

CHRONICLE VAULT

Chronicle Covers: The powerful San Francisco State strike of 1968

By Tim O'Rourke

Nov. 22, 2016 | Updated: Nov. 21, 2018 5:07 p.m.

Classroom Raids

NEW CLASH AT STATE

The Weather

Bay Area: Clouds, fog today, clearing by afternoon. Low, 50; high in 60s. Winds to 15 m.p.h. See Page 38

San Francisco Chronicle

★★★★
FINAL

104th Year No. 319

★★★★

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1968

10 CENTS GARfield 1-1111

Panther Case

Five 'Cleared'
In Shootout--
No Jury ProbeNew Theory
On Battle

By Charles Renshaw

Holding charges against five of the eight men arrested in Tuesday's shootout involving Black Panthers and San Francisco police were dropped yesterday.

The remaining three men were charged with robbery and one of them, William Lee Brown, Jr., a two-time loser, was additionally charged with three counts of assault with intent to commit murder.

Brown said it was Brown's gun that got Lieutenant Derrick Cronk, Sergeant Robert Pilon and Inspector Michael O'Malley in the hospital.

Cronk, most seriously injured of the three officers, was reported still in critical condition yesterday but remains in the intensive care unit at San Francisco General Hospital.

Brown and his two co-defendants were released yesterday.

The San Francisco Grand Jury yesterday refused Mayor Joseph Alioto's request for an in-depth investigation of the Black Panthers as an organization advocating the killing of policemen.

Jury Foreman Don Fackler said the Mayor had "changed his position" and that a second inquiry at this time might prejudice the robbery and assault case against a group of Panthers involved in Tuesday's shootout.

Mayor Alioto countered immediately with the declaration that the Grand Jury's decision is "biased and not in the interests of the city."

He said he saw no harm in naming Bobby Seale, the Panther chairman, and Eldridge Cleaver, minister of information, to support their claim that the arrests by police were a frameup.

Showdown
On Campus

Members of the Tactical Squad faced students on the San Francisco State College campus

Strikers Invade Buildings
--Tac Squad Is Called InSmith Says
Classes to
Stay Open

The fragile peace at San Francisco State College was broken yesterday afternoon with the full resumption of the campus strike after President Robert R. Smith rejected a demand to suspend all classes.

Through the presence of more than 100 police on or near the campus was not enough to keep classrooms open, Smith said the college would attempt to reopen on schedule today.

The atmosphere was tense, even chaotic, with a police helicopter hovering overhead.

More S.F. State news on Pages 14-15

**2 Heart Transplants
For Patient at Stanford**

**12,000
Mysterious**

**Cleaver
UC Credit**

and more than 300 members of the Tactical Squad and other police units making repeated sweeps onto the campus.

The police were told when hundreds of students invaded five classroom buildings chanting "De alike! Shut it down!" and demanding a halt to all instruction.



The Chronicle's front page from Nov. 22, 1968, San Francisco State University protests.
Photo: The Chronicle 1968

It was the longest college strike in U.S. history, and it enhanced campuses across the country.

The Chronicle's front page from Nov. 22, 1968, covers the student-led strike at what was then San Francisco State College over the lack of diversity in courses, faculty and overall academia.

"The fragile peace at San Francisco State College was broken yesterday afternoon with the full resumption of the campus strike after President Robert R. Smith rejected a demand to suspend all classes," the story read.

"Though the presence of more than 100 police on or near campus was not enough to keep classrooms open, Smith said the college would attempt to reopen on schedule today."

Protests had been held for months, and the strike was nearing its third week. The Black Student Union and a collective group, the Third World Liberation Front, demanded changes to the Eurocentric prism through which their education was being processed. The actions at S.F. State prompted a second strike at UC Berkeley.

The protesters would clash with police over the course of five-month strike. On this day, the SFPD tactical squad was summoned to quell the demonstrations.

