

# End of Vietnam war discussed by local activists

By Karen Minkel

The Vietnam War ended last week. Many of the people actively involved in the sixties anti-war demonstrations are still around the San Jose area and look back on that era as a useful productive time.

Most wholeheartedly support the new Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) in South Vietnam.

"I think it's fantastic," were the sentiments of both Margie Drake, now involved in the Revolutionary Student Brigade here, and John Hummer, coordinator of SJSU's Young Socialist Alliance.

"The Vietnamese people fought for 20 to 30 years to end this (imperialist) domination," Drake continued. She entered the anti-war movement after being clubbed in a 1970 SJSU demonstration against the invasion of Cambodia, she said.

"It's a great victory for the people of the whole world. It's trite, but totally true that the Vietnamese people waged a heroic struggle for the last 30 years," Hummer said.

Hummer was involved in protests in the Los Angeles area.

"The victory of the PRG was "always a forgone conclusion," Ron Gougler, now head resident of Moulder Hall said.

Gougler said he was involved in SJSU demonstrations in the late 60s and early 70s but is no longer interested in the student political movement.

"I felt the whole thing (the war) was a fiasco, so what's new?," Lee Garrett

asked. Garrett said he dropped out of the protest scene at the first hint of violence and is now working at a local recycling center.

All of the old protesters said they felt their efforts had helped bring about both an end to American involvement in Vietnam and ultimately an end to the war itself.

"Ten years after it's hard to say what effect the movement had in terms of cause and effect," Garrett said. "But in terms of atmosphere, I think it made a difference.

"I don't think it's possible to say that what we created was this (the end of the war), but it (the movement) created an atmosphere that made change possible," he said.

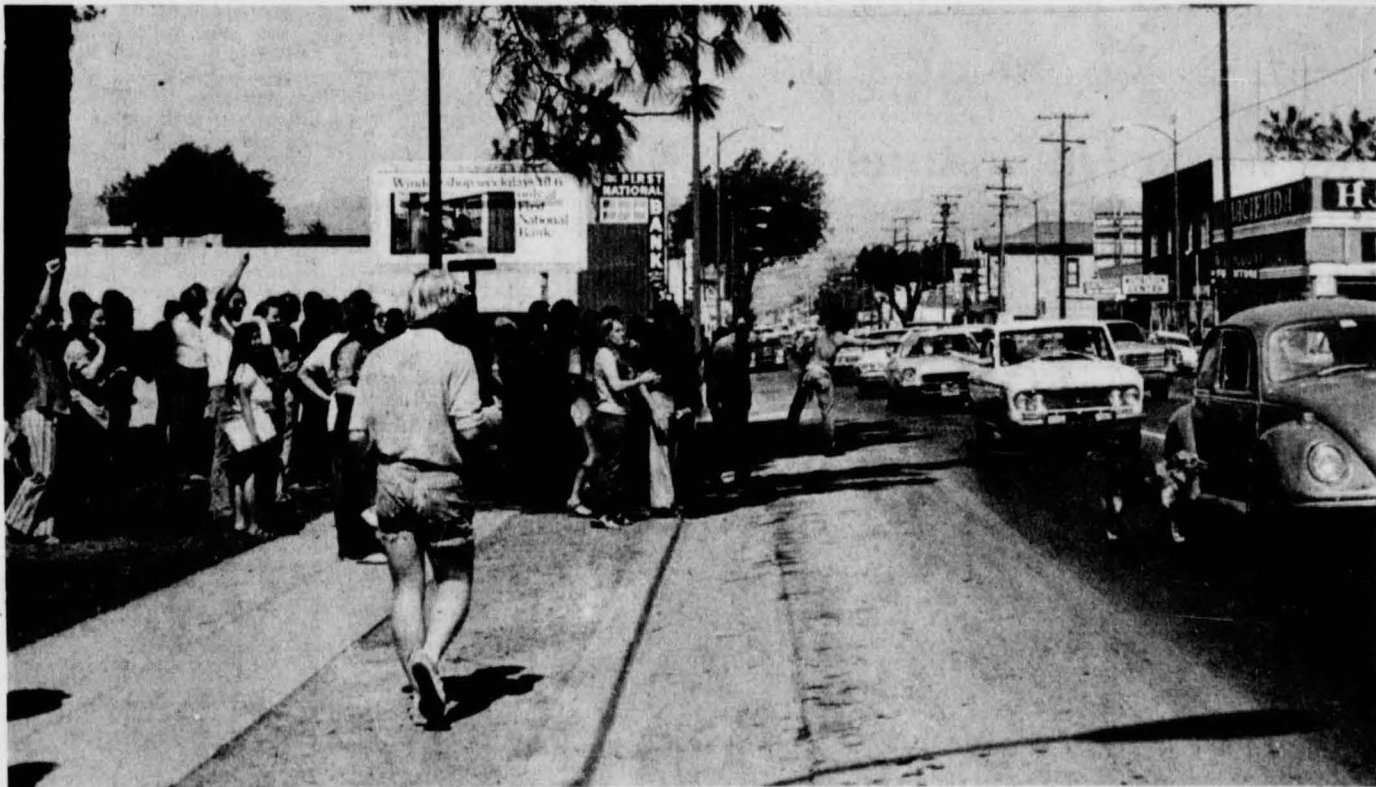
"A small group of people changed the entire consciousness of a nation," Hummer said.

"One of the major effects (of the anti-war protests) is the fact that President Ford and the rulers of this country, despite their fondest wish to reintroduce troops in Vietnam, couldn't because there would be an overwhelming outcry," Hummer added.

Gougler said, "Without question, I think the people in this country who were moving against our involvement in Vietnam made them (the government) listen to what we were saying.

"It wasn't any big bureaucrats. It was the people. We had something to say and we said it," he added.

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SIXTIES PROTEST--Anti-war protesters, involved in demonstrations like this one that tried to block Highway 101, believe their efforts helped bring end to the war.