and the Bell Telephone Company to hire Black women as counter girls and operators. They also monitored defense plants to ensure that Black people were allowed to attend job training classes

The NAACP remained active and maintained a steady presence in the Black community of Indianapolis throughout the 60s and 70s. Calling for numerous investigations into the corruption taking place in the department, victims such as Thomas Washington as well as Leroy Richardson were able to secure legal aid amidst times of turmoil through the organization. Further, the Indianapolis chapter of the NAACP was active nationally, sending delegates to the National Convention to take part in a Legal Redress Committee focused on police brutality and harassment. In these instances, the NAACP not only provides resources that are denied to the Black community, but they play a pivotal role in reminding victims that they are not alone. Historically, Black people have and continue to cultivate their own spaces and provide resources to their community more, and often better, than state apparatuses. Additionally, these spaces often act as a shield against these apparatuses, the police being no exception.

Analysis Point 4: Protest in Indianapolis

The fourth, and most surprising finding when looking at the Recorder, was the ways in which the newspaper outlines numerous as well as varying forms of protest throughout the time period when it comes to police brutality. The literature surrounding Black life in Indianapolis certainly points to different factors that contribute to these varying forms. As previously mentioned, Klan influence, though not as present in local politics by the 60s, has its place in the history of Indianapolis as well as their existing presence throughout this time period. Additionally, Pierce (1996) writes that in comparison to other northern cities that experienced

some forms of racially motivated urban disturbances, “Indianapolis remained remarkably calm” (p.2). And while it is true that Indianapolis had no large riots in comparison to its neighboring cities, unrest and outcry were a part of the Black community here.

When thinking about what protest can mean for a community, it is important to remember that protest can take many forms. One can argue that the Recorder played an active role in protesting themes of violence. The purpose of the Recorder, as it is self-proclaimed, is to create a publication that would speak to and for the people. Disseminating ideas that are not held by everyone allows for truth and justice for the community they represent. believes in. Explain how these forms of resistance change depending on a number of factors and depending on each instance. Further, outright rallies and protests begin to become more prominent forms of mobilization in the later part of this timeline. Ultimately, resistance looks different in the city of Indianapolis. But that does not mean there was no resistance at all. Through looking at the different forms of resistance throughout the time period, one can better see and understand that.

Conclusion:

Overall, this detailed history of police presence in Black communities in Indianapolis makes one idea very clear: Police violence is nothing new, very common in Black communities, and there is a legacy of challenges for reform. In addition, although Indianapolis did not make major national news during this period of Civil Rights, mobilization on the ground was still a prominent part of Indianapolis. Recognition of the language surrounding police violence through the voices of those affected reveals a very revealing counternarrative that is long overdue. Analysis of the language can also explain a lot about the community at large.

This work is not only a first step toward filling the gaps in the history of the Black community, but this research is also very specific to the times and places that have been chosen. But this is not to say that this work cannot aid other academic literature. Ultimately, cities such as Indianapolis would greatly benefit from this form of research. Advancement in this work would include not only analysis of community perceptions of police, but also a dedication to disseminating those perceptions. This leads to a better understanding of how we can mobilize for change. Research aids in the proper recognition of frustrations within the community, allows for discourse, as the Recorder did, and helps mobilize the community to demand change. Overall, the core of this research is meant to provide further proof that as an institution, the police serve as a form of social control rather than a mechanism for safety and protection. As more literature is produced that accepts this idea, there is a possibility for a shift from a state of fear to a state of peace.

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