

Protest Violence Brings a Change in Tactics

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WASHINGTON, May 4—To the heightened violence of the Mayday demonstrators, law enforcement here has responded with new tactics that modify—perhaps purposely the picture of the District of Columbia police as unfailingly genteel hosts to the nation's dissenters.

The injuries and the anger of the Chicago street battles in 1968 were not even faintly duplicated here. But the mood was a sharp contrast to the customary clam of the Washington police, one of whom, as recently as the mass march on the Capitol 10 days ago, was overheard saying, "If I were their age, I'd probably be out there myself."

The avowed goal of the visitors had changed from dissent to disruption. Police Chief Jerry V. Wilson, convinced that he was dealing with "urban guerrillas," in turn changed his policies markedly.

Yesterday, and again today, policemen were swinging their long nightsticks freely at the milling demonstrators, young men and women alike. More often than not, their targets were legs and buttocks but Lawrence M. O'Rourke, Washington bureau chief of The Philadelphia Bulletin, was only one of scores of protesters and bystanders who was hit on the head, too.

Nightsticks and Obscenities

The sight of district policemen jamming the butts of their sticks into the ribs and backs of their prisoners, often shouting obscenities at the same time, has become commonplace in the last two days.

The more important innovation was the use of mass arrests to clear the streets and detain demonstrators, even for hours after the city was calm. Many of yesterday's record 7,000 arrests, it was clear this morning, were dragnet captures of persons who had had nothing to do with the demonstrations.

One man who identified himself as a psychiatrist said that six young people under his care for mental disorders had been swept up with their attendants near George-Washington University.



FULL HOUSE: Antiwar demonstrators arrested Monday were packed into a makeshift Washington Coliseum, for the night. Many protesters were subsequently released

At the Washington Coliseum, a hockey and circus arena where more than 3,000 cold, exhausted protesters languished on the bare stone floor this morning, Mitch Howard, a senior at Livingston High School in New Jersey, said he had come to Washington to visit his cousin at George Washington University and to speak to admissions officials. He said:

"About 11 o'clock in the morning, on Pennsylvania, I asked a cop how to get away from the demonstration. He said, then 'I'll show you where you'll be safe.' Then he grabbed me and said, 'you're under arrest.'"

City officials said today that Chief Wilson had conceived the mass-arrest strategy. Others, including highly placed police sources, said that the Justice Department was more directly involved in policy activity this week than in past demonstrations.

Another Siege Feared

According to authoritative reports, it was the District Government that decided just

before midnight to start releasing prisoners whose arrests had been processed and who had paid their \$10 collateral. The Justice Department, represented at the Coliseum by Assistant Attorney General Will Wilson, was said to have feared another siege against the commuter traffic into Washington this morning and urged that yesterday's prisoners be held, even those who had never been formally charged.

Justice was also understood to have delayed the distribution of Army blankets to the prisoners, although District of Columbia National Guardsmen had brought the blankets with them yesterday evening. They handed them around with evident pleasure when they received permission to do so about 2:30 A.M. today.

In an exchange that seemed to summarize the harsh spirit of things at the Coliseum, Mr. Wilson, a former Texas prosecutor, answered one earnest, unrepentant young demonstrator's questions about constitutional rights with questions of his own.

"Didn't you come here to shut the Government down?" he asked. "Well, what are you griping about?"