DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

John M. Harrington, Chief of Police



CITY OF SAINT PAUL Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

367 Grove Street St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 Telephone: 651-291-1111 Facsimile: 651-266-5711

August 8, 2008

Subject: Establishing a platform of communication to facilitate peaceful demonstrations during the 2008 Republican National Convention

Dear Peacemaker,

In the interest of transparency, we start by explaining that this letter is being authored and sent by members of the St. Paul and Minneapolis Police Departments. We are contacting you because of your group's stated position on affecting social change through peaceful methods.

It is indisputable that non-violent protest and even civil disobedience has played a compelling role in fostering significant social change, especially for those whose voice went unheard. Recognizing that philosophically and practically local police have a fundamental role as peace officers, problem solving and relationship building are essential to that end. The vital tool for these tasks is respectful communication. SPPD and MPD officers trained as Crisis Negotiators have undertaken the mission of addressing this role by creating a cadre of officers known as Free Speech Liaison Officers... or simply referred to as 'Dialogue Officers.' The objective is to establish communication networks and have them in place before the excitement and fervor of the RNC are in full swing.

We understand that our outreach efforts may be regarded with a level of suspicion, but let us be explicit. Our concern and role is to provide maximum opportunity for groups and individuals to freely express their stated position and concerns in a safe and meaningful manner. It is our duty to serve and protect those who live, work and visit Minneapolis and St. Paul. While we know the great majority of people who will be demonstrating at the RNC have peaceful agendas and simply want their message and issues heard, we have grounded concerns about those few who intend to use violent and destructive tactics. We all know that civil disobedience messages, peacemaking efforts, and important calls for social/political change throughout history have repeatedly been marred by the actions of those few with violent intentions. This is what we seek to avoid.

A violence free event is our goal. By violence free we mean free of violence by either protestors or police. Reaching goals requires action. Our police departments have been preparing for all contingencies for many months. As the event approaches we hope that our joint actions include dialogue. Our dialogue officers ask that you allow us to serve as a liaison between your respective groups and the law enforcement chain of command that will be in place for the demonstrations and marches planned during the RNC. Our goals are to:

- Provide information on sanitation, march and assembly logistics, and emergency procedures
- · Answer or get answers to other questions, and
- Discuss the ways in which all of us with peace goals can meet our objectives.

Ex. 1-02

We reach out to you with the hope that you will allow us to meet with your groups, on your terms and with OUR joint peaceful interests in mind. This endeavor is new and representative of the kind of efforts that makes the Twin Cities different. We are convinced that we as peace officers and you as peacemakers have similar purposes. We want the events occurring here to be remembered not for the violent and damaging actions of those few, but for the way it provided groups and individuals a means to engage in the democratic process.

Our phone numbers and email addresses are listed below. We hope that you will at least consider our request and that we can be of service. Even if our officers are invited to attend one of your meetings to provide general information or answer questions, we will have taken the first step toward dialogue, which we all know can at times be difficult but will frequently lead to good outcomes.

RNC Dialogue Officers

Bill	Blake	612-924-5078	william.blake@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
Janet	Dunnom	651-315-3219	janet.dunnom@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Art	Guerrero	651-315-3215	art.guerrero@ci.stpaul.mn.us
John	Hoithusen	612-924-5079	john.holthusen@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
Sheila	Lambie	651-315-3216	sheila.lambie@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Jane	Laurence	651-315-3220	jane.laurence@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Connie	Leaf	612-924-5083	constance.leaf@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
Sylvia	McPeak	651-315-3214	sylvia.mcpeak@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Sara	Metcalf	612-924-5080	sara.metcalf@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
Anne	Moryc	612-924-5085	anne.moryc@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
Mary	Nash	651-315-3217	mary.nash@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Jim	Novak	612-924-5092	james.novak@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
Jim	Nystrom	612-290-3787	nystr017@umn.edu
Chris	Pickhardt	612-924-5087	christopher.pickhardt@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
David	Rodriguez	612-924-5091	david.rodriguez@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
Paul	Schnell	651-315-3218	paul.schnell@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Rich	Sheldon	612-924-5089	richard.sheldon@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Below you will find additional information about the establishment of the Free Speech Liaison Officer Program.

