

My Interview with a Participant in
the March R.L.J.-1

The march reached Hooverstein's
department store when ministers and nuns
began asking the marchers to go back to
Clayborne Temple. The policeman started
beating people. They beat an old man
mercilessly. The policemen did not endeavor
stopping the looting on Beale street but
when the riot got to Main street, the police
shot in the air. Witnessed stated that a sixteen
year old boy was shot while his hands were
up. Some people were sprayed by tear gas
while sitting on their porches.

Black power advocates were influential
in inciting the riot. The rioters seemed
to have certain stores that they looted.
As a result of the riot, there was a
seven o'clock curfew enforced in Memphis
for four days. The sanitation workers are
still marching, this causes the stores down-
town, to lose thousands of dollars daily.

The march for the sanitation workers began around 9:00 o'clock. The approximate number of marchers numbered over a thousand. Before the marchers could get on main street, the marchers were turned around because high school students started rioting, they threw rocks and bricks in the department store windows. There was an estimate of \$400,000 damage. The merchants on Beale street suffered the most damage because nearly all of the white establishments were looted.

One can go on Beale street today and find one-third of the store windows boarded up because of the riot. Some of the articles that were stolen were guitars, radios, suits, watches etc. I talked to two of my colleagues and they told me that they were downtown Thursday, March 29 when it happened. They were victims of the tear-gas spraying.

The rioting was believed to have hurt the Negro cause rather than help it because it produced killings, the entrance of national guardmen and all of this has not made Mr. Loeb compromise and give the sanitation workers more money. (142)