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MIDTOWN STROLLERS: President Nixon and his daughter Tricia chatting with Rabbi Allen Freehling of Toledo, Ohio. Earlier, Mr. Nixon spoke with newspaper executives.

President, Here, Strolls on East Side

By FRANK LYNN

President Nixon took an impromptu sidewalk poll on the upper East Side last evening and said that he found that people were more optimistic about peace in the world.

Mr. Nixon, in town briefly to confer with newspaper executives, left his suite in the Pierre Hotel for an unscheduled 10-block stroll, which ended with an equally impromptu news conference in an unlikely setting—the hotel garage.

"I think the climate is

some better," he told reporters, referring to "the hope that people have that we are moving toward a period that we can have a peaceable world." The President held the conference after he had talked with a dozen persons during his half-hour stroll with his daughter Tricia.

The President said he was glad that he "ran into a number of young people, some of them with their hair a bit longer than mine" on his predinner walk.

Noting that the youths he had met were "extremely

friendly," the President said that "one thing I've always emphasized to people is that you never judge what a person's reaction is going to be by the length of his hair; he may be very friendly and at least courteous — everybody on the walk was at least courteous."

Unlike another strolling President, Harry S. Truman—whose morning walks were generally scheduled — Mr. Nixon gave the city police and Secret Servicemen little

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warning before he emerged from the Pierre, at Fifth Avenue and 61st Street, and headed north to East 62d Street and the apartment house at 810 Fifth Avenue where he lived at the time he was elected President.

Mr. Nixon said he and his daughter had wanted to revisit the apartment house. He darted into the lobby and learned, after talking with an unidentified doorman, that an elevator operator in the building who had the same birth date as Mr. Nixon died after a heart attack last week. The President identified the man only as "Henry."

Surrounded by Guard

With about 30 uniformed policemen and at least 20 Secret Servicemen and detectives swarming about him, the President walked west and north to Park Avenue and East 63d Street where he turned south to return to the Pierre.

He stopped at least a dozen times to talk with passers-by, including several visitors from Belgium, Malta and France. The President said that many of the foreign visitors talked about "good relations, peace and that sort of thing."

An hour after returning to the Pierre, the President and Mrs. Nixon left with former Gov. Thomas E. Dewey and Mr. and Mrs. Roger Johnson, longtime friends, for a brief ride to La Cote Basque Restaurant at 5 East 55th Street, a few doors from Governor Rockefeller's Manhattan office.

Before entering his Lincoln Continental limousine for the seven-block motorcade to the French restaurant, the President told Mr. Dewey, "I wish we could walk but I had an army with me before."

The applause from about 400 persons that greeted the President as he emerged from the Pierre for dinner was typical of the friendly reception he received throughout his scheduled nine-hour stay here.

There were only sporadic jeers or antiwar chants, possibly because there had been no public advance notice of the Presidential visit, which combined afternoon business with evening pleasure.

Editors Briefed

The business was a background briefing for executives of The Daily News, on his domestic and foreign policies.

The briefing, in the 37th-floor executive dining room at the News building, 220 East 42d Street, was the second in a series of meeting Mr. Nixon plans with newspaper executives across the country. He met last month with editors of The Washington Star, which, like The Daily News, generally supports Administration policy.

Asked if the newspapers' support of the President was a factor in his decision to visit The News, a White House aide said he had "no idea." He added that "the President had a lot of invitations, and this was one of them."

He said there were no plans for Mr. Nixon to visit other newspapers here.

The President arrived at The Daily News at 2:40 P.M. after a 40-minute flight from Washington to Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn, a helicopter trip to the Wall Street heliport and a drive by motorcade to The News building at Second Avenue.

Mrs. Nixon had arrived here quietly yesterday morning for a shopping tour before joining the President for dinner last night.