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LeMoyne Reflections on Sanitation Strike March pp. 80-82 -- B.W.

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March

Thursday morning, March 28, 1968, I went down Vance to Hernandez Street to see the gathering of hundreds of Negroes and a few whites at about 10 a.m. They were waiting on Rev. Martin L. King, who was to lead this Mass March for the purpose of justice being done for the sanitation workers (strikers). Before Rev. King arrived, the crowd carried posters and were discussing what they were going to do. I heard one Negro tell another that "as soon as they start breaking windows, I am going to get some watches and diamonds." I could see then that this man had the wrong spirit.

Rev. King led the Mass March from Clayborne Temple to Main Street. I was told by one of the marchers that someone started throwing bricks and breaking windows, and that the marchers were stopped at York Arms (store on Main). They had to return to the Temple, and Peaches (one of the marchers) said that Mace was sprayed into the Temple. I feel that this was wrong and very unfair on the part of the policemen because the insiders

B.W.-3

were not having any.

About thirty minutes later, I saw and heard fire towers and fire squad cars going down Vance where many stores had been burned and damaged. People were running from the direction of Beal St, cursing which did not do any good. The policemen were shooting at some one on Third St, and many negroes were hurt other places, I was told. There was stealing, shooting, beating and spraying of mace.

Some of the eyewitnesses' statements were:

Mrs. E. K. - "Thursday, about 12:30 a.m., watching from the window of King Cotton Cleaner, I saw 18 or 24 boys from 16-19 years old with planks, bricks and bottles. They were around Sears (on 3rd St) and broke out all of the windows. Their faces were not covered, and I didn't recognize any of them. As I was driving off, they went over to the Cleaners and started breaking windows. The workers were running and screaming. After a while the policemen came."

Mrs. K. - "I didn't see the boy (Larry Payne-16) get shot, but I saw the policemen spraying mace into the faces of people

who lived up the home on
 Mason St. The policemen dared them to
 come down, one of the policeman spit at
 one of the girls who worked with me. Mrs.
 Payne went to the hospital, and they wouldn't
 let her see him. It was awful, and we
 need to pray."

Peaches (a mother) - "A man was pulled out of his
 car and beaten by the police-
 men."

Sister G - "A policeman kicked an old lady in
 the street and started hitting a man
 with his stick. They were both stand-
 ing at the bus stop."

Thursday was a frightening and dreadful
 day, and some of the marchers took advantage
 of Rev. King's March for their own evil gains,
 which was wrong. Prayer is the only answer
 to these problems, and God will judge the
 length of his trouble. If God doesn't stop
 it, other men and Loeb sure can not.