

Memphis Riot Blasts Racial Calm

As the Memphis sanitation strike entered its seventh week last Thursday, the uneasy truce between the city and its black community collapsed in violence and disorder.

Tension mounted early Thursday morning in anticipation of Dr. Martin Luther King's march up Main Street, which was scheduled for 10:00. Police battled groups of students attempting to leave classes at several predominantly Negro high schools.

The march itself was the occasion of the day's worst outbreak, but isolated incidents continued through late afternoon. By midnight, order was apparently restored, and city officials permitted sanitation workers to resume daily marches on sidewalks along Main Friday afternoon.

A curfew imposed Thursday night, however, remained in force through the weekend; and 4000 National Guardsmen were still on duty in the city.

One person was killed and at

least 85 injured. Most were taken to John Gaston Hospital with head injuries, treated and released. Police reported 276 arrested, and a preliminary estimate by the Insurance Council of Memphis set damages, exclusive of fires, at \$400,000. Fire and Police Department officials were still tabulating figures this weekend on arson and looting.

King Sparks Effort

Thursday's march, the focal point of the disturbances, resulted from Dr. King's first appearance

in Memphis during the strike on March 18. He told a crowd of 13,000 strikers and sympathizers at Mason Temple Church of God in Christ that they should all go on strike for a day. "No black workers should go to their jobs that day, and no black students should go to school," he said.

After the address, King conferred with strike leaders and ministers, and promised to return that Friday and lead a mass march downtown. A heavy snowfall prevented King's departure from At-

lanta Friday, and the march was then rescheduled for Thursday.

It was to begin at Clayborn Temple A.M.E. Church, on Hernando and Pontotoc; and would progress up Hernando to Beale, and on Beale to Main. Police planned to block off Main and Second Street from Poplar to Beale.

March Begins

People began assembling at Clayborn Temple around 7:30 Thursday morning, but King's arrival was delayed until 10:30. The march got underway at 11:00, with King and members of "Community on the March for Equality," the minister's organization supporting the sanitation strike, in the lead. The sanitation workers followed as a group.

March leaders were worried about the youths who remained on the sidewalks as the march began, rather than joining the body of the marchers in the street.

Police estimated the number marching at 6,600, but Negro leaders claimed 20,000 as a more accurate figure. "When the front of the line reached Main, people were still passing the Temple," said Rev. Harold Middlebrook, Associate Minister of Greater Middle Baptist Church and a youth organizer with C.O.M.E. (Distance from Clayborn Temple to the intersection of Beale and Main is about half a mile.)

Windows Break

Violence broke out on Beale Street as the head of the column reached Main and McCall about 11:20. Steve Johnston, a Southwestern student who was serving as a parade marshal, said that a single youth broke a window at Pape's Men's Shop, 159 Beale.

"Rev. Middlebrook, myself and other marshals ran to the store to prevent looting, but it was too late," Johnston said.

Dr. H. Ralph Jackson, director of the A.M.E. Church's Department of Minimum Salary, was march-

ing with Dr. King in the front. "We heard windows breaking behind us on Beale and decided to stop the

Mayor Will Speak

Mayor Henry Loeb's office early Monday confirmed the mayor's appearance at Southwestern today at 10 a.m. in student convocation "unless unforeseen circumstances arise."

Loeb Lauds Fast Action By Lawmen

In a *Sou'wester* interview with Mayor Henry Loeb on Friday, the top city official said the police turned back the march "basically because youngsters were breaking windows" and because violence erupted.

Asked if he thought the police acted with restraint, Loeb said, "You're damn right I do."

The mayor said the reason there was law and order in Memphis was due to the immediate call-up of the national guard. He said that he was "proud of the fact that we moved immediately within two minutes after the violence erupted."

Speaking to a *Sou'wester* reporter outside his office, where the City Council was talking long distance with a highway official in Washington, the mayor said the violence and disturbances that broke out would have no effect on the city's position on the sanitation strike or negotiations with the union.

Asked what the city was planning on the current crisis, Loeb said: "What needs to be done will be done."

Smith Airs Views On National TV

In an effort to get the militant side of the Memphis Negro community before a nationwide audience, workers in the city arranged an NBC News interview Friday morning with Coby Smith, Southwestern student and a member of the Black Organization Project (BOP).

The interview was set up by ministers in Memphis who are convinced that violence is what is required to bring racial equality, and who think that the nation must know that violence will be wrought in Memphis by those who are fighting for racial equality.