"The police were called when hundreds of students invaded five classroom buildings chanting 'On strike! Shut it down!' and demanded a halt to all instruction," the story read. "Three students were arrested."

The strikes would last until March 1969 and would bring about many changes in higher education across the nation. The first College of Ethnic Studies was established at S.F. State, and UC Berkeley saw the start of the ethnic studies department. Many more diverse faculty members were hired, and curricula soon better reflected the students who were using it to strengthen their minds.

See more front pages: Go to [SFChronicle.com/covers](https://sfchronicle.com/covers) to search a database of hundreds of Chronicle Covers articles that showcase the newspaper's history.

Chronicle Covers highlights one classic Chronicle newspaper page from our archive every day for 366 days. Library director Bill Van Niekerken and producers Kimberly Chua, Michelle Devera and Jillian Sullivan contributed to the project. Tim O'Rourke is the executive producer and editor of SFChronicle.com. Email: torourke@sfchronicle.com Twitter: [@TimothyORourke](https://twitter.com/TimothyORourke)

From: **SFChronicle.com | Archives** newsletters@sfchronicle.com
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Date: November 7, 2018 at 2:04 PM
To: jberrett@gmail.com

SA

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San Francisco Chronicle

The Vault

The San Francisco Chronicle Archives

Wednesday, November 7, 2018

How SF State's bloody strikes changed academia and nation 50 years ago

By Bill Van Niekerken





Stan Creighton / The Chronicle 1968

Fifty years ago, students at what was then [San Francisco State College](#) fought back and changed academia forever.

A student-led strike on the campus began Nov. 6, 1968, and lasted 134 days. By the time an agreement was finally reached, [students and police had violently clashed](#) many times and about 500 protesters had been arrested. A recent trip to The Chronicle's archive turned up dozens of photos - many not published in decades, if ever - that show the sacrifices the protesters made and the savagery of police trying to quell the uprising.

[*<<< Click here to see more photos from the 1968-69 S.F. State protests >>>*](#)

Several student-administration conflicts had started during the 1967 school year, but the suspension of Black Panther George Murray, a graduate student and instructor who urged students to bring guns to campus, escalated the protests into a full-blown effort to close the college.

On the Monday after Murray's suspension, roving bands of students representing several organizations such as the [Black Student Union](#) and the Third World Liberation Front interrupted classrooms, exhorting their fellow students to leave in support of the strike. By the time 35 police officers arrived from the nearby Taraval Station, the campus was in chaos.

[Over several days](#) faculty support grew, as did the violence between police and strikers. A midday campus skirmish on Nov. 13, 1968, saw eight youths arrested and several injured, prompting San Francisco State President Robert Smith to suspend classes.

Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh and Gov. Ronald Reagan demanded the college be reopened. The governor called Smith's actions an act of capitulation. Reagan said: "Professors are paid to teach, not lead or encourage violent forays. If they refuse to honor the trust our citizens have placed in them, they should look for work elsewhere."

Smith resigned on Nov. 26, and S.I. Hayakawa was installed as president of the college. Hayakawa announced he would open the college on Dec. 2 "under a state of emergency." Three hundred police officers were on hand to enforce tough new rules.

Ten people were arrested, and standoffs defined the first day as Hayakawa attempted to reopen the college. A day later, nine were injured and 31 arrested. The Dec. 4 Chronicle headline called it the "worst day yet." Hayakawa, for his part, stood strong in his convictions: "I want to make it clear to everyone that I will break up this reign of terror."

How rough did it get? Chronicle photographer Vince Maggiora was clubbed by police while photographing the action. A second blow was stopped when he identified

himself as a member of the press.

As mediation broke down and violence continued, Hayakawa announced that Christmas break would begin a week early, giving the situation three weeks to cool down. The college attempted to reopen Jan. 6, 1969.

