

Ride Through Terror for Some Delegates

MIAMI BEACH — (CDN) — A ride to Convention Hall became a journey through terror yesterday for a handful of Republican delegates and their families after demonstrators ambushed their bus.

First, the bus tires were slashed and the engine set afire.

Then, when the delegates plunged out into the mob of 40 chanting, screaming demonstrators, a Georgia woman delegate's arm was

slashed while other delegates and their families were roughed up, hounded and harassed as they dashed two blocks to the safety of a police outpost.

"My two young children were screaming and crying," recalled a shaken Mrs. Peggy Leonard of Oak Forest, Ill., whose husband is a delegate.

'Couldn't Believe It'

"I couldn't believe it was happening — that we were in America, and they'd do that to women and children," she exclaimed.

Said alternate delegate Harry Magers Jr. of Berwyn, Ill.:

"That sort of thing is so outrageous it's certainly going to help Nixon.

"People are going to hear about this, and decent people will say, 'If those kinds of kids are against Nixon, then I'm for Nixon,' he predicted.

The 30 minutes of terror began after the group decided not to wait for one of the regular convention shuttle buses and instead hopped aboard a municipal bus outside their Playboy Plaza Hotel.

Refuses to Move

Half a mile from the hall, the bus got tied up in a jam caused by convention-bound traffic slowed by roaming bands of demonstrators.

Suddenly a dozen demonstrators lay down in front of the bus and refused to budge even when the vehicle was within inches of them.

Others angrily shouted:

"How many more people are you going to kill in Vietnam?"

As the demonstrators shoved and jolted him, clawing at his credentials, Demunno plowed into and through the circling crowd, hoping he has headed in the general direction of the hall.

Magers, seeing the trouble, peeled off his blazer. But the crowd spotted it and

set upon him and Mrs. Leonard, trying to force them back into the bus.

Magers shouldered ahead and ran interference for Mrs. Leonard and her children.

Door Locked

They dashed across the street to a supermarket, but the manager saw the pursuing demonstrators and locked the store's door.

They scurried on down the

As the bus stopped, knives flashed in the twilight, air hissed from the tires, and the bus settled on its wheel rims.

One demonstrator sprayed black paint on the windshield, leaving the bus "blind" and immobilized.

As the 50 or so passengers stirred restlessly, the demonstrators began shouting demands that the riders come out. But the bus driver cautioned:

"Sit tight — you'll be worse off out there."

Panic Begins

Then, chunks of concrete began crashing through several windows, shattered glass sprayed over the seats, and the passengers began to panic.

Next, the demonstrators pried open the cover over the bus's rear engine and threw a blazing American flag into the engine housing.

Campaign '72

Fearing a gasoline explosion and fire, the passengers began screaming in panic and streamed from the bus.

When the demonstrators spotted the distinctive, orange-colored Illinois delega-

tion blazer of James Demunno of Elmwood Park, Ill., they warned him to get back on the bus.

"You delegates aren't going anywhere tonight," a demonstrator told him.

street, with one group of demonstrators hounding them while a group of older protesters — "I think they were those Vietnam veterans," Magers said — urged their pursuers to "lay off those people."

Two blocks from Convention Hall they found a police outpost, and the police escorted them the rest of the way, through alleys, back yards and gangways.