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# King Urges Work Stoppage By Negroes To Back Strike

By K. W. COOK

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called last night for a general work stoppage by Negroes if the city does not agree to demands of striking sanitation workers for a union dues checkoff.

"They will hear you then," he told the cheering and shouting persons attending a rally at the Mason Temple at 938 Mason. "The City of Memphis will not be able to function that day." Some persons estimated the crowd at 13,000. The police estimate was 9,000.

Dr. King, on a swing through Southern states to recruit persons for his "Poor People's" camp-in next month in Washington, asked the rally to "make this the beginning of the Washington movement."

He promised to interrupt his tour and return to Memphis Friday to lead a mass march. Memphis Negro ministers have been leading marches almost daily since the first week of the 36-day-old strike.

Dr. King arrived at Mason Temple at 9:07 p.m. for the meeting which began at 7:30 p.m. He was accompanied by his Southern Christian Leadership Conference lieutenants, the Rev. Ralph Abernethy, James Bevills and the Rev. Andrew Young.

His entrance through a side door was marked by a standing ovation filled with a salute of upraised clenched fists with the thumb sticking up.

By 7 p.m., virtually every seat in the Mason Temple auditorium was taken. In less than an hour, persons were crowded in the doorways and jammed in the aisles. Many stood throughout the almost four-hour rally.

Dr. King, who spoke for an hour, told the strikers, "Along with wages and other securities, you're struggling for the right to organize. This is the way to gain power. Don't go back to work until all your demands are met."

"There is a need to unite beyond class lines. Negroes must join hands with Negro have-nots. Our society must come to respect the sanitation worker. He is a significant as the physician for if he doesn't do his job, disease is rampant."

The Rev. Mr. Abernethy called for strikers and their supporters to throw themselves in front of garbage trucks and block them.

Dr. King was scheduled to spend the night in Memphis and go today to nine Mississippi cities on his recruiting drive. He came to Memphis on a flight from Los Angeles.

While waiting for Dr. King to arrive, Jerry Wurf, international president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, told the throng that Mayor Henry Loeb had promised to meet every demand by the union "except the dues checkoff and the right to be recognized."

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He said the checkoff was important because strikers, whose pay check was small when working, "don't know who to pay first. Workers want a guarantee that there will be a union, that their money will go into the union and if trouble comes, they can help themselves."

Tommy Powell, president of the Memphis AFL-CIO Labor Council, made petitions available and called for 100,000 signatures of voters to recall Mayor Loeb. He asked that signed petitions be turned in to the council's Committee on Political Education.

Mr. Wurf, union president, and Mayor Loeb are scheduled to describe their positions in the strike and answer questions in meetings tonight and tomorrow at St. Louis Catholic Church at 203 South White Station Road.

Mr. Wurf is scheduled to speak at 7:30 tonight and Mayor Loeb at the same time tomorrow. The program is sponsored by the Tennessee Council on Human Relations.

Two strike-connected arrests and two firebombings were reported yesterday as the strike entered its sixth week with no signs of a settlement.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Speaks To Rally At Mason Temple

—Staff Photo