Blood sweat and gas: Print media and the 1968 Democratic National Convention

Sarah Switzer Love
The University of Montana

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/5066

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mail.lib.umt.edu.
Permissions is granted by the author to reproduce this material in its entirety, provided that this material is used for scholarly purposes and is properly cited in published works and reports.

**Please check "Yes" or "No" and provide signature**

Yes, I grant permission  

No, I do not grant permission  

Author's Signature:  

Date: 5.18.01

Any copying for commercial purposes or financial gain may be undertaken only with the author's explicit consent.
Blood, Sweat and Gas: Print Media and the 1968 Democratic National Convention

by

Sarah Switzer Love

B.A., Sociology, University of Wisconsin

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts

The University of Montana

2001

Approved by

Chairperson

Dean of the Graduate School

Date
Blood, Sweat and Gas: Print Media and the 1968 Democratic National Convention

Chairperson, Professor Michael S. Mayer, Ph.D.

The Democratic National Convention of 1968 was a watershed convention both inside and outside the convention hall. Thousands of demonstrators amassed in the city of Chicago to protest a number of things, including the Democratic administration of Lyndon B. Johnson, the Vietnam War, racism, and poverty. Thousands of media personnel and police officers were present in Chicago as well. The “convention outside the convention” was not entirely peaceful, with skirmishes occurring between some of the protesters and police officers on a daily basis. This thesis is about the demonstrations, the violence, and the print media response to these.

The study looked at four newspapers, the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, the Washington Post, and the New Orleans Times-Picayune during the months of August and September 1968. It looked at the story “frame” of these newspapers: how the papers shaped the unfolding story of the demonstrations, who or what were the sources for these stories, if all the relevant information was given and who, according to the newspapers, was responsible for the violence.

The study found that the newspapers’ frames resulted in coverage more favorable to the city of Chicago than the demonstrators. The newspaper coverage focused on violence and the possibility of violence by the hands of demonstrators and of items of minimal importance, such as clothing, looks, and age. The newspapers also tended to omit parts of the story line contradictory to their story frame and relevant background material, offered misleading headlines, and tended to offer vague coverage of the actions of the Chicago police. As a result, the newspapers in this study, along with some actions by some of the demonstrators themselves, furthered in the stereotyping and marginalizing of the demonstrators, all of which resulted in an inaccurate account of the events on the streets of Chicago.
Table Of Contents

Introduction................................................................................................................................................1
Chapter One: Preconvention Activities.......................................................................................................9
Chapter Two: Media Portrayal of Preconvention Activities .................................................................22
Chapter Three: Convention Activities....................................................................................................38
Chapter Four: Media Portrayal of Convention Events..........................................................................64
Chapter Five: Post Convention Coverage............................................................................................82
Chapter Six: Conclusion..........................................................................................................................90
Bibliography.............................................................................................................................................96
Introduction

The United States experienced the most turbulent year of the post World War II era in 1968. Early in the year, Americans learned of the Tet Offensive and got their first glimpse into the chasm between the promise of victory and reality in Vietnam. The year witnessed Lyndon Baines Johnson utter those famous words, “I shall not seek, and will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President.” The assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy added to the surreal feeling that America was about to implode. The withdrawal of President Johnson and the initial success of peace candidate Eugene McCarthy gave a glimmer of hope to anti-war and anti-administration forces that perhaps the Democratic Party would nominate a candidate friendly to their views.

Nineteen sixty-eight also witnessed the continuing rise of the student protest movement, which had become more confrontational as the decade progressed.1 Eugene McCarthy attempted to siphon off some of these student dissidents by reaching out to the younger generation, and some of the best minds of this generation worked diligently for McCarthy all year. While many dissidents thoroughly believed that no one but the administration’s number two man, Hubert H. Humphrey, would get the Democratic nomination, McCarthy managed to obtain legions of recruits who “got clean for Gene” and worked tirelessly throughout the primaries to get their candidate nominated.2

The events of 1968 climaxed in August. The Republican Party convention met early that month in Miami, Florida, where Republican delegates nominated Richard M. Nixon as their “law and order” candidate amidst rioting and the death of four persons in nearby neighborhoods.3 Despite the violence in Miami, most eyes remained on Chicago. Many speculated that the influx of 100,000 hippie, anti-war, and anti-administration demonstrators August 25 through 30 during

---

the Democratic National Convention would ignite a black uprising in the ghettos of Chicago near the International Amphitheater, the meeting place of the Democrats.4

Although there were neither black uprisings nor anywhere near 100,000 demonstrators in the city of Chicago that week, the events of the Democratic convention had long lasting significance. Some of these events occurred within the convention and will not be discussed here. This thesis deals with related events that took place outside the convention: the demonstrations and violence, and the print media response to these. The blood, sweat, and gas on the streets of Chicago that week “marked a crisis in the nation’s political and cultural order.”5 This crisis, fueled by “completely different conceptions of political practice and social order,” pitted the dissident demonstrators and those sympathetic to their cause against the Johnson administration, Mayor Richard Daley’s Chicago, and the fifty-six percent of the American population tired of the havoc wrecked by, according to the Washington Post, “crazies” and “mind-blowing political agitators.”6

The events of the convention polarized Americans; some thought the city of Chicago reacted in a reasonable way, and others saw Daley and the Chicago police as barbaric. The events also polarized Americans concerning the media portrayal of the events. Many believed the media, especially the three major television networks, aired too many stories about the protesters, were too sympathetic toward the demonstrators, and gave the public a distorted view of events.7 As one Chicago police public-information officer put it, “This unruly group of revolutionaries is bent on the destruction of our system of government. They represent a pitiful handful...but by golly, they get the cooperation of the news media.”8 This statement reflected the beliefs of many Americans, and the subsequent months witnessed much public debate and study over the role of media, especially that of the television media, in the event.

---

5 Ibid, xiii
7 Farber, Chicago ‘68, 205.
Many demonstrators directly tied their goals for the convention demonstrations to the mass media coverage they would get. This group recognized that their presence in Chicago would not stop the nomination of the administration’s nominee or planks; instead with their actions they aimed to change “people’s images and understandings [with the hope that] somehow those ideological changes would produce something better.” A friend of Abbie Hoffman, Jim Fouratt, said, “Chicago was exactly what he [Abbie] wanted it to be, a media event.”

Some of the events before and during the convention week were made to order for media coverage and public consumption. These symbolic “media events” were sensational, spotlight-grabbing episodes that lent themselves to media coverage because they could be quickly and easily explained and were often accompanied by a stark visual. Two such examples that succeeded at getting media coverage for the demonstrators included demonstration officials teaching demonstrators the snake dance and self-defense measures a few days before the official start of the convention and Yippie spokesmen stating the group planned to put LSD in Chicago’s water supply. While the demonstrating groups succeeded in getting media attention with these ploys, they could not control whether their activities would be covered positively, accurately, or fairly.

Not only were demonstrators dependent on these media events to get the public’s eye, members of the media relied on these events as well for their simplistic stories and photo opportunities. Some members of the media attempted to create “media events” of their own and at times goaded demonstrators into these actions. As one witness to the events put it: “you could not count the times that the parade marshals were asked to perform for the cameras the exotic import: the snake dance used by Japanese students to break through police lines in their demonstrations.”

---

9 Farber, Chicago ’68, 250.
10 Larry Sloman, Steal this Dream (New York: Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc, 1998), 159.
11 Gitlin, The Whole World is Watching, 187.
12 Schultz, No One Was Killed (Chicago: Big Table Publishing Company, 1969), 50.
Aside from the issue that the media presence in Chicago may have goaded and provoked some of the clashes of that week and, as we shall see, both the city and demonstrators wanted to use the media as their tool, a close look at the media coverage of the event is valuable for other reasons. The media play a large role in a modern society; most Americans get and support their view of the world from what they see on the nightly news or read in the newspaper. In a sense, one could argue that these media outlets form the public’s sense of history. While mass media play this important role in society, it is imperative to note that the media do not necessarily give an exact reflection of what occurred. All media selectively choose what to and what not to air or print, and in doing so they decide what is and is not the news. Their selectivity defines the situation, informs public opinion, and shapes public debate within the parameters it has set up for the story.\(^\text{13}\)

There was much public debate about media coverage in the aftermath of Chicago, most notably over the television coverage; commentators spent much less time discussing newspaper coverage. This constituted a major oversight. Newspapers, for the most part, had more time to put together their stories before they went to print. Although the television coverage of the demonstrations was not live due to an electrician’s strike, the networks aired the conflicts as soon as they possibly could. Newspaper reporters, while undeniably under time constraints, had more time to cover the story and often saw it through to its completion before wiring the story to their editors. Newspapers were not as limited by time constraints as the network news shows, most of which had to fit an entire newscast into only twenty-two minutes. Newspapers, on the other hand, could add pages or a special section dedicated to the events in Chicago (which indeed some did) where they could go into more detail and probe the causes and meanings of the events.

This thesis examined newspaper coverage of the convention outside the convention. How did these newspapers shape the story of the demonstrations and demonstrators? What or who were their sources? Did they present relevant background information? Whom did they hold responsible for the blood that ran in the streets? The subject covers only the months of August and September of 1968 in four newspapers: the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the

\(^{13}\) Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 49.
Washington Post and the New Orleans Times-Picayune. The original plan for the project intended to round off the study with a paper from the West, the San Francisco Examiner, but difficulty obtaining it led to limiting the sources to newspapers from the East, South and Midwest. The New York Times was included because it was the most important newspaper of record in the United States, printing "all the news that's fit to print" from a liberal standpoint. Many regional newspapers took their cue of what was news from the Times and duplicated the Times' version of news through its wire service. Also, other news services often relayed a story only after seeing it in the New York Times, in effect "recertifying" it.14

This thesis included the Chicago Tribune because of its decidedly conservative slant and its status as the convention's hometown newspaper. Further, many congressmen praised it for its excellent coverage of the events.15 The Washington Post provided the voice of the Washington establishment. Finally, the New Orleans Times-Picayune added a southern regional newspaper into the mix.

In writing the news, as in writing history, complete objectivity is constantly aimed for but rarely achieved. Some forms of bias, some preferential treatment toward certain facts or opinions, inevitably influences the choices that make up the daily news. Decisions about what or what not to print, the length and location of the story in the paper, what to emphasize or suppress, and what sources to use all worked toward assigning a specific definition or frame to an event and a significance to that event. This frame gave meaning to the facts the media source provided, and once this frame was in place, "it tend[ed] to perpetuate [it]self irrespective of what the existing and subsequent information indicated."16 The media used many different tools of the trade in framing events, some of which include omitting certain parts of a story line, presenting only one side of the story, over generalizing or inflating detail, and trivializing events.17

14 Ibid., 99.
15 The Chicago Tribune, August 1968.
Examples of each of these can be found in the coverage of the demonstrations in Chicago. Much of the coverage of the New Left as a whole was riddled by occurrences of “polarization” or an emphasis on “counterdemonstrations and balancing the antiwar effort against ultra-right and neo-Nazi groups as equivalent ‘extremists.’” As a result, news media often inaccurately linked dissident groups with communist fronts or anarchists, or interviewed leaders of extreme right-wing groups, such as from the John Birch Society, to counter statements given by New Left groups.  

Coverage of dissident activities often stressed the deviance of protesters, depicting them to be a small number of irresponsible outsiders, not representative of the population as a whole, when in actuality many came from moderate, middle class groups, such as SANE, Women for Peace, and Concerned Citizens. Media accounts of New Left events frequently depreciated the number of people at the event and the movement’s effectiveness while placing emphasis on “the presence of Communists, the carrying of Vietcong flags,” and violence was commonplace. These accounts also relied heavily on government officials and other authorities as sources for details and statements, which resulted in giving the reader only one perspective of the course of events.

Reporters can use other tools to present one perspective of events. Some, such as quoting someone out of context and using evasive terminology in the description of events, can be found in the coverage of the Democratic convention. Other times, reporters fake neutrality by offering a “false compliment” camouflaged for an attack or a “false criticism” that is followed by great praise that minimized the effect of the negative statement. Other times a reporter may present the opinion of one individual to represent a large subsection of the United States or offer the inner feelings, motivations, or goals of a group in question with no reference to its source.

All of the above mentioned tools are frequently used in the media’s frames of news events. Every form of media, whether of a liberal or conservative bent, defines, and therefore

---

18 Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching.* 27.
19 Ibid, 28.
frames, news in accordance to their worldview. This worldview, as other studies of media
treatment of social protests have found, "very largely *coincides* [italics in original] with the
definition provided by the legitimate power holders." This study buttressed those findings. The
city of Chicago, especially Mayor Daley, viewed the demonstrations as a result of outside
agitators, which would need to be quelled by the Chicago police lest the demonstrations touch off
a riot in the urban black neighborhoods. The newspaper take on events was remarkably similar.
Each newspaper framed the demonstrations outside the Chicago Amphitheater as unnecessary
events heavily dependent on the presumably violent actions of militant and radical demonstrators
who would have to be restrained by governmental forces. As a result, major news media ignored,
maligned, or misrepresented organizations, events, or people that did not neatly fit within this set
definition, such as the Lincoln Park neighborhood organization in Chicago, which wanted less
police involvement in the demonstration activities.

Although each of the newspapers in question presented a slightly different story of the
events before and during the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, their methods of
framing the story were remarkably similar. Each newspaper placed heavy emphasis on the
probability of violence during the convention week and used vague terminology to describe
events, especially when recounting police actions aimed at the demonstrators. Further, the
newspapers often undercounted the injuries of demonstrators, omitted various points of
information contradictory to their frame, and placed emphasis on facts of marginal importance to
the story, such as on the demonstrators' age, dress, or looks. As a result, the coverage of events
in these newspapers favored the establishment and maligned the demonstrators, thus giving
readers a distorted, inaccurate, and ahistorical view of the events in question.

These shortcomings played a role in the newspapers' analysis of events after all the
demonstrators had departed from Chicago. The papers continued to focus most of their attention

---

21 Graham Murdock, "Political Deviance: The Press Presentation of a Militant Mass
Demonstration" in *The Manufacture of News: A Reader*, eds. Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (Beverly

177.
on the flow of events, for example the speeches Mayor Daley gave or the opinions of famous persons on the events in Chicago, and neglected the underlying conditions of the conflict, the reasoning behind the events the way they occurred, and whether they had to occur that way at all. Consequently, while many claimed the media contained too much sympathy toward demonstrators, the print media, by not offering a thorough summary and analysis of events, actually encouraged and buttressed the beliefs of the majority of Americans and political leaders, furthered the stereotyping of demonstrators and added to the misinformation of the American public.
Chapter One

Preconvention Activities

From the moment the Democratic National Committee unanimously chose Chicago as the site of the 1968 Democratic National Convention, the choice was controversial. The media hoped the Democratic Party would have their convention in Miami, the location of the Republican National Convention, which would drastically cut down operating costs. As it got closer to the convention dates of August 25 to 30, the controversy grew to the point that some openly discussed moving the site. The city of Chicago experienced an electrician’s strike in August, making television coverage and telephone installation exceedingly difficult. In addition, the city experienced a bus and taxicab driver strike and many openly wondered whether Chicago would be able to handle peacefully the thousands of demonstrators planning to descend upon the city.3

Immediately after the DNC’s announcement, the city of Chicago, law enforcement, the media, and dissenting groups wasted no time in beginning their preparations and tackling the logistical problems each faced.

Soon dissident groups announced their plans to demonstrate in Chicago that week, the finer details of which to be worked out in the subsequent months. One group intending to demonstrate at the convention was the New York based Yippies (Youth International Party). The brainchild of Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin and a few other New York cultural and political dissidents, this group envisioned a carnival like party on the lakefront of Chicago where there would be entertainment, discussion forums, information exchanges, workshops about problems facing dissenting youth, and other attractions that would continue day and night throughout the convention week. They called it the Festival of Life, to contrast with the “convention of death” that would be occurring in the International Amphitheater.4

---

As early as January 16, 1968, the group posted its first “Yippie Manifesto” that encouraged anyone and everyone to head to Chicago. The manifesto called on all “rebels, youth spirits, rock minstrels, truth seekers, peacock freaks, poets, barricade jumpers, dancers, lovers and artists” to descend upon Chicago where 500,000 would join together to create a “mock convention” where one could “mak[e] love in the parks,” read, sing, laugh, and grope and show the establishment of LBJ, Mayor Daley, and J. Edgar Hoover that their threats had no effect.25 The Yippies proceeded to plan for the festival. They began approaching bands to perform and lining up transportation and places to stay. The New York based Yippie group also got in touch with similar minded hippies in Chicago to aid in planning.26

The withdrawal of Johnson from the race on March 31 slowed Yippie plans. The presence of President Johnson unified protest movements, and his abdication resulted in a declining interest in the mass demonstration in Chicago and some members proposed foregoing the whole idea.27 Nonetheless, in April a Chicago Yippie, Abe Peck, wrote an “Open letter to Mayor Daley” requesting permits for the upcoming conventions. In this letter, which Peck sent to Daley and to the Liberation News Service, he wrote, “You must realize that it is too late to stop thousands of young people from coming to Chicago…. [We] share a common desire to avoid bloodshed and needless hardship.”28 Peck personally wanted to discuss any problems and work out all of the permit requirements so the group could continue planning the event. Instead, what Peck and other Yippies got was continued harassment by Chicago Police, who continually busted Yippie gatherings and arrested all present on trumped up charges only to drop them all on the day of the court hearing.29

The Yippies aimed many of their preconvention actions at the media. They used shock value to get media attention and to present their views and lifestyle. They posted plans to have a nude float-in in Lake Michigan where thousands of nude bodies would float for peace. They aired

25 Farber, Chicago '68, 21-22.
26 Ibid., 26-27.
28 Farber, Chicago '68, 41.
29 Ibid.
their intentions for a love-in in Grant Park. They voiced their intention to put LSD in Chicago’s water supply. They claimed male Yippies would seduce the wives and daughters of delegates, female Yippies would seduce male delegates and put LSD in their drinks, and that others planned to pose at taxicab drivers and drop delegates off in Wisconsin.30

These spurious goals obscured the more serious ones. The Yippies wanted to blend the hippie lifestyle of Hoffman with some of the New Left’s philosophies of Rubin.31 Besides wanting to create “a connecting link that would tie as much as the underground as was willing into a gigantic national get together…. [They also wanted] to make some kind of statement in revolutionary action-theater terms about Johnson, the Democratic Party, electoral politics and the state of the nation.”32

Rubin believed Mayor Daley’s shoot to kill order during the riots following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4 exemplified the violence Rubin considered inherent in American society. Many others in the movement believed Daley directed this order more so at the upcoming August demonstrations than at the rioting over King’s murder. Others fearfully wondered what Daley, after making such an extreme public statement, had in mind for the protesters privately, and talk of abandoning the Festival of Life heightened.33

Despite the city’s shoot to kill order and the fact that the Yippies had not, as of June 1, gotten a response from the city to their letter, Rubin and Hoffman continued their plans for the Festival, which got a boost of renewed interest after the assassination of Robert Kennedy on June 6. That month Abbie Hoffman called the upcoming demonstrations a “constitutional convention” where “visionary mind-benders…for five long days and nights [will] address themselves to the task of formulating the goals and means of the New Society.”34 Again he mentioned the music and the workshops, and asked that people coming to Chicago be ready for

31 Gitlin, The Sixties, 235.
32 Sloman, Steal this Dream, 121.
33 Farber, Chicago ’68, 146-147.
34Mailer, Miami and the Siege of Chicago, 135.
five days of "energy exchange." Hoffman wrote, "If you don't have anything to do, stay home, you'll only get in the way."35

The leaders continued their quest for festival permits with little doubt that they would receive them. In a statement printed in the underground newspaper, The Realist, Hoffman mentioned the quest to obtain permits for the festival, the expectation that they would be granted, and the high probability that there would be some violence.

