

Police Were Warned by Telephone Calls of Planned Battle

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By MARTIN ARNOLD

City Hall and the Police Department received warnings yesterday morning that several hundred construction workers, organized into a band on Thursday, would attack peace demonstrators in lower Manhattan.

The warnings came from, among others, the office of Representative Allard K. Lowenstein, Democrat of Nassau County, and from construction workers who did not approve of the impending attack.

Tom Morgan, Mayor Lindsay's press secretary, said last night that many reports of probably confrontation between students and opposing groups were received at City Hall Thursday night and yesterday morning. All were referred to the Police Department, he said.

Bonus Offer Alleged

With the exception of the known Manhattan warnings, he said, none were "considered valid."

After violence between construction workers and students broke out at noontime yesterday, the police said they did not have the manpower to control the workers.

Mayor Lindsay summoned Police Commissioner Howard R. Leary, First Deputy Commissioner John R. Walsh and other high-ranking police officials to City Hall this morning to explain to him the handling of the disturbances by the police.

Neither Commissioner Leary nor Richard Kellerman, the deputy police commissioner for press relations, was available

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Callers Warned Police Of Men's Plan for Battle

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for comment last night.

Not only were the construction workers organized, but at least in one case they were offered a monetary bonus by their contractor-employer if they would take time off from their work to "break some heads," one of the construction workers said.

According to the same construction worker, who said he wished to remain anonymous for fear of his life, he called the police at 8:30 A.M. yesterday and warned them that "construction workers are out for blood today, that construction jobs in lower Manhattan were going to be in on the blood-bath."

A short time later, at about 9 A.M., Harriet Eisman, a special assistant to Representative Lowenstein called a similar warning to City Hall. She said she had received a tip on Thursday night.

"Last night I received a call from a friend of mine," Mrs. Eisman recalled. "He said that the workers were briefed by the shop stewards at the jobs to go and knock the heads of the kids who were protesting the Nixon-Kent thing."

"I called City Hall at 9 o'clock this morning and spoke to one of the assistants there, and told him exactly what I'm telling you. The response I got was, 'We'll do everything we can, thank you for letting us know this.'"

Grapevine Organization

The construction worker who had called the police said that despite the warnings the police at the scene of the rioting did little to stop the workers "from smashing up the kids."

He said that the worker attack was organized through the construction workers' grapevine which, he added, "is very quick and thorough." He explained that "the men all ride in to work together, they eat at the same restaurants and drink at the same bars."

They decided, on Thursday what they were going to do, he said, after a small band of steel workers left their jobs at the Bowery at noontime and marched up to Wall Street,

where they attacked some street demonstrators.

The worker said: "Then they came back and said that everyone had to go out Friday—all the workers from the World Center, the U. S. Steel building and 2 Manhattan Plaza—and break some heads."

Patches Identify Leaders

He said that most of the workers involved were steel workers but that the group included elevator construction men, electricians from Local 3 of the Electricians Union and carpenters.

The attack on the peace demonstrators was so well organized, this construction worker said, that on at least two occasions during the day, "I turned around and happened to see men in business suits with color patches in their lapels—the color was the same on both men, and they were shouting orders to the workers."

Leon Katz, a spokesman for the Port of New York Authority, which owns the World Trade Center site, said that there were 2,500 workers there. "We checked our contractors, and to the best of our knowledge, according to their information, none of the workers on Wall Street were from our site," he said.

Walkie-Talkies Used

"They get a very short lunch hour—30, 45 minutes—and didn't have much time to go down there," he said.

Some of the workers carried walkie-talkies that they usually use on their jobs—so that they could communicate with each other during the fighting.

Asked why he had warned the police yesterday morning, the construction man said: "I don't go along with this kind of thing—mad crowds roaming the streets. I can't explain the feeling. What can happen to this country."

"We're witnessing a revolution. Women, children, anyone can be beaten up and the police do nothing."

The meeting place for some of the construction workers on their way to the attack appeared to be the Whitehorse Tavern on Pearl Street, a small, dark, two-story bar and catessen.