

Aside to Nixon Makes Celebrity Of Girl Who Won Youth Award

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 4 — By the time a knock on her hotel room door awakened Debra Jean Sweet again early this morning, she had resigned herself to a sleepless night because of interruptions.

This time, the knock brought a telegram from her fellow staff members at the Walter League project in Chicago where she is a \$150-a-month social organizer.

"Super staffer," the telegram read. "Nixon's wart. Sister in the resistance. You're beautiful, we love you." It was signed "Your family."

Miss Sweet, 19 years old, visited the White House yesterday to accept from President Nixon a Young American medal for her role in organizing a 30-mile march by several thousand Wisconsin high school students two years ago that raised nearly \$25,000 in contributions to purchase food processing equipment for American Indians and irrigation pumps for Nicaragua.

As she and Mr. Nixon shook hands, Debra told him softly, "Mr. President, I don't believe you're sincere about this award until you get us out of the war."

According to Debra, the President seemed momentarily surprised, then told her, "We're doing the best we can. We appreciate your coming here and hope you continue your fine service."

Departed Abruptly

After the presentation, Mr. Nixon posed briefly for a photograph with Debra and her parents, invited those present to tour the White House and left. There were reports yesterday that Mr. Nixon departed in some agitation, but his aides said today that the ceremony had ended and that the President was anxious to return to important matters awaiting his attention.

Since Debra made her widely quoted remark to the President, her room on the tenth floor of the Hotel Washington has been a focus for newsmen seeking interviews and friends. Her

parents, somewhat perplexed by the attention their daughter has received, escaped the hotel this morning for some sightseeing, but Debra stayed behind to answer the constantly ringing telephone.

"Hey, thanks for the telegram," she exclaimed to a friend calling from Chicago. "Yeah, Chicago Today [a newspaper] called me at 3 in the morning . . . I haven't gotten much sleep . . . Yeah, I have a reporter here right now. Bye."

"It's been like this all night," she sighed to a visitor, then excused herself again to answer the phone.

The Walter League is concerned with educational reform in high schools, supports the efforts of farm workers to organize, and runs projects to feed the hungry and counsel young men on the draft.

Speaks of Concerns

Between telephone calls, Debra said she considered hunger to be "a catchword for the struggle between people who eat and the ones who don't," and said she considered American high schools to be "non-education."

She said she believed that "a violent revolution" in this country was "pretty inevitable," and that she would like to visit Cuba one day.

She said she supported the resistance movement against the draft, and had planned to wear a button bearing the movement's symbol, the Greek letter Omega, at the Presidential ceremony yesterday "but I lost it." She wore instead a button supporting the farm workers. "I don't think he noticed it," she said of the President.

She called herself a "non-dogmatic" socialist, adding: "I haven't read very much Marx." She said she believed the only solution to hunger in America was redistribution of wealth. "If things were equal, each person in the United States would get \$9,000 a year — that's \$36,000 for a family of four. We've got to move toward that," she said.