The new year brought a teacher strike in support of the student's demands. Reagan, responding to the teachers' action, declared, "I think it has to be kept open, if you have to surround with whatever force is necessary. ... Those who want to get an education, those who want to teach should be protected at the point of a bayonet if necessary."

On March 4, after weeks of picketing, protesting and negotiating, most teachers returned to work, under terms of a settlement approved by the union and college authorities.

Two weeks later, an official administration statement read, "Dr. Hayakawa will announce specific plans for establishing a school of ethnic studies, to include a black studies department. He will also announce plans for expanding minority programs and for extending educational opportunities to a broader spectrum of the San Francisco community."

Soon after, Black Student Union leaders Benny Stewart and Jerry Varnado climbed on cafeteria chairs at midday, cupped their hands and told the 1,000 students gathered around, "The central committee has decided to accept the agreement.

"The strike is over."



More from Chronicle Vault

- **Chronicle Covers:** Read more about the [San Francisco State strike of 1968](#), through the lens of The Chronicle's front page from Nov. 22 of that year.
- **A salute to the BSU:** The Black Student Union at San Francisco State University was the first organization of its kind in the U.S., and it set the standard for how these groups could help students and the community at large. [Read about Jimmy Garrett and Jerry Varnado](#), who were part of the group in the mid-1960s.
- **A clash in history:** Five decades ago, Vietnam War protesters took a stand, shutting down the Oakland Induction Center, a governmental hub where draftees were processed before being sent to the armed services. The response from authorities was swift and, at times, savage. [The images from the conflict](#) in mid-October 1967 remain stunning.
- **In their words:** [Free Speech Movement activists](#) reflect on their accomplishments in the 1960s. Question: What is the event you remember most? One respondent's answer: "Sitting in a police car for 32 hours, from noon on Oct. 1, 1964, until 8 p.m. on Oct. 2."



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The Chronicle Vault newsletter publishes at noon Wednesdays and 8:30 a.m. Sundays and highlights more than 150 years of San Francisco stories pulled from The Chronicle's archive. It is written and edited by Bill Van Niekerken, the library director of The Chronicle, and Tim O'Rourke, the newsroom's assistant managing editor and executive producer of [SFChronicle.com](#). Follow [Chronicle Vault on Instagram](#). Contact Bill at bvanniekerken@sfchronicle.com and Tim at torourke@sfchronicle.com.

Recently rediscovered photos show the violence on the San Francisco State College campus and the savagery of police



Bill Van Niekerken

Nov. 7, 2018

Updated: Nov. 7, 2018 4 a.m.



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Officers lead Donald McAllister away as police clash with demonstrators supporting a strike at San Francisco State on Dec. 3, 1968.

