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“Memphis, Tennessee In the News”

Memphis, Tennessee has joined the ranks of other large cities in its fight against violence, rioting and looting. Memphis has been the headlines of every newspaper in the country. This was provoked by occurrences [sic] that began here last Thursday March 28, 1968.

The march started out as proof to the city that Negroes were together in their fight to improve their standards and especially those of sanitation workers. The sanitation workers are entering the 8th week of their strike for dice check-off, better working conditions and higher wages.

The march was was [sic] led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, a diligent civil rights worker. Dr [sic] King has been in and out of jail in his attempts to free Negroes of their social and educational barriers.

At 8:00 a.m. Thursday morning the citizens began gathering at Clayborn Temple, the starting place of the march. During this time there was an outbreak of violence at Hamilton High School [cut off] 178 Wilson. This story was related to me by Miss Pamela Brown of 1825 Castalia who is a student at Hamilton and a participant in the disturbance. She arrived at school at 8:30. There were three [cut off] at the bus stop telling them not to enter [cut off] school. Some entered the school and others refused to.

At 8:40 the sanitation workers “traitors” passed by in their pick up trucks. The students began throwing rocks at the truck and the squad car which accompanied it. The police called in other policemen when they arrived they chased students back into the school.

During this disturbance a student was beaten over the head by a policeman with his night stick. The young lady was taken to the hospital.

The march was scheduled to start at 9:00 but due to the lateness of the arrival of Dr. King the march didn't get under way until 11:00. The march progressed without incidents for about twenty minutes

Dr. King, Rev. Lawson and assistants to Mr. King were at the head of the march. Marching behind them were about 10,000 strikers, well wishers [sic] and sympathizers of which I was a member.

Everything was fine until a group of hoodlums and and [sic] teenagers began rioting and looting. They began rioting and looting. They used the sticks that they were carrying signs on to break windows and beat policemen.

The officers attempted to put a stop to this looting and rioting but were very unsuccessful for awhile [sic].

In one incident a policeman was beaten very badly by the rioters when he attempted

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On Main Street a man was driving along. A policeman was beating a Negro so badly until he got out of his car and began beating the officer. The officer freed himself and started running.

The march was turned back after this outbreak of violence, a lot of innocent people were hurt. They were gassed by law officers. At 12:00 the marchers had turned around and were on there [sic] way to Clayborn Temple from there they would disperse.

Thursday a young Mitchell high School student Larry Payne, was shot by a policeman when he attempted to get away. It was claimed that he was caught looting. His parents contend that he was surrendering.

Thursday night a curfew was imposed on the city. All citizens were to stay in from 7:00 PM to 5:00 am. The curfew was lifted Monday. There was a lot of damage done to small businesses such as [Illegible] Frurniture and Appliances store, Caslalia [Illegible] Market, Goldmans [sic] Laundry.

Presently Memphis is getting back to normal. Dr. King is scheduled to return to Memphis tomorrow 4-3-68 to make plans for another march on Monday.

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