

Abbie Hoffman 1968 Democratic Convention

Today is August 26, 1968. We will be protesting out here at the convention until the 29th, with permits or not. The policemen can't seem to even tell the difference between a flower child and a yippie now a days. I am a huge advocate for yippies and political radicals nationwide. I go to protests, public and political speakings. You see, the trick is to convince the policemen that we are unpredictable, dangerous and crazy then they'll be to afraid to get near us. My buds and I were taking a toke outside when we had an idea just to scare them. So, we went down to the store and bought water guns and filled them up with disappearing ink. We squirted them at the police officers convincing them it was acid. Next thing, a story was written about that in Time magazine; it doesn't take a lot to get people shaken up.

The policemen are afraid we will hurt the delegates, but that's not what we are here for. We're here to stop the war in Vietnam and have a groovy time. With all this protest out here, this is where the media is going to come. It's like the Rose Bowl out here. There are people dropping acid and having a good time. The media eats up this kinda stuff. Do you really

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think the media will be focusing on a convention? Conventions are such a drag. The police are driven by the fear of what we will do to the delegates, water system and public safety.

Chicago is in a total state of anarchy as far as the police mentality works. "We're going to have to fight for every single thing for this rally. We're going to have to fight for electricity. We're going to have to fight to have the stage come in. We're going to have to fight for every rock musician to play. The whole week is going to be like that. We should proceed with the festival as planned. We should try to do everything that we have come to Chicago to do even though the police and the city officials are standing in our way." The city lets us sleep in the parks so we will stay off the streets, and helicopters fly over us always on patrol. They have everything on maximum security making it as hard as possible to do anything, but with as many people as we have, we will be fully capable of getting our message across. I overheard officer Kelso say, "...it didn't look to harmless to me; it looked like they were preparing for a riot and meant to do some harm." Our tactics worked. These pigs were about to go ape on us.

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It became more of a police riot rather than anything. They beat people, ordered to or not, that's against human morals. We weren't hurting anyone; they were just afraid of what they imagined us doing. Seven others and I were arrested during this protest. We became known as the Chicago Seven. All of us were put on trial together, but we were released from jail soon after. At the end of the convention on August 29th, Hubert Humphrey won the Democratic nomination for President. Protesters, radicals, and everyone calmed down and went home. This convention aired on TV and was all over media nationwide. I know that this impacted politics and the war in Vietnam forever.