We are negotiating, with the Chicago city government, a 6-day treaty. All of the Chicago newspapers as well as various pressure groups have urged the city of Chicago to grant the permit. They recognize full well the huge social problems they face if we are forced to use the streets of Chicago for our action.... This matter of permits is a cat and mouse game. The Chicago authorities do not want to grant it too early, knowing this will increase the number of people that descend on this city. They can ill afford to wait too late, for that will inhibit planning on our part and create more chaos. It is not our wish to take on superior armed troops who out number us on unfamiliar enemy territory. It is not their wish to have a Democrat nominated amidst a major blood bath. The treaty will work for both sides.36

Despite Hoffman's confidence, the Festival of Life would not take place as originally intended. The shadow of possible violence dampened all the plans for the week. In addition, most of the bands refused to commit absent a permit. The Yippies felt they would obtain a permit for the festival at the eleventh hour and needed the promise of big numbers to gain that permit, something they could not have without the commitment of the bands. The continued police harassment of Chicago Yippies, including arresting underground newspaper vendors and "long hairs" in certain areas of town, frightened many and made them less willing to participate in the planning process. These people would have to live in Chicago after the convention ended, and believed that it was in their best interest to distance themselves from the New York Yippie leadership. Leaders of the New York faction therefore had to fly to Chicago and do the planning themselves, adding to the confusion, disorganization, and haphazard planning process that had already begun.37

35 Ibid.
36 Ibid., 136.
37 Farber, Chicago '68, 41,43., Walker, Rights in Conflict, 25,27.
The other major group organizing to protest during the convention in Chicago, the Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam (Mobe), had some organizing difficulties of its own. Like the Yippies, they started immediately after the Democratic Party’s announcement to make plans for descending on Chicago in late August. Experienced protest leaders created Mobe as a tool to bring together the disparate and numerous peace and anti-administration organizations under one umbrella. This new organization, a combination of nearly 150 dissident groups, would organize the events of the convention week, work with Chicago’s officials, and line up housing and transportation for those traveling to Chicago.  

By April of 1968 these disparate organizations had agreed to use the convention demonstrations to increase pressure on the government to end the war in Vietnam and facilitate the breakdown of confidence in the government and military by “stressing that the decisions which led to the Vietnam war were rigged in the same way, and by the same people, who are rigging the convention and elections in 1968.” In an attempt to offer something to every group taking part in Mobe, its leaders planned to have protests focused on the major institutions that contributed to the war in Vietnam and to urban breakdown, such as welfare offices, urban renewal departments, police stations, slumlords, schools, and city halls. They planned to concentrate actions on Chicago draft boards, the downtown induction center, institutions that took part in war related research (such as the Illinois Institute of Technology) and corporations like Dow Chemical, which produced napalm and Agent Orange, two weapons used in the Vietnam War. They also planned a national day of resistance on August 27, a day to turn draft cards into the convention and a day to offer a “serious teach-in for soldiers protecting LBJ’s convention.”

While many in Mobe expected violence from the police and federal authorities and believed that this violence might be beneficial as it could work to “further expose the authoritarian character of Johnson’s government,” they formally committed themselves to non-violence and to

---

38 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 17.  
40 Ibid., 12.  
41 Ibid., 13.
the absolute necessity for the peace movement to be at the convention. Instead, the group offered that official commitment to non-violent tactics did not mean passivity. Forceful disobedience, such as draft card burnings, picketing, and marching, combined with large-scale demonstrations, they reasoned, could include those more militant demonstrators with those who had never before publicly protested the war. It would make possible a multilevel protest that would please the aims of all the organizations under the umbrella while allowing new people into the movement. By doing this, they hoped to bring to Chicago a number of people too large to be considered a lunatic fringe.

Johnson’s refusal to run for reelection retarded the planning process during the months of April and May. Even the tragedy of Robert Kennedy’s assassination failed to mobilize the antiwar protest movement to concentrate on planning for Chicago, and there had yet to be an official “call” to the city. A small sector of Mobe, without input or permission from the representatives of the other organizations, moved forward with plans for the convention at the end of June. Rennie Davis attempted to reach Mayor Daley and city officials to gain permits and make the necessary arrangements for the convention protests, to no avail. Davis then met with his friend Roger Wilkins in the Justice Department to aid in setting up a meeting with city officials. Meanwhile, other organizers continued to round up transportation, housing and funds while they waited to hear from the Chicago administration. Since movement leaders had not yet been able to meet with any important city leaders, and the issue of permits was uncertain, Mobe took the attitude that, while a last minute permit would be great, it really did not matter, because they were going ahead with their plan either way.

The city of Chicago found itself busy in the months leading to the Democratic National Convention as well. The very day the Democratic Selection Committee announced the unanimous selection for the site, reporters asked Mayor Richard Daley about the possibilities of

---

42 Ibid., 2.
43 Ibid., 4.
44 Farber, Chicago ’68, 100.
45 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 32.
46 Farber, Chicago ’68, 107.
mass demonstrations the week of the convention. Daley dismissed the possibility stating that in Chicago, everyone was "positive" and that Chicago would have a positive program, and demonstrations—mainly alluding to rioting in black sections of cities—would not take place. By early January, however, Mayor Daley began to receive intelligence reports from across the country, and it became more and more clear to Daley that the anti-war movement was indeed making plans to demonstrate during the Democratic convention. Although Daley still hoped it would not to happen, Chicago officials and the Chicago Police Department, under the auspices of the Convention Planning Committee, started to plan for the influx of visitors and how to handle any protests at the convention.\textsuperscript{47}

By February, the Convention Planning Committee had established working relationships with the Secret Service, FBI, Military Intelligence, the Illinois National Guard, the Democratic National Committee, and other private and public organizations. The committee deemed this as necessary because of the influx of intelligence reports from undercover agents, which would continue to the end of the convention week, that warned of impending demonstrations.\textsuperscript{48} Throughout the months of February and March, this organization quietly planned for the August event while Chicago police officers learned the proper methods for arm grips and arm locks called "come alongs" and "how to be strong-minded and not strong-armed."\textsuperscript{49}

These methods of crowd control changed after the rioting that followed the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Unhappy with the way the police dealt with rioters and arsonists, Mayor Daley condemned the Chicago Police Superintendent's "minimal force" approach to the riots. As a result, the Mayor personally issued new, tougher orders for future demonstrations, which included a shoot to kill order for arsonists and those with Molotov cocktails, and a shoot to maim order for looters. The new orders alarmed many demonstrating groups. A few days after the riots, the city passed new ordinances for disorderly conduct, trespass, and resisting arrest violations that gave the police much more freedom in making arrests. These new ordinances

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 117, 133.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 133.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 135.
made it illegal to "make any unreasonable or offensive act, utterance, gesture or display which...creates a clear and present danger of a breach of peace." That same day, the Federal government passed a new anti-riot law that made the conspiracy to cause a riot a federal crime.

By late April, Mayor Daley had his plan in place for dealing with the demonstrators. The city would, as Daley’s press secretary Earl Bush said, "discourage the hippies from coming" by not giving them a "staging ground." There would be no park permits to use Chicago's parks or streets to protest. Mayor Daley reasoned that there could be no conceivable reason for the city of Chicago to accommodate outside agitators who aimed to disrupt the city and its convention. This was not, however, something he communicated to the demonstrators themselves, and demonstration groups continued to spend time and resources in their attempt to get the proper permission for their plans.

In June and July, Mayor Daley met with Samuel Shapiro, the governor of Illinois, about the possibility of having the National Guard in place for the convention in August, and Governor Shapiro decided to call up the National Guard the week before the convention started. Illinois guardsmen spent much of their summer training for the demonstrations of late August in the event that the city needed them. During this time, Daley also met with Roger Wilkins, Rennie Davis’s friend in the Justice Department. The meeting started out well, until Wilkins began to discuss Mobe’s plans for the Democratic National Convention. At the mention of the dissident group Mayor Daley cut Wilkins off and told him that the city of Chicago would take care of itself. The meeting did not last a full fifteen minutes.

At the beginning of August, most protest groups still believed in the possibility of extracting permits to march and use city parks from the city of Chicago. City officials continually met with Mobe and Yippie leaders, but much more so to learn about protester plans than in an

50 Farber, Chicago ’68, 146.
51 Ibid., 151.
52 Ibid.
54 Farber, Chicago ’68, 157.
attempt to reach an agreement with the groups in question. The city had not, and would not, sway from the position it took at the end of April.\(^{55}\)

The demonstration leaders got their first outright negative reply from the city on August 5.\(^{56}\) Members of the Justice Department’s Community Relations Division told them that Chicago city parks would not be available for sleeping, something both Mobe and the Yippies counted on to deal with the logistical problem of where to house the hundreds of thousands of people expected for the week. In a Mobe meeting that evening, demonstration leaders discussed what they should do next. Some thought that even though the city dragged its feet in negotiations, it would still issue permits at the last minute. As a compromise gesture, Mobe decided to ask for only one permit, for a march on August 28 from Grant Park to the Amphitheater. The group scheduled a decision-making meeting with the Deputy Mayor Stahl on August 12.\(^{57}\)

The city did not make a decision at the August 12 meeting. City officials did ask, however, if the protesters planned to march without a permit. Later that day during a press conference, Eugene McCarthy appealed to his followers not to make the trip to Chicago. He urged them to conduct rallies in their own communities to “avoid the possibility of unscheduled rallies leading to unintended violence.”\(^{58}\) On the other hand, Chicago’s underground newspaper, the Seed, warned its readers “Don’t come to Chicago if you expect a five-day festival of life, music and love. The word is out. Chicago may host a festival of blood.”\(^{59}\) By contrast, investigators later learned that Vice-President Hubert Humphrey wrote to Mayor Daley urging him to give the demonstrators heading to Chicago permits to demonstrate and halls to convene. Mayor Daley never responded to the letter.\(^{60}\)

The following day, the Mobilization began to train their marshals, training that continued until the convention began. They trained the marshals to provide directions, oversee the marches, guide demonstrators to safety in case of a confrontation with the authorities, and protect

---

\(^{55}\) Ibid, 161.  
\(^{56}\) Ibid., 108.  
\(^{57}\) Walker, Rights in Conflict, 34.  
\(^{58}\) Ibid, 28.  
\(^{59}\) Ibid, 27.  
demonstrators from hecklers and other violent situations. Mobe leaders hoped that by having marshals they could limit the number of policemen present and diffuse an already stress-filled situation. The marshals would help protesters form small groups and leave the park at night with minimal arrests and conflicts.

Clearly, this tension-filled situation in Chicago scared away many moderate protesters who would have helped make the organizer’s goal of one hundred thousand demonstrators a reality. Demonstration leaders still hoped to attract as many moderate people as possible and to that end worked feverishly toward gaining permits. Mobe and Yippie leaders met on August 12 and 13 to negotiate for permits with city officials and on August 14 Rennie Davis sent a telegram to Daley requesting an emergency meeting of city officials to deal with permit requirements.

On August 16, Daley responded publicly to this telegram by blaming the outsiders for the potential turmoil before the convention even started. He said, “People in Chicago behave themselves. It is only some people who might come to the convention from outside Chicago that might bring trouble. These outsiders have no right to interfere with the right of Chicago citizens to enjoy a safe and orderly community.” The city then put up signs in Lincoln and Grant parks stating, “Park closes at 11 p.m.” The citizens of the Lincoln Park area regarded the appearance of the signs with some amazement, as other organizations, like the Boy Scouts, had slept in the parks previously and Chicago police loosely enforced this ordinance in the past.

The Yippies and Mobe filed a lawsuit in federal court on August 18 for a permit for Lincoln Park after they exhausted their attempts with the Justice Department, Democratic National Committee, and numerous branches of the city government. Both groups charged Mayor Daley and the city with conspiring to deny them the right to assemble and the right of equal protection. The following day the Yippies withdrew their suit, fearing that the court’s decision would bar them from holding a daytime festival. Mobe continued their case but on August 23, three days before

---

61 Farber, Chicago '68, 108.
63 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 35.
64 Farber, Chicago '68, 161.
65 Schultz, No One Was Killed, 49.
66 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 40.
the convention officially began, the court found that the city did not conspire to deny rights to the protesters.\textsuperscript{67} After further negotiation between protest leaders and city officials, the city granted one permit for an afternoon rally at the Grant Park band shell for Wednesday August 28. Demonstration leaders received this permit the evening of Tuesday, August 27, leaving them little time to plan the events of the following day.

Demonstrators began to arrive on Sunday August 18, and the week before the Democratic National Convention began was fairly quiet. The demonstrators established base in Lincoln Park, and Mobilization members recruited and trained marshals. They discussed recruiting procedures, ideals of non-violent demonstrations, relations with police, and the legal rights of demonstrators. Undercover police and representatives of the Chicago Commission on Youth Welfare listened and observed everything that happened. Police officers tailed Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman. Demonstrators learned how to do the snake dance and other self-defense measures that got quite a bit of publicity from the press. As each day came and went, it became more and more apparent to the demonstrators that the city was not going to hand out any last minute permits, and many were left to scramble for places to sleep at night.\textsuperscript{68}

The first and only fatality related to the convention week occurred near demonstration grounds on Thursday, August 22. The Chicago police shot to death a 17-year-old Native American dressed in "hippie type" clothing. The police said they shot him after he fired a .32 caliber revolver at them.\textsuperscript{69} This incident increased the feeling of tension and insecurity already among the demonstrators. One demonstrator marshal said, "we don't want to go overboard in ascribing malevolent intentions to the police, but obviously things are going to be getting very rough here. We've got to be prepared."\textsuperscript{70}

The few days before the convention, demonstrators began to trickle into Chicago. On Friday August 23 several hundred people milled around Lincoln Park while Mobilization leaders discussed first aid precautions, legal aid, and what to do in case of tear gas attacks or mass

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., 36.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., 80-82.
\textsuperscript{69} Farber, Chicago '68 p. 165.
\textsuperscript{70} Walker, Rights in Conflict, p. 83.
arrests. They obtained legal advice and representation for arrested demonstrators from volunteer lawyers and law students through the Legal Defense Committee. That morning the Yippies announced their candidate for president, a pig named Pigasus, in the Chicago Civic Center Plaza. The pig’s platform was “garbage.” The police arrested six people and took the pig to the Chicago Humane Society.\textsuperscript{71}

A temporary Chicago police command post near Lincoln Park began operation on the morning of Saturday, August 24, and by 5:00 p.m. police estimated that about two thousand people had gathered.\textsuperscript{72} Both Abbie Hoffman and Tom Hayden were quoted as saying “My God, there’s no one here!”\textsuperscript{73} The Yippies and Mobe expected tens of thousands of people, and quickly saw that this was not to be. Music, dancing, and karate filled the afternoon; later a Yippie released a live pig in the park and the police arrested the man. Approximately twenty-five movement centers operated around the city, including the Radical Mobilizing Committee, Vets for Peace, Resistance (for draft resisters), Concerned Clergy and Laity, Women’s Peace groups, and the Committee of Returned Volunteers (ex-peace corps volunteers) where they handed out literature and spread their message.\textsuperscript{74}

Saturday evening witnessed the park filled with groups of people sitting around bonfires, singing songs and listening to music. Demonstration leaders, including Rubin, Hoffman, and the poet Allen Ginsberg, drafted short statements urging those in the park to leave at the 11:00 p.m. curfew, and most in the park promised to leave by curfew. At 10:30 p.m. there was anywhere between two and eight hundred people in the park, and at 11:00 p.m. poets Allen Ginsberg and Ed Sanders led a large group out of the park. Roughly seventy-five police officers swept the park and the street west of the park and the crowd gave away quickly with little or no confrontation. Much of the crowd regrouped in Old Town chanting “Peace now!” and “Stop the convention!” and

\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Schultz, No One Was Killed, 70.
\textsuperscript{74} Walker, Rights in Conflict, 11-14.
caused a traffic jam. After some time the police dispersed the entire crowd, but not before they arrested eleven demonstrators for disorderly conduct.\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 86-84.
Chapter Two
Media Portrayal of Preconvention Activities

The media coverage of the preconvention period contained numerous similarities among the four newspapers in this study. The newspapers contained many of the same quotations from government officials, omitted similar developments, and often carried misleading headlines; all of which worked to vilify the demonstrators. All of the newspapers accentuated the probability of violence during the convention week.

The *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, which contained only one article about the upcoming demonstrations, titled “Guard Is Called for Convention,” told its readers about the state of Illinois summoning the Illinois National Guard to protect the Democratic National Convention. It warned readers about the possibility of one hundred thousand demonstrators descending on Chicago for the week of the convention and the possibility for “tumult, riot or mob disorder.” The *Times-Picayune* quoted Illinois Governor Samuel Shapiro, saying, “It is deemed that a time of public disorder and danger exists.... This threatened situation in Chicago may become beyond the control of the civil authorities.” The article also quoted Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, who said something contradictory to his actions and the Governor’s statement: “We don’t anticipate or expect any trouble...An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure...we will give anyone an opportunity to demonstrate—but under reasonable conditions and reasonable hours.” 76

This article was the only one the *Times-Picayune* carried about the upcoming activities outside the Democratic National Convention. The article gave no background information about the demonstrators or the demonstrations. Neither did it give much information behind Mayor Daley and the state of Illinois’ reasoning for expecting “tumult, riot or mob disorder.” The coverage, at best, painted a picture of a city uncertain about the upcoming event. At worst, it painted a picture of a city under siege by thousands of people bent on disorder despite Chicago’s

---

willingness to accommodate the demonstration groups. Neither of these painted an accurate picture.

The *Washington Post* carried sixteen articles between August 1 and August 26 about the upcoming protests and the city’s preparation for the convention; fourteen of which discussed the likelihood of conflict between demonstrators and city and state officials. The headlines for some of these articles included: from August 2, “Students Set to Battle Humphrey;” from August 21, “10,000 Soldiers, Police Alerted for Chicago;” and from August 24, “Troops, Federal Agents, Police Gird for Convention.”77 The newspaper gave front-page space to the article dealing with McCarthy’s request that his followers remain in their hometowns, with the headline, “McCarthy Fearful of Chicago Protest.”78 The article told readers that the presidential candidate had asked his workers not to make the trip to Chicago and to conduct rallies in their hometowns because of the potential for violence in Chicago. With his request McCarthy hoped to avoid “the possibility of unintended violence or disorder,” and hoped that party delegates could go about their duty “free from the apprehension of uncontrolled demonstrations.” The article, however, informed readers that because “antiwar and other groups have already announced plans for demonstrations to coincide with the Democratic Convention…. City officials are making extensive plans to maintain security around the convention site,” in effect telling readers that only the demonstrators were a threat to the convention, and that the lack of permits or even the extra security had no part in the tensions. The headline of this article was a bit strong as well, considering the article’s content. The author based only one-fifth of the article upon Chicago’s protests. The rest covered McCarthy’s most recent political actions prior to the convention. Also, nowhere in McCarthy’s discussion of the possible protests did McCarthy admit to personally feeling fearful. Nor did he attempt to lay blame for any violence, if it would happen, as the author of the article did two paragraphs later.

The *Post*, on August 24, discussed with great detail three threats perceived by law enforcement agents that the demonstrators posed for the convention: attempts on the lives of

---

78 Ibid., August 13, 1968.
candidates and important figures, the potential of demonstrations growing out of control, or there
being an explosion of violence from nearby low-income black neighborhoods. The article ended
with the statement that many war protestors were "determined to stage large demonstrations in
spite of the fact that city officials have drastically restricted the number of sites where they may
legitimately do so."\textsuperscript{79} As with the article on August 13, the article ended on the much-repeated,
and not wholly accurate, notion that the demonstrators, with their determination to go ahead with
plans that may not be sanctioned by the city of Chicago, will be the culprits of any violence.

