

Editor's Note: Since I was present during the protest march that sparked the Memphis riots, I will attempt to give the facts of a fellow to Memphis and also to give the facts of what happened in the march and witnessed the downtown riot on Thursday, March 26, 1968. I was present from the at Clayborn Temple, the headquarters for the march in support of the striking workers lead by civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, at 10:00 clock for the beginning of the march. At the time of Tom's arrival there was only about 2000 people assembled for the march. Carter noticed that there were a large number of Priest, Yans and Ministers assembled at the front of the marching line. Tom also noticed that the liquor store in the neighborhood was during extremely good business. As time passed the crowd grew larger and larger and by 10:30 Tom estimated the crowd to being anywhere from 10 to 15 thousand. Tom had by that time moved from the front of the line of march to the middle. As the crowd increased Tom noticed that the atmosphere was more in the nature of a carnival and that there was many people males either acting and or smelling as if they had been drinking.

of 110000 men the marchers had swelled to
anywhere from 20 to 30 thousand people by
Linn's estimates, another 20000 was needed for
the march to begin. The effect of the
front Clayborn Temple. Around 11:15 King ar-
rived and the march began with Tom being
around the middle of the marching line.
Everything was peaceful at the start
of the march but, ~~soon~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ^{King's} opinion, as soon
as the middle of the line turned up
Beale Street some marchers close to stores
began breaking windows with the sticks
that held their protest signs, at this
point most of the march leaders were
clustered at the front of the march and
they hadn't realized what was happening.
The march continued to move and windows
that were in the middle of the march line,
when the window breakers reached Pape's
Clothing Store looting began. This looting rapid-
ly spread to all of the clothing stores and
shops on Beale Street.

The line of march was continuing to move
and Tom had reached Main Street and so had
the looting and window breaking.

as the march on March leaders realized
what was happening and they immediately
orderly ordered the marchers to turn
and go back to the march headquarters.
When the marchers once again moved back
to Beale they was blocked by some of
the marchers that was already on Beale
looting, looting, looting stores. Confusion set
in and when the marchers began to ignore
the march leaders request to go back to
the headquarters police moved in swinging
sticks and spraying tear gas. Some people
returned with bricks, sticks and battles. Others
continued to loot. Beale turned into open battle
between young marchers and the police. Hate and
anger was on both sides. For the first time
in Memphis black people struck blow for blow
with the police. The police showed extreme
anger and ugliness exemplified by the many
over beating of young people and the hitting
of a few old people. One example was the con-
tinued beating of an already unconscious young
man by a group of police shown on national
television. By 12:30 Jones left the downtown scene
of the riot.

at about 3 o'clock I personally witnessed
brick throwing at cars driven by white
people. This took place on Mississippi and Walker.
Bricks was thrown at buses and one
man's car window was smashed and his
face was blooded when he tried to protect
the bricking of his car. In my neighbor-
hood all of the white stores windows were
smashed on Porter and looting occurred at
the Cleaners on Porter. I heard no gun shots
during the riots and saw only three fire-
bombs explode and they were in the house-
ing projects garbage cans. This concludes my
personal report on the Memphis riot.

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