

Middle-Class Youth Has Its Day

By Haynes Johnson
Washington Post Staff Writer

The greatest of all protest processions probably didn't alter a single mind, change a single vote, affect the national policy, stop a single shot. It certainly didn't stop the war.

None of that seemed to matter to those predominantly young Americans who turned out in endless numbers on a sparkling fall day in Washington. For them, it was a day for movement and music, not for ringing political manifestos and proclamations.

Appropriately, it was Arlo Guthrie, youth's own balladeer who wants "to

end war and stuff," who set the tone for the day.

"I don't have much to say," he said to the great throng stretching out before him on the Monument grounds. "I mean, it's all been said already."

Arlo, guitar in hand, began singing. The crowd immediately responded. It was that way all afternoon: the speeches were discursive, dull, and polemical, the singers sharp, succinct, refreshing.

An emotional highlight came late in the afternoon. Again, the medium was music, not oratory.

Pete Seeger, the veteran folk singer,

began leading the crowd in the refrain, "All we are saying, is give peace a chance." They stood, swayed in unison, flashed the V sign, and sang out.

In the background, Dr. Benjamin Spock's voice could be heard calling out over the microphone.

"Are you listening Nixon? Are you listening Agnew?"

What the President was doing at that moment no one in the crowd knew. He had told the reporters earlier at the White House, though, that it was a good day for watching football.

See MOOD, A17, Col. 1