Carl Stern of NBC News, Washington, headed the news team which interviewed Smith at St. Stephen's Baptist Church.

A small portion of the 15-minute interview was broadcast Friday night on the network's Huntley-Brinkley Report.

Riot Source Sought

In attempting to discover the sources of the rioting which put an end to Thursday's march being led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Stern asked Smith if the organization was responsible for the disturbance. Smith would say neither "Yes" nor "No."

Asked if the violence were spontaneous, Smith said that "for the record" he would have to say that it was. He reiterated this position to *The Sou'wester* Friday night.

King Has Failed

According to Smith, one of the

first two Negroes to enroll at Southwestern, Dr. King's nonviolent approach no longer appeals to the black community. For him to regain the leadership, Smith continued, "there will have to be a basic change in the attitude he has expressed so far."

Mr. Stern asked the student if he were against Dr. King's nonviolent attitude. Smith likened himself to a weather vane, and said that his organization responds to the wishes of the black community — whether it be for non-violence or militancy.

"Does your group preach violence?" brought as a reply, "We are teaching people how to protect themselves. We in Memphis are getting ourselves together and taking care of business."

Violence Is "Logical"

He sees the violence as "the logical extension of the frustration with which the black community has watched the White Community harden its attitude about dealing with black people . . .

"No longer are we going to allow white racists to sleep comfortably when their cops invade and attack our community."

Inside St. Stephen's, a meeting of strike and march leaders was being held. Said Gerald Fanion, City-County Communications officer, "The meeting is analyzing the situation, making future plans and formulating statements."



Photo By Rut Tufts

THE MASSIVE MARCH begins its journey from Clayborn Temple down Hernando to Beale Street. Conflicting estimates placed the number of marchers at 6,600 and 20,000 people. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. headed the march, which erupted into window-smashing and looting as its vanguard neared the inter-

section of Main and McCall. A second march, led by Dr. H. Ralph Jackson, head of the Department of Minimum Salary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, was held Friday. There were no incidents.



Special Edition



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Southwestern Eyewitnesses Describe Evolution Of Riot

"When I arrived at Clayborn Temple at 9:15, there were about 1000 people in front. By 9:30 the whole block was filled with people." This statement by Robert Orr (a Pittsburgh, Pa., junior) described the beginning of a significant day for him and other sanitation strike sympathizers from Southwestern.

Marchers Good-natured

"People were rather good-natured," said Orr. "After the march started, we passed two Negro policemen who joked with us and waved to the crowd."

"I did, however, notice some

people without signs who were not in the body of marchers. They were running up and down the sidewalk with sticks.

"The first sign that violence had flared was the appearance of Rev. Lawson running down Beale with a megaphone, identifying himself and telling marchers to return to the temple—the march was off."

Street Is Chaos

Suddenly the street was in chaos. "People came running, steam-rolling down Beale, smashing windows and pulling out merchandise. Everyone panicked and started to run, sweeping me with them."

"I was more disgusted than

frightened. Then I saw a Negro boy throw an empty whiskey bottle into the crowd with no apparent emotion at all. It hit a Negro woman in the head.

"I became very frightened then. If he could do that with so little concern for who he was hurting—just that kind of undirected hatred—there was absolutely no security for anyone."

As to who was to blame for the rioting, Orr said, "It is impossible to say who actually was. Rioters were not a part of the march insofar as they rejected the statement of the aims of the march—that 'the only force we shall use is

soul-force, which is peaceful, loving, yet militant.'"

Orr stated that the police were unaware of the looting at first. "They couldn't get into the area because of the fleeing people."

He also said that "the marchers were not deserted by their leaders. Rev. Lawson did everything he could. I don't see how anyone can blame him or Dr. King for any of this. The best thing to do was leave the area and let police come in and stop the looters."

Martin On Main

Teak Martin (an Oak Ridge, Tenn., senior), near the front of the march, told of attempts to regain order: "Negro leaders were telling the marchers to return to the temple. Police formed a line and started toward the crowd."

"On Main south of Beale, youths were breaking windows with sticks. Police appeared and lobbed tear gas into the crowd. Everybody started running down Beale. Police chased them and beat them

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Editorial

Reason Falls To Emotion

The macabre situation in which Memphis, Tennessee, now finds itself was caused by, and has generated, two sickening realities: the abandoning of rationality, and the extreme difficulty in discerning what has actually taken place — and qualify and defend what you will, there is, somewhere, the Truth in this disgrace.

