

U.S. Probes Leaders of Peace Rally

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The Justice Department has launched an investigation to determine if any leaders of last weekend's antiwar demonstrations here should be prosecuted under the new federal antiriot act.

Deputy Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst told a press conference yesterday that some of the top policy makers of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam—sponsor of the mass march last Saturday—are already under investigation.

"I don't want to mention names," he said, "but any time you have persons crossing state lines to cause violence, the Justice Department has the duty to investigate (such action) under the antiriot statute."

Sporadic violence in downtown Washington triggered the investigation, he said. The violence included a window-smashing rampage against the Justice Department building Saturday by some militants among a larger gathering of about 10,000 demonstrators.

Roving bands of militants smashed windows in at least 76 buildings in downtown Washington during the weekend. Other minor vandalism occurred. Police used tear gas and arrested about 150 persons, most on disorderly conduct charges.

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Kleindienst acknowledged that "98.65 per cent" of the 250,000 antiwar demonstrators during the weekend were peaceful, "but the others came here with premeditation" to cause violence.

"The steering committee of the New Mobilization was aware this was going to happen and did nothing to stop it," Kleindienst charged.

New Mobilization leaders, who claimed they took extensive measures to head off violence, including private "cool it" talks with militant groups and the deployment of more than 2,500 volunteer marshals for crowd control during the mass march, reacted with disbelief yesterday.

"It's difficult to understand how bringing large numbers of people into Washington to demonstrate peacefully in a march and rally is in violation of the antiriot statute," spokesman Ted Johnson said.

"The Justice Department was unable to limit our demonstration beforehand and now seems intent on diminishing its effect after the fact," he added.

The antiriot measure, part of the 1968 Civil Rights Act, is the same one under which the "Chicago eight" were being tried in connection with their activities during violent demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention last year.

The act makes it a felony to cross state lines with intent to incite, organize or participate in a riot. Maximum penalty is five years' imprisonment and a \$10,000 fine.

The two Mobilization-sponsored actions last week—the 40-hour "March Against Death" from Arlington Cemetery to the Capitol and the mass march Saturday up Pennsylvania Avenue concluding with a rally on the Washington Monument grounds—were orderly.

Violence erupted Friday night when militants among 2,000 to 3,000 demonstrators clashed with police during an attempted march on the Embassy of South Vietnam and again late Saturday afternoon when several thousand persons marched on the Justice Department.

Kleindienst noted that war critic David Dellinger, already on trial in Chicago on riot conspiracy charges, was permitted

by Mobilization organizers to urge the crowd at the Washington Monument rally Saturday to join in the march against the Justice Department.

"The Mobilization steering committee knew in advance about the unpeaceful kind of march planned against the Justice Department," he said.

Kleindienst blamed much of the resulting violence on the "irresponsibility or gross negligence or deliberate participation" of Mobilization organizers.

"I stood out there on the (fifth floor Justice Department) balcony and saw all I know about mob psychology come about," he said.

Kleindienst called yesterday's press conference to describe the federal role during the demonstrations.

Intelligence reports of possible wide-scale violence necessitated bringing some 9,000 federal troops into the city to support police and the D.C. National Guard, he said. The troops were kept inside government buildings and he made no recommendation to deploy them on the streets.