

# Report on Last Thursday's Disturbance

R.R.-1

On last Thursday, March 28, 1968, the city of Memphis was rocked by an outburst of violence. This was the first time that the city had experienced such a thing and it will probably experience that much more violence if it does not act in good faith toward the striking workers.

To get down to the problem at hand I interviewed two people, who participated in last Thursday's march, which was led by Dr. Martin Luther King.

The first person I interviewed was a young man. His name was James Thurber, not his real name, but I will just call him that for right now. James is 22 yrs. old, he participated in the march on last Thursday and this is his account of what happened:

On Thursday, March 28, 1968, I participated in the march led by Dr. -

Martin Luther King, I like all the  
rest that were marching had my placard  
and was really looking forward to  
enjoying the march. As I rounded the  
corner of Beale and Main, I heard  
something which sounded like glass  
being broken. I turned around and saw  
people scattering all over the place, some  
were dodging bricks and bottles, others  
were looking for a place to hide. By  
now the police had arrived on the scene,  
telling everyone to turn around and  
head back to the church. As the people  
headed back to the church, the policemen  
began beating on them and pushing them.  
Sometimes as many as 2 or 3 policemen  
would attack one person at a time. One  
lady was knocked down and beaten about  
the head until the blood started  
pouring from her head. I made it  
back to the church and was sitting down.  
All of a sudden tear gas started coming  
into the church. I knew then that  
it was time for me to leave.

Mr. Thurber's statement ended right there and it was apparent that the policemen did not use good judgement in handling the situation.

The next person I interviewed was a young lady whose name I do not care to mention. I will call her Geraldine Riley. Miss Riley is 17 yrs. old, and she also participated in the march last Thursday.

She told me that, the march started off peacefully, until she saw some boys throw rocks and bottles into windows. Fortunately for her she had not yet exactly on Main street. She and some friends of hers, ran into a nearby home. She told me that as she looked out the window of the home, she could see the policemen beating people needlessly. Anyone that they happened to run upon, got hit with the policemen's

stick, or they had mace sprayed  
into their faces and then they  
were beaten.

From these two eye witness  
accounts by these two people, I  
can conclude that it was an  
error on both parts.

The young people who started  
the disturbance by breaking out  
the windows ruined what would  
be a perfect march.

The policemen did not use good  
judgement in handling the situation  
and virtually they have set the  
people that participated last Thursday  
in the march, against them.