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LeMoyne Reflections on Sanitation Strike March pp. 301-302 -- R.S.

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The Memphis Crisis

Since I am not a resident of Memphis, I was not in Memphis during the rioting Thursday. I can only give my opinion and describe how people around me feel and how this rioting influenced the people of my hometown, Dyersburg.

When I heard about the situation last Thursday, the first thing that came into my mind was, why did this happen? Reading the newspaper and hearing the radio and television, I have not found the answer to this question. In my opinion, the rioting was started by persons irresponsible and ignorant to the fact, that violence does not solve anything.

In my opinion, the rioting is not finished. Someone is waiting for the next march to start a disturbance. When the next rioting starts, it will not be very easy to calm. I predict the situation to be like that of Detroit.

The people in my hometown become frightened. Everywhere you would go, people were talking about Memphis and the "riot." All the persons I came in contact with repeatedly stated, the Memphis would be another Detroit or Nashville. Not only did they say this, but they also stated that Memphis is the beginning and there will be no end to it, because all other surrounding cities will attempt similar strikes and may be have similar riots.

The people in Memphis are afraid also. They fear another march, because it could result in more destruction and more deaths.

Persons in the community where I am staying are afraid to get out at night anymore. The talk in the community now is "What will happen next? If not this, the King should have stayed out of Memphis," is ringing.

No one can predict what will happen next. Last Thursday is the beginning of Memphis facing a crisis because of ignorance and stupidity of citizens and its city government.