

DEAN RUSK COMES TO SAN FRANCISCO

Bruce Houtford

On the night of Thursday, Jan 7, Dean Rusk made a speech to the commonwealth club at the Fairmont Hotel. Anti-war groups had about 36 hours notice of his coming in which to prepare a welcome.

Demonstrators began to gather as early as 5:00 P.M. There was a great deal of confusion among them, stemming from the fact that several different groups had put out leaflets calling for the demonstration and each had put a different time. S.F. State had been told 6PM, Berkeley 7:30 etc. As the demonstrators arrived they were ordered ~~to~~ by the cops to stay across the street from the Hotel. The only pickets allowed on the Hotel side of the street, initially, were a group of Australians on strike from Quantas Airlines (Rusk has been helping import scabs to break the strike).

By 7 PM there were approx ³⁰⁰~~500~~ demonstrators across the street from the Hotel. There was no organization to speak of. There were several people with bull-horn each shouting contradictory instructions and proposals. Eventually about 100 went across the street to the Hotel sidewalk and began a picket line, in defiance of police orders. The police however did nothing. Two soldiers showed up in full uniform, with anti-war signs.

By 7:45 we had about ⁵⁰⁰~~800-900~~ people, all of them "doing their thing". ^{A FEW}~~Some~~ peoples thing was to throw blood, pennies, rocks and bottles at cops and onlookers on the hotell steps. The cops then declared us an "unlawfull assembly" and they charged the crowd with clubs and mace. We attempted to retreat a la Oakland and block the intersections. Unfortunately the police were expecting this tactic (apparently they are able to learn from past experiance) ~~as quick as xxx~~ and every time a group of us would gather they would send 3 or 4 (or 1 or 2) cops to attack and chase ~~the~~ us. Groups of 50 or more demonstrators were chased 3 or 4 blocks by 2 or 3 cops. We discovered that we were unable (or unprepared) to stand up to a free swining club backed up by mace. We tried to us mobil tactics, but they were more mobile then we. One thing that was very popular with them was to chase a group of us down a street, then send motorcycles around the block to come in, in front of us. Several were run down by motorcycles as they were fleeing from police behind them. Cops would sieze individuals our of a crowd and throw them into a paddy wagon. About 60 were arrested, most them after being beaten by sticks. It is safe to say that, tactically speaking, the cops won the day.

Stategically speaking I think that we did a little better. 90% of the bystanders we encountered (~~and~~ since we were being chased all over Nob hill we ran into quite a few) were sympathetic, or at least, not hostile. The inability of the cops to distinguish between bystander and demonstrators was of great assistance. Early in the attack a number of us were invited by an Episcopal priest to seek "sanctuary" in the Episcopal Cathedral 1 block from the Hotel. Many demonstrators did, in fact run into the cathedral hoping to find saftey. The police, oblivious to the fact that they were risking eternal hell-fire, went in after them. This upset quite a few people.

At least 3 major questions have been raised in the aftermath of the Rusk demonstration. 1-the question of organization of a demonstration, and the responsibility of the organizers (if any) to the participants. 2-the question of discipline and 3-the question of how mobile demonstrators handle mobile cops.

*Sorry
Explanation*