

Eye Witness Report

L.A. Police Riot

anon.

1967

The monitors were doing a hell of a job maintaining order; the cops, on the other hand, were looking more and more uptight, and more and more of them were showing up from somewhere.

A man who identified himself as a physician kept saying they can't stop us from exercising our rights of free speech.

The police began to put on pressure, and we were aware of something going on up ahead. Apparently the cops were trying, and succeeding in breaking the parade into two vulnerable parts.

One of them came running down the line, whispering out some order. Suddenly they were massed waves deep, jackboots and helmets gleaming in the fitful glare of television klieg lights. People found themselves packed tighter as the minutes passed. There were warnings to be careful of children.

About 9 p.m., perhaps a few minutes earlier. Suddenly the cop in front of me swung his truncheon against the face

of a man. Blood spurts. Others join in. The first cop started hitting a girl, about 20, with a baby in her arms. When she fell down trying to protect the child, the same cop kicked her in the back. The doctor tried to go to her aid and was beaten down by several cops.

At this point, some joined arms for a sitdown, but they were too disorganized. Most didn't know what to do. They tried to push back, but couldn't. A solid mass of people were backed up against the railing of the Olympic Avenue overpass.

A wall of cops moved forward against an immovable mass, with much jabbing and swinging of clubs. More and more fall. Screams and shouts of anger. Swearing back out of impotence. Someone started singing "We Shall Overcome" and "God Bless America."

Sudden movement; we were stumbling down a landscaped embankment towards Olympic. The ground was full of wire and sprinklers, so that many fell and were beaten senseless by the pursuing cops.

As the crowd broke for the opposite side of Olympic, police cars and motorcycle cops roared in very fast. Motorcycle cops rushed along the curb, stopping every ten feet or so and striking out blindly with clubs.

Several people, apparently innocent bystanders, were pulled out of cars and beaten. A number of people, including several young girls, lay bleeding on the edge of the pavement.

At this point, maybe 9:15, one witness claimed later to have watched a young girl run over the chest by a police motorcycle. She was reportedly thrown into a squad car and was not seen as of Saturday night. I heard a young cop scream "Get close, damn you, gimme a chance, I'll kill you all."

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