

Volume 5 Number 071

Democratic Convention, 1968 - II

Lead: When the Democrats came to Chicago in late August 1968, it was hot in the hall, and hot on the streets.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: Denied the opportunity to nominate the incumbent, President Lyndon Baines Johnson, the Democrats turned to Vice-President Hubert Horatio Humphrey, former Senator from Minnesota and one of the party's leading advocates of civil rights. Yet, because of his support for Johnson's Vietnam policy, Humphrey

was perceived by many party activists as moving in a conservative direction. These liberals had first clung to the candidacy of Senator Eugene McCarthy, then many had flirted with the brief campaign of Robert F. Kennedy only to be bitterly disappointed by his assassination. Party officials, allied with Johnson, maintained tight control of the convention, thus frustrating the attempts of the liberals to change the platform or even offer token alternative nominees such as Julian Bond. Humphrey watched in great distress as his natural allies over and over raised objections and shouted their contempt only to dash themselves against convention machinery controlled by party regulars. He would

need these activists in the fall against Nixon and perceived that many of them would stay at home, thus insuring his defeat.

If occasionally rambunctious in typical Democrat fashion, the proceedings inside the International Amphitheater were a model of control compared to what was happening outside the hall in the streets of Chicago. There ten thousand, mostly white, middle-class, young demonstrators had descended on the city to protest the Vietnam War, Johnson, Humphrey, and anything else they felt disagreeable in American society. They were soured by the events of the year and many were in the windy city to disrupt the proceedings. They sought permits for

**demonstrations in the City's parks,
but encountered the stubborn
resistance of Mayor Richard Daley.
Proud of his town the mayor dug in his
heels and set the police on the
demonstrators. Next time: The Yippie
and the Mayor.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is
Dan Roberts.**

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Resources

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