Like the New Orleans paper, the \textit{Washington Post} carried an article about the decision to
use the Illinois National Guard.\textsuperscript{80} This article gave the number of crowd control troops to be on
stand-by in case of emergency as fifty-six hundred Illinois National Guardsmen, nineteen
thousand Army Reservists, and seventy-five hundred regular Army troops, and allayed its readers
worries by telling them that "the convention's security force could thus total some 40,000 men if
necessary." This article quoted the Illinois Governor as well, saying that the Guard may be
necessary since "demonstrations by dissident organizations may result in tumult, riot or mob
disorder." This quote was a very popular one, all four newspapers carried it, with the \textit{New York
Times} using it four separate times in their coverage.\textsuperscript{81}

The \textit{Post} also carried a few articles from the point of view of and about the
demonstrators, but even these managed to play up the theme of impending violence, despite
both the Yippies and Mobe stating repeatedly that they did not advocate violence. One article,
continuing the emphasis of upcoming violence, called Mobe marshals the dissidents' "troops."\textsuperscript{82}
The newspaper titled another article about the demonstrators, quite deceivingly, "Lowenstein
Warns of Violence by Dissidents During Convention."\textsuperscript{83} While Al Lowenstein, a leader of a
moderate dissident group that, because of the lack of permits, did not hold protests during the
week actually did warn of possible violence, this title resonated with the assumption that the

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., August 24, 1968.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., August 21, 1968.
\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Washington Post}, August 21, 1968.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.
demonstrators planned to instigate major amounts of violence once in Chicago, which was not accurate. This headline gave a particular slant to the story and established a predisposition that the article would be about demonstrator plans to wreck havoc on the city. But, in actuality, Lowenstein warned that because the city of Chicago and the Democratic Party denied all requests for permits the week of the convention they opened up the demonstrations to more radical and militant groups who would demonstrate with or without permission. The paper quoted Lowenstein as saying “I cannot now view Chicago with anything less than a sense of dread. The poetic duo of Daley and Bailey [the Democratic Party’s national chairman] should be held to blame for any disorders that now result.” Nowhere in any of the coverage during this time, outside a few solitary and sporadic quotes from demonstration leaders, did the newspapers discuss the possibility that the lack of permits and permissible times and areas of protest presented obstacles if the city of Chicago really wanted no trouble during the week of the convention. The article ended with the reiteration that “leftist” groups still planned to march to the convention site despite the city’s actions, which would have been the “biggest dissident spectacular still on next week’s schedule.” The paper could have easily titled this article Lowenstein Blames City for Potential Convention Violence, which would have reflected Lowenstein’s beliefs more accurately than the actual title.

Another article about the demonstrators emphasized in its headline that “100,000 Estimated” demonstrators planned to head to Chicago, exaggerating the number of people expected.\footnote{The Washington Post, August 22, 1968.} By the time the article ran August 22, all demonstration leaders knew at that time that nowhere close to 100,000 persons would make the trip to Chicago. The FBI and city investigators had infiltrated many demonstrator groups (by Wednesday of the convention week, military intelligences estimated that one in six demonstrators was an undercover government agent) and it was highly unlikely that government officials anticipated one hundred thousand people going to Chicago.\footnote{Farber, Chicago ’68, 170.} Further, most of this article pertained to the possible violence in Chicago. It told readers that “the bartering over the permit was being played out against a
backdrop of increased tensions as demonstrators and police prepared for Monday’s convention.”

It also told readers that low level flights would be barred over the Amphitheater, that Chicago policemen were ordered to wear riot helmets, and that workmen were putting barbed wire on top of the wire mesh fence around the convention site. While none of these above mentioned items were false, the continued detailed reporting of these items without any reporting of attempts to keep the convention peaceful played up the potential for violence and disorder, especially at the hands of the demonstrators.

Although the Chicago Tribune was unique for being the mouthpiece for city and state officials during the preconvention time period, it contained the same frame of events as the other newspapers in this study. Like the Washington Post, the Tribune covered McCarthy’s admonition to his workers not to make the trip to Chicago. This article carried many of the same quotations as the Post article, and this one as well, “The presence of large numbers of visitors amidst the summer tensions of Chicago may well add to the possibility of unintended violence or disorder…I hope my supporters would conduct rallies and other public demonstrations of support in their own communities and not Chicago.”

 McCarthy took pains not to place blame for the expected violence of the week. The newspapers, however, were not so careful.

Along with the Times-Picayune, the Chicago Tribune contained unquestioned contradictory official statements. This newspaper, following Mayor Daley’s lead, played down the possibility for mass demonstrations, claiming the (television) media “cooked up” these notions, while featuring the preparedness and the capability of the authorities for “maintain[ing] order.”

One article quoted the Mayor’s Director of Special Events, Colonel Jack Reilly, as saying “We do not know of any demonstrations that are scheduled to be held anywhere in Chicago. We do not expect any demonstrations.” However, the very next paragraph notified readers that the “dressing rooms at Soldier’s Field could hold one thousand persons should the jail and city house of correction become filled.”

Given the situation, where demonstration groups had publicity

---

86 The Chicago Tribune, August 13, 1968.
88 Ibid., August 15, 1968.
stated that they were going to protest with or without a permit, that the newspapers and reporters could, without question, accept such a statement is a testament to the paper’s and reporter’s attitude toward the upcoming convention demonstrations. Granted, it is a reporter’s job to relay statements of political leaders and other important figures, a newspaper committed to offering balanced and accurate coverage of a story should indicate when an official says something of questionable veracity.

A few days later, the Tribune carried more disputable official statements that its reporters never questioned. Another article quoted Mayor Daley about the city’s preparedness and reiterated that anyone who would make trouble would not be from Chicago. When asked how security was going to be during the convention week, Daley replied, “Better than any convention I have ever attended. Security is tight, but our hospitality is generous. There will be no trouble in Chicago. People in Chicago behave themselves. It is only some people who might come to the convention from outside Chicago that might bring trouble.”

The Chicago Tribune also gave much more attention to potential assassination plots on key party members; other newspapers did not cover these stories, and the New York Times dismissed it as having no substance. This article also played upon the fear that black militants would riot during the convention week, another unsustained fear of the city and media (to the disappointment of many demonstration leaders, local black leaders early on expressed their disinterest in the activities). The paper offered: “Reports of a plot to assassinate Vice-President Humphrey and Sen. Eugene McCarthy during the Democratic Convention are under investigation…. The plot was said to have been formed during a meeting of one hundred Negro extremists and north side gang members and to have included plans for the destruction of several district police stations with explosives and rifle fire…. The source of this story was a jail inmate claiming he attended the meeting along with many Blackstone Rangers, a feared black gang that many anticipated would stir up trouble for the city during convention week. Although the

89 Ibid., August 17, 1968.
91 Farber, Chicago ‘68, 52.
92 The Chicago Tribune, August 20, 1968.
polygraph test was inconclusive and the newspaper had no further sources, the Tribune went with the story anyway. This possible scenario appeared numerous times throughout the coverage on the demonstrations outside the convention, and afterward Mayor Daley used this story as a justification for the heightened security and the police brutality evident throughout the week.

The Tribune's coverage of the city's decision to call up the National Guard contained many similarities to the other newspapers. The article contained Governor Shapiro's warning of possible "tumult, riot and mob disorder" by groups threatening "to offer and commit violence to persons and property, and by force of violence breaking and resisting the laws of the state, therefore it is deemed that a time of public disorder and danger exists." The reporter ended the article with: "The governor acted on a precautionary basis after receiving reports from private sources, that troublemakers, including civil rights activists and Vietnamese war protesters, could cause trouble."93 Evidently, the Tribune viewed civil rights activists and Vietnam War protesters as troublemakers, and given this view it seemed impossible to expect any balance in the coverage of events.

The Tribune covered the Yippies' announcement of a pig as their candidate on Friday August 23. While giving a factual account of the events that afternoon, the Tribune used the article to emphasize the skill of the police and the demonstration groups' plans for violence. The paper gave evidence to the competence of the police with this line: "Moving quickly and without incident, ten uniformed officers...loaded the pig into a police wagon as soon as it was placed in the plaza." This article also included a quote from singer Joe McDonald, who considered playing at the Yippies' Festival of Life, stating, "We now believe the Yippie leadership to be irresponsible and only interested in confrontations with the police."94 On three separate occasions during its preconvention coverage, the Tribune carried quotations from members of demonstrating groups during the preconvention period, and one that it did carry was negative toward one of those groups.

93 Ibid., August 21, 1968.
94 Ibid., August 24, 1968.
The New York Times played up the theme of potential violence as well. Their coverage mainly contained articles dealing with the preparations of the city to contain this violence as well as fears of various persons, including protest leaders and city officials, that violence may occur in Chicago. One article, titled, “Chicago Prepares for Mass Arrests,” quoted the under sheriff of Cook County, Bernard Carey, stating, “If we believe a third of the rumors we are hearing, we are in for a lot of trouble.”95 On August 1, the newspaper included an article, titled “Rights Aide Fears Chicago Violence” about the perceived potentiality of low-income black neighborhoods erupting into violence during the convention week.96 Another article, carried a few days later, said, “In a racially explosive city, the most segregated in the North, concentration of a large percentage of the force in one place could cause teeming ghettos to start trouble elsewhere. Close advisers to the Mayor believe racial hostility has increased in Chicago since part of the west side ghetto went up in flames in April.” After emphasizing the potential for conflict in the black neighborhoods for most of the article, the author briefly noted at the end that black groups had not announced plans for demonstrations in connection with the convention.97

The Times also covered Mayor Daley’s decision to call up the Guard for the convention. This article contained that famous quote by Illinois’ governor, “tumult, riot or mob disorder,” two times.98 Three days after this article a front-page headline stated “Guard Told to Shoot if Defied in Chicago” where readers learned that Guard members would be armed with rifles, bayonets, riot-control shotguns, and tear gas and could use any of these to stop someone “from committing a forcible felony.”99

This newspaper also carried an “interest” article about the residents in the neighborhoods near the International Amphitheater, titled, “Mood is Hostile in Back of the Yards Area,” that underscored the tension emanating from Chicago. This article reported that the area near the Amphitheater was “hostile territory for antiwar demonstrators, Yippies, and other dissidents....”

95 Ibid., August 9, 1968.
96 Ibid., August 1, 1968.
97 Ibid., August 11, 1968.
98 Ibid., August 21, 1968.
99 Ibid., August 24, 1968.
The article ended with quite a few quotations from neighborhood residents, including these: "We don’t like that kind of people. There’ll be bad trouble if they come here. Rocks, fire. They better stay away." Another resident said, "There will be slaughter. Just slaughter. On both sides, I guess. They better not come where they’re not wanted." And "I’m Polish and I don’t have much use for these people who sympathize with the Communists. But I’m not going to do anything about it...but if they come through here carrying Vietcong flags there might be a little trouble... People shouldn’t be allowed to carry a Vietcong flag through here. If the cops don’t take it away from them, somebody else will."\(^{100}\)

While the *Times* did report on what the locals had to say about their visitors for the convention week, the paper interviewed people in a working class neighborhood (a group as a whole not notably sympathetic to the demonstrations in the 1960s) and in an area that would never see the demonstrators or demonstrations in their neighborhood. Other locals did not have such an adverse attitude toward the demonstrators (for example the Lincoln Park neighborhood) and had the newspaper interviewed residents in this neighborhood, which was guaranteed to host the demonstrators (and perhaps they did, but did not run the story), the story would have run differently.

Besides an emphasis on violence, other themes of the four newspapers in the pre-convention coverage included the use of ambiguous terms, especially when the police and demonstrators faced off, and the undercounting of injuries to demonstrators. Even though there had yet to be any significant clashes between the authorities and demonstrators, all of the newspapers utilized vague terms or minimal details during the preconvention period. In all four newspapers, Illinois Governor Samuel Shapiro warned of "tumult, riot or mob disorder," but the articles never went into detail as to why the state felt that the demonstrations of convention week would result in tumult, besides the fact that the city expected a large number of dissidents to come to the city of Chicago.

The *Chicago Tribune* offered vague coverage about the plans of the demonstrators. The paper gave little detail about the actual plans of the demonstrators, except that they planned to

\(^{100}\) Ibid.
amass one hundred thousand people around the Amphitheater to “block” the nomination of Humphrey and would attempt to demonstrate around the Amphitheater, the convention sites, and downtown hotels that housed the demonstrators.  

On the other hand, the Tribune gave very detailed information about the forces amassed against the demonstrators, including this article, titled “Elite Corps of Convention Ushers Picked Will Seek to Stop Gate Crashers,” that, among other things, told the reader that “at least 90% of his [Andy Fran, “the nation’s number one usher chief”] men will be more than six feet tall and 90% have been high school or college athletes.”

Coverage at this time also lumped all of the demonstrating groups together and did not differentiate between the different goals and people attracted to the dissenting groups. The Times-Picayune called the different groups “a corps of dissidents,” and the Washington Post labeled dissenters as “the yips and the crazies.” The Chicago Tribune lumped all the protestors under the following labels, “troublemakers,” “New Leftists and hippies,” and “Yippies,” and the New York Times called the groups “radical demonstrators” and “militants.” These terms overlooked the more moderate pro-McCarthy and anti-war protesters wanting to make their stand in Chicago.

All four newspapers omitted material that did not fit into their convention demonstration frame, in which the demonstrators were focused on violently disrupting the Democratic convention despite the warnings and actions of authorities. The one pre-convention article in the New Orleans Times-Picayune contained no information about the demonstrating groups or what they had hoped to achieve with their demonstrations. The newspaper omitted any discussion about the time and resources spent by the demonstrating groups to acquire permits and the response those groups received from the city of Chicago, including their attempt to use the Federal Court to procure the permits. Their article, in which all of the information about the upcoming demonstrations came from government officials, did not balance the threat of “tumult,

---

101 The Chicago Tribune, August 20, 1968.
102 Ibid.
riot or mob disorder" with the Yippies' or Mobe's concerted attempts to keep everything peaceful and non-violent and their move toward obtaining permits to that end.  

The *Washington Post* omitted much about the Yippie and Mobe attempts to obtain permits from the city. Nowhere in the Post's treatment of events did the Post mention the demonstrators meeting with city officials on August 5, 12, or 13. Their first mention of permits was on August 14 in an article titled "White House Accused of Chicago Meddling." As seen with other articles, this inflammatory headline had little to do with what a majority of the article was about. This article told readers that demonstration groups had requested camping permits for city parks to house the expected number of demonstrators from the Chicago Parks District and parade permits from the Bureau of Streets and Sanitation, and concluded with a quote from Rennie Davis, saying "We believe that all of these decisions [for permits requests] will be made in the White House or in the Mayor's office." This statement, in the absence of others' statements and in the absence of any thorough coverage of the event, would most likely seem outlandish to the paper's readers. It trivialized Rennie Davis and one perspective from demonstrating groups about their ability to organize with the city for peaceful and orderly protests.

Also omitted in the Post's coverage, and a large oversight in consideration of how much emphasis they placed on conflict, was the demonstration groups' emphasis on non-violence. Nowhere did the paper mention that the groups, as with Mobilization, called special meetings to discuss how to keep the demonstrations peaceful and orderly and how obtaining permits would aid in meeting that end. Nor did they include any statements advocating non-violence, such as one written by Tom Hayden and David Dellinger that urged: "The campaign should not plan violence and disruption against the Democratic National Convention.... The right to rebellion is hardly exercised by assembling 300,000 people to charge into 30,000 paratroopers.... Any plan of deliberate disruption will drive people away...little would be served except perhaps the political hopes of Johnson, Nixon, and Wallace."  

---

107 Farber, *Chicago, '68*, 90.
The *Chicago Tribune* also did not carry any articles discussing dissident groups' goals for their demonstrations or what they attempted to do toward that end, including their attempts at receiving permits for their planned demonstrations and marches. The lack of coverage about permit negotiations became especially poignant after one reads the *Tribune* article on August 16 titled “Bailey Denies Playing Favorites.” The *Tribune* stated in this article that “[Democratic Party National Chairman John] Bailey denied knowing anything about various groups’ requests to use park district property, mostly Grant Park and Soldier’s Field, for rallies.” This cannot be possible, considering that members of Mobe and the Yippies started to work toward these permits close to five months before and had contacted every party involved before heading to Federal Court. The article also said that Bailey “was sure Mayor Daley would help the groups get park district facilities.”\(^{108}\) This was highly doubtful, as Daley had decided by late April that he would not hand out park permits for the week of the Democratic Convention, and the two had been periodically in contact throughout the planning process.\(^{109}\) On August 20, the *Tribune* covered Mobe and the Yippies filing suit in Federal Court to gain permits for convention week. This article did not quote or use the demonstration groups themselves as sources, but did say that “The suit claimed that failure by the city to provide quarters for demonstrations constitutes a threat to law and order.”\(^{110}\)

Since nowhere in the *Tribune*’s coverage had anything been written about the demonstrators themselves, their wish for a peaceful demonstration, or their hopes for permits along that line, the reader could get the distinct notion that crazed, violent, irresponsible hooligans were about to descend upon Chicago. It was not until the demonstration groups arrived in Chicago and set up in Lincoln Park did they get coverage in their own right. Even then, the paper slanted the coverage against the dissidents. One article on August 22 was about Mobe marshals, their snake dance, and their training to maintain order and to protect demonstrators from police and National Guardsmen. Although nothing in the article alleged that the

---


\(^{109}\) Farber, *Chicago ’68*, 151.

\(^{110}\) *The Chicago Tribune*, August 20, 1968.
demonstrators wished to attack or combat the police in the streets, the newspaper titled this article, "Hippies Train in Tactics to Battle Police."\textsuperscript{111}

The \textit{New York Times} had, by far, the most thorough coverage of the four newspapers, and was the only one that told its readers some of the goals of the demonstration groups as well as the reasons why they congregated in Chicago for the demonstrations. This newspaper reported, as early as August 6, Mobe and Yippie attempts to obtain permits for their plans and that they would carry out their plans regardless if they had the permits or not. An article on August 6 contained statements from demonstration leaders Rennie Davis, David Dellinger, and Sidney Peck, and told readers "the demonstrators would be peaceful and were not interested in entering the convention hall or disrupting the convention."\textsuperscript{112} On the fifteenth, the paper reminded its readers that the groups "have longstanding but unanswered requests before city officials for meeting space and parade permits" and two days later reported that Rennie Davis claimed that "the city was giving his group a 'run-around' on its requests for parade and rally permits."\textsuperscript{113}

The \textit{New York Times} also included some coverage of events demonstrators planned that did not pertain to the Democratic convention itself. An article titled "Closed Doors Greet Radicals in Search of C.I. A. in Chicago," revealed some demonstrators' attempts to "expose and embarrass the spy agency and force it to close its offices."\textsuperscript{114} The paper did not cover, however, why these demonstrators wanted the agency to be closed, nor did the newspaper discuss some of the other plans of dissident groups, such as to picket companies and institutions doing war related research and producing war materials.

The final tool each newspaper used to reinforce their convention protest frame and decrease the importance and skill of the demonstrators was to emphasize relatively unimportant characteristics such as age and appearance. The \textit{New Orleans Times-Picayune} never mentioned the demonstrators by name in their article before the convention began, and this absence alone serves as a sign of the legitimacy and importance this newspaper granted the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[111] Ibid., August 21, 1968.
\item[113] Ibid., August 15, 1968.
\item[114] Ibid., August 24, 1968.
\end{footnotes}
demonstrators.\textsuperscript{115} The Post's articles about the demonstrators emphasized their youth and looks. In one article discussing Rennie Davis, the author called him the "youthful general of MOB" and then continued to describe what Davis wore and that his "hair was neat and short." This paper also described another demonstrator as having "arrestingly long locks." They did not give treatment similar to this to any city or police official, and in doing so trivialized these demonstrators and what they had to say. Another article defined the demonstrators, in this case the Yippies who announced the pig as their candidate in downtown Chicago, as "seven scrappy hippies," "crazies," and "the kids." The article also quoted an angered citizen who twice called this group "scum."\textsuperscript{116}

Besides this emphasis on age and looks, another theme, found most often in the Chicago Tribune's coverage, was the attention given to communists and possible communist action during the convention week. The Tribune carried an article that stressed the preparedness of the city to deal with any possible problems that might occur during the convention week and said, "All potential troublemakers were spotted weeks ago and they have been watched by police in more than a dozen cities. The FBI is known to have infiltrated communist ranks to keep track of Red subversion and sabotage."\textsuperscript{117} The suggestion that many protesters could have been dupes of communists acted to belittle the demonstrating groups and delegitimated what these protestors had to say.

Although the New York Times did, by far, give the most press and seriousness to their coverage of the dissidents, they undermined, just like the other newspapers did, the legitimacy of the groups by emphasizing their looks and age. The newspaper continually referred to the demonstrating groups as "young," "youthful," and "youngsters." One article, titled, "Young Dissidents Practice Self-Defense for Chicago Protests," contained the words "young" and "youth" eight times throughout the twenty-two-paragraph article, including a reference to a "bearded young man," "a tall bearded young man in black horn-rimmed glasses" and "young men in

\textsuperscript{115} The New Orleans Time-Picayune, August 21, 1968.
\textsuperscript{117} The Chicago Tribune, August 22, 1968.
tattered Levi shorts.” That article ended with a discussion of park regulars watching the dissidents, and a quote from one of these regulars, “We’ve been here for so many years. This is our place. We don’t want this sort of people here. Why don’t they go away? They don’t belong in a civilized country. Why don’t they go to Ethiopia?”

