

# War - Gulf War - Protestors Making themselves heard

War protesters, supporters are getting their message across

By TOM LONG  
Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — The silent majority is beginning to make noise. At the same time, the vocal anti-war protests of the last week appear to be quieting down.

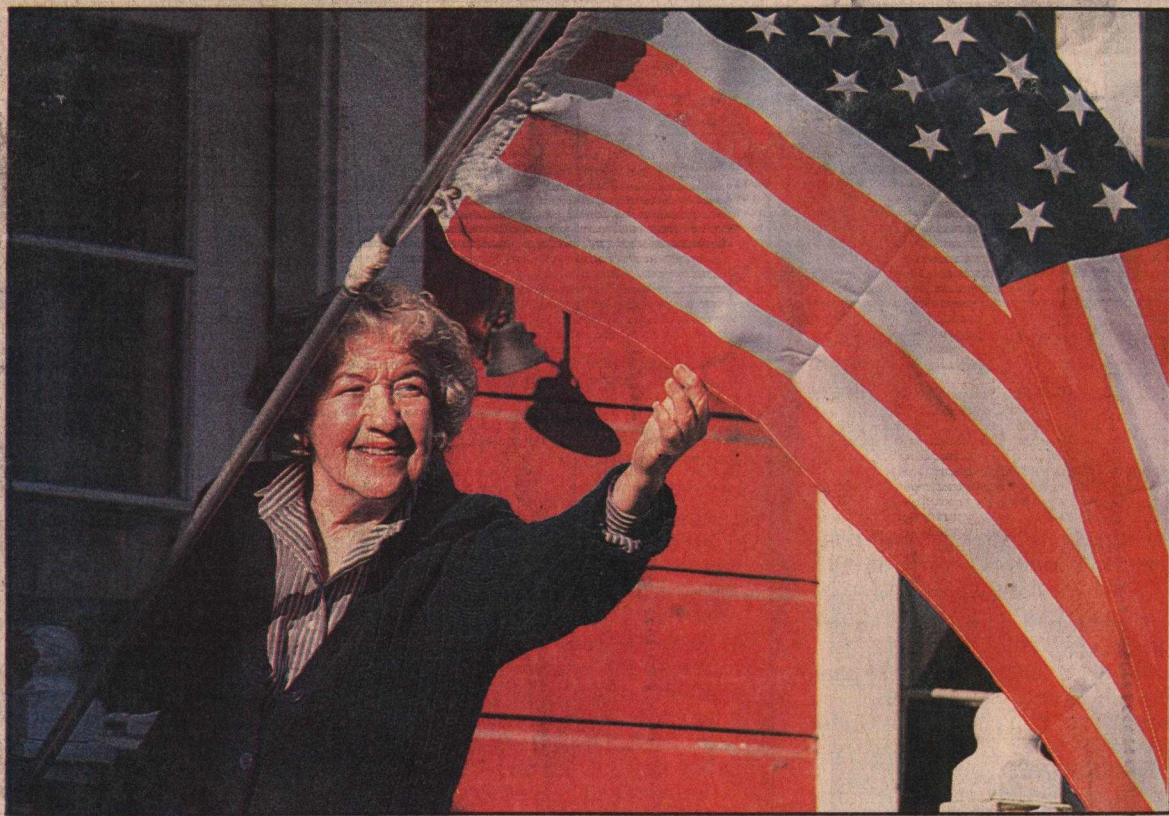
The emotional pulse of the community is still beating fast, but not quite as fast, five days after war began in the Middle East.

Many of the thousands locally who attended a downtown anti-war rally Wednesday night that ended with Highway 17 being closed down by protesters are reconsidering the impact of such demonstrations.

"We'd like to see things aimed at making a difference in the military part of society, rather than aiming at the highway and the civilian part of society," said Andrea Wilczynski, 20, a UC Santa Cruz student and member of Students for Social Responsibility.

"The opposition is mainstreaming now," said City Councilman and peace activist Scott Kennedy. "It's spreading into churches and schools and groups. People are floundering to choose tactics that are effective."

