

## Two Months Pay

# Council Firm On Cutting Post But Will Compensate Bruce

By Sy Berg

Santa Cruz councilmen, by 7-0 vote, tempered an important re-organization move with mercy last night.

They moved to compensate long-time Field Services Director Donald Bruce until April 1, despite the fact that his position will be abolished January 27.

They accomplished this by amending an ordinance before them for final adoption last night. The revised ordinance will be published for final consideration December 27.

Protests against the job cut were raised from the audience.

Elimination of Bruce's job, with an estimated \$11,000 annual saving, is the result of an economy-motivated re-organization of the public works department.

This was recommended to the council by City Manager Dave Koester and Public Works Director Bill Fieberling.

Koester last night reiterated his stand.

He pointed out that he was brought in by the council to solve the vexing problem of how to pay for increasing costs without raising taxes or cutting the amount or quality of services.

His solution — increased efficiency and elimination of waste and duplication.

He recalled that at least \$50,000 per year will be saved as a result of this and earlier elimination of other jobs.

"This amounts to 10 cents on the tax rate," he reminded.

Councilman Norman Lezin expressed the feeling of the governing body when he disclaimed any personality considerations had influenced the move.

"I've known Don Bruce for years. I found him an enthusiastic and zealous citizens; and while I knew he worked for the city, I didn't know his title.

"As a private citizen my sympathies are with him. But as a councilman, after long study of this job elimination — during much of which I didn't even connect the name of Bruce with the job — I feel we have the responsibility to sustain the city manager's administrative pro-

posal, which is reasonable."

The council, while under no legal obligation to do so, agreed to hear protests from Bruce and his supporters in the audience.

Bruce submitted a letter requesting a delay to give him "some time to defend himself."

John R. Biondi, representd as chairman of a "Committee for Bruce," submitted a letter which cited Bruce's 17 years of city service, his tireless work during the December, 1955 flood, and a subsequent heart attack.

The letter went on to reprove the council for its proposed action, urging it to take account of the past record and offering three suggestions:

1. Keep Bruce in his present position.
2. Offer him complete and full retirement.
3. Provide another city job with equal status and pay.

Koester later suggested a termination pay arrangement "to ease the strain of transition."

He said Bruce will be given priority consideration if another job opens up that he would fit in.

Mayor Bert Snyder corrected one protest that "one job has been eliminated (Bruce's) but another has been added (Fieberling's), so how could there be any saving to the taxpayers?"

Snyder pointed out that Fieberling will fill two previous posts — city engineer and field services director. He said confusion probably results from the new public works director title.

Fieberling is assisted by Loren Scofield, administrative assistant; Fenton Ham, assistant city engineer; and Walter Keller, inspection services director. Keller has taken on added responsibility for traffic coordination and parking meter operations.

Snyder, stressing the need for economy moves, cited overwhelming defeat last February of a charter amendment to increase the general fund tax limit 50 cents to \$2 per \$100 assessed valuation.

## Guards Bent On Revenge Kill

## 23 Cons In Argentine Prison