Photo: Stan Creighton / The Chronicle 1968

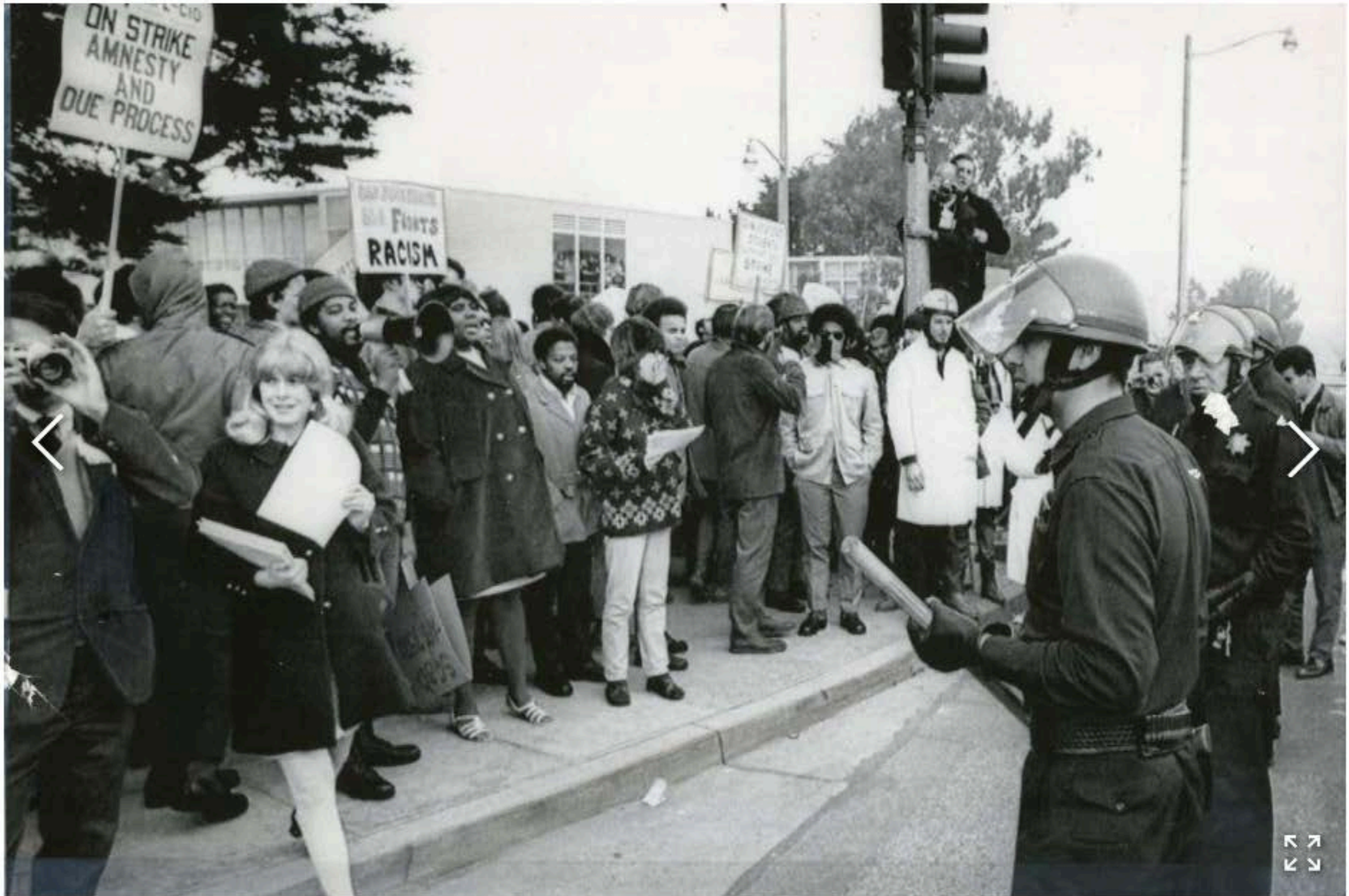


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Officers on horses waded into a crowd student protesters at 19th and Holloway streets on Dec. 9, 1968. Demonstrators had provoked the officers by throwing rocks.

Photo: United Press International 1968



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Officers in riot gear face off with demonstrators, including students and teachers, in January 1969.

