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LeMoyne Reflections on Sanitation Strike March pp. 303-305 -- F.H.

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The Riot

I was not in the march neither did I observe any of the rioting. Therefore, my paper will consist of what somebody said and what I have read in the newspaper and have seen on television.

Mrs. Singer said, "There was a large crowd of people about three thousand, gathered at Clayborn Temple. They had gotten tired and restless from waiting for Dr. King, who was to lead the march.

The march started a little after eleven very peacefully. When I reached Main and Beale, the head of the line had gotten to Main and Gayoso. At this point the crowd turned and started running. Then they turned and started marching again."

I asked her when did they start running. She said, "I don't know, but then the same thing happened again, and this time I heard glass splattering. A group of boys was coming down the sidewalk. They were throwing and breaking windows. About the same that I had run as far as Lansky Brothers, they started breaking the---

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---windows of the store and people began to go in and get things."

I asked her if that was the only store that they broke into. She said, "No, it wasn't the only store, but the people were running everywhere. Reverend Lawson was trying to get the people to march back to the temple.

I ran back to the "Big M," and a group of policemen came in and started curing. They told us to get out, because they were going to close the flare. If they thought that persons were moving too slow they would shoot them with this gas that they had."

Miss Conny said, "I saw the boy the day that he was killed. We were together at one time. He was doing no more than the others, but I lost contact with him.

I will never go back to another march, I was so scared."

I think that the march was for a worthwhile cause. Even though many blame Dr. King for everything, I feel that the accusers are wrong.

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I feel that the policeman killed the young fellow out of anger. Even though the policeman said that the boy looked older, I personally know that he looked much younger.

It would have been much better today if the strikers would have gotten that small raise that they wanted. A raise and the other small things that the strikers wanted would have been much cheaper than all of the damage done; the police and National Guard protection, the loss of money because of the curfew, all of the people who were injured and most of all – the death of Larry Payne.

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