Another article described Rennie Davis and Tom Hayden. “Mr. Davis,” according to the Times, “has the fresh faced good looks and easygoing style of an Iowa 4-H Club leader. Mr. Hayden, somewhat more rumpled and shaggy, looks as if he might be a clerk at a college book store.” Other articles described demonstrators as “fiercely mustachioed,” or, as in the case of one describing Lincoln Park the week before the convention, described the clothes most of the demonstrators wore to the park. Again, this newspaper did not treat government and official subjects in this manner, and by placing emphasis on these points with the dissident groups it depreciated the legitimacy of the dissidents and implied that what some demonstrators wore was more important than what they had to say.

By the weekend before the Democratic convention was slated to begin, each of the four newspapers in this study carried similar coverage of the events. All of the newspapers underscored the possibility of violence during the convention week while downplaying the attempts of Mobe and the Yippies to obtain permits for their demonstrations. All of the newspapers used similar sources, and often carried the same quotations, as with Illinois governor Samuel Shapiro’s “tumult, riot or mob disorder.” The sources for the newspapers’ stories were overwhelmingly from official sources, and the coverage of demonstrators in their own right or in their own words was scant, especially in the New Orleans Times-Picayune, who did not mention the demonstrators at all. Finally, each newspaper omitted similar developments and story lines, or minimized the impact of certain stories with misleading headlines.

As the Democratic National Convention was about to convene for the task of nominating its candidate for president, the city of Chicago, protesting groups, and the media prepared in their own way for the days to come. At this time each newspaper had a news frame solidly in place.

---

which would prepare them for the questions of who, why, and how events outside the democratic convention could occur. As the following shall show, the newspapers' convention week coverage would not stray from that frame.
Visitors swelled the city of Chicago on Sunday, August 25, the first day of scheduled activities for the demonstrators. Convention delegates started to arrive, as did thousands of regular army troops to accompany the National Guard troops already on duty at garrison stations throughout the city. Yippie and Mobe leaders, working together now because of the small turnout and the difficulty in working with the city of Chicago, announced a march to start at 1:30 p.m. that would picket the major hotels housing convention delegates. According to reports, the demonstrators marched in a peaceful and orderly manner; they stopped at red lights and stayed on the sidewalks. After the march a large group returned to Lincoln Park, and an undercover agent described the crowd as such:

About 50 to 75 were bikers, i.e., motorcyclists with leather jackets, etc., about 250 were leaders and their marshals who generally had the same political and tactical beliefs. Finally the vast majority were innocent people or at least people whose political viewpoints more concerned with anti-war protest etc., than with violence or revolution.

At 4:00 p.m., the Yippie Festival of Life officially began. The group provided food, balloons, and drugs for all who wanted them. Around this time, a Chicago newsman overheard Abbie Hoffman tell another protester “if the pigs come into the park tonight we are not going to stay. But we don’t want to get trapped or forced into any mass arrest situation. Everybody knows what the police are planning.”

This latent tension between protesters and police was clear around 5:30 p.m., when Abbie Hoffman attempted to bring a flatbed truck to the edge of Lincoln Park to be used as a stage by local rock bands. Before this, bands had played on the grass, which caused problems as spectators continually pushed against each other in an attempt to get a look at the band.

120 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 87.
121 Ibid, 88.
122 Farber, Chicago '68, 177.
123 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 89.
Earlier somebody had cut the electricity to the band, and Hoffman attempted to alleviate both situations by providing a stage and electrical source. The police refused, however, to allow Hoffman to use the truck as a stage, and while a majority of the group avidly watched this conflict, a few demonstrators among the group grew angry. One man even stood in front of the truck in an attempt to stop its passage—the police promptly arrested him. Some dissidents started to yell “Let him alone!” “Kill the pigs!” “Fuck the pigs!” and “Gestapo pigs!” while some of the police yelled back “Get the fuck out of town...go back where you came from, fag.” A few demonstrators threw bottles and stones at the police, and some of the police responded by clubbing the crowd with their nightsticks, causing the assemblage to withdraw. Blaming the police, Abbie Hoffman declared the festival officially over while Allen Ginsberg attempted to calm the crowd by gathering people in a circle and chanting Om.

The crowd in Lincoln Park did calm down after this minor skirmish. As nightfall approached, a quiet crowd of roughly three thousand persons gathered around bonfires made in trash baskets. Some people discussed what they should do, others pounded on bongo drums and sang, and others handed out leaflets. Periodically the police went in and stomped out the bonfires, shoving people in the process.

At 10:30 p.m., a police vehicle with public speakers drove through the park announcing the upcoming curfew and warning demonstrators and media people alike that they would be arrested if they stayed in the park past 11:00 p.m. Mobe marshals continued to warn demonstrators to leave the park when asked, which a majority of the crowd (roughly 1,000) did. This mass departure caused a bigger problem, however, as most of this group, which had no place to go, congregated in the streets, blocking traffic.

The police commenced their sweep of the park and the neighboring streets around 11:40 p.m. The sweep took place without incident. Nonetheless, once at the street, many officers

---

124 Ibid., 90.
125 Farber, Chicago ’68, 178.
126 Ibid, 179.
127 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 92.
128 Ibid., 92-93.
bolted forward and began to swing their clubs at the demonstrators. While some of the police
used their clubs to move people along, many others beat people bloody. Later one officer said,
“No attention was paid to the amount of violence used” on the dissidents.129

A large number of demonstrators ventured downtown to the Loop and blocked traffic
chanting “Peace now!” and “Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh.”130 Police officers, with loaded shotguns
prominently displayed, met the demonstrators on a downtown bridge ready to use tear gas if the
marchers challenged them. A handful of officers swinging clubs chased the few dissidents who
ventured across the bridge. Eventually most of the demonstrators, estimated at one thousand,
gathered again in Lincoln Park, where 438 officers regrouped as well.131 Shortly after midnight
the officers issued more warnings for the crowd to leave the park. But as before, with nowhere to
go, the crowd moved to the streets, resulting in more conflict with the police.

The police formed a line and started down the sidewalk on Clark Street. They faced no
resistance, but a few blocks down roughly twenty police officers broke line and commenced to
attack with batons retreating people. From there the clearing disintegrated into “wholesale
confusion.” With nowhere to go, the crowd proceeded to move up and down Clark Street among
batons and tear gas. According to one witness, on one corner several “straight young people
were sitting on their doorsteps to jeer at the Yippies. The cops beat them, too, and took them by
the back of the necks and jerked them onto the sidewalk.”132 Eventually the crowd dispersed and
the violence ended; many demonstrators ended up in emergency housing at churches,
movement centers and even a theater.133 It was 2:00 a.m. For the demonstrators, the
Democratic National Convention had officially begun.

Monday, August 26

Much action occurred outside the official convention Monday morning despite the late
night the evening before. A group of ministers from the Lincoln Park area met to discuss the

129 Farber, Chicago 68, 182.
130 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 94.
131 Ibid., 96.
132 Schultz, No One was Killed, 89.
133 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 100.
excessive force they believed the police used the prior evening. The ministers decided that they “would have to act Monday night to avoid...further danger to the community” and should “act as a buffer between police and those in the park.” They planned to meet at Lincoln Park that evening at 10:45 p.m. At 11:00 a.m. the Yippies held a press conference where they announced that they had sent a telegram to United Nations Secretary General U. Thant demanding an “impartial observer” in Chicago. The group reiterated their conviction that they had a right to sleep in the park.

Part of the freedom to demonstrate is a place to sleep. We don’t think the park belongs to Mayor Daley. We think it belongs to us. By us, I mean the American people. The violence was initiated by the police. We didn’t come to Chicago to initiate violence. We’re going to stay in Chicago; if we have to fight to stay in Chicago, we’re going to fight.

Early that afternoon, around 2:25 p.m., two undercover cops and several backup police officers arrested Tom Hayden and Wolfe Lowenthal in Lincoln Park while Hayden and Lowenthal discussed with Mobe marshals a plan to march from the park to the Conrad Hilton, a hotel that housed a large number of convention delegates. Hayden recalled that during the arrest one undercover police officer said to him, “I oughta kill you right now...But you’re gonna get it. You’re gonna get Federal charges and go away for a long time.” Within minutes, roughly four hundred and fifty demonstrators left Lincoln Park to protest the two arrests. Rennie Davis and a group of Mobe marshals led the group of marchers. Once the group arrived at police headquarters, they staged a short peaceful demonstration and returned to Grant Park.

Their return to Grant Park, where many restless demonstrators milled about, injected the crowd with energy. A large number congregated around the statue of John Logan, a civil war general. The presence of so many people surrounding and on the Logan Statue drew numerous police officers to the scene, and as the number of police increased, so did the number of demonstrators, drawn to the scene of unfolding conflict. The police headed toward the statue

---

134 Ibid., 100, 101.
135 Ibid., 101.
136 Hayden, Reunion, 304.
138 Schultz, No One Was Killed, 95.
in pursuit of those on the statue where they tugged, clubbed, and pulled the demonstrators down. It took a total of ten minutes to remove all the demonstrators from the statue, one of whom broke his arm and received hits to his groin as the police pulled him down.\footnote{Walker, \textit{Rights in Conflict}, 105.} Similar to other battles of the week, this incident involved a small number of the demonstrators in the park. Most spent the afternoon listening to speakers, chanting, and hanging out in the park. By 5:30 roughly one thousand peaceful demonstrators had congregated.\footnote{Ibid., 105.}

On Monday evening, Tom Hayden and Wolfe Lowenthal returned to the scene of their arrest after being released on bond to find small groups of people huddled around bonfires in Lincoln Park, talking, singing, and drumming. According to one witness, the crowd in Lincoln Park “now included more locals and older people as well as a few blacks and west side teenagers there for fun.”\footnote{Farber, \textit{Chicago '68}, 185.} Tom Hayden was arrested again a few hours later, for allegedly spitting on a police officer. This second arrest so soon after the first inspired him to go underground for the following few days.\footnote{Ibid., 187.} Meanwhile Abbie Hoffman kept himself busy advocating for a peaceful evening by reminding demonstrators that “we’re not here to fight anybody. If we are told to leave, then leave.”\footnote{Walker, \textit{Rights in Conflict}, 106.}

Elsewhere in the city, it was not as peaceful. From 9:00 p.m. on, a group ranging from the size of 150 to 2,000 people streamed up and down the streets, yelling, chanting and periodically throwing bottles and rocks. The Chicago police used their clubs to keep the demonstrators away from the downtown commercial and tourist areas.\footnote{Ibid., 106.} At Lincoln Park, the first march of the evening departed. The demonstrators intended to march to the Sherman Hotel, where the Illinois delegation stayed, “to protest the head pig.”\footnote{Ibid., 107.} The police blocked the demonstrators’ path by forming a line and managed to push the group back to Lincoln Park, making only one arrest for aggravated battery and resisting arrest. The group of demonstrators,
now made up of roughly one thousand people, continued to move toward the hotel while the police formed a line and started to move them back to the park. Within the next ten to fifteen minutes and before they contained the melee, the police assaulted six members of the press and arrested forty-six people. But during this time the police did not just target the demonstrators on the streets of Chicago. One passerby, stalled on the street on his motorcycle because of the large number of demonstrators blocking traffic, said,

...the policeman nearest me yelled at me to turn my motorcycle around; another yelled at me to get to off the street. As I began to turn around, one policeman shoved me hard enough to almost knock me off my motorcycle, and prevented me from turning around. Almost immediately another policeman smashed his nightstick against my motorcycle, denting the headlight rim. Still another policeman swung his nightstick at my head, but checked his swing when he realized that my helmet would make his swing ineffective. He then struck me in the chest, causing a bruise that was still painful after two weeks...146

At roughly the same time, seventy clergymen gathered just north of Lincoln Park and began to move through the park. Each man dressed in clerical garb, wore an armband to aid in identification, and carried a list of places demonstrators could spend the night or receive legal or medical aid. At 10:45 p.m., forty-five clergymen met on the west side of the park to await the possible confrontation. Fifteen minutes later, a police car circled the park and announced that the curfew had arrived. Several hundred people left the park, but more remained to face the police. The police, none of whom wore badges or nametags, made no immediate attempt to clear the park.147

While the police gave the demonstrators time to leave the park, many demonstrators busied themselves instead by making barricades with picnic tables and wastebaskets. This barricade spanned roughly thirty feet, and two hundred people gathered behind the center of the barrier with one thousand more people farther behind. The resolve of the demonstrators grew with the false security of this blockade; many said they intended to stay in the park all night, regardless if the police used tear gas.148

146 Ibid.
148 Ibid., 110.
Meanwhile, members of the police force received riot gear, shotguns, and gas masks to use against those hiding behind the makeshift barrier. At 11:15 p.m., the police warned all present, "Anyone remaining in the park from now on is in violation of the law. Please leave the park. This includes the news media. The park is now closed."\textsuperscript{149} Despite the warning, it was not until 12:20 a.m. when the police made their first physical move to clear the park. A single police car, with its headlights off, drove slowly up behind the barricade. It turned its headlights on as it came up to the crowd and crept slowly onward splitting the group of demonstrations in half and "push[ing] one girl up against a trash basket that was part of the barricade, who was stuck there, terrified."\textsuperscript{150} The girl, moments later, freed herself, and the crowd then moved to stone the police car as the squad car lurched forward, zig zagging through the crowd. To the demonstrators at the barricade, it appeared as though the car had tried to run them down.\textsuperscript{151}

At 12:30 a.m., the clearing of the park began in earnest when task force officers lobbed four canisters of tear gas and four smoke bombs into the park. Then the three hundred member task force stormed in, followed by newsmen. One spectator insisted that "all hell broke lose" with the introduction of gas into the situation.\textsuperscript{152} About twenty-five demonstrators headed toward the Garibaldi Statue in the park, and some officers chased after them yelling, "Kill the motherfuckers!" and "Into the pond, into the pond, get the motherfuckers into the pond!"\textsuperscript{153} Some police officers shoved, beat and dragged many people into the pond and clubbed any of those attempting to offer aid, including clergy members.\textsuperscript{154}

Meanwhile other officers chased people out of the park and in just eight short minutes the police declared the park empty. The result of the clearing, however, was the same as the evenings before. This evening, however, the police had a bigger and more difficult task ahead of them as approximately fifteen hundred demonstrators jammed the streets. One observer had this to say about the street clearing:

\textsuperscript{149} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{150} Schultz, No One Was Killed, 109.
\textsuperscript{151} Walker, Rights in Conflict, 112.
\textsuperscript{152} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., 112.
\textsuperscript{154} Ibid, 113.
people couldn’t move, people got gassed inside their cars, police were the objects of stones, and taunts, mostly taunts.... Most of the taunting of the police was verbal. There were stones thrown and of course the police were responding with tear gas and clubs and every time they would get near enough to a demonstrator they hit him....

The police brought patrol wagons to the scene, filled them up with demonstrators, and returned to the scene to arrest more people.156

As the crowd fled, the chaos of the street traveled with them and penetrated police lines as well. At one point in the evening, one police line pushed a crowd of demonstrators north while another group pushed the group southward, in effect compressing the dazed, angry, and often injured demonstrators between them.157 Later, approximately twelve police officers slashed the tires of cars parked in a nearby parking lot, targeting cars with McCarthy stickers. Elsewhere a few policemen with batons struck a gentleman who had just exited a city transit bus on his way home from work. Altogether, volunteer medics brought to Chicago by Mobe treated over eighty people for serious scalp wounds alone.158 Hundreds more suffered from gas inhalation and many others went to nearby hospitals for stitches.

The clearing of Lincoln Park that night seemed to go “on for hours and hours” but by 2:00 a.m. the streets were practically devoid of any action.159 Soon after the conflict ended in the streets, the city of Chicago sent out its street cleaners and erased any sign of the clash for the morning commuters and cameras. The rest of the city slept, and would read about the melee in the morning newspaper.

Tuesday, August 27

“Tuesday, many middle-age delegates woke in the Hilton frightened of the young people in the streets, whom they imagined as scatological avengers; while citizens of Lincoln Park were frightened of their cops, who were also avengers—of the wounded guarantees of social mobility.”160

155 Ibid, 114.
156 Ibid.
157 Ibid., 116.
158 Farber, Chicago ’68, 187.
159 Sloman, Steal this Dream, 145.
160 Schultz, No One Was Killed, 131.
Tuesday was a day for press conferences; almost every group that had been involved in or witnessed the events of Sunday and Monday held one.\textsuperscript{161} Mobe held a press conference at 9:00 a.m., and over one hundred reporters attended. Mobe's spokesperson, Rennie Davis, stated that they would not be intimidated by police brutality; "'the whole world's watching' what the police and Mayor Daley and the Democratic Party were trying to do to the antiwar movement," he said. Davis added that the Democratic Party and city of Chicago would not get away with it and that Mobe would march on the "war makers" in the Amphitheater on August 28.\textsuperscript{162} Later, Abbie Hoffman spoke to reporters:

What we saw last night was a demonstration of police stupidity and anarchy, it is the stupidity in driving city folks, you know, city Yippies out into the streets of Chicago, you know, when if they were allowed to sleep in the rural area, you know, the park, the way we want to, and establish our community, you know, everything would be cool.\textsuperscript{163}

Also infuriated that morning were ABC, CBS, \textit{Newsweek}, all the major Chicago newspapers except the \textit{Tribune} and other media outlets who sent telegrams and letters to Mayor Daley protesting the treatment of their photographers and newsmen. Many demanded to meet with Police Superintendent Conlisk, who promised that he would work to improve communications between police and media and would investigate the claims that police officers removed their badges and nametags.\textsuperscript{164}

From 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. fifty clergymen joined with Lincoln Park residents for an emergency meeting. This group drafted a statement asking police to lift the ban against sleeping in Lincoln Park and agreed that "the police, not the demonstrators, constituted a clear and imminent danger to the community."\textsuperscript{165} The clergymen present agreed not to act as buffers that evening, but to stage a protest of their own against the police brutality they witnessed the night before by staging a prayer vigil from 11:00 p.m. Tuesday evening until 4:00 p.m. the next day, deliberately breaking curfew. They believed that "if they want to gas us, people of Chicago will

\textsuperscript{161} White, \textit{The Making of the President}, 329.
\textsuperscript{162} Farber, \textit{Chicago '68}, 187.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., 188.
\textsuperscript{164} Walker, \textit{Rights in Conflict}, 211-213.
\textsuperscript{165} Lane, \textit{Chicago Eyewitness}, 17.
realize that it isn’t just kids, but respectable people flipping in. We’re going to celebrate freedom and peace for this community, for Chicago, for Vietnam.”

At 4:00 p.m. the clergymen and local residents, calling themselves the Lincoln Park Emergency Citizen’s Committee, met with the 18th District Police commander and asked him to suspend the curfew ordinance, decrease the size of the police force in the area, and stop acts of police brutality. They argued that the curfew was a “clear violation of the will of the people.” The commander said he would relay this request to the police superintendent. One resident said, “The police, it seems to me, are the disruptive force in our community.”

Although most of the demonstrators spent the day recovering from the night before, there was quite a bit of action on Tuesday, much of it at movement centers. Some dissidents marched to the Polish consulate to protest Poland’s participation in the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Others took part in a demonstration at a draft board, while additional people marched in a “Walk and Vigil of Mourning,” where roughly two hundred Quakers and other pacifists walked from the Loop to the Amphitheater. In the park, people could hear leaders speak: Abbie Hoffman explained his kind of revolution and Sony Bono tried to convince the group that the governing bodies would listen to reason. In the early afternoon, the Poor People’s Mule Train, organized by the Southern Christian Leadership Council, marched around the Hilton hotel, reminding the delegates of the plight of poor people across the nation. Some anti-war demonstrators joined this march, which remained peaceful and orderly.

Around 3:00 p.m., there were some signs that the city was attempting to avoid a scene similar to the one of the night before. A sound truck drove through the Lincoln Park neighborhood and asked residents to open their homes to demonstrators that night when the police enforced the curfew. Some merchants donated food to help feed the influx of strangers. One hour later in Lincoln Park, a group of demonstrators surrounded a team of police shouting “Pigs!” “Pigs!”

