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Students for a Democratic Society Records (WUA00190), 1956-1969. Series 1: Students for a Democratic Society Material, Series 1, Box 1, Folder 1: Unclassified letters, Dec. 1966 - Aug. 1968.

[letter, National Mobilization Committee to end the war in Vietnam to Terry Kock, August 1968]

[letterhead: NMCEWV logo]

Chicago August 1968

Dear Friend,

We are sure that you realize that this is a testing time in Chicago. Although our plans are for nonviolent actions and we have made clear for months that we do not desire to obstruct the convention or to interfere with the movement of delegates into or out of the convention, Mayor Daley and the Democratic Party have turned Chicago into an armed camp of national guardsmen, airborne troops on standby, barbed wire, tanks, mace, and every conceivable weapon of intimidation and repression. Chicago is fast becoming the Prague of the midwest [sic]. Naturally we feel that the movement must respond to this challenge. We disagree with those who have urged their supporters to stay away because of the danger of violence and repression. Instead we are appealing to people to make it clear that we will not lose our democratic rights by default. We plan to assert our right to march to the Convention and to hold public hearings there. At these public hearings, we will hear victims of war and racism – returned veterans from Vietnam (both black and white), welfare mothers, returned volunteers, etc. It is our hope that the pressure of tens of thousands of persons ready to march and the pressure from people all over the country will cause the city Administration and the Democratic Party to draw back from the brink and avoid this disgrace, the onus of which will fall heavily on them.

But we need other persons too – persons who come not to confront the repressive machinery but to assemble peacefully in a park, to hold a meeting for which we have a permit and where, whatever happens elsewhere, there should be no likelihood of trouble of any kind.

A mass People's Assembly will convene on Wednesday August 28, at 1:00 pm, near the bandshell at Grant Park, just east of the Loop and will conclude at 4:00 P.M. This makes it possible for people to come to Chicago for that one day, arriving at noon and departing in time to be home again at a reasonable hour. Thousands of people – men, women, and children – coming in for the day, can make a tremendous witness for peace and racial equality and at the same time provide pressure on the city and the Administration to come to their senses and deal properly with those who will be carrying the challenge one step further by proceeding to the Ampitheatre.[sic]

What should you do? First, find out whether people in your area have made plans to come to Chicago. Second, start a phone calling chain to get the word around immediately that tens of thousands of our people must be in Chicago to protest on Wednesday, August 28. Third, begin to arrange for transportation to Chicago. And fourth, make sure that you will be with us.

Very sincerely, in peace and freedom,

Dave Dellinger, Chairman [signature]

Donald Kalish, Co-Chairman [signature]

Sidney Peck, Co-Chairman [signature]

P.S. For those who can't come earlier but can get here on the evening of Tuesday, August 27, we are holding a special unbirthday party for President Johnson. This will take place in the Collisuem, which we have rented for the occasion. There will be two shows, one at 7 and one at ten. Admission \$1. Come and bring the family.