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'There were different Tac squads involved'

Following the civil disorder in Santa Cruz last week, The Valley Press questioned Lt. Bill Plageman of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's department about the events.

Lt. Plageman is also assistant commander of the County tactical squad which was among other tac squads that handled the demonstrators Tuesday at the Governmental Center, Wednesday evening at the torch-light parade in Santa Cruz, and all of the afternoon Thursday in the streets of Santa Cruz.

He said:

"I would like to make one thing perfectly clear to everyone--the press included--

that in the events of the past week there were different Tac squads involved.

"The trouble is, that we're all seen as cops and the people and the press puts us all in the same bag.

"I was in all the action, and I don't think the Santa Cruz County Tac squad has to answer to anybody for their actions--we didn't beat anybody in the normal movements of the crowd.

"People have a right to demonstrate--and anybody who says they don't is terribly wrong.

"When they are in the streets, without a permit, then they are engaged in an illegal

action--and we want to move them to a legal place to demonstrate.

"We were not happy--in some instances--by the actions of another tactical squad.

"We now are restructuring the action of the tactical squad to work in 'arrest teams.' This will mean that we use the squad to separate small groups, that can be handled, and we simply arrest the demonstrators--rather than trying to disperse them.

"The Scotts Valley incident of Friday (May 6) was the correct way to handle a large number of protestors. We moved them off the street and into a field and let them do their thing.

"No one was hurt.

"In Santa Cruz Thursday, the only time a club was raised was when we pursued specific individuals, (leaders of the most radical element of the mob) and in capturing them they resisted us.

"Pictures will prove that in the regular movement of the mob, both in Scotts Valley and during the Wednesday parade, and along Highway 17 Thursday there were no clubs raised.

"And these pictures very often show the smiles of protestors, we are moving along.

"The dispersing action by the Santa Cruz police tactical squad Thursday as we

were moving the demonstrators along Front street and when we got to Soquel avenue.

"With the 10,000 acres up at the UCSC campus, I wish they'd keep their demonstrations up there. When they do come down here and assemble illegally, then we want to move them out of the streets to allow citizens to use the streets."

Question: "Do you believe the best solution is to move in with clubs and force the mob to disperse?"

"There is a concept that if you hit an

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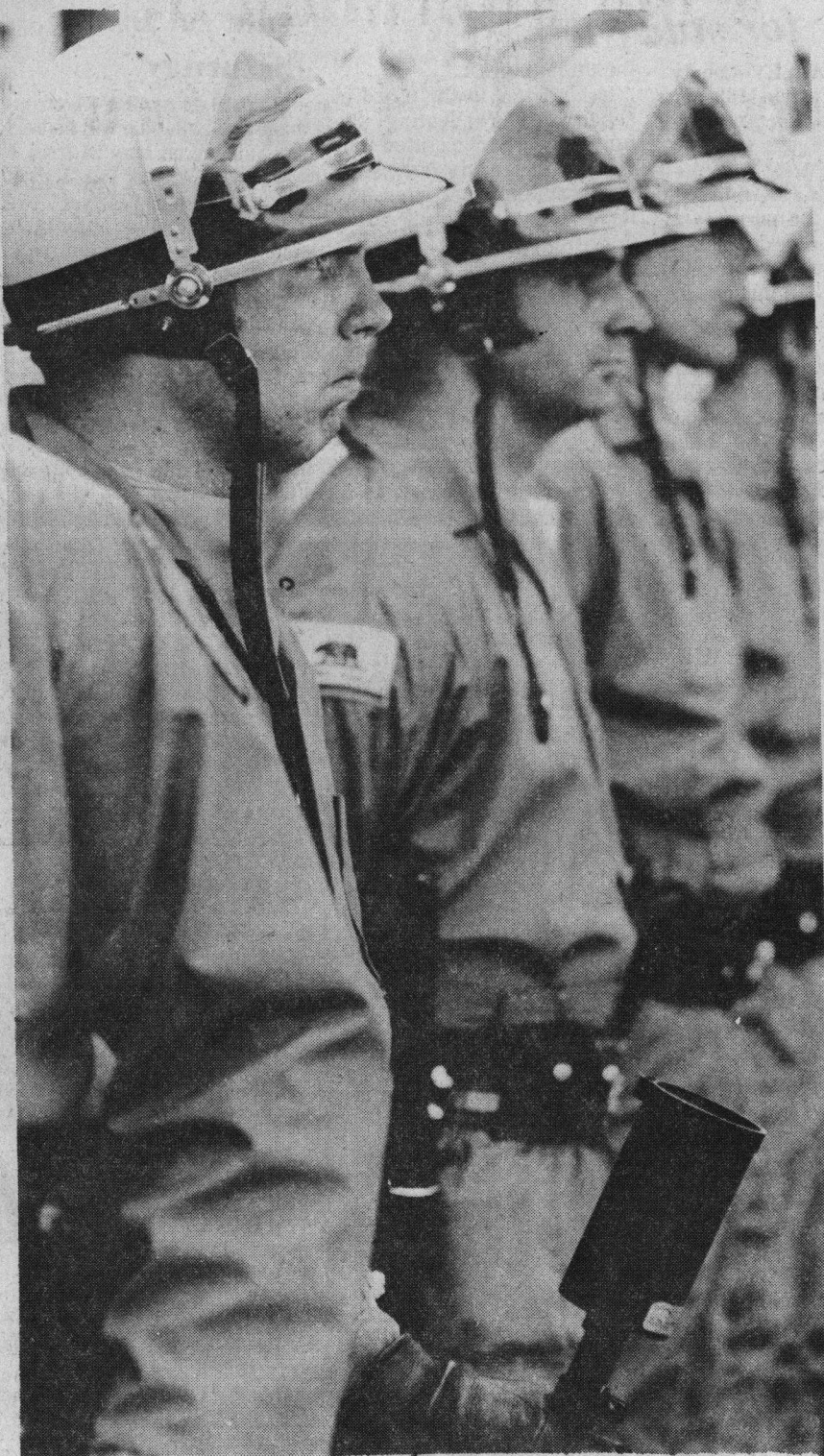
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Stress

