10/1/68

STATEMENT OF DONALD RUMSFELD, M.C., CONCERNING ACTIVITY IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, DURING THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION.

I was in Chicago while the Democratic National Convention was held, August 25-30, 1968. I saw much of what took place near the Conrad Hilton Hotel during those five days. I was and continue to be critical of Mayor Daley's conduct in the Convention Hall and as Mayor. Those days were sad ones for Chicago, the State of Illinois, and the Nation.

Stacking the galleries at the Convention with city employees, turning off microphones, and restricting open debate are not in the best tradition of a free society. I have been equally critical of debate restrictions which exist in the U.S. House of Representatives. (See my attached statement on the need for Congressional Reform.)

Certainly, it is impossible to put oneself in the shoes of the Chief Executive of a city and second guess his actions without having had access to the same information which was available to him. Also, I am aware that I did not see everything that took place in Chicago; one person present sees only a part of what takes place. My comments and criticism, therefore, are based solely on my own observations, and are my personal interpretations of what took place.

It is axiomatic that the survival and development of a society requires order. This is recognized in the Constitution of the United States in the Preamble: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility,..." To maintain order and insure domestic tranquility, security forces should

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and must use that amount of force which is necessary to control particular and unique disturbances. I have no doubts that there were a number of dedicated revolutionaries and anarchists who had come to Chicago determined to stir up trouble and, if possible, incite civil disturbances. I saw and heard them. I also took note of the fact that an overwhelming majority of the people in and about the Convention areas were not revolutionaires or anarchists. Many of them were patriotic Americans deeply concerned about the course and direction of the public policy of their country, especially the conduct of the war in Southeast Asia.

There is no doubt that the police are also patriotic Americans. Policemen are human beings who are engaged in a dangerous and often thankless occupation. The low pay prevalent in many departments has made it difficult to always attract the right ~~best~~ people to police work. As human beings it is to be expected that there may be instances where an individual police officer may misjudge a situation and use too little force to accomplish his task, and that is unfortunate. Individual police officers may also use too much force in the performance of his duty, and that, too, is unfortunate and undesirable. I think that there were instances during the Democratic Convention when the Chicago police used excessive force in controlling the demonstrators in and about the Convention areas.

While one cannot hope to make balanced and final judgments until the work of the Eisenhower Commission has been completed and all the information is available, and possibly not even then, tentative observations should be discussed and debated. It is my impression that the Mayor did not make effective use of the varied alternative tools available to him in the weeks prior to and during the Convention. His failure to utilize these tools resulted in situations where the Mayor had to rely too heavily on the final

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weapon in his arsenal--brute force. Mayor Daley's failure to use the full range of available devices, and his keying up the police department personnel with his "Shoot to kill!" statement this spring, in my opinion, contributed to the disaster which resulted. One alternative available would have been to issue permits in advance for legitimate groups to assemble when these permits were requested by the leaders of the demonstrators.

During most of the Convention week, when thousands of Chicago police were on duty, their conduct was good. In my opinion, the National Guard conducted itself very well. Unfortunately, however, during a part of the week, particularly on Wednesday, there were instances, which I observed, in which I believe the police used excessive force. While I support the use of that amount of force necessary to maintain order, excessive force -- force beyond that which is necessary to maintain order -- simply plays into the hands of those elements seeking to create an incident. For example, I saw Chicago police charge into groups of demonstrating people, some of whom were sitting, and beat them with their night sticks, drag them to police vans, and continue to beat their captives until the door of the van had been closed. I consider this conduct to be an excessive use of force. I viewed another unfortunate situation where, possibly as a result of confusion, the police pinned approximately 150 people against the wall of the Conrad Hilton. Having contained the group, the police persisted in beating and shoving these people, pushing some of them through the windows of the hotel.

After the situation on Wednesday, the police were withdrawn, and replaced by the National Guard. This action achieved order without such violence. Even the Mayor must have sensed at that point that there were some

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situations where the police were causing additional trouble (since a conscious decision had to have been made to replace the police with the National Guard).

Clearly, the professional, dedicated revolutionaries and anarchists achieved one of their goals. The result in Chicago was exactly what they wanted--nationwide press and television coverage of the Grant Park fiasco.

Since the incidents in Chicago, many have praised Mayor Daley for his decisive actions. It is my opinion that the Mayor's actions were the result of indecisive advance planning. I think that if the professional revolutionaries and anarchists who came to Chicago had hired a bit player for the role they needed to make their effort a success, they could not have found a better puppet than Mayor Daley. I cannot praise the Mayor for playing the role the way the troublemakers would have written it. I find it a tragedy which could lead to other such reactions with even more serious far-reaching consequences. A more final assessment must, of course, wait until more information is available, and until we can study the entire situation with greater perspective, and in an atmosphere less clouded with the shock and emotion of the moment. The beating and clubbing of assembled citizens is so foreign to our soil that ~~our fears and hates~~ emotions must be given time to settle so that we can apply our minds and energies to creating a society which will not have violence--particularly in the midst of the national convention of one of our two great political parties.

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