

## The Chicago Convention 1968

September 5, 1968

Last Monday and Tuesday I thought I was seeing a summer replacement for Rowan and Martin's "Laugh-In." Wednesday it wasn't funny anymore. A thought kept running through my brain "Born of revolution, this country is dying of revolution." And, even as the delegates became disenchanted with the so-called Gestapo tactics at the corner of Balboa and Michigan Avenue, the National Guard with bayonets, the Chicago police with billy clubs, the tear gas, the barbed wire, I felt like sobbing. Later, I wanted to vomit!

Maybe we don't prefer the long hair, the sideburns, but when have we beat and bloodied a human being because of how he looked? My TV cameras focused on some pretty typical-looking American young people. We middle-aged perhaps don't understand the young or don't always agree, but when were we given a license to beat and bloody a 19-year-old because of what he believes?

Those weren't "hippies" speaking from the podium! These were respected statesmen who were also calling for the end of the war in Vietnam and in our streets. How did a machine grow so large and so powerful that delegates could be stopped repeatedly for nuisance security checks? When did a machine become so large and so powerful that even the newsmen were arrested, beaten and maligned when they were only doing their job? When did a machine grow so large and so powerful that only a select few were admitted with banners and materials for the use of only one candidate?

How can a party talk of "joy and happiness" when our individual beliefs must be kept secret for fear of reprisal? As a California delegate stated, "Why the repression of enthusiasm? This convention could stand some enthusiasm!" America is legally and morally obligated to establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense and promote the general welfare of its people.

Guns and billy clubs will not solve our problems. What did the assassinations of President John Kennedy, the Rev. Martin Luther King and Senator Bobby Kennedy prove? Mismanaged federal monies will not solve our problems!!!

Protests and demonstrations will not solve our problems, although it seems the only way to draw the public attention to the wrong or the right of the question. I don't have an answer.

But, how about trying once again fairness and honesty in the dispensing of law and order. We might even try some respect again for God, country, poor ole mom, and flag!