

The March In Memphis

S.J.-

On Thursday, April 28, 1968 a riot broke out here in Memphis. I did not witness the disturbance personally but I interviewed my boyfriend, Edward Thomas McSwine.

From the conversation I held with him I learned that there were so many people that he wasn't able to see as far as the crowd extended. He said the crowd was rather peaceful at first awaiting the coming of their leader, Martin L. King. When he did arrive the crowd proceeded down Hernando to Beale carrying signs of all types. He (the fellow I interviewed) carried one saying, "Jeb has no soul."

By this time the marchers who had made it to Beale and Main had started breaking windows and looting goods from different stores. The police who were on the scene started trying to get the marchers under control by spraying mace. He saw some fellows running down the streets carrying plates of material, liquor, and house hold appliances, they had gotten from the stores. He saw some

boys chasing a cop. After the marchers returned to the parade the police sprayed mace in the air. It was a bit, little children were crying wanting to go home.

Within my community there was a bit of disturbance. McFerrin store, which is one the corner of the street on which I live, was burned but not badly. There was a cleaners on Carnes Avenue that was burned beyond hope. Several of the liquor stores had smashed windows. In one of the unit buildings at Melrose High School a slight fire was started.

Parents were disturbed and were calling and going over to the school to get their children.

My personal opinion of the march as a whole was that it was effective in that now all the small and some of the large businessmen are now exerting pressure on the mayor and other city counsels to resolve the strike.