166 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 119.
167 Ibid., 118.
168 Ibid.
169 Farber, Chicago ’68, 189.
170 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 119.
Thirty officers rescued these men by forming a wedge and pushing their way through the crowd without the use of batons. Most of the crowd, however, listened to music, sat and chatted, or chanted with Allen Ginsberg. For the most part, the police were not in sight.

At 7:00 p.m., a crowd of roughly two to three thousand gathered to listen to speakers, including Black Panther party National Chairman Bobby Seale and Jerry Rubin. Rubin then led a group of demonstrators to the Chicago Transit Authority garage to picket in support of the striking black bus drivers protesting alleged racial discrimination in the Chicago Transit Workers' Union. A police broadcast alerted authorities that a group of demonstrators twenty-five hundred strong had left the park and was headed to the Loop. Their information officer was badly mistaken; this large group in actuality was the two hundred people who accompanied Rubin to the CTA building.171

Meanwhile, the Lincoln Park Citizen's Emergency Committee held a rally near police headquarters and attempted to meet with the police commander. The group eventually met with the Deputy Chief, who, while unwilling to negotiate the removal of the park's curfew, did discuss the methods of expulsion. The chief did admit that there may have been "some misbehavior on the part of policemen Monday night," and offered that the police would enforce the curfew on Tuesday night "with no unnecessary violence."172

At the time of this meeting, the demonstrators held activities of their own. Roughly one thousand people marched down Clark Street chanting, "Hell no, we won't go!" Scores of police officers quickly arrived on the scene and started to direct the crowd back toward the park. Suddenly one of these officers pulled out his pistol and fired it at least three times, which dispersed the screaming crowd rapidly.

Elsewhere the Yippies held an “unbirthday” party for President Johnson. Roughly four thousand people, including a large number of McCarthy workers, had gathered at Chicago's Coliseum to express their distaste for President Johnson, the war in Vietnam, and racism. The crowd chanted "Fuck you LBJ" and listened to the music of local musicians as well as the

171 Ibid., 121.
172 Ibid., 121.
speeches of Allen Ginsberg, Dick Gregory, Jean Genet, and William Burroughs. Dave Dellinger told the group that they would march to the Amphitheater the next day. Shortly after midnight, Rennie Davis ended the demonstration by encouraging everyone to march peacefully in small groups to Grant Park where they could confront convention delegates returning home from the convention in front of the news cameras.

In Lincoln Park around curfew time close to one thousand people left Lincoln Park and peacefully marched to Grant Park. At the same time, the clergymen gathered in Lincoln Park to hold their prayer vigil. They marched into the park behind a large wooden cross, formed a small circle and prayed, gave sermons, and sang hymns and folk songs. Soon thereafter, the police announced that the curfew would be enforced that evening, and by 11:30 p.m., the police began massing directly across from the crowd. A sound truck announced that the park was closed, and the fire department lit up the park with their searchlights. A few clergymen met with the police commander, who said that the police would clear the park, but with restraint.

The police announced at 12:30 a.m. that if newsmen wanted protection they needed to move behind police lines, and the clergymen advised people to either “sit or split.” Those who did not want to be “hit, jailed or gassed” should leave the park. Those who intended to stay were told to sit down, lock arms, and remain calm. About one hundred people set up a barricade of picnic tables, and the police prepared themselves as well. An official observer for the Chicago Bar Association said:

There seemed to be almost without exception, an attitude or mentality of impatience of “getting started” and it was the normal thing for policemen to talk about how anxious they were to crack some heads.... Those who were saying anything seemed obsessed with getting a “commie” or “hippies.”...There was almost a circus air about the hoped for opportunity to show the protesters what they thought of them.

He continued, “I am sure that there were many policemen who did not feel this way, but they were not talking or protesting what their fellow officers were saying.” As with previous evenings,

173 Ibid., 121, 135.
174 Farber, Chicago ’68, 191.
175 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 123-124.
176 Ibid., 125.
177 Farber, Chicago ’68, 191.
the police had received intelligence reports indicating the crowd had sharp metal instruments, a
gun, and even had strung piano wire at neck height. The police confirmed none of this. 178

Four more times the police announced that the park was closed, but those in the park
refused to move. Finally, the police lobbed four canisters of tear gas and began to walk slowly
through the park while a sanitation truck shot out more tear gas. The crowd retreated, and the
group carrying the cross jutted it out for protection from the police. Others pulled down tree
branches to use as protection. The crowd poured into the street, blocking traffic, and trapping
two squad cars. 179

At this point the police noticed six cars parked nearby in a “haphazard way.” The police
thought some demonstrators strategically parked these cars, which had “flower power” and
McCarthy stickers, at their location to aid in blocking traffic. Although there were tow trucks
available, the police commander ordered his officers to break through the windows, release the
hand brakes and push the cars out of the way. Two reporters witnessed this happening, and
when they asked a police officer at the scene what had happened, he told them that “hippies” had
done the damage. 180

Meanwhile, the sanitation truck continued to spray the crowd in the street and the police
lobbed several more canisters of tear gas. 181 People ran to avoid the gas as it wafted up into the
nearby apartments. The police line broke up into smaller groups and continued to disperse the
crowd, as some in the crowd continued to fight back throwing bottles, bricks, and stones.
Eventually the crowd dissipated, but not before the police arrested one hundred three people,
injured at least sixty more, and seven police officers received injuries. 182

Some of the people from this skirmish made their way over to Grant Park, where an
entirely different scene unfolded. For several hours that evening, speakers used a portable public
address system to address the demonstrators. Tom Hayden, wearing a disguise, also addressed

178 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 125.
179 Ibid., 126.
180 Ibid., 127.
181 Ibid., 128.
182 Ibid., 132.
the crowd and, reflecting his increasing militancy, encouraged all to meet in the same location the following afternoon to march on the Amphitheater "by any means necessary."183

After meeting with Rennie Davis, the police announced at 1:30 a.m. that they would waive the park curfew that evening solely for Grant Park.184 As long as the group of roughly five thousand people gathered there remained peaceful, the police would allow them to stay. The crowd collectively cheered with relief and spent the next couple hours singing, talking, and dancing. Tom Hayden recalled that the "tension was transformed into a more idyllic collective experience," and that the experience Tuesday night in Grant Park, according to Hayden, made it "perfectly clear how peacefully the protests of convention week might have gone."185

The Police commander discussed his decision with reporters. He said that the decision to allow the demonstrators to stay in Grant Park was solely his decision. He reasoned that the situation was different from the one in Lincoln Park because the demonstrators did not want to sleep in Grant Park. He implied that the court order denying the demonstrators the right to sleep in Lincoln Park did not apply to Grant Park. He was not sure if the demonstrators would be allowed to stay in the park all night because that would be "technically disturbing the peace." He then explained that sometimes it was "better to ignore a technical law violation than to create a major problem."186

At this point, most of the Chicago police force on duty had worked for more than twelve hours straight and were expected to be back on the job by late morning. Mayor Daley decided to call in the National Guard to relieve his tired and overworked troops. No one notified the demonstrators of this decision, and around 3:00 a.m. the first of six hundred National Guard troops in full battle gear began to arrive with "Daley dozers," green army trucks with barbed wire fences attached. The crowd, fearing what this increase in armor meant, grew pensive and a bit angry, especially when the National Guard slowly pushed the crowd back a bit into the park to set

183 Farber, Chicago '68, 192.
184 Lane, Chicago Eyewitness, 32.
185 Hayden, Reunion, 311.
up their skirmish line. Their commander then announced over a megaphone that they would not interfere with the demonstrators unless they became violent. The crowd drowned out the commander by blasting their sound system and singing "This Land is Your Land."

As the evening moved on, many people approached National Guardsmen to discuss with them the Vietnam War and to try to get them to set down their guns and join the demonstrators. Despite constant contact and harassment of Guardsmen by some demonstrators, there were no incidents between the crowd and the National Guard. By the early morning hours, the crowd had dwindled down to one hundred fifty people. By the time the sun dawned Wednesday morning, Guard officials sent over half their troops away.

**Wednesday, August 28**

The most violent and bloody day of the convention week, Wednesday was the day the Democratic Party nominated their Presidential candidate and the day the demonstrators attempted to march to the Amphitheater. Television coverage of these events shocked many Americans, and the chant of "the whole world is watching" took on new meaning.

On Tuesday evening, the city of Chicago granted a permit to the demonstrators to hold a rally from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Wednesday afternoon in Grant Park. This sanctioned rally gave the demonstrating groups their largest crowd of the week, numbering between ten to fifteen thousand. Demonstrators did not solely make up this crowd; witnesses reported the presence of "conventionally dressed persons, young and old, and even some infants," curious onlookers, Vietnam Vets and undercover police "poorly disguised" as hippies. Some of the peace movement’s older, non-violent members attended this rally as well. The police and National Guard, who were also heavily present, spent much of the afternoon warning those present not to

---

187 Ibid, 137.
188 Ibid, 139.
189 Farber, Chicago '68, 195.
190 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 141.
attempt to march to the Amphitheater and explaining the authorities' intention to arrest any and all who attempted to do so.\textsuperscript{191}

Although demonstrator leaders and speakers clearly intended to march to the Amphitheater that afternoon, the first bout of violence of the day came from another incident. Around 3:30 p.m. an individual, whom many demonstrators afterward believed was an undercover police officer, climbed a flagpole near the band shell in an attempt to lower the American flag.\textsuperscript{192} When this occurred, Rennie Davis and six to eight Mobe marshals headed toward the flagpole in an attempt to take care of this matter themselves. Davis urged the demonstrator to lower the flag to half-mast and then come down, Davis also yelled to the police that everything was under control, and that the police should pull back to avoid further provocation. According the Davis, "on that last word, they charged."\textsuperscript{193} The police started forward in unison, but before long they broke ranks and began to club anything and everything on route to the flagpole.

A group of police officers reached the flagpole and pulled the demonstrator down. The police claimed that the demonstrator on the flagpole was "not mistreated in any manner, shape or form" but one witness at the scene claimed "they began clubbing the hippie with their nightsticks all over his body."\textsuperscript{194} The retreating officers met a barrage of furious demonstrators; meanwhile Mobe marshals continued in their attempt to control the area. Then another group of demonstrators made their way to the flagpole, lowered the flag all the way down, and put something else up in its place. Accounts differ as to whether it was a black or red flag.\textsuperscript{195}

Another group of about twenty-four police officers made their way back to the flagpole to arrest this group. Some of these officers yelled "Get Davis!" and headed to the stage area and hit Rennie Davis from behind numerous times until he escaped them by crawling on all fours under a chain link fence before he lost consciousness and was rushed to the hospital. As with many of

\textsuperscript{191} Hayden, Reunion, 314.
\textsuperscript{192} Lane, Chicago Eyewitness, 42.
\textsuperscript{193} Hayden, Reunion, 316.
\textsuperscript{194} Walker, Rights in Conflict, 145.
\textsuperscript{195} Ibid., 146.
the other hospitalized protesters, some police officers followed Rennie Davis to the hospital to arrest him. The hospital staff helped Davis escape after they had given him thirteen stitches.\footnote{Mailer, \textit{Miami and the Siege on Chicago}, 166. Hayden, \textit{Reunion}, 317.}

Back at the park, demonstration leaders continued in their attempt to calm the crowd while the police lobbed tear gas into the crowd to disperse those in the park. Mobe marshals linked arms together in an attempt to separate the crowd and the police.\footnote{Walker, \textit{Rights in Conflict}, 148.} This human chain did little to stop or slow the police, however, who easily broke the marshals’ line and individually waded into the crowd “flailing with their clubs in all directions,” even at people simply seated near the flagpole hoping to hear the bands and speakers. The police hit countless people, including the medics who rushed into the crowd to help the injured. Numerous people fell, and their fellow demonstrators trampled upon them while they choked on and became blinded by the gas.\footnote{Ibid., 149.}

Eventually the rally resumed, and at 4:30 p.m. David Dellinger announced an attempt to march, non-violently, to the Amphitheater. Dellinger stressed the non-violent aspect of the march, and asked all those wishing to use violence to leave the march and do their own thing. Another leader, referring to widespread suspicions that most of the week’s troublemakers were undercover police, said, “This is a non-violent march. The police have agents among us. If anyone starts to throw anything, he is probably a cop. . . . If anyone throws anything, he is not with us. Stop him. This is a non-violent march.”\footnote{Lane, \textit{Chicago Eyewitness}, 49.} The demonstration leaders went so far as discouraging the use of signs posted on large sticks, fearing that the presence of wooden pickets would be too provocative.\footnote{Walker, \textit{Rights in Conflict}, 150.}

An estimated five to six thousand people met for this attempted march to the Amphitheater. According to one participant, fear was the common denominator of this group: “Most in our line...seemed frightened. They do not expect to be arrested. They fully expect to be beaten and gassed. Some smear Vaseline on their faces as a protection against skin burns caused by the gas. Many have little pieces of wet cloth to breathe through when the gas
The group assembled in orderly lines and headed down the sidewalk on Columbus Drive until a line of policemen stopped them. The marchers sat down on the sidewalk and chanted and sang while the Deputy Superintendent of the police, James Rochford (a city legal aide), and Sidney Peck of Mobe met to discuss the march. After an hour of waiting, the leaders came back to the marchers and announced:

We cannot proceed as a group without pushing into the officers; and since this is a non-violent demonstration, we cannot do that. The police have agreed that if we break up now we can go individually across the street to the area in front of the Hilton. So that's what we are going to do.

Most demonstrators grumbled with disappointment, but nonetheless moved to the area across the street from the Hilton, where two thousand people had already congregated.

One observer, author John Schultz, noted that "all rational on-the-spot control ended when the non-violent march was denied." The crowd from the march, numbering around three thousand at this point, started to move toward Grant Park or out of the area. But dispersal of the crowd was difficult; it overflowed onto the side streets, and as one participant noted, "we had a feeling of being trapped by cops." This tension increased when demonstrators realized the National Guard had mobilized its largest number of troops thus far that week and had moved those troops to block many of the available routes out the area. These Guard members were more heavily armed than they had been all week; they carried M-1 rifles, grenade launchers, gas dispensers, unsheathed bayonets and .30 caliber machines guns to use against swarms of unarmed demonstrators and bystanders.

The troops ordered all demonstrators back to the Grant Park area, and then dispensed tear gas freely to help thin out the crowd, which included demonstrators, "ballplayers still wearing their softball uniforms, vacationers and picnickers with their families." People ran, blinded,
screaming, crying, coughing and vomiting. The strong breeze off Lake Michigan ensured that the Guard’s gas doused business people and shoppers in the downtown area as well.\textsuperscript{207}

At roughly the same time, the mule train of the Poor People’s Campaign entered an intersection adjacent to the park. Twenty-four police officers accompanied the train, and soon numerous demonstrators joined the march as well. At the request of the leaders of the Poor People’s Campaign, the police moved to clear the intersection. They started out in formation, but before long the police line broke apart and started to beat people indiscriminately, many yelling “kill, kill.”\textsuperscript{208} The separate police lines, in the confusion, pushed the crowd into each other until the demonstrators had no place to go. Many demonstrators stayed put, chanting, “the whole world is watching, the whole world is watching” in reference to the television cameras taping the action in the streets, while the police forced others up against building walls in the mad rush of a crowd attempting to avoid police clubs.\textsuperscript{209} Within minutes, the police had maced, beaten or bloodied hundreds of people. One witness, an ACLU representative, stated:

\begin{quote}
The police kept coming in…. The crowd kept trying to get away, but it was so thick that there were many people who seemed…to be stuck in the middle and unable to do anything about it. There was a great deal of screaming and yelling. A lot of people were crying and shouting for help.\textsuperscript{210}
\end{quote}

Some observers saw police Deputy Superintendent James Rochford in distress over the violence of his men, jumping on them and trying to pull them off of demonstrators, shouting, “For Christ’s sake, Stop it. Stop it, damn it, stop it.”\textsuperscript{211}

Demonstration leaders and Mobe marshals continued in their attempts to control the crowd. One leader yelled in a bullhorn, “Please stay calm. It is our desire to disperse if they will let us. Please stay calm. We are trying to find out what they want.” To which someone from the crowd yelled back, “We know what they want. They want to kill us.”\textsuperscript{212} To flee from the violence, many demonstrators moved behind sawhorses the police lined up for media and other bystanders

\begin{itemize}
\item 207 Ibid., 157.
\item 208 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 168.
\item 209 Ibid.
\item 210 Ibid.
\item 211 Schultz, No One Was Killed, 193.
\item 212 Lane, Chicago Eyewitness, 83.
\end{itemize}
not involved in the demonstrations. During the melee, the police continually pushed these sawhorses against the hotel until a window to the Haymarket Lounge, a restaurant and bar on the first floor of the Hilton Hotel, shattered from the pressure and sent a large group of people tumbling into the establishment amid a shower of glass. A squad of policemen followed these people into the bar and, along with some of the Lounge's patrons, beat anyone who looked like a demonstrator.²¹³

This brawl on the street took about twenty minutes, and by 8:15 p.m. the police had the intersection under control, for the most part, although individual policemen and demonstrators periodically clashed.²¹⁴ The police left Grant Park and the east side of the sidewalk free for the five thousand demonstrators who continued to congregate. Demonstrator medics busied themselves with the more serious wounds such as broken bones and serious head wounds and left the less serious and more numerous wounds until later.²¹⁵ By 8:30 p.m., additional National Guard troops arrived on the scene and established a U-shaped formation surrounding Grant Park. They surrounded the restless demonstrators in this manner until 4:00 a.m. the next morning.

Meanwhile, various groups of demonstrators moved freely on the streets. More militant demonstrators ran through the streets setting off trash can fires and stink bombs, throwing anything they could get their hands on, blocking traffic, and periodically attacking policemen. The police conducted numerous street sweeps to disperse the demonstrators, and by 10:00 p.m. the Chicago police had swept most demonstrators back to Grant Park and the area in front of the Hilton. When the demonstrators returned to the area, it looked much different from when they left it. City street sweeping crews had already been through and wiped away the remnants of the battle that occurred just two hours earlier.

Another round of speeches by demonstrator "notables" began at 10:30 p.m., with roughly several hundred demonstrators and fifteen hundred spectators present. Individual occurrences of

²¹³ Sloman, Steal this Dream, 154.
²¹⁴ Farber, Chicago '68, 201.
²¹⁵ Lane, Chicago Eyewitness, 80-81.
violence by police and demonstrators continued to occur. The crowd listened to the speeches and, via radio, to the events within the Amphitheater, waiting for the Democratic Party to nominate Hubert Humphrey as its presidential candidate. By 12:20 a.m., the crowd had dwindled to fifteen hundred, despite the influx of McCarthy workers who joined the crowd after the disappointing showing of their candidate at the convention. The Chicago police completely retreated, and the National Guard, with loaded rifles and Guard jeeps affixed with barbed wire on the front, took sole control of the area.\textsuperscript{216}

Five miles down the road, delegates committed to McCarthy, McGovern, and Robert Kennedy met to discuss tactics after their defeat. The delegates decided on a candlelight march to the Conrad Hilton hotel where they would hold a candlelight vigil. Around 3:30 a.m. the delegates met the demonstrators in Grant Park who greeted them with a cheer. The delegates told the demonstrators that they had collected over two thousand dollars for bail money. Most delegates joined the demonstrators in song and some addressed the crowd. Wednesday evening, now early Thursday morning, ended this way. Eventually the delegates returned to their hotels, and demonstrators either slept in the park or returned to their place of stay to recuperate from the evening’s events.\textsuperscript{217}

Lincoln Park on Wednesday was comparatively quieter, although some violence did occur there Wednesday night. Another delegation of the Lincoln Park Emergency Citizens Committee met with the District Commander of the police and demanded citizen participation in the police lines that evening, which they got. Most of the violence that night near Lincoln Park occurred from the hands of gang youth.\textsuperscript{218}

\textbf{Thursday, August 29}

On Thursday morning Grant Park finally showed signs of being a battle scene. Garbage, bottles, bricks, chunks of concrete, paper, and clothing laid strewn wherever the eye could see.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{216} Walker, Rights in Conflict, 188-189.
\textsuperscript{217} Schultz, No One Was Killed, 217.
\textsuperscript{218} Walker, Rights in Conflict, 188.
\end{flushright}
while the National Guard continued their duty on the Chicago streets. People no longer walked upon grass, but mud, and unlike the streets that could be swept up by the city, these battle scars remained for weeks afterward.

