



AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, INC.

Chicago Regional Office for Illinois and Wisconsin

431 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60605

R. ODEN HANNAFORD
Regional Chairman

KALE WILLIAMS
Executive Secretary

HANNISON 7-2532

August 2, 1966

Supt. O. W. Wilson
Chicago Police Department
1121 S. State Street
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Dear Superintendent Wilson:

I was a participant in civil rights demonstrations in Gage Park and Chicago Lawn on Saturday and Sunday. I should like to offer my observations and suggestions on police action, particularly on Sunday. I do so as a private citizen, not authorized to speak for anyone else. I do so, too, in recognition that the protection of a moving assembly, over unfamiliar streets and with short notice, poses unusual difficulties for the police.

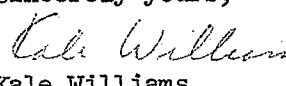
1. I observed no attempt to disperse the crowd and only sporadic attempts to keep them at a distance from the vigilers. For much of the time on Sunday, the angry crowd was permitted to walk only a few feet from the vigilers. This was true on the streets as well as in the park. This action was in sharp contrast to earlier observations I made as a member of a clergy team during the West Side disturbances. On July 14, at Kedzie and Roosevelt Road, I observed numerous arrests for refusal to respond promptly to police orders to move on or disperse.
2. I observed no attempt to enforce the laws against exploding fireworks. It is my feeling that the apparent police acceptance of this harassing tactic in the first few minutes of the vigil encouraged the mob in its more violent actions later.
3. I observed few arrests, even when there was obvious unlawful behavior, i.e., throwing of firecrackers, rocks, or bottles. People who were apparently arrested would reappear in the crowd a short time later. Apparently prisoners were driven from the area and released.
4. When the vigilers left Marquette Park at 71st and California, after discovering that their automobiles were inoperative, they were without any police presence or protection for a space of several blocks along 71st Street. When police did arrive there

were few men on foot; police in two-man squad cars were ineffective in limiting the throwing of rocks and bottles. It was on this stretch between California and Western that the vigilers were under most severe attack and when most of the injuries occurred.

5. Most of the damage to automobiles occurred after the vigilers had left Marquette Park. At the time we passed the parked cars most tires had been slashed, several cars overturned, two pushed into the lagoon and one was burning. Apparently, police protection to the vigil itself was reduced at this point, yet little protection given to the automobiles. Television films I have seen show vandalism and destruction proceeding without any police in evidence.
6. I would suggest greater use of plain clothes police in the crowd to isolate and arrest people carrying stones, bottles, firecrackers, or other dangerous weapons.
7. It was obvious that some officers were torn between their duty and their identity with their friends and neighbors in the crowd. Friendly interchanges are perhaps a desirable technique of crowd control when the law is being firmly enforced. When there are obvious breakers of the law, such interchanges contribute to an impression that the police are acquiescing in some degree to violent and unlawful acts.

I should like to express my appreciation for the many officers who were trying to enforce the law without partiality and, particularly, to the several officers who assisted me when I was injured.

I have great confidence in the integrity and ability of the administration of the Department and believe you would want to know promptly of these observations which reflect on its efficiency and impartiality.

Sincerely yours,

Kale Williams
Executive Secretary

cc: Lt. Robert Wilson, Human Relations
Chicago Police Department

Mr. Edward Marciniak
Chicago Commission on Human Relations