Throughout the sanitation strike, people have been dealing in personalities instead of conflicts in ethics and policy. The standard procedure upon encountering one on the other side has become to lambast him as stupid and narrow-minded, instead of attempting to use Reason, and to seek common ground.

No goodwill or sincerity is assumed on the part of anyone with whom one differs. The mayor and city government have been skewered as idiots by the Negro community; men who have suffered much and are now fighting desperately for their manhood are deprecated as "uppity niggers."

The loss of reasoning is demonstrated by the riot. Negro youths, acting more as gangs — "excited like kids at a football game," said the Rev. J. J. Jones — touched it off on Beale Street.

The police leaped in, some no doubt with relish, others without ample riot training, and over-reacted. Thus, they missed the chance to be what they constantly claim to be, and which would eliminate the ubiquitous "brutality" charge: restrained.

Questions: did the young Negro gangs start the window-breaking and looting, or was it the

marchers? Did police incite the riot? What really happened at Hamilton High School? What about Clayborn Temple after the march?

These questions point to the second sickening obstacle: how can we determine what occurred? Inane rumors are going to fly. But observe the varying reports of the institutions that purport and have the duty to be broadcasters of the truth. Listen to a WHBQ news program. Then turn to WDIA. Compare a Commercial Appeal editorial with a Tri-State Defender write-up.

How are such contradictions eliminated? Ideally: fight problems with Reason, not personalities with emotion. The past has hideously clouded with prejudice the problem of working for one America. There has never been a greater need for the assumption and manifestation of goodwill.

Perhaps most importantly, the news media of this city bear the gravest responsibility to dig for the facts and to make them known: political pressures and reporting geared to make a race look good must go.

When senseless violence leads to wanton plundering and the death of a young Memphis citizen (however he died), Negro militants, you are wrong.

When a city policeman clubs a little boy, Officer, you are wrong.

Whenever irrationality like this bites into the fight for justice, it is irrevocably incumbent upon the news media to report it.

And it is the duty of all citizens to act reasonably upon these facts.



TEAR GAS PERVADES the tense atmosphere as a man lies bleeding in the street. City police are approaching, as they battle Negroes

for control of the Beale Street area. At least 62 persons were injured in the melee.

