

500,000 ATTEND PEACE RALLY IN WASHINGTON



R.T. photo by A. LePere

by Howard B. Leibowitz

Washington, D.C. April 24 — Almost ½ a million people jammed onto the west lawn of the Capitol building and the streets of Washington D.C. to protest United States involvement in South East Asia.

There were few outbreaks of violence that were reported, the most serious being a clash between members of the right wing American Nazi Party and anti-war demonstrators on Pennsylvania Ave. near the White House. Washington police reported making three arrests, but would not identify those being held.

Mrs. Coretta King Speaks

By noontime, over 200,000 people crowded the steps of the Capitol building to hear speeches given by Herman Badillo, Representative (D) of N.Y., John Kerry, of the Viet Nam Veterans Against the War, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, Eugene McCarthy, Howard Samuels and others. Mrs. King in her speech said, "Let us declare that the war is over, and that the war on poverty and repression are in force."

Authorities in Washington, D.C. estimated that over one thousand buses flowed into the city today, causing mass delays on the highways. This caused many of the demonstrators to be later than the planned 11:00 AM starting time and many would not enter the city and the entire schedule had to be revised.

Almost every activist group was represented including the Peace Action Coalition, the People's Coalition for Peace & Justice, Gay Liberation, Women's Liberation, Black Panthers, Weathermen, and the Student Mobilization Committee.

Labor groups were present in numbers, among them the Teamsters Union, Nat'l Butchers Union, United Auto Workers Union, the United Furniture Workers and the Hospital Workers local 1199.

National Guard Not Present

It was reported that National Guard troops were activated for possible riot duty, but none were visible in the area.

Most of the crowd were young people, though this year's protesters, included more blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, adults and families.

Lloyd E. Bond, a patrolman of the Washington Police Force flashed the peace sign and remarked that he "hopes the nation will be at peace."

The demonstrators were entertained throughout the afternoon by such noted musicians as Pete Seeger, Peter, Paul and Mary and Country Joe McDonald and the Fish.

Simultaneous Demonstrations

Simultaneous demonstrations were held in San Francisco, California, where an estimated 200,000 people participated, led by Viet Nam Veterans and in London, England, where approximately 5,000 demonstrators burned an American flag. It was the first anti-war demonstration in London in three years.

Maj. leader Mike Mansfield stated that "the Viet Nam veterans against the way may have influenced more people in their favor than any group."

Thousands of demonstrators were frustrated in their attempts to gain an audience with Pres. Nixon, whom they were told was on vacation at Camp David. The White House was closed to all visitors due to the demonstrations.

Doctors and hospital workers from the Walter Reed Hospital — provided medical emergency treatment for the demonstrators.

They Came In Peace, For Peace



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