The city of Chicago began to lose some of the week's visitors. Late Thursday morning ten to fifteen busloads of demonstrators left Chicago for home; but McCarthy campaign workers continued to take these departing dissidents' place on the streets and in the parks. By noon, demonstration leaders set up a sound system; Tom Hayden, Rennie Davis, Jerry Rubin, and Dave Dellinger urged the crowd of two thousand to stick around and join them in a march to the Amphitheater later in the afternoon.219

Around 4:00 p.m., Wisconsin delegates committed to McCarthy embarked on a previously announced march from their hotel in downtown Chicago to the Amphitheater to protest the police brutality they had witnessed throughout the week. As the march continued, more and more demonstrators joined, until the group contained two thousand people and sprawled over several blocks. This march never reached the Amphitheater, however, as a line of hundreds of Chicago police and National Guard turned them back.220 The marchers returned to Grant Park, where McCarthy spoke. Soon afterward, another march, led by Abbie Hoffman, left the park in the attempt to reach the Amphitheater. The marchers gained some distance, but the Guard and police stopped them as well. This group headed back to the park in time to hear Dick Gregory speak.

By that time roughly three thousand people had gathered in Grant Park to listen to Gregory. Gregory introduced the Deputy Superintendent of Police Rochford to the crowd who said that "sometimes the law is not what I'd like" and encouraged the crowd to remain in Grant Park.221 Gregory responded to this by inviting the crowd gathered in the park to have a beer at his south side apartment, in an area of the city that the police blockaded for fear of urban riots.222

---

219 Ibid., 223-224.
220 Lane, Chicago Eyewitness, 95-96.
221 Walker, Rights in Conflict, 227.
222 Lane, Chicago Eyewitness, 109.
Gregory and convention delegates led a noisy but orderly march to Eighteenth Street, where the marchers encountered a one thousand-soldier barricade complete with two patrol wagons and Guard jeeps equipped with barbed wire. The demonstrators and media vans crowded the street while Gregory moved forward to negotiate with the authorities, who reiterated that anyone who chose to cross the police line would be arrested. Gregory promptly returned to the crowd and shared the news.\(^{223}\)

Gregory’s announcement began a constant stream of dissidents crossing the line to be arrested. Dick Gregory crossed the line first, and the police arrested him. Next a few convention delegates and clergymen crossed the barricade and the Guard arrested them as well. The line of willing arrestees continued. A Guardsman announced again that if anyone else stepped forward the Guard would arrest them as well. To which the crowd chanted, “Arrest us all, Arrest us all” and “We’ll walk to jail, we’ll walk to jail.”\(^{224}\) Finally the Guard realized that almost all of the three thousand marchers were willing to be arrested. One hour and seventy-nine arrests later, the Guard closed up shop; they had no more squad cars on hand.\(^{225}\)

The atmosphere became more charged and the tension rose as the arrests ceased. The Guard announced that the remaining group would not be arrested but would not be allowed to cross the Eighteenth Street boundary. Some demonstrators continued to press forward, however, and some threw missiles at the Guardsmen. This led some individual Guardsmen to break rank and go after demonstrators. Finally the Guard put on their gas masks and dispensed two canisters of tear gas with an added nausea agent into the crowd and started to move forward with their rifles butts swinging to clear the street. The gas was heavy and hung over two city blocks. Demonstrators ran blindly in search of fresh air, while the Guard continued the action of gassing and marching to clear the streets. Later, the National Guard General claimed that he did not give the order for gas.\(^{226}\)

\(^{223}\) Ibid., 116.
\(^{224}\) Ibid., 122.
\(^{225}\) Schultz, No One Was Killed, 163.
\(^{226}\) Lane, Chicago Eyewitness, 122-126.
Thirty minutes later, roughly two thousand people, including many “straight” people according to eyewitnesses, assembled again in Grant Park.²²⁷ The crowd made bonfires in a few of the park’s trash baskets, and the National Guard told the crowd they could stay in the park overnight as long as they did not attempt to cross Michigan Avenue. The demonstrators gathered again, listened to speeches, and despite some isolated incidents, the evening and the Democratic National Convention, which finally wound down at 12:10 Friday morning, ended peacefully.²²⁸

Friday, August 30

Although Thursday evening ended peacefully on the streets and parks of Chicago, a conflict between the police and McCarthy workers took place around 5:00 a.m. Friday morning. The Conrad Hilton hotel housed McCarthy’s headquarters for the convention. As the convention week unfolded, an increasing number of McCarthy’s workers became more sympathetic toward the demonstrators as many of the demonstrations occurred immediately outside their hotel windows. The evening of the greatest conflict, Wednesday evening, some McCarthy workers converted their hotel rooms into makeshift medical stations and smuggled injured people up to their fifteenth floor rooms to treat them with ripped bed sheets and ice.

Around 4:00 a.m., National Guard Colonel Robert Strupp learned that somebody was dropping objects from the fifteenth floor of the Hilton. Some of these objects included ashtrays, bottles, beer cans and even a military chemical irritant and an inactivated grenade. These missiles could have easily hit and seriously injured many of Strupp’s men. After investigating, the Guard concluded that these missiles came from room 1506A of the Hilton Hotel.²²⁹

Soon thereafter the Chicago police, based on this information from the National Guard, conducted a raid of the fifteenth floor of the hotel. Expecting to find trouble, the police captain took a group of police officers and a small number of National Guardsmen to back him up. At 5:10 a.m. this group arrived on the fifteenth floor to find a small group of people sitting in the hall,

²²⁷ Walker, Rights in Conflict, 229.
²²⁹ Walker, Rights in Conflict, 231.
singing, and playing bridge, while most of the people on that floor were in bed sleeping. The police lined all persons who were awake against the wall and, using passkeys from the management, started to enter all the rooms, even those that did not face the street and park below. They dragged campaign workers from their beds and pushed them into the fifteenth floor lobby.230

The police eventually came upon a room that was a scene of a party. Beer cans, hi ball glasses, and trash cluttered the room. The hotel security officer told all present that they would have to leave the room as it was not in anyone's name (the room was in the name of economist John Kenneth Galbraith). After a few protests, the group slowly left the room. On the way out of the room a police officer shoved a McCarthy worker into a card table in the attempt to hurry him up. The McCarthy worker then picked up the table as if he was going to hit the police officer with it, but decided against it and put it down. The officer then hit him on the head with his nightstick and split the worker's head open. While this occurred, another McCarthy worker, George Yumick, challenged the right of the police officers to act in this way. As a result three police officers attacked him, some throwing whisky on him and sarcastically apologizing, others beating him with their nightsticks on his back and head, even after Yumick had fallen to the ground. Yumick received five stitches for his wounds. A few other people suffered head cuts and bruises as well.231

Chaos reigned on the fifteenth floor lobby; many people cried and screamed with fear, and within twenty minutes the police forced close to fifty people out of their rooms and into the lobby. Before long McCarthy advisor Phillip Friedmann and Eugene McCarthy entered the lobby to calm down their staff members and learn about what had occurred. McCarthy suggested that they go, in small groups, directly back to their rooms, which all eventually did.232

Later Friday morning several hundred people occupied Grant Park where they heard more speeches. At its height at noon, the crowd numbered roughly one thousand people, and

---

230 Ibid.
231 Ibid., 232.
232 Ibid., 233.
included a large number of curious onlookers and convention delegates. No violence occurred, and more and more people left the area to go home as the day continued. The events of the convention outside the convention were over.
Chapter Four

Media Portrayal of Convention Events

The media coverage of the convention week did not differ much from the preconvention coverage. Because of the events of that week, and perhaps because of the emphasis on violence in the media up to that point, much of the papers’ coverage did focus on violence. What may be surprising, however, was how that coverage manifested itself. As with the preconvention coverage, the newspapers gave much space to violence and the potential for violence, but unlike the preconvention coverage, the newspapers gave very little detail to the actual events during the convention week. As the week continued, all of the papers’ coverage, with the exception of the Chicago Tribune’s, became, to some degree, critical of the actions Chicago police. Nonetheless, all of the newspapers treated the demonstrators as the primary instigators of the violence, not as a group unsure of the city’s next action and responding to their environment.

As with their preconvention coverage, the newspapers in this study continued to neglect events that did not fit into their convention frame. Scant coverage, if any at all, was given to the Lincoln Park neighborhood association or the aid given to demonstrators by these Lincoln Park neighbors or clergymen. The coverage also, especially at the beginning of the convention week, minimized the impact and importance of the demonstrators, both by what the papers reported and by the small amount of the coverage offered in the demonstration groups’ own words.

All four newspapers offered vague coverage of the week’s violence to some degree. In the preconvention period, all the newspapers gave detailed coverage of the city’s steps to insure the safety of the convention, but during the convention week the newspapers did not give much detail to the actions of the Chicago police and Illinois National Guard, and rarely gave more detail than that these groups were present and were used to keep the demonstrations orderly. On the other hand, the papers delivered unmatched detail of the activities of the demonstrators, right down to some of the demonstrators’ attire. Finally, each of the newspapers placed the blame for the violence on the demonstrators, and made the demonstrators the main protagonists in the story while using a minimum of detail received from these protagonists.
The *New Orleans Times-Picayune*’s coverage of convention week emphasized these themes. Monday and Tuesday’s coverage of events reported that the demonstrators in Chicago were up to nothing of importance. On Monday the paper wrote that “Hippies, Yippies, and anti-war demonstrators milled around the city causing no particular problem.”\(^{233}\) Evidently the paper found the demonstrators worthy of coverage only when they caused problems, because demonstrators were active those days, as shown earlier. On Tuesday the paper gave detail to the descriptions of some of the demonstrators, including this one: “As the Yippies marched to police headquarters a white girl wearing a black beret, military fatigues and a pistol belt sat on the shoulders of a Negro man.” While helping to paint a picture of the scene in Chicago on Monday, the details the paper offered also played upon negative stereotypes of the demonstrators.

The *Times-Picayune* also referred to the ineffectualness of the demonstrators. One article reminded readers that “the threatened demonstration by 100,000 young anti-war militants failed to materialize” and that “most conventioneers were unaware of their activities.”\(^{234}\) It was true that 100,000 “young anti-war militants” failed to go to Chicago (one could wonder whether 100,000 young anti-war militants even existed—demonstration groups at one time promised 100,000 demonstrators which is different from “militants”) but the statement that most conventioneers were unaware of demonstration activities was of questionable accuracy. While it was true that most conventioneers were unaware of many demonstrator activities, as the newspapers mainly reported demonstrator bouts with police, the demonstrators set up camp in a park across the street from one of the hotels housing convention delegates and the Amphitheater had televisions that aired activities on the streets, so these people had to be aware of their presence. The paper also offered this statement without any reference to how it received this information or without any quotations.

The *New Orleans Times-Picayune*’s coverage also emphasized the possibility of violence, and that the violence would be at the hands of, and the fault of, the demonstrators. This bias was evident in the following statement from August 26 and in other statements which will be

\(^{233}\) *The New Orleans Times-Picayune*, August 26, 1968.
\(^{234}\) Ibid.
discussed later: “Throughout the city the most massive show of force ever assembled for a political convention served notice to black militants, war protesters and other dissidents, who have threatened to disrupt the convention, that any violence would be met head on.”\(^{235}\)

However, when that violence did occur, and when it occurred primarily at the hands of the police, the coverage of events became more vague. One can read this kind of coverage throughout the week. In the *Times-Picayune*’s coverage of Monday, the paper told its readers that when the “500 demonstrators … moved out of Lincoln Park Monday afternoon they were forced to turn back…by a wall of police, some swinging night sticks.” The paper did not give detail to the methods the police used to force the demonstrators back or the results of those. For example, the paper did not report that the eviction from the park caused a larger problem, that of demonstrators relocating to the streets, nor did the newspaper report any amount of the brutality of some of the police officers, such as those who targeted medics, reporters, or people attempting to leave the park. The *Times-Picayune* also failed to report that the police used their clubs on four separate instances that day. Although the paper added that “several [demonstrators] were seen bleeding,” it stated that three persons were injured in the melee (according to the Walker Report, twelve persons sought aid in local hospitals alone).\(^{236}\)

This type of reporting continued throughout the week. On Wednesday, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, in an article titled “Chicago Scene for Marches…Protests Held Without Serious Incident,” continued to underreport injuries and activities occurring on the Chicago streets. The article began with: “Several groups of Democratic National Convention week demonstrators, filtering from their rallying point in Lincoln Park, marched through city streets Monday night without serious incident.” The *New Orleans Times-Picayune* finally noted that tear gas had been in use on Sunday and Monday evenings (there was no mention of this before this), while excluding its use on Tuesday. Nowhere was there any mention of demonstrator leaders encouraging demonstrators to leave Lincoln Park at curfew, of local citizens contacting the police to encourage less use of clubs, or of the Chicago police waiving the city’s curfew at Grant Park

\(^{235}\) Ibid.
Tuesday night, and how, especially in comparison to the evenings in Lincoln Park, that evening in Grant Park passed much more quietly and peacefully. Perhaps the sole responsibility for the violence did not rest only on the demonstrators after all. The absence of these events in the paper's coverage made that seem highly unlikely.\(^{237}\)

Although there had yet to be any serious mention of possible police brutality outside the convention in any articles solely dealing with convention events, on Wednesday the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* carried an article that alluded to the possibility. In an article titled, "Police Action Rough, Claim--Grandson of Winnie Tells of Chicago Incident," Winston Churchill's grandson told his story of a run-in with Chicago police where an officer "laid his hands on me and proceeded to frisk me in a rough matter." The article did end with this quote, "I cannot help thinking how lucky we are with our police force in Britain."\(^{238}\) While ending with a damaging quote about the Chicago police, it was telling that a rough frisking of a foreign reporter (while granting he was the grandson of a revered British figure) received much more detail and earlier coverage than the same treatment and more of American citizens, demonstrators and bystanders alike.

Bystanders did not fare too well during convention week coverage, either, as can be seen in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*'s coverage of Wednesday. The *Times-Picayune* continued to portray the demonstrators as the main agents of action in Chicago. Excerpts from an article titled "Policemen, Guard Battle Protesters" proved this point. The article opened with "Some 3000 antiwar demonstrators fought a bloody, open battle with an equal contingent of police and Illinois National Guardsmen Wednesday night in an assault on the downtown headquarters of the DNC." Later the article said that "despite these massive security precautions and 3 nights of clashes between demonstrators and police...the protestors went ahead with their march anyway," insinuating that this violence was the inevitable conclusion to some demonstrators attempting to march. The article continued, stating that as the police attempted to break up the demonstrations, "the mass of demonstrators broke into smaller groups and continued to fight

---

\(^{237}\) The *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, August 28, 1968.

\(^{238}\) Ibid.
police, who repeatedly called for help.” The scene painted by this statement was almost laughable, how hundreds of police, with teargas, mace, clubs, guns, and thousands of National Guardsmen available to back them up would be in serious danger by almost the same number of demonstrators, armed with stones, sticks, their feet, and wet cloths to reduce the effects of tear gas.

Elsewhere in the article, the New Orleans Times-Picayune stated that the police “forcibly cleared the area” of Michigan Avenue and Jackson Street. The paper did not elaborate how the police did this. The paper did tell that the police used tear gas, if only to say that “100 of them [police officers], not wearing gas masks, were stricken by their own tear gas and went to their knees, choking.” Nowhere in New Orleans Times-Picayune's coverage was there any mention of the thousands of demonstrators continually bombarded by this same gas, and at times this gas with an added nausea agent, and how this affected them, sometimes making it more difficult for them to flee the flailing clubs of the police.

In regard to the incident at the Haymarket Lounge, the paper said “the demonstrators broke through police and military lines in Grant Park, across from the Hilton, and stormed the hotel, where they were beaten back and went rampaging through the streets.” This was an interesting way to describe the events outside the Hilton hotel on Wednesday. Instead of “rampaging,” many of the participants searched for a way out of the area and, as shown earlier, the police set up these barricades as a safe zone for spectators. Some of the police officers, under mounting pressure from the crowds on the street, eventually shoved these people with the barricades through the Haymarket’s glass. Nowhere in the article did the paper mention some police officers following the spectators into the hotel and hitting people indiscriminately with their clubs while club patrons joined them. Along with placing the blame of the breaking of the window at the Hilton hotel solely on the shoulders of the demonstrators, the paper attempted to do the same with the bystanders unlucky enough to be in downtown Chicago that day. The article notified its readers that “several spectators were also seen beaten as police moved into a crowd

\[^{239}\text{Ibid., August 29, 1968.}\]
\[^{240}\text{Ibid.}\]
and dispersed them.” And then as if to justify this beating, the paper continued, stating that “the spectators joined the demonstrators in jeering police.”

The *Times-Picayune*’s coverage of Wednesday’s events continued to downplay demonstrator injuries and omit information contradictory to their frame. The newspaper wrote that “the police were showered with rocks, trash cans, and sticks as they moved into the crowd,” Wednesday afternoon after the incident at the Grant park flagpole, because they needed to “rescue several policemen who were surrounded by the crowd after they arrested a protestor.” The paper did not mention any of the injuries these citizens suffered as the officers clubbed their way through the crowd, or the fact that demonstration leaders urged the crowd and the police to stay put so the demonstrator marshals could peacefully take care of the situation. The paper also did not cover how the demonstrators on the streets came to the aid of others, including the mobile medical teams who were often the target of police. The paper also neglected to inform readers that the crowd make-up on Wednesday was more mainstream and included more locals, creating a scene a bit different than 10,000 crazed “hippies and yippies.”

According to the *Times-Picayune*, the hippies and Yippies continued to control events on Thursday and Friday. The articles about Thursday’s events did tell of delegate and Dick Gregory’s attempted marches to forbidden parts of the city, although the arrests that resulted from the Gregory march came, according to the paper, from a decidedly different scene than what actually occurred. The article stated that “the confrontation was generally orderly at the start, but later demonstrators threw missiles and surged into a line of law enforcement officials.” The paper never mentioned any cause for the change in the crowd’s behavior, or how numerous demonstrators orderly lined up to be arrested. The paper also did not fail to mention that the demonstrators threw missiles (using the prefix “the”, never stating that these people were a minority in the bunch and were often yelled at to stop) but did not give any detail as to how some law enforcement officials instigated or responded to this “threat.”

---

241 Ibid.
242 Ibid.
243 Ibid., August 30, 1968.
The paper then carried two articles about the police conduct of the week, one titled, "Heated Denial Given by Police" and the other balancing article titled, "Writers Express Horror, Dismay at Police Conduct." The two articles about police conduct neglected to include statements from any person who experienced that conduct head on. Neither of these articles was from the point of view of the demonstrators, and the balancing article included this quote, "I have heard [Jerry] Rubin speak, and he was obscene and revolting...." The paper included the rest of the quote, however, which said Rubin was arrested for what he thinks, which was alarming.244 It seemed as though anything that may appear to be positive about the demonstrators must be tempered with a negative comment.

The New Orleans Times-Picayune's Saturday paper completed its coverage of the events of convention week. In its final article, the New Orleans Times-Picayune noted that "583 persons were arrested during the disturbances," a number close to the official number, 668, cited in the Walker Report. The paper did not mention the total number of civilians injured. This final article also noted the "confrontation between police and supporters of Senator Eugene McCarthy." The paper said the police raided after "empty beer cans, glasses and smoked fish were dropped from the Hilton." The paper described the police action as "swarm[ing] over the 15th floor, club[ing] 3 persons and chas[ing] about 50 of 'McCarthy kids' down to the lobby." The article then stated that four policemen were injured (again nothing about demonstrator injuries) and that "all four [police officers] were treated and released from a hospital." The article did contain some of McCarthy's admonishments of the Chicago police, but then ended with a damning quotation from a Chicago police lieutenant stating "McCarthy people are liars from the word go." 245

The coverage of events in this article contained some subtle differences from the coverage of convention events as a whole. This article gave more detail to the actions of the police and National Guard than other articles of the week. Here the paper stated that the "confrontation" was between "police and supporters of Senator Eugene McCarthy," whereas

244 Ibid., August 29, 1968.
elsewhere in the week any clash between police and demonstrators was portrayed as instigated by demonstrators. Finally, during the convention week much attention was given to the attire and actions of the demonstrators, but in this article the paper paid little attention to people throwing items from the hotel window, despite the fact that those items could have severely injured or possibly killed someone.