Photo By Teak Martin

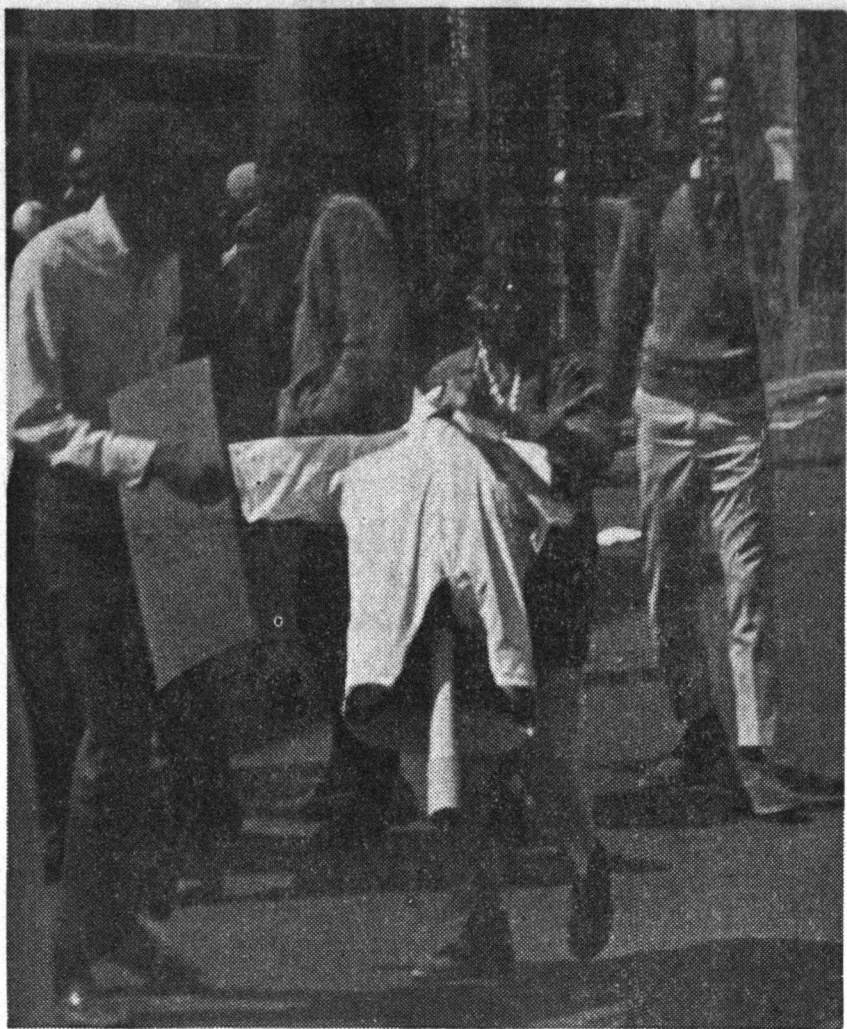


Photo By Lee James

WINDOW-SMASHING touched off looting on Beale Street. The source of the initial violence is unclear, but it opened the way for the pilfering of store furnishings, including the mannequin being stripped above.

Marchers Mass In Temple As Police Squad Lobs Gas

(Continued from Page 1)

"I tried to get some pictures of police beating a man, but a policeman hit me on the head."

At Clayborn Temple, Martin saw police "form a line 40 yards north of the temple. A couple of Negro youths threw rocks, but the majority of the people were in the temple."

"Advancing police lobbed gas into the entrance of the church."

Three or four policemen ganged up on single people and beat them.

"There was an old man standing in front of a house just watching. A policeman ran up and squirted him with Mace, beat him and told him to get on the porch. When the people on the porch couldn't get into the house, he squirted them, too."

Fowler At Front

Cary Fowler (Memphis freshman) was near the front of the

At the request of The Sou'wester for an explanation of riot psychology, Dr. E. Llewellyn Queener submitted this article. Dr. Queener heads the Southwestern Psychology Department and holds graduate degrees from Yale.

There is a variety of riots. Publicity stunt riots, such as those sometimes staged in Iron Curtain countries. This is a way for a government to speak without appearing to speak.

Military riots in which a small number of professional rioters seek a particular objective. A riot of this kind occurred in Athens, Tennessee in the late '40's when a group of veterans took over the county government by force.

Publicity and military riots have definite objectives and usually end when these objectives have been achieved.

Then there is the "lay" riot, in which a variety of personal and social hates and fears converge on some vaguely defined set of categories such as "Whitey" or "Nigger." We had a lay riot in Memphis Thursday. Its main objective was the venting of rage.

Hate and fear, like any strong emotion, have a tendency to literally constrict vision and simplify

march when the crowd began to turn back. As the people headed toward him, Fowler turned into a side street and watched.

"You could look around and see blood; people were lying in the street. You couldn't stop to help, because if you did, the police would come and beat you."

Marchers Are Trapped

Fowler said that police "converged on the marchers, pushing them toward Main while other police forced the marchers down Beale. They just had them trapped in this block with no street to get out on."

Fowler attempted to reach Clayborn Temple. "The police fired tear gas into the crowd in front of the church," he said. "I was forced to run down a side street, thinking to enter the temple by a back entrance."

"When we got to the back, people were breaking windows and jumping out. Some held children in their arms. I don't think the police were inside."

Student Inside Temple

A Southwestern student, who asked that his name not be used, was inside the temple. "People were rushing in, screaming they had been gassed and police were coming in to kill everybody. Some of them were just running through the church, trying to get away. Some were looters."

"Ministers were trying unsuccessfully to quiet the crowd. Black Power men kept coming in and trying to speak."

Once, he filled a bucket with paper towels and water and handed them out to gas victims. He also helped in the Minimum Salary Building.

"I washed one little girl's eyes out," he said. "She had been sprayed with gas. She was only three or four."

The last time he returned to the church, he found it only a third full. "The smell of gas was strong, but I couldn't see it in the air. People were running into the church, yelling that people were shooting at us and were coming in after us."

"The girl with me fainted. I brought her to and we hid in a corner until the sanctuary was too empty to really be safe."

They ran into the Minimum Salary Building and hurried up to the third floor. "There were a lot of kids there who were hanging out the windows watching the action on the street."

Gas Seeps In

After a fight flared between two Negro boys, Dr. Jackson asked all students to go down to the second-floor cafeteria. "After a while, gas started seeping in, apparently from the first floor. We had to cover our faces, but that didn't help long."

"When we tried to escape down the back stairs, I had to feel along the side. I couldn't see anything—my eyes were so full of gas."

