

often blamed on the innocent majority of one segment of our whole people? Or will they allow an apparent danger to become a real disaster? Will they bear the guilt of driving each State, each city, and even each citizen to provide his own protection? Will their example teach each individual that in order to survive he must meet the threat of force with force, action with reaction, and counter-reaction with escalation until the fabric of our society and our civilization is rent asunder?

We of the business community feel that we have some guilt for not having pressed for greater protection in the past, for having allowed ourselves to be intimidated by the potential and at times real threat inherent in sticking one's neck out. But it is time to stop worrying about sticking our necks out, about not getting involved. We are involved, and we intend to defend the commercial and economic interests of this city and its people. We ask for the protection to which we have a right, for our lives and property and for the lives and property of the entire community. It will be achieved, but we prefer that it be achieved through the law.

We ask for a deterrent to destruction, not only a promise of control after it has started. A curfew is an effective emergency weapon to curb destruction, but it penalizes the innocent far more than the guilty. Use of a curfew for long periods in itself could destroy large segments of commerce. If sufficient police are patrolling this city, are seen in large enough concentrations and numbers, and are known to be authorized to enforce the law with all means necessary, serious rioting, arson, and looting will never have the chance to begin. If sufficient police are unavailable, there are in the area of Washington and at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief more than sufficient troops to provide the necessary show of force. It would seem preferable to show force before, rather than to have to use it afterwards.

It is obvious to all that the existing number of police does not allow adequate protection, especially when their effectiveness is reduced drastically by imprudent restraints. We, therefore, ask that troops be placed on duty to supplement the police forces prior to and during the impending demonstrations, that they be made clearly visible in sufficient numbers to provide an overwhelming show of force, and that the President of the United States and Government of the District of Columbia make a public statement of policy that the police and the troops will be authorized and directed to use all force necessary to assure the peace and order of the community, and that the courts will support them.

You have taken the oaths of the highest offices of this land that you will to the best of your abilities preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. That Constitution guarantees the rights of the citizens to live in peace and free from fear. We citizens now call upon the executive, legislative, and judicial officers of the United States and of the District of Columbia to fulfill their oaths of office.

Very truly yours,

PARK AND SHOP, INC.

(This letter is sent at the unanimous request of the Executive Board of Park and Shop, Inc., which represents over 200 member merchants and professional firms and over 95% of all commercial parking facilities in the District of Columbia.)

COLUMBIA, S.C., May 19, 1968.

Mr. NASH CASTRO,
U.S. Interior Department,
National Capital Park Region,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CASTRO: Several friends and myself are planning a trip to Washington during the first two weeks in August (4th thru 17th). We have decided that it would not only be nice, but much more economical to camp on the same park grounds that you and the Interior Department have made available to the organizers of the "Poor Peoples Demonstration."

Our party will include approximately twenty to twenty five people, including women and children. Being able to camp on these public grounds will make it possible for us to give the children a good while to see the Nation's Capital and its many historical places of interest and to observe some of the most recent changes made by not such historical events.

Of course we are in a position and would expect to comply with the same requirements that you are asking from the "Poor People", actually we are poor too, that's why camping in the middle of Washington appeals to us.