

October 13, 2011

An Open Letter to Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel

Dear Mr. Mayor:

You agreed that our city will host the G8 and NATO summits next May. The G8 and NATO represent the core of the very forces that most Americans and peoples around the world have come to despise during the current economic meltdown: NATO's ballooning military expenditures come at the expense of funding for education, housing and jobs programs; and the G8 continues to advance an agenda of 'austerity' that includes bailouts, tax write-offs and tax holidays for big corporations and banks at the expense of the rest of us.

During the May 2012 G8 and NATO summits in Chicago, many people, with good reason, will want to exercise their constitutional right to protest against NATO's wars and against the G8 agenda to only serve the richest one percent of society. Yet your representatives have stonewalled repeated attempts by community organizers to meet with the City to discuss reasonable accommodations of protesters' rights.

Our demands are simple:

- 1) That the City publicly commit to provide protest organizers with permits that meet the court-sanctioned standard for such protests -- that we be "within sight and sound" of the summits; and
- 2) That representatives of the City, including Police Superintendent McCarthy, refrain from making threats against protesters.

Chicago has a disgraceful history of repression and police brutality, from the attacks on protesters and journalists at the 1968 Democratic National Convention to the widespread torture of Black Chicagoans by former police commander Jon Burge and other officers. The city should not reinforce that reputation by denying us our legitimate right to gather and protest next May.

We, the undersigned, therefore call upon you to respond to our demands within two weeks.

Name (print)	Signature	Email