

How cops got mean and ugly night left came to have its say against Falwell.

Pickers were still going strong over at Macy's as Patricia Jackson of the sponsoring All-Peoples Congress kicked off the anti-Moral Majority Union Square rally at 6 p.m. last Thursday.

An estimated 1,000 people were inside the Square while 1500 demonstrators were returning from where they had earlier picketed Jerry Falwell at the Holiday Inn one block up on Sutter at Powell. It was soon evident from the noise out on Powell that the city's finest were already at work tarnishing the city's image.

Demonstrator Bill Nessen, who said a mounted policeman first knocked over a news rack and then rode over him as he lay on the ground, said the cops first converged on a spot where demonstrators sat down in the street. They started swinging their clubs overhand at people all around them. One medic was badly beaten in the head while she was attempting to give medical aid. Despite police claims that demonstrators threw things at them, all the witnesses this reporter talked with said the attack was completely unprovoked.

While this confrontation was occurring, the mc's back at the rally lead people in chants of "Racist, Sexist, Anti-Gay; Moral Majority Go Away." Things remained more or less calm within Union Square while periodically during the evening people ran out to the streets where more active demonstrations were taking place.

Among the speakers and entertainers on stage were activist and Board of Supervisors candidate Pat Norman, folksinger Bill Folk, Bill Wahpehahpah of the Indian Treaty Council, who gave a reasoned anti-Christian, pro-Indian religion pitch, and the comic troupe Ladies Against Women, who called for making virginity a requirement for high school graduation.

About forty-five minutes into the rally, a group of about twenty punks staged a Garbage-in at the Stockton and Geary intersection. The punks, reported to be from the Livermore Action Group, overturned five cans of garbage from a near-by health food restaurant into the intersection. (They did not overturn dumpsters, as reported in the next day's *Chronicle*.) Then they lay down in the street, stopping traffic. One of them said they were protesting the cops' earlier action of "hurting people." Most of the punks had dispersed by the time police arrived, but undercover cops ferreted them out and threw five of them into a paddy wagon parked at the Stockton intersection. By 7:05, traffic was flowing again, as the grim-faced TAC squad and the mounties kept the crowds up on the sidewalks.

Riot potential for the evening reached a

peak when cops dragged a man down from his perch on the Stockton street sign, and fire crackers — which sounded ominously like gun shots — suddenly went off in Union Square.

A Heinz soup can popped under a car tire and rolled into the gutter as I crossed the intersection to go back to the rally. Squashed orange halves, parsley, paper cups and cops' horses' tea muffins strewn across the intersection created an eerie urban collage.

The rally lost some of its audience again at 8:45 as a Sunset Scavenger dumpster in front of the Casual Corner clothing store on Powell at Geary exploded into flames, the work of an unidentified arsonist.

As I was leaving around 9 p.m., a city garbage truck was sweeping the Geary-Stockton intersection, and the tension level had diminished considerably. The cops at the corner joked about the sweeper, which



was obviously not designed to clean up organic vitamin C.

I experienced a strong feeling of déjà vu, inspired by the military-styled, highly regimented, hate-vibed TAC squad, which forged its reputation back in the sixties beating up hippies in the Haight-Ashbury. The plastic-visored storm troopers even made the same kinds of comments they'd made back then. I heard one say to another as an obviously masculine punk passed by, "Is that a boy or a girl?" Are these fascist clones imported or are they home-bred in sties for each generation's use?

There was no violence on the part of anyone at Thursday night's rally except the police, who have been known to cause riots periodically. And the TAC squad I learned back in the '60s should be differentiated from other San Francisco police, some of whom have an old-fashioned liberality and can even enjoy the city's diversity as it is displayed at public events. You never see a TAC squad smile. They only do that in the bathroom.

Coming up
November 1984

LETTERS

Women Against Imperialism

Dear Friends,

We're writing to inform your readers about the Central American Solidarity work of Women Against Imperialism. Barbara Ustanko, who compiled the *Coming Up!* Central America Resource Guide, suggested that we and other groups write in to help complete the directory.

The Women's Campaign to Confront the U.S. War Machine is a campaign of educational activities and actions to oppose U.S. militarism in Central America. We have demonstrated at the Armed Forces Recruiting Stations in Oakland and San Francisco, closing them down, and marched through rush hour crowds to the (unmarked) CIA headquarters in San Francisco, just after the contras bombed Corinto Harbor in Nicaragua. In 1982 we celebrated International Women's Day by demonstrating at Port Chicago Naval Weapons Station, a huge weapons depot for bombs destined for El Salvador. (Today 7.2 tons of U.S.-supplied bombs are dropped each day on the zones of popular control liberated by the FMLN/FDR.) Last year on IWD, two hundred women marched on the Presidio Army Base the same month that 800 U.S. soldiers were dispatched from there to Honduras. Nearly a hundred women and children got onto the base itself, and blood was poured on their tanks and weapons of death. Last summer we participated in building the non-intervention contingents in the Lesbian/Gay Freedom Marches.

We are actively working on a material aid campaign for AMNLAE and AMES, the women's associations of Nicaragua and El Salvador. AMNLAE is rebuilding childcare centers destroyed by the CIA contras, and AMES runs a childcare center for refugees from the air war. We sponsored a benefit film showing of *Dream of a Free Country: A Message from Nicaraguan Women*, raising \$1000. We have available videos and slideshows on women in Central America to show at your house meeting, class, or organization. Currently we're offering a class on women and war, with a focus on women in Central America and the impact of militarism here in the U.S.

We want to join with other women to help build a strong, dynamic, anti-imperialist women's movement to oppose U.S. militarism and fight for our freedom as women. There are a lot of ways to get involved, just call 652-4401 ext 656, or write Women Against Imperialism, 3543 18th St #14, SF CA 94110.

—Women Against Imperialism