



Associated Press

A DISSENTING VOTE: Peace demonstrators lined part of his route as President Nixon campaigned in Rochester, Minn., yesterday. Mr. Nixon gave crowd the victory sign.

Nixon Is Turning Hecklers Into Campaign Advantage

By DAVID E. ROSENBAUM OCT 30 1970

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla., Oct. 28 — When the doors to Bayfront Center in St. Petersburg were opened this morning, among the first in line were 20 long-haired students who had come to heckle President Nixon.

They expected to have choice seats up front. They had picked up admission tickets days in advance from the local Republican committee, and seating was on a first-come, first served basis.

But when Mr. Nixon walked to the microphone with Representative William C. Cramer, who is running for the Senate and Gov. Claude R. Kirk Jr., who is up for re-election, the hecklers were at the very back of the 11,000-seat arena.

From there, they could not be heard well enough to be disruptive, but they were just audible enough for the President to note them and denounce them as examples of "those who try to shout down speakers, who attempt to close down schools."

The scene has been the same at nearly every campaign stop Mr. Nixon has made recently—a small corps of young people, far removed from the speaker's stand, who provided

the President a target for his barbs and gave the silent majority someone to shout down.

Used to Advantage

There is no evidence that these hecklers are recruited. But they are planned for, welcomed in small numbers and their presence usually helps rather than hurts the President's appeal to voters.

Examples from three Florida cities show just how the hecklers are controlled and used.

In Miami Beach last night, about 100 youths entered the convention hall a few minutes before the President was scheduled to speak. According to one of them, they and about 100 other protesters were standing outside the hall when a man they assumed was from the White House presented them with white tickets and ushered them to an empty section at the rear of the hall.

The youths performed as expected, stamping their feet and chanting, and both Mr. Nixon and Representative Cramer were able to make disparaging remarks about them before a statewide television audience.

When the St. Petersburg students walked through the entrance to Bayfront Center, a young Secret Service man with a walkie-talkie and a diamond-shaped pin in his lapel nodded

his head ever so slightly. At that signal, Wilbur Pillsbury, an investigator for the city attorney's office, motioned the students to the side. He searched one man's knapsack, confiscated another's motorcycle helmet and would not allow the girls to take their purses into the arena, even though other women carried their handbags inside.

To check their belongings and get receipts, the youths had to walk to an office at the other side of the arena. By the time they returned to the entrance, the auditorium had filled, and the only remaining seats were in the very last row of the top tier.

"We just take our orders from the Secret Service people," Mr. Pillsbury said.

Asked whether the delaying tactics that forced the youths to sit in the rear had been planned in advance, Mr. Pillsbury grinned and said, "No comment."

Mindful of Tactics

"Of course we're being used," said Bill Dietenbeck, a member of the Youth International party (Yippies) at the University of South Florida. "But we'd rather be used than have the President think there's no opposition to him here."

A few hours later at an airport here, a half dozen Florida State University students carrying "Stop the war" and "Go home Nixon" signs arrived long before the President's scheduled stop.

A deputy sheriff informed them that a special roped-off area was the only place signs could be carried. As they stood there with their signs, they were joined by 50 or so other students.