

Washington Does Most of Its Business as Usual

By CHRISTOPHER LYDON
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WASHINGTON, May 3 —
Rush hour came two hours early, around 5:30 this morning. Nine o'clock commuters sailed blissfully into town, and some of them wondered whether dawn demonstrations might not be a good thing every day.

Between protesters and policemen, there were many scenes of ugly confrontation and a bitter spirit unusual in Washington demonstrations. But by no means was the whole city affected.

"I'd say the disruption was the equivalent of a half-inch snowfall," said one downtown executive. A colleague demurred: "I'd say about a half inch of rain."

Those who made a point of "business as usual" found it surprisingly easy. Mrs.

Nixon told her taff that the demonstrations would not interfere with her luncheon for 88 wives of Cabinet members and Congressmen, many of whom drove to the White House from the Maryland and Virginia suburbs.

Gen. William C. Westmoreland, the Army Chief of Staff, scorned directives that Pentagon workers show up for work at 5 A.M. The general walked up the unobstructed steps of the Pentagon at two minutes before eight and was at his desk, as usual, at 8 on the dot.

Representative Robert B. Mathias, Republican of California, the Olympic decathlon champion in 1948 and 1952, paddled a canoe for himself and two colleagues, Representatives R. Lawrence Coughlin, Pennsylvania Republican, and Representative

Walter Flowers, Alabama Democrat, in a nearly 5-mile trip down the Potomac. The trip from the Virginia side of Chain Bridge to the Washington Marina took just under 2 hours: The canoe is now parked in the Cannon Office Building's garage.

From the Washington side of the Potomac, a bearded young man in a crash helmet sailed forth in a kayak, landed at the Pentagon, but was disappointed to find that his overland allies had been cut off at the bridges. He shrugged at the lines of policemen, then tipped over his craft to reveal the legend on the bottom. It said: "Capsize the Establishment."

Senator Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York, who usually takes an early flight to Washington on Monday mornings, planned conservatively, and took the Amtrak's new Earlybird Metroliner from New York.

His colleague, James L. Buckley, several shades more conservative, made the trip from New York last night and was in his office dictating letter to his secretary at 6:30 A.M.

The most dangerous threats of violence came from motorists. On 23d Street, two blocks from the State Department, a protester who had hoped to halt the stream of traffic jumped on the hood of a sedan that was about to run him down, then rode in panic for nearly half a block before bouncing off, apparently uninjured.

Demonstrators made a persistent effort, nonetheless, to be friendly, and felt rewarded. At Dupont Circle, a small, smiling girl went from car to car handing antiwar literature to the drivers. "Stall your cars for us please," she said. To drivers who would not lower their windows she shouted, "Don't you want to drive around the circle two or three times to look at the freaks getting their heads beat in!"

It was a major triumph, said Michael Lerner, a spokesman for the Mayday Tribe, that "a number of motorists

who understood the message actually slowed down their vehicles or stopped when there was a barricade, and sort of winked."

"You didn't have a feeling that the war machine had ground to a halt, but Georgetown as a neighborhood was a pretty lively place," said one young socialite. There was an air of cheerful forbearance in Georgetown, even after Washington's fashionable downtown neighborhood became a center of the struggle that spilled over from the M Street commuters' artery.

One transit bus was disabled on O Street by a resident who dashed out of his house in a bathrobe, lifted the back hood of the bus and put the electrical system out of commission. The intersection of O and 35th Streets was littered with garbage and glass by an early "trashing" spree, but at 9 o'clock many of the same young people who had made the mess started cleaning up. Minutes later the intersection was clean.

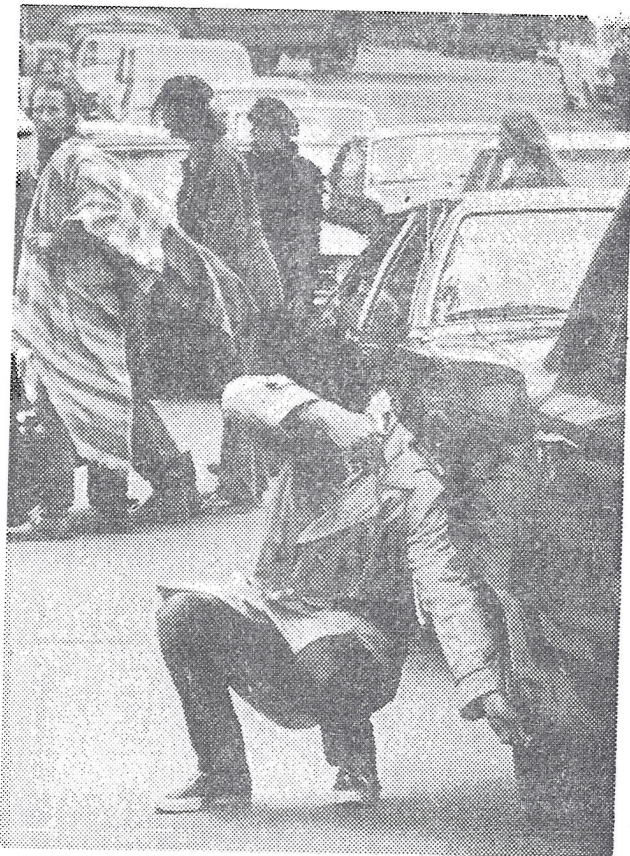
Nixon Is Kept Informed On Actions by Police

SAN CLEMENTE, Calif., May 3 (UPI)—President Nixon kept in close touch today with the developments in the antiwar demonstrations in Washington, the Western White House said.

Ronald L. Ziegler, the President's press secretary, said the President was fully aware of the decisions made for dealing with the demonstrators and "concurred with the action."

Mr. Ziegler said the President talked to the Washington Police Chief, Jerry V. Wilson, Saturday to get a report of the situation and to commend the police force for the manner in which it had performed its duty.

In a radio broadcast to his policemen, Chief Wilson mentioned his conversation with Mr. Nixon and said it was the President's desire that "this city be open for business."



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HARASSING TACTIC: A demonstrator letting the air out of a car tire on M Street in the Georgetown area.