

OBSERVATION POINT

Did Demonstrators Deserve Brutality?

By Philip H. Power



By now, nearly everyone has had his say about the police and the alleged brutality in Chicago at the Democratic National Convention. In fact, the intensity of discussion on this issue shows more clearly than anything else just how powerful matters of law and order, crime in the streets and violence are in this election year.

Polls have shown that about two-thirds of the people in this country think the police were justified in their actions.

I don't.
I don't, for one obvious reason.

Judging on my own experiences in Chicago I can only conclude that the police went way beyond tolerable limits of force. But there's another reason, one which hasn't been much talked about, which gets more to the point than emotional diatribes against either the kids or the police.

THE ARGUMENT backing up the police makes much of the fact that they were provoked, that some people were in Chicago with the specific intent of disrupting things as much as possible.

and that the television networks overplayed the police violence at the cost of balanced reporting. All of these points are true, to a greater or lesser extent.

But they all miss the point. Which is that the issue of provocation and the fact of police overreaction are two quite separate and distinct things. To argue that the police were provoked and therefore were justified in using the excessive amounts of force simply doesn't follow.

A motorist, for example, who leaves before a judge to plead that the man in the next lane had provoked him and that therefore he was justified in running him down is going to get just as stiff a sentence as if no provocation had occurred.

Similarly, the law is very clear about what amount of force police officers may use in making arrests. A reasonable amount of force necessary to subdue the suspect while an arrest is being

made is one of the legal limitations, and the other is that a police officer may use whatever force is necessary to protect his own life or that of an innocent person.

Now the demonstrators may have been dirty, unpleasant and nasty, but they certainly were not threatening the life of the police officers. And to beat a man in the kidneys with a night stick just as he is sticking his head into the paddy wagon doesn't seem like the reasonable amount of force needed to make an arrest that the law talks about.

The point is that while the provocation of the police was entirely reprehensible and uncalled for, it did not justify the kind of brutality the police used.

After all, a policeman has a difficult job. He gets provoked more times during his working hours than practically anyone else. He, of all people, should have the self discipline and training to act in

a proper way, even under the most extreme conditions.

The Chicago police didn't, and for that reason I can only condemn their actions as brutal, unnecessary and unprofessional.

THERE'S ANOTHER problem lurking around the fringes of this argument.

Most of the people I've talked to were quite willing to blame the kids because: (a) They were dirty; (b) They smoke pot and do other funny things; (c) They were protesting a war, not by writing polite letters to the editor but by going out in the streets and staging a demonstration; (d) They were kids and therefore different; and, somehow, un-American. (Pick one.)

None of these reasons strikes to the heart of the fact that the kids felt very strongly about the war and had a perfect constitutional right to demonstrate

against it.

The wrath of the older generation seems to have been directed against the image of the demonstrators rather than against the substance of what they were doing. In fact, this substance doesn't seem to have been ever considered much.

Even some of my friends in the union movement, many of whom had their heads bashed in during the picketing, demonstrations and strikes of the 1930's—a remarkable parallel to the anti-war demonstrations in terms both of social movements and of the degree of public and newspaper criticism—don't seem to see this point.

Perhaps it's the generation gap.

But perhaps it's something a little more sinister, something that has to do with the decline of tolerance for dissent that seems to have been so noticeable lately.

OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS

PHILIP H. POWER, Publisher
DALE O. PERIN, Controller
RICHARD T. THOMPSON, Managing Editor
Member, Midwest Press Association

RUDOLPH MAZUROSKY, Advertising Director
FRED J. LEVINE, Classified Advertising Manager
FRED J. WRIGHT, Circulation Director
Suburban Press Foundation

This Is The Week That...

This Veto Great, George

... By Don Hoenschell

Gov. Romney did it great when he stuck that bill in his pocket and vetoed it.

The process is technical and nobody will be enlightened by an explanation, so forget it, Charlie. The bill is dead.

Anyway, it would have placed a joint legislative committee in position as monitor over administrative rules—the documents which set up the ground rules for the laws of the state. Senator Robert Huber, of Somewhere, sponsored the bill. It has been sponsored before by people who want to run things from their own block, expressing their own biases.

The first test came many years ago when the joint legislative committee tried to penalize some high school athletes from Hastings who accepted a sweater from a summer softball team sponsor.

