

5/16/67 Guidelines to Mass

By Art Buchwald

Attorney General John Mitchell has urged all police in the country to copy the capital's tactics in handling May-day demonstrators. The decisive opposition to mob force used by Washington police, Mr. Mitchell told police chiefs in California, is an example for the rest of the nation.

No one can argue with that. But Mr. Mitchell did not spell out the guidelines that police would have to abide by in following the successful tactics used in Washington.

Perhaps we can be of help:

Q. How do you put down a mass demonstration of people who threaten to close down a town?

A. Arrest everyone with long hair and peace symbols in a congested area.

Q. Do you write out an arrest slip?

A. No, this slows down the arresting process and permits too many people to get away.

Q. What about people's constitutional rights?

A. The constitutional rights of a citizen may be abrogated if they interfere with another citizen's right to get to work.

Q. Suppose, during a police sweep,

Arrests: Nobody Is Innocent

Capitol Punishment

innocent people are arrested as well as guilty people.

A. There are no innocent people when the police make a sweep through a congested area. If they were innocent they wouldn't be there.

Q. When making a sweep arrest, how do you choose between two people if you can only grab one?

A. Always arrest the person with a beard first. You can assume during a mass demonstration that people with

beards are more guilty than people without beards.

Q. What about women?

A. Women who don't wear bras are more guilty than women who wear bras. Another guideline is pants. Girls who wear pants are troublemakers.

Q. Suppose a policeman does not actually see a crime committed during a demonstration?

A. He is still obligated to arrest a certain number of people. Although citizens are not committing a crime at the moment, they could commit one later, and it's safer for society to have them locked up.

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Q. Since they all seem to dress alike, how do you distinguish between young people who are not committing a crime and those who are?

A. You don't. All young people are guilty of doing something, and besides, most of them are against the war.

Q. Once you make an arrest, what do you do with the prisoners?

A. You take them to the nearest ball park or coliseum and keep them there.

Q. How long?

A. As long as you can. The bleeding hearts and civil libertarians will want you to charge them with a crime as soon as possible. But the Justice Department will back you in keeping them locked up.

Q. Isn't the Justice Department supposed to protect people's constitutional rights?

A. No. The only function of the Justice Department is to see that traffic keeps moving.

Q. Suppose a judge demands that the arrest of an individual be made according to the law.

A. That is not the problem of the police. That is between the judge and the person arrested.

Q. If innocent people can be arrested during a mass demonstration when they were doing nothing, why can't they be arrested for doing nothing when there isn't a mass demonstration?

A. That's a good question, and we hope, with the backing of the Attorney General, we will be able to make such arrests in the future. We know that it's impossible to have law and order if the police are going to have to abide by the law.