Sincerely,

John M. Harrington CHIEF OF POLICE

Sgt. Jane Laurence Sgt. Paul Schnell

Free Speech Liaison Officers 2008 Republican Nation Convention

Saint Paul and Minneapolis Police launch a European-inspired initiative to establish a dialogue with demonstration organizers.

Recognizing the importance of honoring every individual's right to use lawful means to demonstrate their beliefs and opinions, the Minneapolis and St. Paul Police Departments are looking for ways to open a positive exchange of ideas with demonstrators. The Departments are devoting 19 officers to the task of establishing a dialogue with individuals who are considering or planning to use the occasion of the Republican National Convention to convey their viewpoints through an expression of their free speech. The objectives of this initiative are to protect the expression of free speech and facilitate peace and order during the days of the Convention.

Community policing has been a long-time cornerstone of the St. Paul Police philosophy. Assistant Chief Bostrom likens this effort to an expansion of these practices to the national (possibly global) 'Peace Community.' Community Policing is based on familiarity, dialogue and cooperation between the police and the people they serve. Both are stronger and better prepared because of the relationships based on collaboration and open communication.

The police expect thousands of people to arrive in the Twin Cities to convey their opinions to candidates, delegates and the watching world during the first week of September, 2008. The 'Free Speech Liaison Officers' are being asked to become the conduit for communication between police and those who are trying to make plans to assemble and conduct lawful demonstrations. The officers are all experienced crisis negotiators, members of the departments' Hostage Negotiation Teams. The assignment has many similarities to their mission when they are called upon to negotiate a peaceful outcome during a situation that has escalated to a dangerous standoff. While having no authority to make decisions or determine tactics, the negotiators' job is to open and maintain a channel of communication, and make sure that each 'side' is able to be heard by the other. Often, calm communication goes a long way to resolving anger, confusion, and mistrust. Team members are listeners, first and foremost. The liaison officers will make themselves available to any group that is planning to have a presence at the RNC. The depth of the relationships will be determined by the demonstration leaders themselves. The liaison officers hope to meet with leaders and listen to concerns, while facilitating information flow from event planners.

To prepare for this task, Liaison Officers have spoken with British, Canadian, Estonian, Dutch, German and Norwegian Police. Officials in theses countries have endorsed this assignment as a vital component to preparations for hosting large, controversial events such as G-8 Summits and NATO Meetings. During the April, 2007 NATO Meeting in Oslo, Norway, and the June, 2007 G-8 Summit in Rostock, Germany, both police and peaceful demonstrators were glad for the established relationships when anarchists broke the peace and demonstrations rapidly turned violent. When this happens, the risk of injury for demonstrators and police escalates immediately and it is too late to begin a dialogue. During the RNC, Police will be monitoring all aspects of the venues and want to be able to warn peaceful demonstrators of changes, hazards, and vulnerabilities of their members.

In conversations with peaceful demonstrators, police understand that most people do not want to be injured by violence or arrested. Of course, police are also preparing to deal with those who choose to break the law. But it is expected that most individuals will select to distance themselves from violent and destructive behavior, and conduct themselves in a civil and considerate way. A clear channel of communication has been shown to be critical in recent similar events in Europe and Canada. Officers and demonstration leaders who have exchanged phone numbers and met to establish a dialogue based on respect can quickly discuss developments and safety aspects, and coordinate to maintain order and calm.

Each Free Speech Liaison Officer (Dialogue Officer) will carry a cell phone and be available to leaders. As the Convention draws near, it is expected that their time will be increasingly focused on this aspect of the preparations.

Sgt. Jane Laurence Sgt. Paul Schnell