THE MICHIGAN SUPREME Court, to its everlasting credit, told the committee to spend more time minding its manners.

Well, this time Huber got the bill through the legislature to give the legislature life or death powers over rules set up to implement the laws they passed.

Here's how such a law would operate.

The Civil Rights Commission would decide the law meant what it said, that open housing means anybody with the dollars or credit could live anywhere he could finance. Huber could say no.

The Conservation Department would state a rule that anybody could fish for Coho if he bought a license. Huber could say maybe. The state health department

could set up a series of tests for water pollution, requiring reports from industry on the shore. Huber's bill would place a legislative committee between the citizen and enforcement.

ROMNEY WAS on solid constitutional grounds when he vetoed the Huber bill. Huber says it's constitutional. Since none of us is a lawyer, this opinion is as good as Huber's.

The governor said the bill gave executive powers to the legislature and obviously it did.

Rule making by an administrative agency is simply applying the law. The rules promulgated by an agency must be screened by the Legislative Service Bureau legal staff so the rules don't go beyond the statute or try to do something the law didn't intend.

The rules then go to the state attorney general for approval as to legal form. Then, they go to the secretary of state for inclusion in the State Administrative Code.

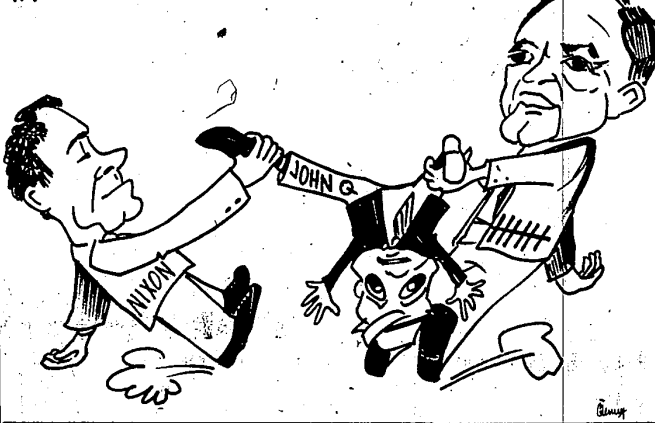
The joint legislative committee then can hold hearings on the rules, but under present law cannot change them. The committee can propose legislation to change them.

IN ITS MOST ridiculous form, the Huber bill could have stopped the application of any law on the books—merely by tossing out the rules. That's the kind of power the committee would have had under the Huber bill.

And such a joint committee would not be appointed by the governor, but jointly by the committee on committees in the Senate and by the Speaker of the House.

We've disagreed with Romney, but not this time.

MAKE A WISH...



By Bob Ameen

Questions On The Hippies

The wave of violence during the recent Democratic National Convention in Chicago not only left many thinking persons in shock, but shocked many persons into thinking.

Pros and cons aplenty sprouted forth in the newspapers and on television and radio. Whether one chooses to believe charges of "police brutality," "police state" or many of the other accusations hurled by eye witnesses and TV viewers alike is a matter of personal prerogative.

What did come out of the confusion and turmoil reigning in front of the Conrad Hilton Hotel and in Grant Park are many unanswered questions.

HOW MANY PERSONS might have been killed and injured if the stringent defense measures taken by Mayor Richard J. Daley had not been employed? Not one single death was attributed to Chicago police or demonstrators. Whether one is a Democrat or a Republican, and does or does not condone Daley's running of the convention and "his" city, this one indisputable and salient fact emerges.

What actual business, insofar

as the convention itself was concerned, did the thousands of Hippies, Yippies and other groups have in Chicago?

TV watchers by the millions can attest to the fact that even accredited delegates had no success swaying the outcome of the conclave, let alone many persons (some under age) whom authorities said were not only unaccredited, but unemployed, under narcotic influence, defiers of convention as to dress and appearance, and in many instances, members of well known militant organizations. True, as in any cross section of the population, some of the demonstrators were sound, honest and law-abiding citizens of our country and probably as patriotic as any of the rest of us.

Where is the money coming from to support thousands upon thousands of these unhappy-with-the-times, unhappy-with-the issues protesters who gather at political gatherings like bees around honey?