The Washington Post contained the same convention week themes as the New Orleans Times-Picayune, although these themes manifested themselves in different ways. From the beginning, the Post offered vague coverage of certain convention events. On Monday the paper offered a detailed article, titled, “Convention Guarded by Over 25,000,” which broke down, number by number, how many law enforcement agents would be in Chicago and the role each could play. Although the paper gave its reader a detailed account of the enforcement numbers, it did not give a detailed account of their actions. For example, the Post’s article on the events of Sunday, August 25, titled “Yippies Clash With Police,” told its readers that “several hundred helmeted policemen with nightsticks and shotguns cleared Lincoln Park of youths shortly after midnight, enforcing a curfew.... A dozen or more were arrested and a few were clubbed by police near the park....” The article also reported that around 11:00 p.m. thousands of “youths” left the park (like the New Orleans Times-Picayune, the Post did not offer that demonstration leaders encouraged protestors to leave at curfew time) and began blocking traffic and clashing with motorists.246 The police, according to the Post, played a minimal role in this event.

This same lack of detail was evident in Tuesday and Wednesday’s stories of the protests. On Tuesday the paper told its readers: “Police stormed into Lincoln Park early today and used tear gas on more than 2,000 antiwar protesters.” It was ten paragraphs later before the paper shared that some police officers had “club[ed] some in the crowd.” The paper described the demonstrators in the park as “the rock and bottle-throwing crowd,” implying that all, or most, of the demonstrators threw missiles at the police.247

247 Ibid., August 27, 1968.
The Post did share one reason why the demonstrators might have been frustrated with the city of Chicago, stating that the city had refused them parade and camping permits. And while giving the demonstrators a semblance of a reason to be upset with the city, the Post continued to trivialize the group; throughout the week, the paper referred to the demonstrators as youngsters, youths, young radicals, youthful supporters, the kids, and the youth horde. While many of the demonstrators were young, the continual reference to demonstrator's age made it easier for the paper and its readers to dismiss the actions of this group to the immaturity or fancies of youth. The paper also trivialized the seriousness of the protesters in an “interest” article that authoritatively stated that “among the counter-pols the complaints center on the police proclivity for arresting people and the pot shortage.” While undoubtedly some in Chicago were upset over the “pot shortage,” emphasizing this while not mentioning the more serious goals of the demonstrations, such as bringing together a large number of people to infuse legitimacy to the anti-war movement and increasing pressure on the Democratic party to stop the war in Vietnam, was misleading at best.

Wednesday’s Washington Post's coverage contained information on “the newfound police restraint” that seemed clear from police actions on Tuesday night. The paper said that the police “rout was accomplished with somewhat more restraint than Monday night...” as it “was accomplished primarily by teargas.” What the article did not share, however, was that this restraint evident in police actions was partly the result of lobbying by area clergy and the Lincoln Park Citizen’s committee, who were alarmed by the force of the evenings before. Wednesday’s Post coverage also carried a narrative report of Tuesday night that attempted to portray the nightly scene in Chicago from the viewpoint from the “youth encampment.” The article shared how “experienced militants” attempted to calm “panicky people” and admonished them to walk during police routs and reported that “the kids” threw rocks and bottles (“whatever they had the foresight to arm themselves with”) at the police. While on the surface it appeared that this article was sympathetic toward the demonstrators, it notified readers that these demonstrators, who built “barricades of picnic tables and trash cans” were inept as they were “part of the generation of cop

---

248 Ibid., August 26, 1968.
haters growing up in America but they’ve yet to learn how to effectively fight back.”

The author did not include, however, that many on the streets of Chicago did not want to fight the police, nor did the author include a better method for demonstrators, who would not be armed with tear gas, jeeps and guns, to battle police officers and National Guardsmen who had these at their disposal.

The *Washington Post*’s coverage of Wednesday was rather brief and a bit critical of the Chicago police. The paper called the “clubwork” of the police “crunching but unprofessional” and stated that “the men in blue seemed to be under no command....” The paper also mentioned that two groups of police moved in on demonstrators from two different directions trapping and beating many in the process and that some neutral onlookers were injured in the melee. This article was the first time the *Post* mentioned the presence of blood outside the convention, offering a more realistic and less sanitized view of the streets of Chicago.

Still, the *Post* excluded from its coverage much of what occurred on Wednesday. For instance, there was no mention of the events outside the Haymarket Lounge. The paper did report that earlier in the day “15,000 anti-Humphrey, anti-war people gathered in the Grant Park bandshell area for a rally and a march,” it did not include that the demonstrators had a permit for the gathering or that police stormed into the situation clubbing anyone in their path, even though most demonstrators were not breaking the law and demonstration leaders attempted to aid in retrieving the demonstrator on the flagpole. Neither did the paper mention that a couple police officers beat Rennie Davis almost to unconsciousness during this permitted rally.

The *Post* did state that despite the lack of permits many protestors were determined to march anyway onto the Amphitheater, and that the violence of the afternoon was the result of this. The paper did not communicate that demonstrator leaders attempted numerous times to negotiate with police for a march, that protest leaders emphasized the peacefulness of the march, that demonstration marshals (who seemed so compelling to newspapers before the convention began) tried to help keep the peace when Chicago police sprayed tear gas, or that the marshals

---

250 Ibid., August 29, 1968.
251 Ibid.
admonished those who did throw items at the police. Instead the paper said that "Dave Dellinger and a number of other radical leaders...kept a bullhorn directed[ed] their forces for hours" implying a scene where demonstrators were in control of the situation and continuously attacked the authorities.252 Nothing could be further from the truth; no one controlled the streets of Chicago on Wednesday.

Friday's coverage carried the public debate over the role of the city of Chicago, which will be discussed a bit in the next chapter. The day's coverage revealed to its readers the makeshift medical center at the McCarthy headquarters and some of the injuries people on the street experienced Wednesday. The paper also told of "the debacle" of Thursday evening where Illinois National Guardsmen "routed" demonstrators after they attempted to march past the 18th Street boundary and "began taunting and pressing against the National Guard line." The paper told nothing else of the scene that evening, that hundreds of people peacefully lined up to be arrested and that it was only after the Guard stopped arresting people and it became evident that the Guard would clear the area that the taunting by some in the crowd picked up. This was similar to other coverage of the week where it seemed as though for an event to be reported the demonstrators had to be misbehaving in some way. Perhaps that explains why the Washington Post offered no coverage of demonstrator movement centers, the aid some demonstrators received from local businesses and residents, or even the waiving of the curfew at Grant Park. The Post also severely undercounted demonstrator injuries, stating that three hundred civilians were injured during the week.253 A conservative estimate of the week's injuries slated at least seven hundred injuries.254

The Post offered negative coverage of the police with the events at the McCarthy suites at the Conrad Hilton. As compared to the rest of the week's coverage, and perhaps because these were McCarthy workers and not protesters on the streets, these people were the "terrified young followers of Eugene McCarthy" and the police and National Guard "invaded" their area,

---

252 Ibid.
253 Ibid., August 31, 1968.
254 Walker, Rights in Conflict, S2.
“routed young McCarthy staffers out of their rooms” and “began cracking heads.” The paper wrote that the Guardsmen “had no warrants for search or arrests but nevertheless forced their way into room after room....” The Post then briefly mentioned that Guardsmen spotted people throwing items from hotel windows. In contrast to New Orleans Times-Picayune’s end of the article, this article ended with a summary of McCarthy’s statements, saying the above-described treatment “was typical of the harassment and brutality inflicted on his followers all week.”255

The New York Times undoubtedly offered the most thorough and balanced account of the events convention week. This newspaper was the first to report, on August 26, protest leaders asking protesters to leave at the city’s curfew, the first to report that some Chicago police officers seemed to be targeting reporters, and it gave the most detailed accounts of protesters being beaten. This did not exclude the paper, however, from biased treatment of demonstrators and a barring of events not consistent with the general themes of the newspapers in this study.

The New York Times continued to trivialize the protesters by emphasizing age, looks, and goals. The first article of the week, titled “Hundreds of Protesters Block Traffic in Chicago” gave a detailed account of the events on Sunday, including the number of protest participants from official and demonstrator sources, and reported as well that demonstration leaders pleaded with protesters to leave the park at curfew time. The article, however, made continuous references to the age and appearance of the protesters and minimized the importance of the demonstrators. The newspaper repeatedly described the demonstrators as youths, youngsters, and young boys and girls. In this twenty-four paragraph article, and in another twenty-four paragraph article two days later, the Times used some variation of this description seventeen times.256 The continuous repetition of the demonstrators’ ages worked to minimize the importance of these people and aided in dismissing what they had to say to the inexperience of youth. The paper continued to emphasize appearances, as well. The Times described people on the streets as “long haired youth,” “the spectators, some of whom waved Viet Cong flags and the black flags of anarchism,” “young girls with flowers woven in their long hair, college boys in

sweatshirts and young radicals with Mao Tse-Tung buttons," or the "outnumbered and outclassed
demonstrators." Again, while none of these descriptions were false, the emphasis on these
people and not the numerous people who were present not wearing these "radical" outfits
continued the theme that these demonstrators were from the fringes of society and should not be
taken seriously.

The relative unimportance of the demonstration groups was evident as well in the
increased coverage the Times gave "celebrity" members of protesting groups. Although these
people, including Allen Ginsberg, Norman Mailer, William Burroughs, and Jean Genet, had very
little to do, if anything, with the planning and implementing of convention week plans and were
non-representative of the group as a whole, they received disproportional coverage. New York
Times' coverage of the most violent day of the week contained quotations only from city officials
and these people, who had spoken at the afternoon rally. This was evident later in the week as
well, when some convention delegates decided to march to protest the city's handling of the
demonstrations. These articles gave much more detail to the reasoning behind the marches,
including quotations from the participants, and did not carry disparaging comments about the
marchers' ages and looks as the demonstrators' march attempts had received.

The New York Times also offered vague coverage, or omitted coverage outright, at
certain times throughout the week. Coverage of Sunday's events indicated that "about 20
[demonstrators] were struck with nightsticks" on Sunday evening. As previously shown, the
police used their clubs on four separate occasions on Sunday and at least nine persons were
injured seriously enough to go to a Chicago hospital in search of treatment. Nothing in the Times
coverage mentioned Monday's Lincoln Park ministers' meeting to discuss the police brutality they
felt was evident on Sunday night, although the paper did mention the ministers' presence Monday
evening in Lincoln Park. Neither did the paper mention nor cover by name the Yippie and Mobe
press conferences of Monday and Tuesday. Nowhere in its coverage, either, was there a

258 Ibid., August 29, 1968.
259 Ibid., August 30, 1968.
260 Ibid., August 26, 1968.
discussion of the support many of the demonstrators received by locals such as the Lincoln Park Citizen’s Committee, its meeting with Chicago law enforcement officials, and the food, supplies, and floors many local residents and businesses offered to their temporary neighbors.

Now, of course, it was because the New York Times’ coverage was better than the other papers that these issues can be brought up now, and it is important to note that all of the other papers in this study omitted the above-mentioned occurrences as well (unless otherwise noted). Despite their superior coverage, however, these omissions and emphases limited the Times’ ability to offer balanced and accurate coverage. Omitting any message of protesters’ press conferences limited their ability to speak out on their actions and the actions of the authorities, which became a larger problem as the convention week continued and the paper covered official press conferences. Neglecting the support of local residents emphasized the paper’s theme that these demonstrators were a fringe group, outsiders, unembraced by residents of Chicago, a fact Mayer Daley would repeatedly state in the days and weeks following the convention. To this end the Times was slow to note that the groups on the streets of Chicago contained many locals, sightseers, and mainstream people, especially as the week continued, again sending a message that these demonstrators were extremists and did not have anything relevant or thoughtful to say.

The omissions of the papers coincided with their frame. As the papers framed the demonstrators as focused on committing violence, certain actions of demonstrators and police were omitted. Specific detailed instances of police violence were not found in Times coverage. While the paper wrote that police did “tear gas,” “chase,” and “club” some demonstrators, there was no mention of police throwing people into a pond and beating them Monday night, of police targeting pro-McCarthy vehicles, or the Grant Park bandshell incident Wednesday afternoon. The paper gave relatively little coverage of the Chicago police chief’s decision to waive the nightly curfew at Grant Park Tuesday night (this decision was a complete turn about from the city’s intentions of the last five months!) and the relatively peaceful night that followed (with the exception of the awful taunting some National Guard members underwent, which would have fit into the paper’s frame). And finally, while before the convention the marshals were demonstration leaders’ troops, nowhere did the paper share the marshals’ attempts to keep the
peace and come to the aid of people in the streets, such as at the bandshell at Grant Park on Wednesday.

Whether it was Wednesday or any other day of the convention week, the Chicago Tribune's coverage of events was the most biased of the four papers in the study. Not only did the paper undercount injuries and omit occurrences contrary to their frame, the paper reinvented some of the week's events. Along with the other papers, the Tribune offered vague coverage of the week's events, especially of the actions of the Chicago police, and underestimated injuries to demonstrators. One of the Tribune's earliest articles of the week, titled "Police Repel Jeering Mob of Peaceniks" never told its readers exactly how "club wielding police managed to disperse bands of hippies, yippies and other radical groups...." Later in the article the Tribune told its readers that police used buses to move police officers for reinforcements and that the police blocked certain streets, but it never mentioned the use of tear gas. The paper went as far as to state that no one was injured Sunday evening but went on to report that stones thrown by demonstrators hit a car containing two Tribune reporters.261

On Tuesday, instead of saying "no one was injured" as they had about Sunday night's activities, the Chicago Tribune omitted the subject of civilian injuries altogether. Instead the paper reported that "three policemen and a news cameraman were injured in the hippie fracas..." The article later read that "at 9th Street and Michigan Avenue a policeman was tripped and as he fell to the pavement, he said, he was kicked in the head. The policeman...was treated in Mercy Hospital." The paper did not give the same kind of detail to violence directed at the demonstrators. While saying that "police herding the demonstrators out of Lincoln Park were pelted by rocks and bottles and the windows of several squad cars were broken," they reported that "a charge of helmeted police wearing gas masks...bombarded the hippies with canisters of tear gas."262 And while the Tribune mentioned that the Chicago police had clubs, the Tribune made no direct mention of their use. The papers stated that "400 policemen with riot clubs rushed a group of 400 yippies and hippies," but did not report that some police officers used

261 The Chicago Tribune, August 26, 1968.
262 The Chicago Tribune, August 27, 1968.
those clubs to hit people fleeing Lincoln Park, threw some demonstrators and bystanders alike into a pond, that a handful of police were seen slashing tires of vehicles, or that volunteer medics treated at least eighty people for serious scalp wounds.263

During this time the paper attempted to dismiss the importance and effectiveness of the demonstrations. Throughout their coverage the paper referred to the demonstrators as hippies and Yippies, ignoring the ever-increasing numbers of locals and “mainstream” people on the streets of Chicago. The paper described the protesters as “hippies, yippies and other nondescripts,” as “young persons in beards, sandals and old army clothes,” and “swarms of peaceniks.”264 The Tribune, on Monday, emphasized the protesters ineffectiveness by ending its article on Sunday’s events with “Sen. Eugene McCarthy and Vice President Humphrey entered the Hilton hotel while the demonstrators were marching but both ignored them.”265

The Tribune’s coverage of the week continued in this manner. On Wednesday, the paper gave great amount of detail to the demonstrators, such as this passage: “Many of them sat or stood on autos parked on the east side of Michigan avenue and others climbed trees. They shouted obscenities, chanted slogans...” Meanwhile the paper continued to omit anything about the police’s use of clubs, the number of demonstrator injuries, or peaceful actions of demonstrators.266

The articles on Thursday did mention injuries to demonstrators, however. On two separate incidents the paper mentioned demonstrator injuries, and both alluded to a relatively small number. The paper quoted two doctors from McCarthy’s headquarters who stated that they treated nine people. Another article stated that there were “nine demonstrator injuries for the day.” Still another story declared that there were “nine demonstrators injured during the afternoon,” offering a misleading account of demonstrator injuries for Wednesday. On the other hand, the newspaper carried a short article headlined, “29 Policemen, Hurt in Day’s Melee, Listed.” The Tribune, as well, shed some light on the issue of police brutality, referring to it as

263 Ibid., August 27, 1968.
265 Ibid., August 26, 1968.
266 Ibid., August 28, 1968.
what some saw to be “the unnatural enthusiasm of police of the job of arresting
demonstrators.”267

Sometimes this form of coverage changed the meaning of events. On Wednesday, the
Chicago Tribune failed to cover the demonstrators’ march on the Chicago Transit Authority.
Instead, the paper offered that “After the hippie group was driven from Lincoln Park, about 300 of
them swarmed around the Chicago transit authority parking garage.” The Tribune offered an
interesting description of the events outside the Haymarket Lounge in the Hilton hotel as well,
stating: “A group of the demonstrators smashed a window of the Haymarket bar facing Michigan
avenue and 15 or 20 were able to clamber thru into the Hilton before the police stopped them,”
and in another article on Thursday stated that “police were the targets of...[a] wooden sawhorse
barricade.” That completed the peculiar coverage of the Haymarket incident Wednesday
afternoon.268

Friday’s coverage continued the frame of demonstrator responsibility for convention
violence with its opening paragraph: “Anti-war demonstrators, Hippies, Yippies and numerous
disgruntled Democratic convention delegates appeared to have finally calmed down early
today....” The final paragraph again told the total number of police injured during the week (it
stated eighty), but then stated that there was no accurate count of demonstrator injuries.269 In
fact, never in the week did the Chicago Tribune give an approximation to the amount of
demonstrator injuries.

On Friday the Tribune ran quite a few prominent articles in support of Chicago police and
Mayor Daley including these titled: “Chicago: A Great City,” “Demonstrator’s Seized Diary Details
Plan to Disrupt City,” “Daley Backs Cops’ Actions” (all front page articles), “Police Do Excellent
Job, Dirksen Says,” “Terror Mob Periled City, Mayor Says,” “Negro Leader Blames Whites for
Chicago Police Brutality,” “Name Persons Arrested in Disturbance, Large Minority from Out of
Town” (actually 43.5% were from out of state, the byline just as easily could have been a majority

---

from Chicago area), and “Most Callers Praise Daley for Tough Stand on Rioters.” The Tribune
gave no where near this amount of space to those who disagreed with the mayor’s actions, and
dedicated one small article on Saturday (on page 11, the same page with an article titled “Poll
Shows 56.8 Pct. Back Chicago Police”) to those critical of the Chicago police.270

This completed the coverage of the convention week. Each of the newspapers offered
their own version of events, but all contained similar themes. These themes would continue in
the post-convention “analysis” and the coverage offered of both sides.

Chapter Five
Post Convention Coverage

The coverage of events continued after the Democratic National Convention ended and the protestors returned home. The newspapers in this study, especially the Chicago Tribune and the New York Times, attempted to rehash the events of the week, but the public discussion of who was to blame for the events took up most of the newspaper space on the event. Many of the coverage frames continued throughout the post-convention period, which saw its heaviest coverage between August 31 and September 15.

The New Orleans Times-Picayune carried twelve articles throughout the month of September; all of which largely criticized the protesters and praised Chicago police. These articles contained quotations from numerous official governmental sources such as New Orleans' mayor Victor Schiro; Hubert Humphrey; Richard Daley; Chicago police captains; Congressmen, including Gerald Ford; and FBI Director Edgar Hoover.271 The Times-Picayune's post-convention coverage did not contain quotations from any demonstrator or any leader of the demonstrations.

One article, titled “HHH Supports Mayor, Police,” contained a long quotation from Vice-President Humphrey in which he called the demonstrators in Chicago “hard core agitators and anarchists,” and stated the demonstrations occurred because “there are certain people in this country who feel all they have to do is riot and they’ll get their way....” The newspaper reported these statements without question, and did not offer any statements from persons who may have viewed the demonstrations differently. This article also quoted Humphrey as saying while it was clear that “some of them [Chicago police officers] overreacted, there isn't any doubt about that...” he also stated “I think we ought to quit pretending that Mayor Daley did something that was wrong. He didn’t condone a thing that was wrong. He tried to protect lives.” The paper carried this same quotation in another article two days later.272

272 Ibid., September 1, 1968.
Throughout its coverage, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* offered minimal coverage to any point of view other than that of the city of Chicago's and relied primarily on official sources. While it gave ample space to Mayor Daley defending his actions and his city and space to notify its readers that Mayor Daley was receiving overwhelmingly positive public feedback, the paper did not give any print space to demonstration leaders, nor did the paper even mention the press conference some demonstration leaders had. The paper presented solely one point of view of the demonstrations and, as a result, insinuated that only one opinion of the events in Chicago was legitimate.