"We stayed there until Dr. Jackson came and told us we should leave."

Riot Psychology

Hate, Fear Spawn Bedlam

thought processes. They also distort memory, so that everyone can "honestly" tell how it was.

Constricted vision and thinking tends to be highly simplified and categorical, so that the usual discriminations between man-woman, child-adult, friendly-hostile, begin disappearing.

A scared-enraged man, who might never consider hurting a child under normal conditions, sees only "the enemy" and hurts him. Distorted (filter) memory locks in this event as a fact to add to the sum of hate and fear.

Personal, as contrasted to genuinely social, hates and fears erupt in riots. Individuals who have lived in chronic frustration and fear are ready to hit anything — each other or, under riot conditions, "the enemy." Add to this the standard hostility encountered in most adolescents, and you have a very explosive individual. Ideology gives him a target and numbers gives him a protective anonymity.

Rather mechanical psychodynamics occur once the riot is in motion. Seeing others in forceful, violent activity hooks into one's past awareness of himself using force, and he emits violent acts as simple conditioned responses.

This is called "adient imitation" and is the same thing that causes you to lean slightly as you watch the vaulter clearing a high bar. It is mechanical and beyond "moral" considerations.

Everyone is a victim in a riot. The survivors have done things which they would not normally have done and later regret. And then there are the battered or killed losers. If there are real culprits in a riot, it is usually not the participants. It is usually the men who were in position to have prevented the conditions which produced the riots and failed to do so.

First, there are those men who could have negotiated as the strong with the strong. You cannot negotiate with strong men until

you have acknowledged their strength. Unless you acknowledge their strength, you finally drive them to fury. At the last stage, they finally have no objective except the expression of their fury. Frustration plus hope plus legitimized strength equals a decent relationship between human beings called balance - of - power. These ingredients without legitimized strength finally equals an indecent human relationship called riot. It's the old "frustration-aggression" process. You twist a man's nose until he hits you, and then you act stunned that he should be so hostile.

Secondly, there are those men

who sat in cool offices and thought like rioters. These thought in stereotypes such as "rabble rousers" and invented terms such as "the sandal set" or "outsiders." (Outside of what, by the way: Just geographically outside, or outside the democratic process where balance-of-power no longer works?) You can almost understand a scared policeman or an enraged rioter thinking in stereotypes. But you cannot understand, nor forgive, the safe official or editor thinking and acting in rigid categories. And their pious clucking over the debris is revolting.

Lay riots are started by non-participants.

After Main Street Melee

Roiling Riot Hits Origin Of March

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march and go back to Clayborn Temple," he said.

Dr. King was rushed away from the march immediately after the trouble started. Others, including Dr. Jackson and the Rev. James Lawson, Pastor of Centenary Methodist Church, remained and urged the crowd to move back to the Temple in an orderly fashion. Confusion, however, had already taken over.

Dr. Jackson said, "While the march was turning, about eight bands of teenagers ran ahead of the march and started breaking windows. At this point, the police moved in."

Beale Street Cleared

Vandalism and looting were reported spreading to Main and Gayoso, and along the entire march route down Beale Street. "The violence started behind the leaders," agreed Assistant Chief of Police H. E. Lux. "The main leaders deserted, and the remainder couldn't control the mob. We had to move in to stop the violence."

Police were ordered to end the march at 11:30. Many of the marchers were already on the way back to the Temple; the rest left when police began clearing the street with tear gas and billyclubs.

Church Is Battleground

The focal point of the disorder shifted to Clayborn Temple and the A.M.E. Church's Minimum Salary Building next door, where retreating marchers packed both buildings.

Most of the time, the people remained inside the buildings while leaders attempted to hold a meeting. Any crowd threatening to gather outside was dispersed with tear gas.

Willie Thompson, a junior at South Side High School, said that he was standing just inside the door of the Temple when police approached him and sprayed him with Mace. "There was no reason," he said. "Then they grabbed me and started clubbing me." His

head injury required eight stitches.

Marchers Evacuate

Memphis attorney Mike Cody said he arrived on the scene about 12:30 with some agents from the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, and saw a crowd of about 100 marchers facing a small group of police.

"We came to see if we could help get people moved out of there," he said. "About five minutes after we arrived, eight squad cars pulled up in front. Officers got out of the cars and moved on the Temple; the kids started throwing bricks."

