

Report: Progress on King's 'dream' mixed

by UPI

WASHINGTON - Progress toward U.S. racial equality and social change envisioned by civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. is spotty 40 years after his death. As the country Monday observed a holiday in honor of the Baptist minister's birth in 1929, USA Today revisited three of the 125 cities where race riots occurred after King's assassination in Memphis in 1968: Washington; Kansas City, Mo.; and Chicago. Only in the U.S. capital was rebuilding and a more vibrant business and housing environment reported by longtime residents, the newspaper said. In Chicago and Kansas City, vacant lots remain where buildings burned in the riots and others stand empty. "Dr. King's final battle was a battle of economics," Marc Morial, president of the National Urban League, told the newspaper. "Disparity in America has to be at the top of the national agenda again. Dr. King said it in 1968 and it remains true. This is his unfinished work." At least 46 people were killed in the 1968 riots, with another 2,600 injured and 21,000 arrested.

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