

### **L.Y. – 1**

#### The Negroes March on Memphis

It was on March 28 at 9:00 on a Thursday morning that I arrived uptown to participate in a march that was supposed to be non-violent, for the Memphis sanitation workers. When I arrived up town the other marchers were already assembled. At that moment it looked to me as if there were about or over a thousand people there then. While me and my friends stood talking about school and all the (illegible) that didn't go, the march started. After we had gotten to Beale Street the people in the march started going on until I heard windows being broken. The next thing I knew, this fellow beside me had seized a brick and had thrown it threw [sic] the window of Pape's Men's Shop. Then a couple of fellows broke the rest of the window and got the merchandise that was in the window case. After this a repetition of window breaking and looting occurred. A couple of fellows broke to Lonsky Bros. and pull whole racks of clothing out into the street. They broke into the pawn shops and took electric guitars, radios, jewelry and anything they could get their hands on. All this time I was just standing looking in awe, not knowing what to do. There were bricks, broken glass and valuable merchandise lying all over the streets. It was at this time that I heard sirens and the next thing I know

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was the march had disrupted and the participants had become panic. The police came through the crowd swing [sic] their Billy sticks and girls and almost half of the people in the march were running, screaming and falling. I was trying to run for safety also. I saw a policeman grab a teenage boy and beat (illegible) blood streamed from his head. The policemen were (illegible) and everybody. After the police had beaten so many of the people with their Billy sticks, some of the boys decided to fight back. (All this was happening as I was steadily running through the crowd.) I saw a policeman get his head busted by a flying brick. I saw a fellow stab a policeman in the back with a knife. The policemen did things I never thought they would do. Some of them look as if they got joy out of beating Negroes. I saw them beat a fellow across the head until he couldn't stand up. After the teenagers started fighting back the policemen started using tear gas. This is the only harm that came to me that day. The gas seemed to spread, it got into my eyes, burned them, after this, I got as far away from the crowd as I could. After reaching my car, I started home, I saw policemen chasing Negro

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youths . After getting (illegible), trying to escape what seemed like a dream (illegible).

I wish all of this hadn't happen, but, I feel that it is the fault of Mayor Loeb. If he had given the sanitation workers a raise, all of this would have never happened.

The breaking in and looting was caused by outsiders and not by the participants in the march so I think that the march isn't the cause of this, but, the looters use the march as a [sic] aid in their looting.

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