

LAWYERS LOBBY AGAINST THE WAR

1,000 From City Seek Talks
With Congress Members

By RICHARD L. MADDEN

WASHINGTON, May 20 —

The nation's capital, inundated in recent weeks with students lobbying against the war in Indochina, had a new lobby on its hands today — more than 1,000 New York City lawyers, mostly well barbered, well-tailored and well-prepared with legal arguments against the war.

Starting with a rally on the steps of the Capitol shortly before noon and welcoming speeches by New York's two Republican Senators, Jacob K. Javits and Charles E. Goodell, the lawyers — described by their sponsoring organizations as "the most established of the Establishment" — fanned out in 150 teams to lobby for legislative proposals to end the war.

Among the lawyers who participated were Barnard Botein, a retired presiding justice of the State Supreme Court who is president-elect of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York; Francis P. Plimpton, current president of the association and a former representative at the United Nations; former Attorney General Ramsey Clark; and Frederick S. Wyle, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson.

During an afternoon of meetings with members of Congress and the Nixon Administration, it was not immediately clear whether the lawyers had changed any minds.

Some Senators and Representatives delegated assistants to meet with the lawyers and listen to their arguments. Some members of Congress were reported to have declined to meet at all with the New Yorkers on the ground that they were not constituents.

Botein's View

At a late-afternoon news conference, Mr. Botein said he thought the lawyers had received "respectful receptivity." He acknowledged, however, that he had heard there were "complete brushoffs" by some members of Congress.

The organizers of the one-day trip vowed nonetheless that the lobbying effort would continue. One organizer, Neal Johnston, said legal groups in other cities were planning similar activities and that other professional groups, "who have been too silent too long and have left demonstrations to the students," would be enlisted.

The outpouring of lawyers — many of them young but some of them senior partners of major New York firms — produced what Mr. Clark, the former Attorney General, described as "a rather unique day." It demonstrated, he said, that "the law can be an effective instrument for social change."

Mr. Botein called the day "the most exciting thing that's happened to the bar."

Although some of the lawyers met downtown with several Administration officials, including Attorney General John N. Mitchell, the focus of the effort was on Capitol Hill, where the lawyers sought out members of Congress to urge on them the view that they had the right and duty to end the war.

'A Man of Law'

At one such meeting, in the office of Senator Jennings Randolph, Democrat of West Virginia, Mr. Botein told the Senator that he was grateful for the audience. In the past, he said, "we've encountered too many deaf ears and unseeing eyes, and from that has come frustration that has led to violence."

"You're opposed to violence?" Mr. Randolph asked.

"I am opposed to violence; I am a man of law," Mr. Botein replied.

After wishing his fellow lawyers "good hunting" at the Capitol, Mr. Plimpton, the former United Nations delegate, headed for the office of Senator Ernest F. Hollings, Democrat of South Carolina. An aide of Mr. Hollings said, however, that the Senator already had met with several New Yorkers earlier in the day and would not be available.

Mr. Plimpton sent his greetings to the Senator, picked up his monogrammed umbrella and went to a downtown church where about 1,500 Washington lawyers were meeting to plan an antiwar lobbying effort of their own.

About 600 of the New Yorkers traveled to and from Washington on nine chartered cars of a Penn Central train that left New York at 6:30 A.M. On the train they received their room assignments and a packet of what they called "briefing papers," which included biographies of the legislators they were to see and fact sheets on various Congressional proposals to curb the war. In legal tradition, the papers were labeled Exhibit A, B, C and so forth.

"It's kind of a grown-up demonstration," said Mr. Wyle, the former Defense Department official.

At least one young lawyer on the train conceded to reporters that he was affiliated with the former New York law firm of President Nixon and Attorney General Mitchell, but he asked that his name not be published.