

# CAB, La Coalicion Debate Poverty Program Control

By DALE POLLOCK  
Sentinel Staff Writer

In a public hearing that resembled a verbal ping pong match, county supervisors Tuesday were inundated with testimony on behalf of both La Coalicion and the Community Action Board as the county's new Community Action Agency.

The public hearing was part of a complicated 50-day process that began Nov. 8 when supervisors designated La Coalicion the "provisional" choice to head up the federally-funded anti-poverty agency. At stake is some \$265,000 in programs that will be administered by the group chosen to head the new, non-profit private organization.

The board is committed to making a decision by Dec. 13, but Chairman Ed Borovatz made it clear that the designation of La Coalicion is by no means a "fait accompli."

The hundred or so people who crowded into the tiny CAO's conference room apparently took that message to heart, as speaker after speaker trumpeted the praises of La Coalicion and CAB, respectively.

John T. Henry accused the entire CAA proposal as "the biggest rip-off Mexico ever pulled off," while Robert Hall suggested CAB administer north county and La Coalicion south county, with just a "tiny coordinating office" in between.

Going right to the heart of many fears expressed by CAB supporters, La Coalicion board member Tom Sullivan said he had experienced no discrimination as an Anglo in five years

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with the Chicano-dominated organization. "The reason we serve Chicanos is because they are the constituency of our area," he noted.

That did not deter CAB member Howard Baldwin, who represents the Scotts Valley-San Lorenzo Valley area on the CAB, from voicing his concerns that the Valley would be "forgotten" should La Coalicion take over. His sentiments were echoed by senior John Hector of Felton, who complained, "Seniors would have to go to a new office and a new city. We can see no reason for the change."

Don Hartigan, who administers the county's Head Start program, described the present CAB management as "efficient and effective," and predicted an "agonizing period of time" until La Coalicion would be able to give his group the technical assistance it needs.

Following Hartigan's presen-

tation, Borovatz began to zero in on specific figures of where the county's poor are located and how well they are being served in an effort to determine whether county services are being supplied in proportion to the needs of poor people. He asked program directors to supply such information to the board.

Meanwhile, the parade at the microphone continued. Johnny Satomayor testified on La Coalicion's behalf while representing three of the major "cooperativa campesinos" in south county. "They are 100 percent in support of La Coalicion," he told supervisors.

But Michael Nicholas, a WELAC worker, drew the analogy that "If Santa Cruz County is an organism, maintain the stomach in the center, not at the feet or the head," an apparent reference to plans to move the CAA to Watsonville.

CAB chairman Scott Bagley, attempting to counter previous criticism of his organization, told supervisors, "CAB would not be an agency for community action if it didn't bring up controversy." He added, "The only thing old about CAB is the programs, which have been around for years."

### Chiropractic Mini-Lectures By Telephone

A series of free, telephone mini-lectures on chiropractic treatment for various aches and pains is being sponsored by chiropractors across the nation, according to a spokesman.

The taped lectures can be heard by dialing the toll free number, 800-634-6543 and requesting the lecture by number.

A complete list of tape numbers can be obtained by contacting Peter Thibodeau, 913 Cedar St., 426-2210.

### Hanukkah Party Dec. 8

Castle Cottage Corner, 1406 Mission St., will host a Hanuk-

A member of La Coalicion named Joaquin pleaded with supervisors that "We're not going to secede. We're not going to take the money and run," a sentiment echoed by Supervisor Cecil Smith, who said, "Many of the fears expressed here are groundless. Mr. Borovatz and I have insisted on countywide programs, and I've seen no indication in my dealings with La Coalicion that anyone down there feels any other way."

Contacted after the meeting, Borovatz described the whole

designation process as "a very healthy one," and stressed the need to judge each group not on its "past performance, but its future potential."

Expressing his personal opinion, Borovatz said he still preferred the present system, in


which the county, through the board of supervisors, acts as the Community Action Agency. He said that would lead to great financial savings in terms of items like office overhead, and would plow more money back into the service programs.

"Minority and low-income

people have expressed the desire to have the programs run independent of the county," admitted Borovatz. "If that's what they want, we'll provide that alternative. But that choice diminishes the total number of dollars going into service programs."

### Status Of Women

The County Commission on the Status of Women will meet Thursday at 7:30 p.m. at the Watsonville YWCA, 340 East Beach St.

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