

Czechago Blasted by Panel

Fifth Estate Collective

1968

When the President appointed a Commission to study violence after Chicago's freak-out Convention activity last August, not even the most turned on prophet in the movement could have suspected the bombshell report which would become, after a single day on the stands, a runaway best seller.

Maybe hippies, Yippies, Panthers, college students, politicians, and assorted freaks have been saying it all along, but now the Establishment has come out and said it.

Cops RIOT. Upholders of law-n-order rioting on the city streets!

When provoked, of course, (reports of human excrement allegedly being thrown into the faces of pigs cannot be absolutely denied) the cops last summer responded with "malicious mindless ferocity," according to the 233-page report.

The protesters heaped their "calculated provocations" on Chicago's 12,000 best men in blue, and (protected by 6,000 National Guardsmen and an airlift of 6,000 regular Army troops,) the cops lost any cool they ever had.

Conditioned to expect that violence against demonstrators would be condoned by city officials, they waded into the crowds, "with enough wild club swinging, enough cries of hatred, enough gratuitous beating to make the conclusion inescapable that individual policemen, and lots of them, committed violent acts far in excess of the requisite force for crowd dispersal or arrest," the report said.

After Mayor Daley's April order giving the gun of the cop new freedom to kill (or, with indulgence, to maim), extremes of violence in Chicago or elsewhere could only have surprised the most repressed liberals. And, indeed, the report announces that cops were heard shouting "Kill, kill, kill" as they marched in on demonstrators and "innocent bystanders" alike. In blatant contradiction to earlier paranoia on the part of the Establishment security forces, including the newly-incited HUAC, the Commission report unequivocally that the demonstrators present in Chicago were not "entirely of one type, whether hippy-yippie, New Left, Anarchist, or youthful political dissenters" and that it was "wrong and 'dangerous' to characterize the group as such. (No mention of Communist conspiracy, either.)

While this may come as news to many who were there, the report indicated that the "vast majority were intent on expressing by peaceful means their dissent from society generally or from the administration's policies in Vietnam."

Come to think of it, these peaceful protesters were probably incited to riot by the cops who, after all, rioted first: "In the wink of an eye, the cops appeared to have lost all control."

While the report does not say whose eye, it might have been the eye of the world, who was allegedly watching. Or any number of newsmen whom the cops picked out to smash.

The report cites that out of 300 newsmen assigned to cover Chicago during convention week, "63 were physically attacked by police." In any case, it is concluded that "the weight of violence was overwhelmingly on the side of the police."

While the report is the work of a 212-member study team, one man takes responsibility for writing it. Mr. Daniel Walker, president of the unofficial Chicago Crime Commission, warns his readers, and critics (which include, un-

avoidably,, the Mayor of the City of Chicago) that the report is not “aimed at the people who have prejudice on either side...It is aimed at thoughtful people who read the facts.”

The report has so far apparently not been “approved” by the full National Commission of the Causes and Prevention of Violence. But Senator Abraham Ribicoff, one of the surprise heroes of Television during the convention (who decried “gestapo tactics” on the streets of Chicago before millions of tube viewers) describes the report as “a good manual on how not to handle the expression of dissent.”

Of a different opinion is Joseph LeFevour, president of the Chicago Lodge of the fraternal order of police, who had only one thing to say upon reading the report, that the Chicago police did “a great job under pressure” and that the report will “hurt their feelings.”

What the President had in mind when he appointed the Commission, only the President knows, but who could have thought they'd give the cops, symbol of justice and redemption, a blow beneath the belt?

Editors' Note: Check the Bantam edition of *Rights in Conflict* and dig the pictures of the MC-5 and John Sinclair in the photo section.

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