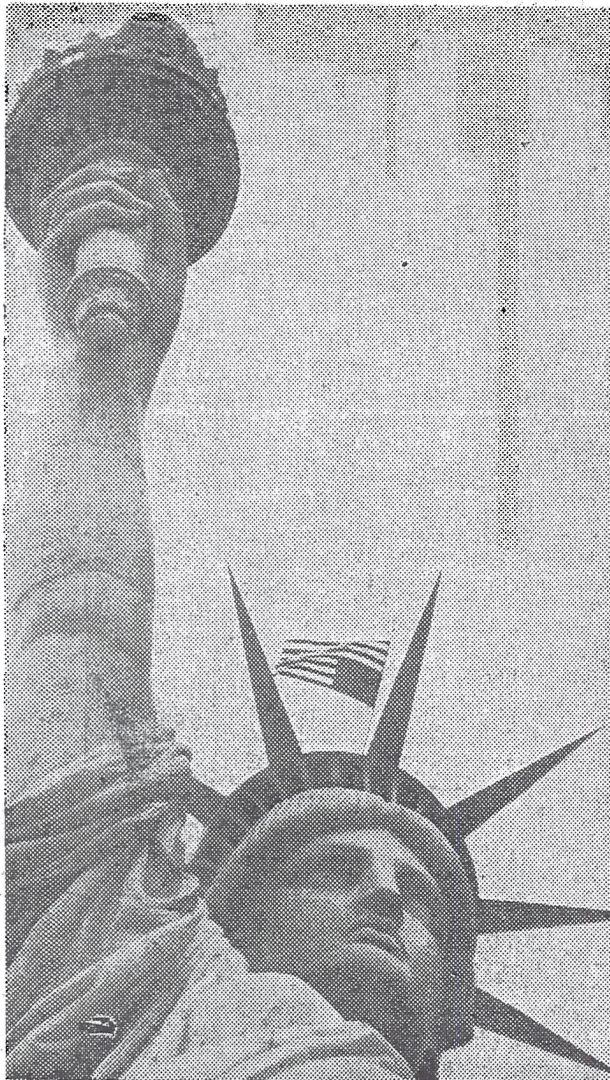


War Foes Reject U.S. Plan to Reopen Statue of Liberty

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By LAWRENCE VAN GELDER



The New York Times/Lee Romero

American flag flying upside down from statue's crown

Vietnam veterans barricaded inside the Statue of Liberty yesterday rejected a Government compromise designed to reopen the historic monument to the public while allowing the veterans to continue their antiwar protest.

The Government's offer was turned down at nightfall as a small American flag, hung upside by the veterans as a symbol of distress, was illuminated through the windows of Liberty's torch. The rejection set the stage for legal action today to confront the veterans with a Federal injunction.

The small flag was originally hung from Liberty's crown and later moved to the torch, which had for many years been inaccessible to visitors.

And while the veterans, the National Park Service and the Justice Department here and in Washington discussed the situation, a force of 22 armed National Park policemen was standing by on Liberty Island 100 yards from the 380-foot-high national landmark.

Similar antiwar protests were carried out yesterday in other parts of the country by the Vietnam Veterans Against the War or their sympathizers. The Betsy Ross House in Philadelphia and a ward in a hospital

Continued on Page 12, Column 4

at Travis Air Force Base in California were barricaded by demonstrators.

Locally, through a day of discussion, caucus and negotiation that seemed best characterized as gingerly, there was little indication that the park police, flown here from Washington, where they normally patrol the capital's parks and monuments, were about to be pressed into action.

While the Statue of Liberty remained closed to tourists after members of the Vietnam

veterans group barricaded themselves inside Sunday night, the Government moved through the courts in one effort to bring the occupation to an end.

Robert Mahoney, a special assistant to the director of the National Park Service, who flew here from Washington, said on Liberty Island that discussions were being held with the Justice Department on how best to proceed.

"We've been talking to everyone, and frankly the shots are being called in Washington," he said.

One Justice Department

move brought a petition from United States Attorney Whitney North Seymour Jr. before District Court Judge Lawrence W. Pierce.

Acting as attorney for the plaintiff, the United States of America, Mr. Seymour asked for a preliminary and permanent injunction directing the veterans to open the doors to the statue, to leave it except during normal visiting hours and to permit officials of the National Park Service and visitors to enter the statue.

Judge Pierce asked the attorneys representing the 16 veterans — Nancy Stearns, Doris Peterson and Rhoda Schoenbord of the Center for Constitutional Rights, at 588 Ninth Avenue — if there could be a settlement that would not require court action.

Show Cause Order Signed

The Government, through Mr. Seymour's representatives, Michael D. Hess, chief of the Civil Division, and Alan B. Morrison, assistant to the chief, said it was prepared to let the veterans remain on the island and demonstrate, as long as they vacated the statue during normal closing hours.

When attorneys for the veterans said they were unable to say if their clients would accept the offer, Judge Pierce asked them to go to Liberty Island, relay the offer and inform him of the response.

When told that the offer had been rejected, Judge Pierce signed an order last night calling upon the defendants to show cause at 9 A.M. today why they should not open the doors to the statue, remove obstructions, remove themselves except during normal visiting hours and conduct themselves in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Park Service.

In announcing the rejection, Paul Weiss, another attorney for the veterans, said that they had repeated their demand that their antiwar protest be publicized through Stars and Stripes, the military newspaper, and over the armed forces' radio and television networks.



The New York Times

CONVERSING WITH PROTESTERS: Paul Weiss, a lawyer for antiwar veterans group, talking through closed door at the base of the Statue of Liberty with people inside.

Mr. Weiss, also from the Center of Constitutional Rights, could be expected to make the trip.

said that the veterans were not against keeping tourists off the island and that the veterans wanted their supporters to be on the island when—and if—they leave the statue.

Government officials said the island attracted 1,500 to 2,000 visitors daily. Robert Moakler, manager of the Circle Line, which operates a boat service to and from the island, said that during the holiday week 2,000 to 3,000 visitors daily

“It’s a shame,” he said. People from all over the world are here who want to visit the statue. And they can’t understand. Speak of Americanism.”

Among those disappointed visitors were Mr. and Mrs. Richard Smith of Sioux City, Iowa, and their three children. When they learned at the Battery early yesterday that there would be no trips to the island, one of the children said, “Oh, those damn veterans.”