

# SC Council Minority Criticizes Mayor For Going It Alone

The minority bloc of the Santa Cruz City Council charged Tuesday that Michael Rotkin is failing to bring some items before the council that he should, and is bringing in others that would better be left to federal foreign relations advisers.

At Tuesday's council meeting, Councilman John Mahaney chastised the mayor for responding on his own to the state Office of Emergency Services concerning its nuclear evacuation plan.

In that response, Rotkin said the state and federal plan to evacuate 400,000 San Francisco area people to Santa Cruz in the event of nuclear war "is insane."

Rotkin said he would not cooperate in "such a dishonest and misleading plan."

Mahaney said he agreed this area could not support 400,000 refugees, but that Rotkin should have asked the full council to respond.

Councilman Joseph Ghio backed Mahaney, saying Rotkin had made it sound as though he were speaking for the full council.

Rotkin drew backing from his political side of the fence when councilmembers Bruce Van Allen, Mardi Wormhoudt and John Laird complimented the mayor on the letter and said it voiced their opinion.

Ghio said, "This implies it is a policy of the city, and that's what's wrong with this letter. It was inappropriate and shouldn't have been sent."

Rotkin said the letter came into the city from OES Director Alex Cunningham and had simply been an argument for the plan and had not asked for an official city response. He said it had been around for some time and was listed on the council's letter sheet.

Councilman Spiro Mellis, who is not exactly the cutting edge of the minority bloc, advised Rotkin, "I think there was an error in judgment. In San Jose, the mayor was opposed, but said it would be taken to the full council."

Laird solidly supported Rotkin, saying the state and federal plan made it sound "as though we can move 400,000 people down here to Santa Cruz for a nuclear weekend and then shoot them back to San Francisco after the bomb is dropped."

Laird noted that number of cars couldn't get over Highway 17, then angrily added, "This plan is not only bad, it's taking away from the real needs" the county has from its January storms.

Rotkin also drew opposition to his proposal for council action to welcome any South African citizens who become refugees because they refuse military service in the uniform of the segregationist government.

Rotkin and Van Allen made it clear that they expect the offer will be more symbol than substance. Rotkin said, "We should make this moral stand to represent our citizens."

Ghio chided, "Here again we need our foreign policy arm — I think this is silly."

Mahaney said, "I think it's ridiculous. We can't solve the problems of unemployment and housing right here (and) we've taken Cubans and Vietnamese into our

country and you can only take so many."

Rotkin argued the number of refugees would be "an insignificant number" if they came here. He said the defense department was holding back from making a commitment and that Santa Cruz should join some other

cities that have held out a helping hand.

Ghio moved to table the item, but that motion failed on the council's three to four split.

The resolution passed with Wormhoudt, Laird, Van Allen and Rotkin supporting.