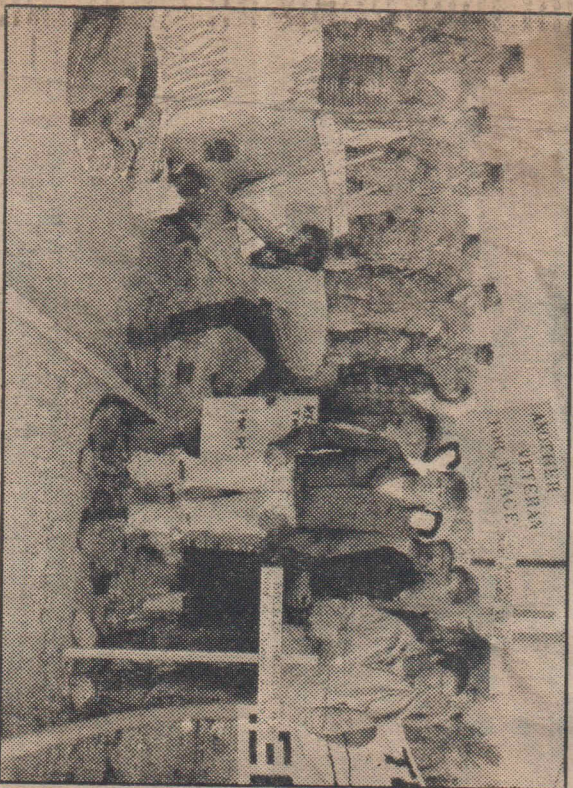


Willson feels 'no ill will' toward train crew



Richard Wisdom — Mercury News

WATCHED — Under Marines' watchful eyes, protesters stand on railroad tracks near Concord weapons station

Maimed demonstrator plans to rejoin protest

By Kristin Huckshorn
Mercury News Staff Writer

WALNUT CREEK — Ten days ago, S. Brian Willson lay bleeding on a dusty railroad track. Friday, he asked compassion for the crew aboard the Navy train that ran over him.

"I don't know what state of mind they were in, or what orders they were under," said Willson, in his first public appearance since the Sept. 1 incident at the Concord Naval Weapons Station. "But I know that they have a soul and they have a heart."

Willson, a Vietnam veteran and peace activist, was struck as he sat on the track to protest alleged

U.S. weapons shipments to Central America. He lost both legs below the knee.

But at a Friday morning press conference at John Muir Hospital, Willson said he would resume protesting as soon as he's able to walk on his prosthetic legs. And he's looking forward to revisiting the track where he was hit, "even if it's on crutches."

Willson, 46, appeared at the press conference seated in a wheelchair and wearing a red St. Louis Cardinals baseball cap. He appeared pale but sounded strong as he spoke for 15 minutes, answering four questions that reporters were required to submit



Richard Wisdom — Mercury News

S. Brian Willson speaks to reporters Friday; his wife, Holly Rauen, listens at far right

in writing beforehand.

"I feel no ill will toward the people who were on that train," he said.

However, Willson's lawyer,

Tom Steel, adopted a harder line.

Steel — joined by Willson's wife, Holly Rauen — said investigations into the incident should result in charges including at-

tempted murder against the person who ordered the train to move and those who executed the order.

But he suggested that the ongoing Navy investigation, "may

amount to nothing more than a cover-up."

Friday afternoon, base spokesman Dan Tikalsky said that let-
See WILLSON, Page 2F

'Total amnesia' follows injury

WILLSON, from Page 1F

ters had been sent to several protesters, including Rauen, requesting their eyewitness accounts of the incident. Tikalsky said the letters were sent by Capt. S.J. Pryzby, who is conducting the Navy investigation.

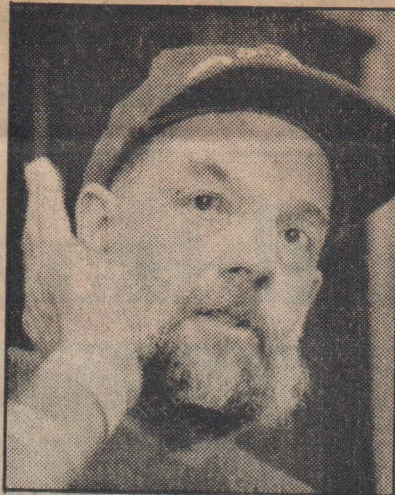
Steel said Friday afternoon that he's pleased the Navy had decided to interview witnesses. But he said he still had "grave doubts" about the honesty of the Navy investigation, based on public statements about the incident by base Cmdr. Lonnie Cagle that Steel said "we know have been untrue."

Steel also said that he had asked the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department to tell him the name of the person who ordered the train to move. He said that request was denied.

Willson would not be able to help investigators recreate the incident. He said Friday that he did not remember anything beginning from the time he sat on the track until the day after the accident. "I have total amnesia," he said.

Willson said he thought the train would stop before it reached him and two other demonstrators on the track, and that they would be removed by sheriff's deputies.

That the train would continue



Len Lahman — Mercury News

'My plan is to continue essentially the same course of action.'

— S. Brian Willson

moving, Willson said, "never was considered a conceivable option by anybody, including myself."

Willson began rehabilitation Wednesday. He said Friday that he is walking with the support of parallel bars and wants to begin walking on crutches within a few weeks. He said he hopes to leave the hospital within a month.

He'll continue active protesting, he said, as soon as he's physically able. "My plan is to continue essentially the same course of action," he said.

A U.S. House subcommittee

hearing into the incident was announced Friday. Two U.S. representatives from the East Bay, Barbara Boxer, D-Greenbrae, and Ron Dellums, D-Oakland, said the investigations subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee would hold a hearing after the Navy issues its report.

In San Francisco, Nicaraguan Contra leader Adolfo Calero said Friday at a press conference that Willson was injured in a "needless" way.

Mercury News wire services contributed to this report.