

EOC

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Board Defers Action On EOC

By Wallace Wood
Sentinel Staff Writer

Groans of disappointment and some angry comments greeted the postponement of any action on deciding the fate of the Economic Opportunity Commission after a 3½-hour hearing yesterday.

The cries came from just a few of the over 200 persons who attended the Green Amendment hearing before county supervisors. "We want to see you vote!" and "Isn't this a democracy?" the callers cried.

Supervisors said they don't want to be rushed into a decision, no matter how anxious the audience. They continued the hearing to May 14 at 2:30 p.m. but said they do not want to listen to more testimony then.

The Green Amendment gives supervisors the right to take away the designation of the EOC as the local "community action agency (CAA)" for putting federal anti-poverty programs into effect.

It would replace the present organization with either a new group made up of government officials, the poor, and community groups, or by an advisory

board with the county supervisors themselves in control.

Most friends of the EOC, and at least one opponent, Mrs. H. R. Lans, suggested keeping the present agency as the CAA.

Many of the persons who spoke in favor of this move seemed to belong to the poor or minority groups; some were EOC employes such as Execu-

tive Director Andy Dieppa, and some were clergymen and representatives of local organizations.

Opponents included such long-time EOC battlers as Mrs. Lans and Ken Burmeister, but some new faces as well. Picket signs displayed against the EOC were seen after the hearing.

Jesse Moore of Santa Cruz threw a new charge into the

fight when he declared the present EOC staff "has alienated every agency, public and private," in the county during its three-year existence.

"If you speak against the EOC, you do not work in this area," Moore declared. "Contrary to what Mr. Dieppa said, there is something to fear from the EOC."

The young man added, however, that he nevertheless is in favor of the goals of the anti-poverty program.

The thrust of opponents' arguments seemed to be that the county still should refuse to give any help to the EOC or federal Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) program.

Mrs. Lans said switching the program to give more control to the county would only give an aura of respectability to the program. "I don't want to see the EOC jump on the supervisors' coattails," she said.

Alice Earl Wilder of Ben Lomond declared the board of supervisors could do a better job than the present EOC board in taking over the anti-poverty program. She said the county could do the same work more efficiently.

"While our pockets are not

picked here, they are being picked in Washington," she said.

This idea was challenged by Jan Stenovich of the Santa Cruz YWCA. She said the county has done little up to now and "the vital thing has been that the people are being reached."

Charles Oliver added that the organization "allows those peo-

ple some decision-making power," while county control would take this away.

Among groups favoring the EOC were the League of Women Voters, Cabrillo Student Council the Mid-County Democratic Club, and the Santa Cruz Council of Churches, and the Spanish-Speaking Senior Citizens of Watsonville.

Persons who spoke in favor of the EOC included the Rev. Jack Takayanagi, the Rev. Robert S. Thomas of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Casey Chatham, Jose Amaro, Pastor James Kubic of the Freedom Community Methodist church, Zack Wasserman of the UCSC Tutorial project under the EOC, Sylvester Carter, EOC commissioner Sarah Eichorn, Mrs. Flora Mesa, Project FIND director Liddell Walker, the Rev. Charles Orr of the Presby-

terian Community Church, Len Thigben, William Altura, Roberta Richardson, Joseph Walker, Juanita Gowder, Joe Gaxiola, and Bill Moore.

One of the most exact of EOC opponents was Theodore Schulz of Aptos, who charged the EOC has never made a public financial report, spends too much money on salaries, and has had a "corrupting influence" on the public agencies it deals with. He made his statements in a legal affidavit.

Joyce Wallace of the Neighborhood Youth Corps anti-poverty program, said a county take-over would not destroy the program itself.

The main argument used by friends of the EOC is that it is doing some good and is giving the poor some respect and standing long desired. "We know the EOC is not a perfect instrument, but is the best so far," Dieppa concluded.

His claims were backed by most of the speakers who said the EOC should be kept on the job. "We want to help ourselves. Only the person bred poor, born poor and brought up poor all his life can understand what this means," Gaxiola said. "The EOC gives us this chance."

IT'S FOR THE BIRDS

Pana, Ill. (AP). — Fire heavily damaged the Stanley Pugsley family home east of Pana yesterday, and Mrs. Pugsley blamed it on a bird that carried a lighted cigarette to its nest in the attic. The blaze left the Pugsleys and their 10 children homeless.

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Two Local Entries Seek BofA Achievement Honor

Three Santa Cruzans will participate in the Bank of America Achievement Awards final

will compete against six other students.

Other divisions of the contest