Sometimes the headline of the article was more damning than the article itself, as with the September 13 article titled “Long Condemns Chicago ‘Scum.’” This article did contain quite damning quotations from Louisiana Senator Russell Long, who claimed he spoke “for Americans and not for the Communist scum of this country,” and called the demonstrators “Communist stinkoes, traitors and no-accounts.” However, later in the article the reader learned that these statements took place during a Congressional debate and that another Senator, Stephen Young, criticized Mayor Daley stating “if Mayor Daley had exercised ordinary prudence, common sense and respected existing legal procedures, in all likelihood there would have been no violence and misuse of police power.”

This headline reinforced the newspaper's frame about the demonstrators and did not offer an accurate or balanced account of what the article contained.

Finally, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* carried an article explaining Mayor Daley's official version of events of the convention week given through the city’s documentary. This article described the film's contents, but did not carry any of the public discussion around the validity of certain parts of the film. The city's version of events stood unquestioned.

The post convention coverage of the *Washington Post* carried some of the public debate around the events in Chicago and some analysis of the events, but any coverage in the words of the demonstrators was scarce. More so than other newspapers in this study, the *Post* emphasized the criticisms aimed at Chicago. The paper carried two separate articles containing

---

273 Ibid., September 13, 1968.
274 Ibid., September 14, 1968.
criticism of Chicago by Representative Gerald Ford and offered an article about a joint protest wired to Mayor Daley by different forms of the news media. The Post also carried two news analyses of events, one stating that Chicago had the making of a disappointing failure for the demonstrators “until Mayor Daley saved it for the radicals by unifying the “McCarthy kids with the hardened street guerillas and radical young ideologues.” Two articles a week later questioned the legality of the city’s policies before the convention and questioned the numbers of civilian injuries offered by Mayor Daley.

The Post also carried some comments from official sources, as well, all of which blamed the demonstrators for the violence on the street. The paper carried an article, titled “Chicago Policeman Tells it Like it Feels,” in which police officer Frank Nanni stated, “It’s pretty tough to stand there and have some smelly looking human being call you a pig and a few other things.”

The Post also carried articles with statements from Julie Nixon and David Eisenhower, Mayor Daley, Muriel Humphrey (who stated, “You can say what you feel without being noisy or rude”), and Hubert Humphrey’s statement that we “ought to quit pretending that Mayor Daley did something that was wrong...” with these “hard core of trained agitators and anarchists” who “had come to Chicago to stampede the International Amphitheater and break up the Democratic National Convention.” The paper also carried the vice-president’s statement that the “obscenity, profanity and filth uttered night after night in front of the hotels’ was the ‘kind of talk’ that you’d put anybody in jail for.” This statement evidently did not raise any eyebrows, as there was minimal discussion if “obscenity, profanity and filth” was a worthwhile reason for arresting or beating someone.

New York Times’ post-convention coverage, like its previous coverage, was the best of the four papers in this study. The paper carried the greatest amount of coverage, contained the
most coverage of the demonstrators in their own right, and even carried a special section concerning the demonstrations in mid-September. Its post-convention frames did remain consistent with the paper’s convention and preconvention frames.

Like the other papers in this study, the New York Times carried more information from “official” sources than anything else. The paper carried quotations from Hubert Humphrey, Representative Gerald Ford, Edward Muskie, Julie Nixon and David Eisenhower, Raymond Corbett, Richard Daley, and Senator Jacob Javits.281 Unlike the other papers, however, the Times did carry quotations from Jerry Rubin, David Dellinger, and Tom Hayden and carried a total of three articles about the demonstrators, including information from some demonstrators in their own words, and two other articles with quotations from demonstration leaders.282 The paper also carried a picture of a Hayden, Hoffman, and Davis press conference but this conference did not warrant an article in the Times, and the paper did not mention anything about it, with the exception that it occurred.

Hubert Humphrey’s quote that the public should “quit pretending Daley did anything wrong” got much play in the Times’ post convention coverage. On September 1, the Times carried that quotation twice in the same article. Not until the end of the article and away from the front page did the paper mention that Humphrey stated that “some policemen overreacted.”283 During its September 2 coverage, the paper had the quote three separate times in its coverage.

While there was minimal coverage of demonstrators or their demonstration leaders in the post convention coverage, the paper did cover a couple “official” sources who were critical of the actions of the city of Chicago. The paper gave a couple of inches of column space to Senator Jacob Javits, who publicly asked what harm could have happened if the demonstrators were given space in Chicago “to scream to high heaven.”284 Besides three articles questioning different aspects of Mayor Daley’s report and video and the scant coverage given to

283 Ibid, September 1, 1968.
284 Ibid., September 6, 1968.
demonstration leaders mentioned earlier, this constituted the extent of the coverage of events using someone outside of government and the city of Chicago as the source.\textsuperscript{285}

While giving coverage of both sides, the Times gave more space to those who backed the city of Chicago, perhaps because of the "newsworthy" people were speaking out, for example, Hubert Humphrey, Spiro Agnew, Mayor Daley, Julie Nixon and David Eisenhower. The paper also offered front-page coverage of the FBI's J. Edgar Hoover's attacks on the New Left, quoting Hoover as saying the aim of the New Left was "to smash first our educational structure, then our economic system, and finally our Government itself."\textsuperscript{286}

The Times coverage of demonstrators continued to emphasize things of questionable importance. In a September 1 article, titled, "Radicals, Relaxing on Illinois Farm, Relive Chicago," emphasized the age of these radicals, repeatedly calling them youths and young people. The article told its readers that these radicals met "under the black flag of anarchism" and that Rennie Davis had "an olive-drab fatigue cap with a button showing a clenched fist perched on his head."\textsuperscript{287} As a whole, the article emphasized details loaded with negative connotations, which were to some extent accurate but offered little in substance about the goals, plans, and analysis of the Chicago convention like the paper attempted to do for official sources such as Mayor Daley and Hubert Humphrey.

The Chicago Tribune, which offered the greatest number of articles during this post convention time, carried coverage most favorable toward the city of Chicago and Mayor Daley. The paper heavily emphasized statements favorable to the city, emphasized the presence of communists among the demonstrators, the competence of authorities, and offered its own "record" of events in an attempt to exonerate its battered city.

On August 31 alone, the paper offered ten articles dealing with the convention. Eight of these articles offered positive coverage of the city of Chicago and worked to lambaste the demonstrators. The paper based three of these articles solely on the support the city was

\textsuperscript{285} Ibid., September 11, 1968, September 16, 1968, September 17, 1968.  
\textsuperscript{286} Ibid., September 1, 1968.  
receiving from members of the public sector. Another gave Mayor Daley an opportunity to justify
the forcefulness of security, while yet another briefly mentioned that demonstration leaders had
held a press conference, but gave no detail as to what had transpired there. Alternately, only two
of these articles alluded to the fact that some in the public condemned the city of Chicago's
actions. One article contained the statements of Gerald Ford blaming Daley and Bailey for the
violence in Chicago. The other article, titled “Police Action Draws Praise, Condemnation,”
mentioned in its title that some condemned police action in Chicago, but the overwhelming
majority of this article gave detail to the praise Chicago authorities received in the days following
the convention.288 And even while these two articles did carry comments critical of the city of
Chicago's actions, the paper still relied heavily on official sources for these statements and
continued to neglect statements made by other sources.

Two articles on August 31 discussed the demonstrators, themselves. The first, titled
"Riot Diary Names 38 Hard Core Reds," disclosed that "names and addresses of 38 hard core
communists and left-wing agitators" were present in a work diary of a leader of Mobe. The other
article, with the subtitle "Inside Story: How Cop Led Life of a Yippie—Unshaven, Unbathed—He
Learned Secrets," emphasized the plans of Yippies to "spread into the streets and riot" and how
Jerry Rubin "ordered snake dances and 'sing alongs' to make sure people believed the
movement was 'peaceful.'"289 While both of these articles may have contained some truths, both
accentuated the negative qualities of the demonstration groups, to the virtual exclusion of
essentially anything else.

Between August 31 and September 11 the paper offered thirteen articles solely about the
support the city of Chicago received from persons across America, such as these titled, "Actor
Hugh O'Brien Defends City on TV," "Machinists Union Hails Daley on Riots," "Scientists Hit TV
"George [AFL-CIO President], Mail Deluge Lauds Daley and His Police," "Lawlessness is
Denounced by Humphrey," "300 members of Clubs Give Cops Support," "Civic Leaders, Groups

288 Chicago Tribune, August 31, 1968.
289 Ibid.
Hail Daley and Police for Actions,” and “Viet Vet Hails Suppression of Mob Here.” The paper used these articles to emphasize the praise the city of Chicago received from certain sectors of the public. All of these articles offered quotations from Daley’s supporters, while the paper virtually ignored any dissent. During this same period, the paper offered the two dissenting articles mentioned above and another that quoted the Director of the President’s Commission on Civil Disorders David Ginsburg stating, “Mayor Daley could have avoided some conflict,” which politicians who supported Daley and Chicago conceded.

The Chicago Tribune continued to demonize the demonstrators in their post convention coverage. Repeatedly throughout the paper’s coverage the readers learned how the demonstrators were not “idealistic youths,” but in actuality the thousands who showed up in Chicago were “a bunch of anarchists, revolutionaries and political assassins,” “communists and anarchists,” and “dirty-necked and dirty-mouthed group of kooks.” The role of the city in encouraging the more radical and irresponsible movement participants by their unwillingness to negotiate with protest groups was briefly mentioned only once, in a quotation from David Ginsburg.

The Tribune also emphasized the presence of Communists in the ranks of the demonstrators. Between August 31 and September 9, the paper carried nine articles that mentioned ties between “Communist front groups,” “Communist-infiltrated labor unions,” “local,” “known,” and “active Communists” and members of demonstration groups.

Finally, on September 9, two days after the paper offered the complete text of Daley’s “The Strategy of Confrontation,” the Tribune offered a special section called “The Record: Democrat’s 1968 Convention.” This section attempted to give some background to the Mobe and Yippies as well as the “whys and effect of security,” stating the backgrounds of demonstration leaders, the advertisements for the Festival of Life in underground newspapers “attempt[ing] to

---

291 Ibid., September 10, 1968.
293 Ibid., September 10, 1968.
draw people to Chicago," the plans of demonstration leaders to establish first-aid stations in Chicago, and the vow to march to the Amphitheater during the convention week. Nowhere in this background article did the paper mention attempts of demonstration groups to obtain permits and places to demonstrate and march.\(^{294}\) This section also listed the names and injuries of police officers, information which the paper had previously listed, while nowhere in "The Record" was there any count of injuries to demonstrators and bystanders. The reliance on official sources was at its greatest in this section, which was full of recently obtained quotations from official sources, with none from demonstration leaders or participants.

The themes in the convention coverage continued throughout the post convention coverage. The newspapers in this study continued to rely on official sources and emphasize items of questionable importance about the demonstrators. All the newspapers underscored the praise that was heaped upon the city of Chicago, while minimizing any coverage of those dissenting from that view. Finally, post convention coverage continued to emphasize certain events, such as an official source speaking in public about the demonstrations, over others, such as press conferences held by leaders of the demonstrations, which helped to buttress the inaccurate coverage already offered of the Chicago demonstrations.

\(^{294}\) Ibid., September 9, 1968.
Chapter Six

Conclusion

The tale of Chicago's National Democratic Convention would continue through the trial of the "Chicago Eight" (soon to be the Chicago Seven after Bobby Seale's banishment from the courtroom) on conspiracy charges and the imprisonment of some of the demonstration leaders. The print media's coverage of the events diminished greatly, however, by the end of September 1968.

This thesis has shown that the four newspapers in this study had a news frame in place for the events outside the Democratic National Convention that would give significance to the events and put them into context, and that these papers adhered to this frame, despite evidence to the contrary. Each newspaper emphasized the possibility for violence and the competence of the authorities. When the violence did occur, each paper placed the blame for this violence upon the demonstrators. All through this coverage, the overwhelming majority of the information came from "official" sources, which, like the demonstrators, had a stake in what the newspapers reported.

Knowing that the coverage of the convention's events was not balanced or fully accurate tells only part of the story. Before the convention, Rennie Davis and Tom Hayden believed that media coverage would, as a whole, not be favorable toward the demonstrators. They wrote, "We have no illusions about the distortions which are inevitable from *Time* magazine and the rest of the media..." but, "we believe that this country is so divided that within the mass media there are possibilities for objective, or at least semi-favorable, reporting." In this regard, another demonstration leader, David Dellinger, stated, "We are not going to storm the convention with tanks or mace. But we are going to storm the hearts and minds of the American people." The

---

296 Walker, *Rights in Conflict*, p.11
demonstrators did not storm the hearts and minds of the American people, and in the case of the four newspapers in this study, the demonstrators did not receive objective reporting.

Why did the demonstrators fail to receive the coverage they aimed for and why was the coverage of the convention week not fully accurate and unbiased? The answer to these questions can be found in the frame given to this event and in some of the actions of the demonstrators themselves. As stated earlier, frames provide a way to think about events. They define problems, diagnose causes, make judgments, and suggest remedies. In this case, the frame found in each newspaper resulted in the biased coverage of the events outside the convention. According to the authors of *Spiral of Cynicism*, to “frame is to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in communicating content, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation.” Media do this by selecting, emphasizing, excluding, and elaborating certain bits of information.

In this case, from the beginning of convention protest coverage through the post convention coverage, the newspapers selected, emphasized, excluded, and elaborated upon the potential for violence, especially from the hands of demonstrators, the competence of city officials, and items of minor importance to the flow of events, such as age, dress, or hairstyle. Along with this, the papers in this study did not select stories and or events that challenged their interpretation of events. This study buttressed what other media studies have found, that if a media opinion about an event or group of people already exists, it will shape subsequent reporting on the topic, regardless of what existing or future information might indicate. Still other media studies on protest activities have found that the expressed expectation of violence will usually lead to an emphasis on reporting violence. In the case of the demonstrations at the Chicago convention, the preconvention emphasis on the adeptness of government authorities

---

298 Ibid, p.45.
and the readiness of the demonstrators to "battle" the police (by the continued coverage of snake dances and demonstration marshals and the omission of any serious coverage about attempts of demonstration leaders to negotiate with city officials for permitted places to demonstrate) would be followed by the papers’ emphasis on any "clash" between some of the demonstrators and some of the police (especially at park curfew time) and resulted in an underreporting of peaceful activities such as movement centers or the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Committee.

The newspapers’ frames, which greatly emphasized (especially in the case of the Chicago Tribune) the competence and the authority of government officials led, at times, to a blind acceptance of what city and government officials had to say. Even when these officials contradicted themselves, (such as when Mayor Daley stated before the convention that the city did not expect any trouble, but minutes later stated that Soldier Field could be used to house arrested demonstrators) there was no public questioning of these statements. The newspapers granted automatic legitimacy to these “official sources” who, like the demonstrators, had a vested interest in the tone of the media coverage. This is not unusual; most media sources accept the basic definition of events given by official and government forces. The newspapers also accepted the expectations of government officials without question and only carried in passing any statement that doubted the wisdom of not offering march, protest, or camping permits. As Michael Parenti, in Inventing Reality, had found, the media “rarely probe into the actual reasons for state policy and actions.” This was evident in this thesis, as a closer look into the city of Chicago’s actions would have found that the city refused to be cooperative with the demonstrators long before it uncovered death threats and riot plans, as repeatedly stated by Mayor Daley, in spite of Bailey’s attempts to convey a contrary image to reporters.

Another result of this coverage was that the concerns of the demonstrators, the reasons why a couple of thousand of people hit the streets in Chicago, was not an issue in the newspapers’ coverage. Instead, the protestors, themselves, became the issue. The newspapers did this by impressing upon its readers that these demonstrators, or “kids,” were bent on violence.

---

301 Parenti, Inventing Reality, p. 158.
302 Ibid., p. 5
crazy or extremist, or dupes of communists. The papers played upon negative prejudices, as well, consistently referring to age, long hair, dirty clothes, or battle fatigues, items of note that were not necessary in the reporting of events, that made it easier to dismiss what these folks said or did. As one media study has noted, "the emphasis on the supposedly 'youthful' quality of the demonstrators plays on the stereotype of youth as not very responsible or rational, making it easier to treat the protest as a product of their immature spirits than as a justifiable response to political reality."\(^{303}\) As found in *The Manufacture of News*, this kind of coverage resulted in "radical political activities appear[ing] as essentially ephemeral, and confined to a small group of outsiders, rather than the product of historically structured and continuing inequalities of wealth and power."\(^{304}\) As a result, the content of the demonstrations was washed out by a continued emphasis on images of youthful, violent, dirty militants who enjoyed cursing at all forms of authority.

Without any political or practical meanings to the events outside the Democratic National Convention, the marches, speeches, and activities that took place become nothing more than spectacle.\(^{305}\) In this respect, the attempted marches to the Amphitheater become nothing more than failed attempts to break from Grant Park and police action to turn them back, instead of events stemming from the desire of demonstrators to actually protest within earshot and eyesight of those people whose actions they were trying to effect. The coverage of the Democratic National Convention, and of protest movements in general, was one based on the description of one unusual event after another, rather than the explanation or analysis of those events.\(^{306}\)

Ironically, if the papers had seriously looked into the "whys" of some of the convention events, they may have found more of the immaturity or thoughtlessness they were trying to find or emphasize in the first place. While undoubtedly there were multitudes of deeply committed people in Chicago who were never given any serious mention, others were there solely for the excitement, the lure of drugs, or the potential for violence. Some demonstrators did do some

\(^{303}\) Ibid., p. 95.
\(^{304}\) Cohen and Young, eds., *The Manufacture of News*, p.163.
\(^{306}\) Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, p. 185.
things that could be seen, at best, as counter to their cause, for example, nominating a pig for president, releasing a greased pig into a park, or bringing vast amounts of drugs to the convention. Ironic, as well, was the fact that the newspapers criticized the demonstrators for such banal things as looks, age, chants, and clothing, when the newspapers could have discussed that none of the demonstrators' serious goals were attained, as there was no march to the Amphitheater, camps in Lincoln Park, and the peace candidate and plank were not added to the Democratic platform.

According to some within the movement, these threats to lace the water supply or to take delegates to Wisconsin in taxis was just another way to use the media and obtain the attention they so desired, even though they often made it easier for the media to depict the protestors in an unfavorable light. As Todd Gitlin's study of the media throughout the 1960s had found, "as the 1960's went on, the threshold for coverage raised." He stated that it became "obvious from within the movement that the media were giving lurid prominence to the wildest and most cacophonous rhetoric, and broadcasting the most militant, violent, bizarre and discordant actions...." Perhaps this was why the newspapers emphasized the snake dance, the nomination of a pig, the attempted marches to the Amphitheater, and the battle fatigues and disheveled hair, but not the speeches, press conferences of demonstration leaders, or those well groomed demonstrators, and why, if demonstration groups wanted to "storm the hearts and minds of the American people," staging these events became part of the plan.

This plan did not come without a price, however. While the effects of some of the media coverage was to trivialize and demean the demonstrators, the actions of some of the demonstrators worked to trivialize themselves, and the reason why the demonstration groups did not receive accurate reporting was partly because of their own actions and statements. Nominating a pig for president with a platform of "garbage" or stating after the convention week that demonstrators hoped to create "many Chicagos" might have gained newspaper space for the demonstrating groups, but it would also help create a caricature of the demonstrators that made it

---

307 Ibid., p. 182.
easier for the media to contain and manipulate the image of a demonstrator. These actions fueled the image of demonstrators that the media already had and helped to keep the focus on some of the demonstrating people, and not on the issues of concern to these people. As a result, while some leaders of the demonstrators hoped for favorable media coverage, the actions of some of the demonstrators themselves, combined with the frames newspapers used to cover protest activities, helped to insure that the favorable coverage would not be a reality.
Bibliography

BOOKS


ARTICLES


UNPUBLISHED SOURCES


VIDEO

