

Administration Will Permit Rally Today

But Troops Are Alerted For Mass War Protest

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WASHINGTON, May 8—The Nixon Administration agreed today to permit a mass anti-war rally tomorrow on grounds immediately south of the White House, an area it had previously declared out of bounds.

The leaders of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, which is coordinating the demonstration, said they would accept the Ellipse as a site and contended that "the Administration has backed down."

While being outwardly conciliatory, the Government was at the same time making plans for a massive security operation. The Justice Department announced that it had requested about 5,500 troops to be available at "military bases or other Federal facilities to assist local law enforcement authorities if needed."

It was learned that plans were being made at the Commerce Department and other downtown Federal buildings to house many of these troops tonight, and a communications command post was being established in the Commerce Department building.

One source reported that the troops would be stationed on the White House grounds tomorrow, but Federal officials would not confirm this report.

At his news conference tonight, President Nixon said he would be in the White House all day tomorrow and would be willing to see some of the demonstrators if it could be arranged with by his staff. [Question 23, Page 8].

Mr. Nixon did not condemn the demonstrators and said he understood their concern with ending the war.

"I believe in everything they're trying to accomplish," he said. "Everything I stand for is what they want."

He said he thought the Washington police had done a "pretty good job" controlling past demonstrations here and hoped other enforcement officials could benefit from their experience.

Following Mr. Nixon's statement, David Dellinger, a co-

ordinator of the Mobilization committee, said that the protesters would "take him up on his offer" and that "the entire delegation of demonstrators [would] march from the Ellipse to the White House immediately following the rally."

Guardsmen Alerted

The District of Columbia National Guard was on alert, mostly in armories, and about 400 guardsmen were assigned to outlying police precincts to free policemen for duty at the demonstration.

All the district and other local police were to be on duty tomorrow.

This afternoon, as thousands of young people began arriving in the city, the White House instructed the Justice Department to go to court to obtain authority for demonstrators to use the Ellipse, a block square area between the White House and the Washington Monument.

Until today the Government had argued that the Ellipse was too close to the White House to permit necessary security.

Roald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, said President Nixon had decided to permit the demonstration on the Ellipse after learning that "those in the rally want to express themselves in close proximity to the White House."

"This area will provide ap-

propriate space and an environment in which people can peacefully express themselves, and the President is convinced that the vast majority have that in mind," Mr. Ziegler said.

The attitude of the Administration was far different from that last November, when officials expressed fears of violence days in advance of the mass demonstration.

Ron Young, the chief demonstration organizer for the mobilization committee, said

at Ellipse, South of

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the White House

the decision to allow the Ellipse grounds for the rally was "a crack in the dike," the first step toward forcing the Government "to bring the troops home from Southeast Asia and end repression at home."

The demonstration was far less organized than any in the capital in recent years. Its free-lance nature could be seen in the fact that by nightfall plans for the rally and for security were far from settled, and meetings were scheduled throughout the night.

The mobilization committee was urging protesters to gather on the Ellipse at noon for a rally to begin at 1 P.M. or 1:30 P.M. and last until about 3 o'clock.

After that, the demonstrators were to break into groups of about 1,000 each for "rap sessions" on their grievances. Mobilization committee spokesmen said they would "decide then" whether to break up at nightfall or to remain into the night.