The faces of authority--showing the stress of a difficult day.



Clearing the streets

The SC County Tac squad moves into to get the crowd moving. At this point the squad began a move down Front street to Soquel, where the Santa Cruz City Tac squad suddenly appeared and ran into the crowd, dispersing it.

Confrontation in Santa Cruz— dissent and control

Protestors clog streets—

(Continued from Page 1)

illegal demonstrator, he will think twice about coming back the next day. This thinking has gone back a long way in the history of this country. When the WWI veterans were demonstrating against another involvement in a war (WWII) the country moved in soldiers and tanks to break up the demonstrations; during the early union strikes the Pullman strikes the

position of unit action.

"Also in this past week, these men have had to work extra time each day—9 hours Tuesday, 17 hours Wednesday, and 12 hours Thursday. It takes a man with a lot of self control, a lot of patience.

"We learned a lesson Thursday. After the tactical squad left the streets, the responsible demonstrators from the campus said 'Let's break it up, we're not

"We're as much afraid that people of the right-wing will move in to attack the demonstrators and then we'll be right in the middle.

"We like to disperse demonstrators if and when this is possible. But I'd hate to hurt anyone, and I know the men on the squad would hate to wake up the next day and find out they'd hurt someone.

"I don't believe the demonstrators did

disrupt train

Valley Press Photos



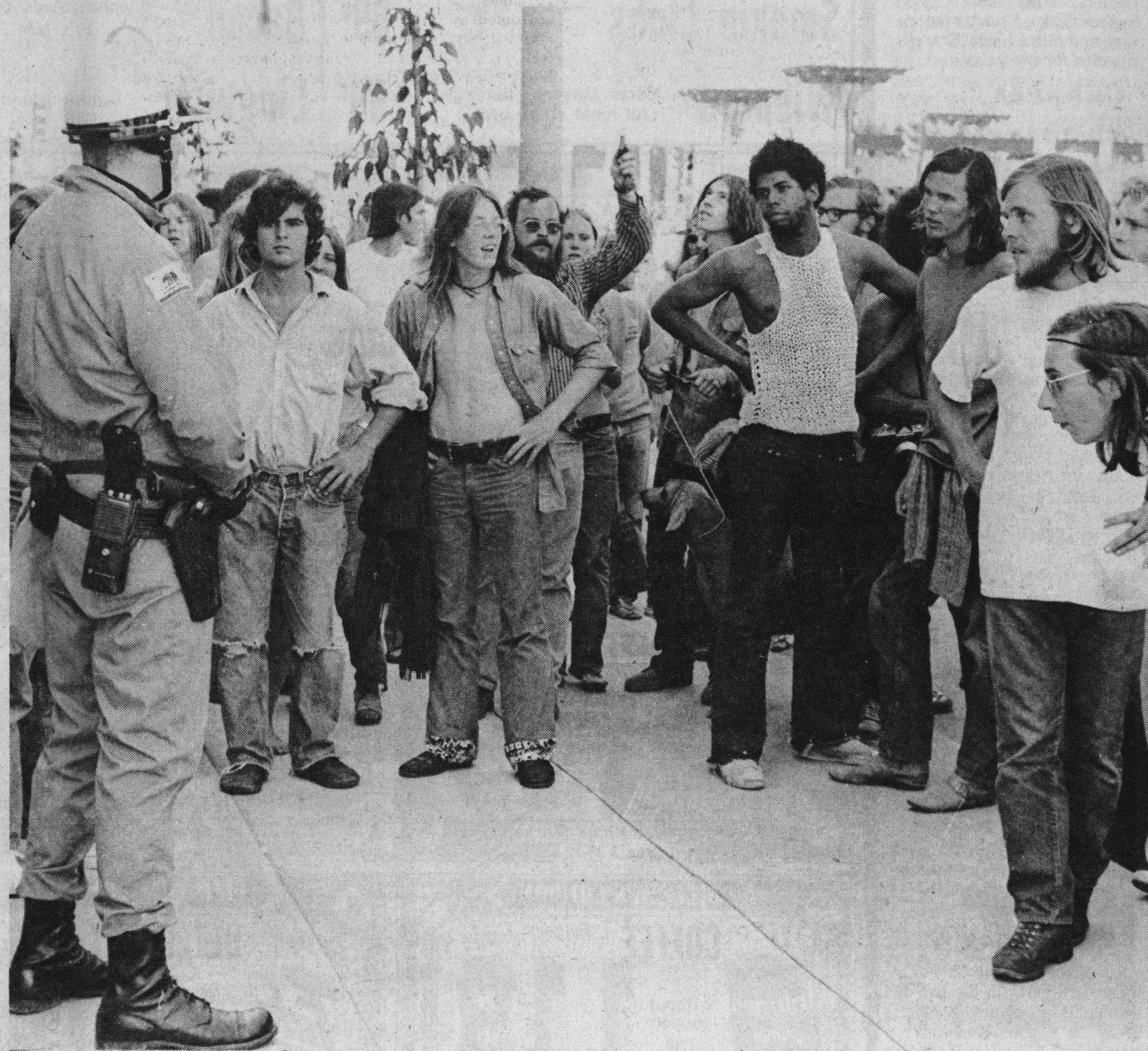
Rebel

The man, captured here, was considered one of the leaders of the radical element gathered near the sheriff's office Thursday. SC County Tactical squad members at this point were the target of some thrown rocks, and one bottle which skittered down the street. VALLEY PRESS PHOTO.

