

Protest!

Suburbanites march against Desert Storm

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

Demonstrations against Operation Desert Storm will not wane or die out, protesters vowed last week in the aftermath of the outbreak of hostilities.

"We want to get the troops home," said Lisa Klieger, a 1990 graduate of Plymouth High School. "We'll protest as long as it takes."

Klieger was one of an estimated 1,000 protesters who gathered at the McNamara Federal Building at Cass and Michigan about 4:30 p.m. Thursday. After about 40 minutes of speeches, chanting and marching, the protesters paraded along Michigan Avenue to Woodward on route to the Central Methodist Church less than a mile away.

"We're not here to burn flags or trash the city," Al Fishman told the demonstrators over a public address system. "We're here to protest the war."

Fishman, a Detroit war veteran who also protested the Vietnam War, is a spokesperson for the Committee for a Peaceful Resolution to the Gulf Crisis which has an office in Ferndale.

The committee is a coalition of numerous antiwar groups. Fishman said it has nearly 17,000 members in metro Detroit, including about 11,000 in Oakland County.

"WE WANT TO reawaken the conscience of America," Fishman said. "We have no shame for our tears... or for our anger."

Marsha Cohen of Farmington Hills agreed. "I don't like this feeling of helplessness about what's happening in the gulf," said Cohen, who believes that demonstrations she and others staged nearly two decades ago helped end the Vietnam War.

"This way I feel like I'm doing something," stated Cohen, who said she left antiwar pamphlets at Farmington Harrison High School, hoping students would attend the rally.

Kristine Calvin, a 1989 graduate of Troy High School, said the protest was against President Bush and the war, but not against the military personnel fighting it. "We support our troops," she said, "we don't want them to die."

Donna Hammond, an Oakland Community College student living in Troy, agreed. President Bush "was too soon with the planes."

Ari Schwartz of Birmingham was also critical of Bush. "Bush talks about a new world order," he said. "We say it should begin with peace."

"Instead of waging war, the U.S. should be putting its resources into housing for the homeless, or better education," Schwartz said. "How can we tell the world how to live when we have so many problems?"

ONE PROTESTER insisted George Bush is a war criminal. "Bush should be put on trial for war crimes," said Richard Feldman of Huntington Woods. Feldman said he is a member of the bargaining committee at UAW Local 900 at the General Motors truck plant in Warren.

Some of the chants had a familiar ring. One, for example, was, "Hell no, we won't go. We won't kill for Amos."

The Amos reference, of course, relates to the protesters' insistence the root cause of the war is oil. Hostilities, they assert, needlessly spill blood for oil.

Another chant offered a contemporary twist: "George Bush read our lips." It went: "Bring back the guns and ships."

Across Michigan Avenue, in front of the Michigan Bell Telephone building, a handful of counter demonstrators waved an American flag as if to taunt antiwar protesters.

"Get out of the country, you traitors," yelled Donald Lolsinger, a Detroit well-known for his anti-protest and anti-communist views. "If somebody tries to burn this American flag, waving brisley, there'll be SEETHUS trouble."

The demonstrator tried to take the flag, but was taken away by police who had at least four cars separating the two groups.

Ten peratures hovered near the 30 degree mark as the protesters started marching from the federal building toward the church. Temperatures seemed much colder because of brass bands at times gutting at 17 miles per hour, according to the U.S.



photos by DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Lisa Lost, a Plymouth High School graduate, uses a tamborine to make antiwar noise.

Weather Service

"I was in the middle of the group," said May Davidson, a protester from West Bloomfield. "And I couldn't see the beginning of the march... or the end!"

Her husband, Morris, did not march, but was waiting at the church to do crisis counseling. "My job was to help people who might have been traumatized by the war,"

said Davidson, a psychologist. "As it turned out, I didn't counsel anyone."

DAVIDSON SAID he believes the media has not objectively reported the depth of antiwar sentiment.

"The church was jammed," he said. But there are a lot more people against the war who haven't begun to protest yet.

Davidson also insists the media has not clearly reported how many protesters — especially those downtown Thursday — are against the war while supporting the troops. "Our disagreement is with Bush and his policies, not the troops," he said.

Kathy Dederion of West Bloomfield said she is upset equally with Bush and Saddam Hussein, president

of Iraq. "Because these two presidents are too stubborn to negotiate, people are dying," she said.

Danielle Walquist, a 1989 graduate of Plymouth High School, shook her head at what she considered the futility of war. "Any war is inexcusable," she said, "especially this one. It doesn't make any sense."



Donna Hammond (left), and Kristine Calvin, a Troy High School graduate, sported arm bands as well as picket signs.

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Jeff Anderson (left) and Scott Square yell across Michigan Avenue at two men with a banner supporting the war.

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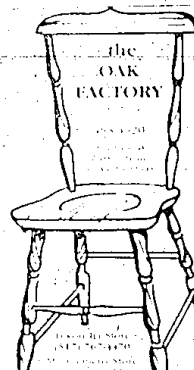
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