It would be foolhardy for Mr. Average American to think that he can afford to romp around the United States, from Los Angeles to Detroit to Chicago to New York on pin money left over after bills are paid. Even if cash were available, would he have the time? Could he afford the time? This question of where the funds are coming from deserves close scrutiny, not only by tax-paying

citizens, but by puppet agencies of the U.S. government entrusted to our protection.

HAD ONLY NORMAL precautionary measures been taken inside and outside of convention headquarters, would anything but a shambles have been left by the thousands who would have, shoved, elbowed and smashed their way in on the convention floor?

The demonstrators admitted they were watching to the Amphitheatre. Once there, and with only a scattering of force, with emotions aroused to fever pitch, could anyone say that sanity and reason would have prevailed over mob hysteria? Past experience in such matters gives an unhappy and tragic answer.

Looking back, as far back as the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Senator Robert Kennedy, the average American voter cannot help but wonder what would have happened at Chicago under normal police protection. Nothing is perfect. No one is perfect. The conduct of Chicago police was not perfect. How much harder to control the actions of thousands than that of one? The answer is obvious.

So, as a nation, let us be ashamed of the actions of SOME Chicago policemen and also ashamed at SOME of our young people. But let us be immensely thankful that not ONE single person was killed during the entire four-day ordeal.

Upshot of the whole controversy raging on Chicago's handling of the convention and demonstrators is one big question, applicable not only to the Democratic convention, but to other huge public functions elsewhere: Was the huge show of force in Chicago necessary and justified? Only an honest and soul-searching hunt into our hearts and minds can give each and every citizen that answer. And that answer will be his own.

By Robert Selwa

Guns Gain Favor In Murders

The latest report of the Federal Bureau of Investigation on crime and violence in the United States lends further evidence to the case for the urgent need for gun control.

Citing a crime rise in virtually every category of offense, geographical area and type of neighborhood, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover revealed that the gun is gaining favor as a murder weapon.

It had a role in 63 per cent of the nation's more than 12,000 homicides last year. Handguns accounted for 48 per cent of all murders, shotguns for nine per cent and rifles for six per cent. Firearms were used to commit more than 6,600 murders, 52,000 aggravated assaults and 73,000 robberies.

THE FBI REPORT made state-by-state computations and came up with significant findings.

Four northeastern states with strict gun control laws were among the lowest in the incidence of murder by firearms—Rhode Island, New York, Massachusetts and New Jersey. Of five other states with some form of gun control, three were well below the national average—Hawaii, Illinois and Michigan.

The point has been made before and is reinforced by the latest FBI study: If gun control is needed at the Federal level and is needed now.

There are too many guns around, and in the affluent economy of the U.S., too many more are being made and distributed. Not only are our leaders slain by guns, but also common citizens. A neighbor walks his dog at night and is mistaken as a burglar; an enraged person resorts to the only way he can win an argument; or a child gets hold of what the adults said wasn't loaded.

The most basic of all human rights is extinguished by the bullet. For every heart transplant saving a person, there are countless irrational deeds wiping out other lives.

For five years the Congress of the United States has considered and delayed effective gun control legislation. It took the death of a second Kennedy to spur movement in Washington. But all that has been accomplished is a ban on mail order sales of guns and under 18. The weapon used on John F. Kennedy might have been stopped; that used on Robert Kennedy would not.

When will we have strong and meaningful gun control legislation at all levels, federal, state and local? When will more store owners take the forward step of halting gun sales on their own initiative? When will police departments be given more tools for dealing with crime, tools in the form of laws which make the very possession of unregistered guns a punishable offense?

There are two things you'll need to serve
a PERFECT BANQUET DINNER

1. People
2. Us

From 4 to 140, we have the facilities. Six private dining rooms to serve you every need. Call us for your next meeting, banquet or dinner party.

453-4301



CHUCK MATSON



- Group Insurance
- Health Insurance
- Pension Plans
- Life Insurance
- Annuities

NEW YORK LIFE
Insurance Company

17000 West 8 Mile Road,
Southfield, 366-9480

Sense And Nonsense

Why letters of resignations of city officials have to be accepted by the local legislative body is a puzzle to this writer. Such a letter is merely a notification that a person is leaving his job (assuming there are no contract problems to resolve) and why does a person have to seek permission to resign?