Photo: Associated Press 1969

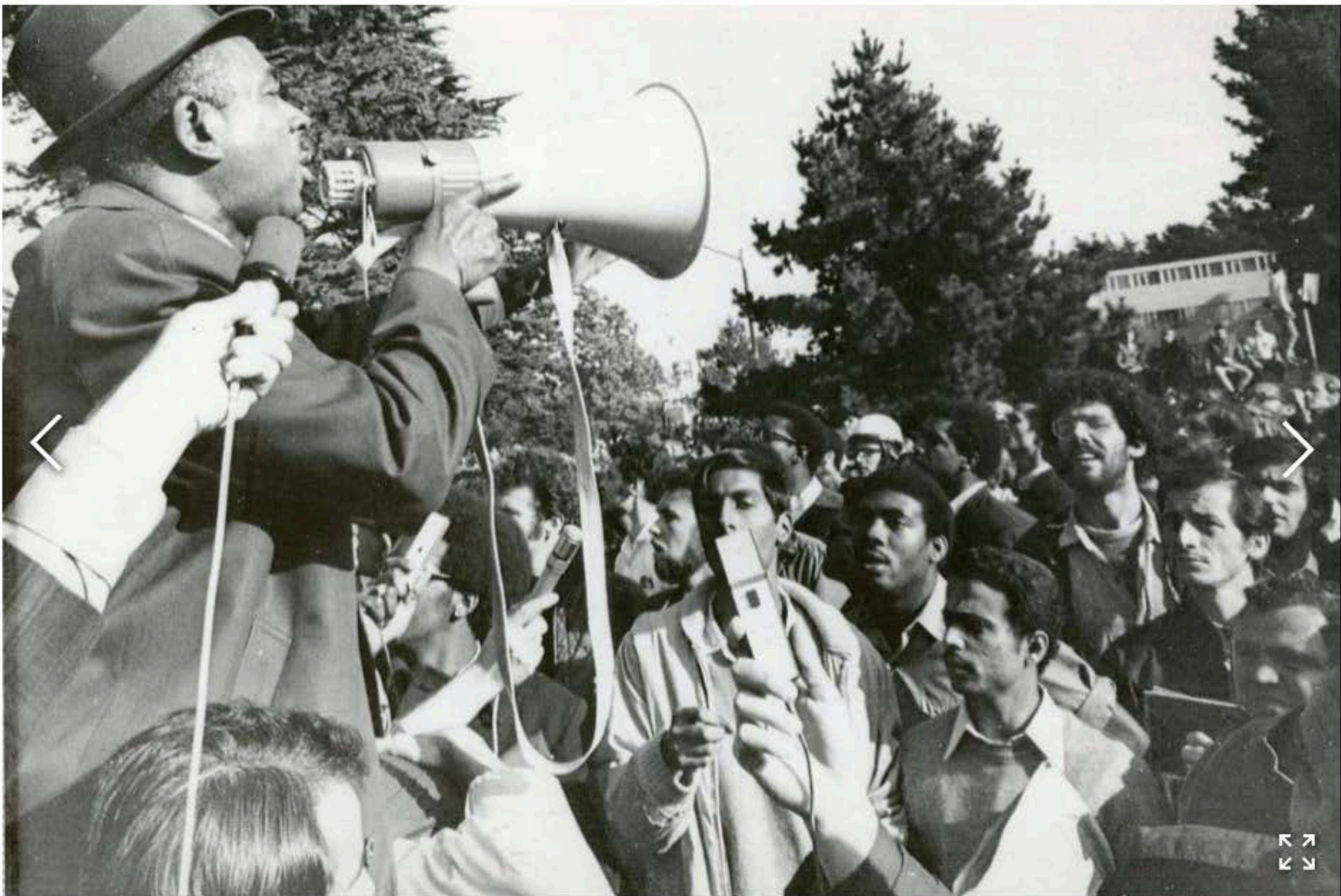


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A group of officers known as the TAC Squad patrol as roving bands of demonstrators tried to shut San Francisco State on Nov. 6, 1969.

Photo: Vincent Maggiora / The Chronicle 1968



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Carlton B. Goodlett addresses demonstrations at San Francisco State. "If we keep our heads, no violence should emanate from this quarter," he says as about 500 officers enter campus to break up the demonstration on Dec. 4, 1968.

Photo: Associated Press 1968



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Police battle pro-strike students under at San Francisco State on Dec. 3, 1968.

