

# Dieppa Defends EOC In Lively Board Meeting 5-10-67

An informational report on the activities of the Economic Opportunity commission of the county erupted into an innuendo-filled, emotion-stuffed display at the county board of supervisors meeting yesterday.

There was yelling, gavel-pounding, a walk-out by Chairman Tom Black and a display of war medals by Ismael Dieppa, the commission executive director.

Black said the discussion came about when Dieppa volunteered to explain the commission's progress. He appeared to read a prepared report and answer questions. It was in the question period that the action picked up and Black packed out.

Dieppa carefully answered the questions, defending the commission and its progress.

"Do you feel that you're really reducing poverty?" asked Supervisor Robert Burton.

Dieppa said the program has an "impact on poverty." He said the idea was to allow people to become "gainfully employed and become involved in his own problems."

"Why don't you let the State Department of Employment do that?" Burton asked.

Dieppa said his commission not only finds jobs, but creates them by contacting employers and trying to work out private training programs and other projects.

Supervisor Vincent Locatelli said he understood the EOC was "helping hippies."

"It's very unfortunate that mass media has been the major source of information for many of us," Dieppa answered.

He declared the EOC is not "subsidizing" the hippies and "differentiates between voluntary poor and involuntary poor" and "addresses" efforts toward the involuntary poor. He said, however, that all should have opportunities.

Burton began pressing more, asking if some of the people in the audience were being paid by the EOC to attend. Dieppa strongly denied it.

A question from the audience drew Dieppa to explain that the county EOC program has 37 employees, 20 of them "poor people" who were unemployed at the time the commission was formed, and 10 "professional" workers. He said the lowest wage is \$1.50 an hour for community development aides. He said his salary is \$12,500.

Henry Hasty of Scotts Valley stood up and began to read a loyalty oath. Black held this was not a question, but Hasty declared such an oath should be required of all EOC employees.

"I suspect it might shake a few things out of the woods," Hasty declared.

He also introduced a signed statement from his wife, Mary, a former EOC employee.

She declared: "We were to go to the courthouse and look up properties owned by all of the public officials and we were to find out everything there was to know about them so that if we did not want them in office we would have enough information against them that we could get them out."

"Some of us might not realize

there is a war in the United States, a war in California, and a war right here in Santa Cruz county," Hasty declared. "I request that this board . . . require every paid employee of the EOC to sign that loyalty oath."

Dieppa replied that the EOC does require an oath. Hasty said he went to the EOC and applied for a job and the applications did not have any oath.

Black's temper hit the boiling point when Mrs. H. R. Lans of Santa Cruz began questioning Dieppa about a duplication of services by EOC.

"By God, if you're keeping on with this, I'm leaving right now," Black bellowed.

The gavel crashed and a recess was declared.

When Black returned and resumed the session some 10 minutes later, Mrs. Lans was still standing, waiting to ask more questions.

The questions continued, with Mrs. Lans again asking if the EOC doesn't actually cover areas already being handled by other agencies.

Dieppa said welfare provides "subsistence needs" to families. "We're doing more than giving a dollar to a family," he said, holding that the EOC tries to make families self-sufficient.

Mrs. Lans then accused the EOC of supporting the peace march, which she termed the "march of traitors."

"The EOC has never supported and will never support a peace march," Dieppa declared.

It was here that Dieppa pulled a box out of a paper bag and displayed a military medal which he said he won for making 30 bombing missions in Korea. He also displayed his Air Force honorable discharge.

"I think my loyalty to my country is unquestionable," Dieppa stated.

"I lost my country (Estonia) to very peculiar government. This is now my country to fight for," Mrs. Lans countered.

Dieppa made a strong point to invite the objectors to attend the regular EOC meetings.

"You're welcome to attend these meetings. We're very willing to work with you because that's what community action is," he said.