

Agnew Grants Request for Mass Antiwar

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 15— Vice President Agnew said today that he had decided to grant a request by an antiwar group to hold a mass rally on the West Lawn of the Capitol later this month.

At the same time, the Vice President approved a request by an antiwar group of Vietnam veterans to hold a smaller demonstration several days earlier on the Capitol's west steps, but he denied the group's request for a second demonstration there.

Mr. Agnew's decision marked the first time that permission had been given for a mass gathering on the Capitol grounds.

The Vice President sent a letter to Philip J. Hirschkop, an attorney representing the National Peace Action Coalition, the antiwar group coordinating the mass demonstration scheduled for April 24. In it, he said that he had waived the statutory prohibition against assemblages on the Capitol grounds without conferring with House Speaker Carl Albert with whom he shares the au-

thority, because Mr. Albert was out of the country and could not be reached.

A number of antiwar groups have been denied the use of Capitol facilities in the past, including the organization that sponsored the Vietnam Moratorium demonstration here in November, 1969, when some 250,000 people demonstrated here.

Jerry Gordon, a coordinator for the peace coalition, called the Vice President's decision a "historic breakthrough," and said that he was pleased with the cooperation his group had

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Demonstration on Capitol Lawn

been receiving from officials in the Nixon Administration.

The Administration's general helpfulness in planning for the April 24 demonstration is something of a departure from previous protests in the capital, when organizers encountered numerous difficulties in obtaining march and assembly permits.

Mr. Agnew's letter noted that the protest organizers had agreed to supply 2,000 marshals to supervise the Capitol rally, and that they had predicted an attendance of about 50,000 people. The Vice Presi-

dent said that he was waiving the anti-assembly statute "because of these assurances."

Coordinators of the peace coalition demonstration, however, said they hope for an attendance of up to half a million people.

In a separate letter to John K. Mallory, an official of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Mr. Agnew said that he was granting that group's request to hold an hour-long demonstration at the Capitol on April 19. The veterans plan to meet a delegation of congressmen there that day.

However, a second request from the veterans' group to hold a similar rally at the Capitol on April 23 was turned down, Mr. Agnew said, because it would interfere with advance plans for the gathering the next day.