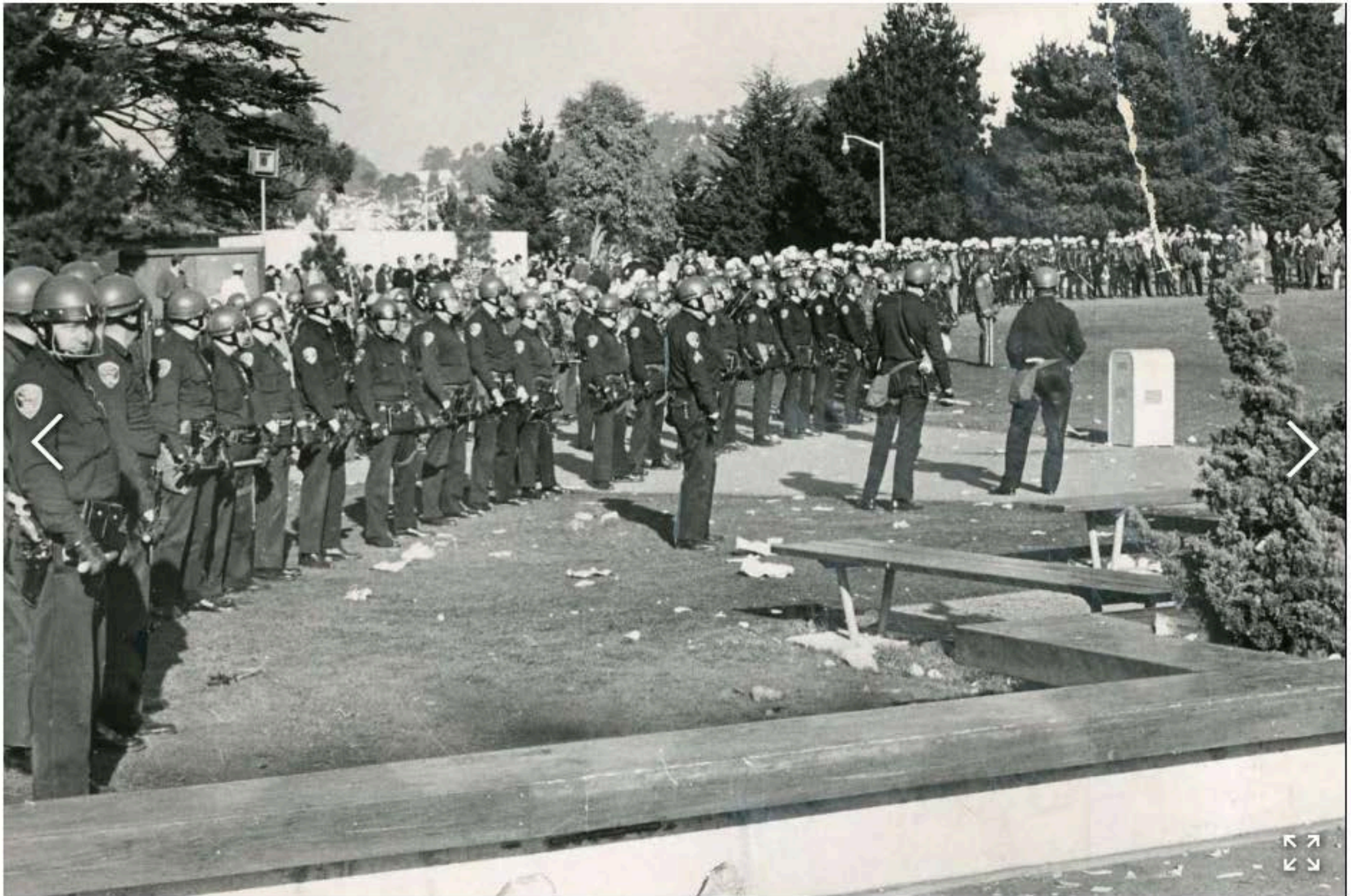
Photo: Art Frisch / The Chronicle 1968



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Officers in riot gear put on a show of force in front of the cafeteria on Dec. 4, 1968.

Photo: Jerry Telfer / The Chronicle 1968