"Both sides set up a battle front that moved back and forth between the streets and the building entrances. They kept charging each other blindly. Neither knew what they were doing. It was a mess. We finally got the police to withdraw so the marchers could move out of the place," Cody said.

Gas Gets Inside

Chris Drago, a Southwestern graduate who now teaches at Owen College, said that he was inside the Temple until 1:00. "Tear gas was seeping into the church from the streets. Most of us were trapped in there with it for an hour."

A number of people remained in the Minimum Salary Building until late afternoon. The last incident occurred at about 3:00, when a tear gas canister was fired into the building in an attempt to clear it.

By that time, Beale Street had been completely cleared, and workmen were boarding up store windows.

Police received scores of calls between dusk and 8:00 p.m. for window-breaking and other vandalism. Calls slackened afterward, and all but ceased after midnight.

Four thousand National Guardsmen were on duty by 7:15, working 12-hour shifts; a 7:00 p.m. curfew was deemed "very effective" by Assistant Chief of Police W. E. Routt.

Friday was peaceful, and the curfew was partially lifted. Monday afternoon, the curfew was removed, along with the ban on sales of alcoholic beverages.

King and C.O.M.E. leaders were reported planning another march for this afternoon, but the city had not yet made a decision to allow it.

Second Edition Tomorrow

A second special edition of The Sou'wester will be published tomorrow. A regular issue of the paper will appear Friday.

Any students, professors or other individuals interested in making contributions of one dollar or more for the special editions should contact the Sou'wester office at 274-1800 (ext. 218) or any editor.

THE SOUTHWESTER

ACP All-American

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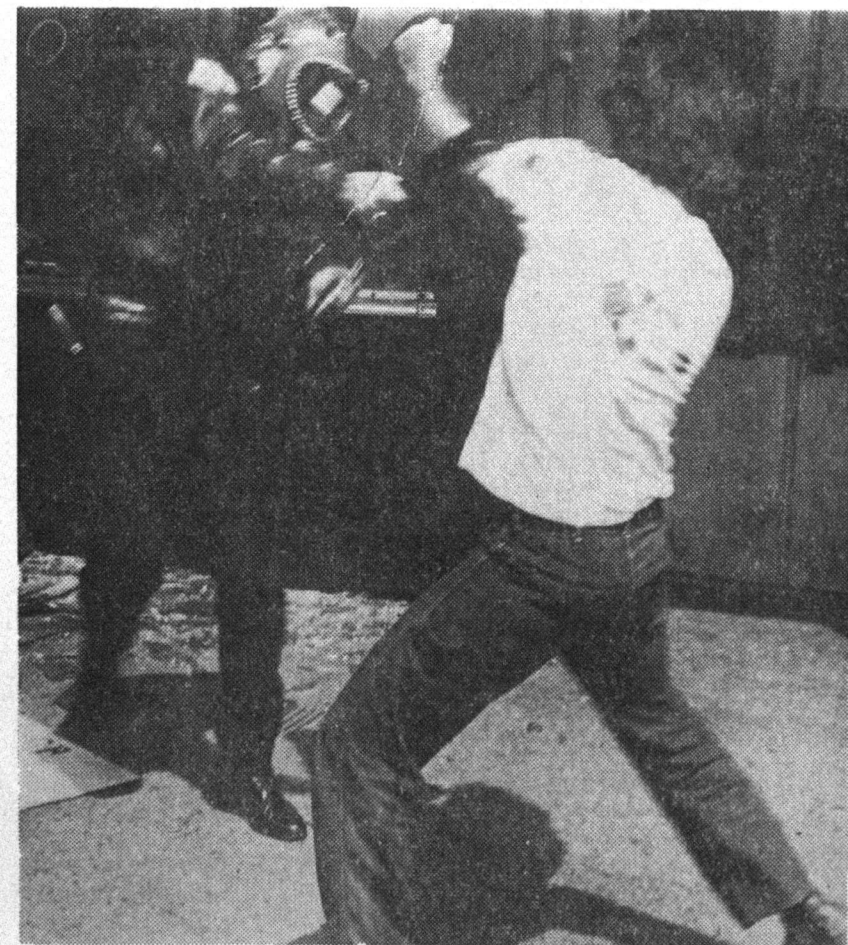


Photo By Rut Tufts

POLICEMAN AND UNIDENTIFIED MAN battle in front of shattered Beale Street store windows last Thursday. Police efforts to break the violence were lauded as "restrained" in The Commercial Appeal, and drew sharp barbs from the Negro leadership.