demonstrators were beaten unmercifully. "I believe they have a right to demonstrate—but we must control the movement of illegal demonstrations. We did this last week in Santa Cruz—the crowd moved when we wanted them to. "In moving the crowd, we go up to it with batons at the ready, at half-step and protruding the batons—and we have been able to control and move the demonstrators this way. "People have to understand that the tactical squads are made up of men who have been individually highly trained. It is difficult for them to be thrown into a

doing any good here.' But the hard radicals stayed and tried to force a confrontation. Even then, we were off the streets these people picked it up and went home. "I don't disagree with their ideology I have no argument with the philosophy of why they are demonstrating—I say 'stop the war.' Most of the guys on the force say 'stop the war.' "But anybody who comes down to do something unlawful, should expect to get moved. "My job is clear-cut—how I feel politically has nothing to do with it.

any real damage. They lit three small fires, and then moved out of the way for the fire truck on the one; the others were just boxes in the streets. "I noticed that while some leaned up against the trees, they were careful not to damage them. "I have to wonder, though, if the taxpayers realize how much this is costing them. "I also have to wonder, 'who won.?' Do the demonstrators believe they have won. Did we win. I just don't know who is winning this."



Confrontation

A lone Santa Cruz City Tactical squad members listens to the complaints, and jeers of the crowd. Here one of the people in the crowd said, "Leave him alone—he's just one guy."