

✓ Demonstrations 54 arrested in protests

6-13-85 Two ex-mayors among those taken into custody

□ 250 demonstrators in state arrested
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□ More than 1,000 arrested nationwide
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SANTA CRUZ — Police arrested 54 persons, including two former Santa Cruz mayors, during two days of protest over U.S. policies in Central America.

Twenty-eight demonstrators were arrested Wednesday afternoon for blocking the doorway to the armed forces recruiting station on Seabright Avenue near Water Street. Included in that number were former mayors Burt Muhly and Bruce Van Allen.

This morning, 26 persons were arrested for blocking the door to the Internal Revenue Service office at 303 Water St.

Nearly 140 protesters marched around the armed forces building for more than an hour Wednesday, waving banners calling for an end to U.S. support of Contras and for peace with Nicaragua.

"We're here to try to keep people from joining the service to go to war in Central America," said protest organizer John Hunter.

As a group of demonstrators, including Muhly and Van Allen, began sitting in the doorway of the armed forces office, a protester pleaded with a young Marine recruit through an open window.

Just after 3 p.m. police moved in and told the protesters the recruiters wished them to leave. When they refused, they were led one by one to a

paddy wagon and taken to County Jail for booking on trespassing charges. All were released on their promise to answer to the charge in court July 10.

As police led the protesters to the paddy wagon, one man yelled "You are the real freedom fighters." President Ronald Reagan has given that nickname to the Contras.

Reagan won a major victory in his effort to see the government of Nicaragua overthrown when the House of Representatives voted Wednesday to authorize "humanitarian" aid to the Contras. Six times previously, the House had refused to go along with the Senate on that issue.

From the rear of the paddy wagon, Muhly shouted to his fellow demonstrators: "Align yourself with your congressman (Leon Panetta).

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He made a damned fine speech today."

During the floor debate, Panetta pushed for an amendment that would have delayed the \$27-million aid for six months pending the outcome of ongoing peace negotiations. The amendment failed.

Panetta last year introduced legislation requiring the United States to participate in those peace talks, known as the Contadora talks, but the bill died in committee.

"I am not going to stand here before you ... and tell you that the Sandinista government is a model of democracy and human rights. I am not about the defend the Contras, either. Instead, I am here to defend peace."

Later in the debate, Panetta said,

"I think the biggest problem we have today ... is trying to define exactly what our policy is in Central America....

"Very frankly, it varies a great deal upon the interpretation of the various (congressmen).... Some have said that it represents war. Others say that it represents peace. Some say it represents humanitarian aid. Others say it represents military aid. And it is in line with the ambivalence of the policies of the administration, which one day supports the overthrow (of the Sandinista) government, the next day does not support the overthrow (of the Sandinista) government...."

Dana Bottorff of Ottaway News Service contributed to this report.