Meanwhile, many of those who have stayed home, silently supporting the Bush administration's goals in the Middle East, have begun expressing their feelings. "I believe in the right to



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

Esther Abbott waves her support for U.S. troops in the gulf from her front porch every day.

peaceful protest, but (demonstrators) are defeating what they're trying to do when it gets out of hand," said Jerry Crews of Santa Cruz.

Crews, a World War II veteran, is one of hundreds, maybe thousands of people in the county who have hung American flags outside their homes in support of America's military efforts.

"People see me putting the flag up here in the morning and honk and say 'Way to go!'," Crews said

from in front of his Westlake-area home.

At Linda's Bible Book Store in Freedom, sales of American flags have skyrocketed. "People are flying them on anything they can attach them to," said salesperson Susan Williams. "A lady was just in that was going to put one on her golf cart. Yesterday a school bus driver bought one for his school bus."

Williams said the bookstore sold nearly 100 flags Friday

alone. "Some of the people buying them have voiced their anger with the demonstrators," Williams said. "This is their way of kind of counter-protesting."

Esther Abbott of Lincoln Street is the only person on her block with a flag waving from her porch. But she's unwavering in her support of the war effort.

"People who are marching are either students or they don't

Please see MESSAGE — A12

## Message

Continued from Page A1

have jobs," said Abbott, whose late husband Chuck was the chief force behind developing the Pacific Garden Mall. "People who think like I do have jobs and things to do."

Despite the thousands who took to county streets last week to protest the war, most people interviewed on county streets this weekend supported American efforts in the Middle East. And disliked the anti-war protesters.

"I'd like to take (the protesters) heads and knock them together," said 81-year-old Harriet Barnes of Watsonville. "The U.S. is doing the best we can."

"I feel like I'm part of a silent majority, not a minority," said Lynn Osborn of Aptos. "It's not like the Vietnam sentiment. If (Hussein) isn't stopped there's going to be trouble. He's a madman."

"I think protesters are more visual than the people who support the war," said Ann Homer of Aptos. "We need to show support

for the troops — not so much for the war. Low support causes low morale."

Others dislike the war — but still dislike local protests.

"I support the protesters, but I don't agree with violence, or blocking the highway and keeping people from going to work," said Jack Jones, a high school teacher from Aptos.

Many anti-war activists have become acutely aware that the traffic jams caused by protests Wednesday and Thursday nights — when cars were backed up at rush hour on Mission Street and downtown and Highway 17 was closed later — caused hard feelings among many in the community. Particularly the second night's shutdown, which was caused by only about 400 people, as opposed to the thousands who closed off the road in the hours just following the first bombings of Baghdad.

"The first night there was such a surge of strong feelings — anger, fear, anxiety — about what was coming next," said Council-

man Kennedy. "But I think most people, even the people out on the freeway that night, realized that wasn't going to work."

"The bulk of the people are turning to other strategies that really reach out to community and don't offend the community," Kennedy said.

A number of peace groups met Saturday at the Resource Center for Nonviolence and drafted a statement of commitment to non-violence which they hope to have all local anti-war groups sign. And anti-war events scheduled for today — a children's peace march beginning at Loudon Nelson Center at noon, a candlelight vigil and march at 5:30 p.m. starting at Lighthouse Field — are expected to be quiet, thoughtful affairs.

But the bulk of the peace marchers have come from UCSC, the starting point of both Wednesday's and Thursday's marches. But only about 75 students showed up for a planned march on Congressman Tom Campbell's office in Scotts Valley

Friday — so few that the protesters had decided to car pool out to the demonstration instead of bothering to march.

That protest was deflated when an apparently crazed gunman was shot to death in an unrelated event near the county center, where protesters had gathered for their march. Eventually about 20 people drove to Campbell's office to deliver a letter of outrage toward the war.

According to Students for Social Responsibility's Wilczynski, much of the outrage coming from students has yet to be focused. "I think we have to work on our internal functioning right now," she said. "We don't have anything planned for next week."

"I think what we're looking at is making people aware of what the issues are here, doing some actual teaching," Wilczynski said.

"We have to get squared away and figure out where we go from here," she said.

L. Kei Miura also contributed to this report