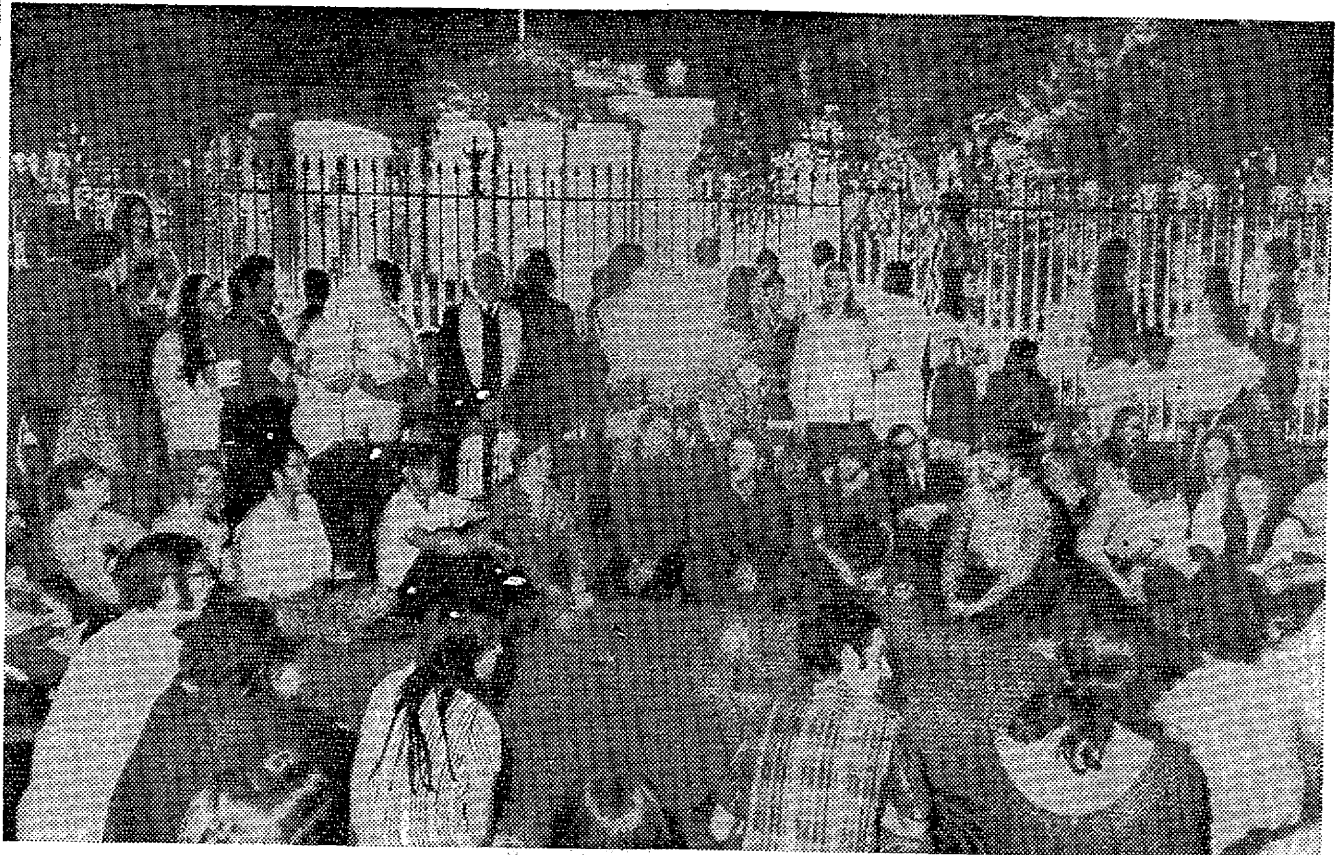
A high police source said tonight that the best intelligence information had shown that about 100,000 demonstrators could be expected tomorrow.

The source said that even the police department had not been told whether troops would be in the city. But he added that it was "perfectly obvious that the police and the National Guard cannot handle 100,000 people."

Gas Used in November

Troops and guardsmen were on alert last November for the mass demonstration here, but they were never used, as the police controlled unruly protesters with tear gas.

Police Chief Jerry Wilson said in an interview today that his men would use the minimum force necessary to control the demonstration and that he considered tear gas "always better than physical confrontation" with clubs or guns.



With the White House forming a backdrop, a crowd gathers at a candlelight vigil on Pennsylvania Avenue sidewalk Associated Press

The guardsmen, should they be called into the streets, would be equipped with M-16 rifles and ammunition in pouches on their belts. They have standing orders not to load their weapons unless specifically authorized on the spot or unless their lives are endangered.

The White House and Lafayette Park across the street will be cordoned off with buses.

The mobilization committee has designated about 3,000 marshals who have been instructed to keep the demonstrators from provoking the police or soldiers.

Dozens of members of Congress met with students in their offices today. Several Cabinet members, including Attorney General John N. Mitchell, met groups of students.

A "festival" was held tonight at the Sylvan Theatre on the Washington Monument grounds, with free performances by such entertainers as Grace Slick of the Jefferson Airplane; Ed Sanders of the Fugs; Phil Ochs, the folk singer, and Judy Collins, the singer.