

Sanctuary in Berkeley

Berkeley's City Council took an unprecedented action for an American city yesterday and offered asylum to military deserters and draft resisters.

The action, aimed at the continuing Vietnam war, was taken on a resolution "to provide a facility for sanctuary" for "any person who is unwilling to participate in military action."

Edward E. Kallgren, a moderate on the council and a member of a prominent San Francisco law firm, said the council was not defying the 'supremacy of the United States

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government or its legitimate powers."

"We want to dramatize our opposition to this war and our belief that the war has a direct adverse effect on all the cities of the country," he said.

CHURCHES

He said the city will place facilities of its own — and others it can negotiate — at the disposal of churches to run. On Tuesday ten Bay Area churches announced in Berkeley they would offer sanctuary to war dissenters and specifically mentioned possible dissenting sailors from the carrier Coral Sea, scheduled to sail tomorrow from Alameda for Vietnam.

The council's action, while intended as support for any actions by men on the Coral Sea, made it clear it was "not intended to influence them into specific actions such as sanctuary."

"We encourage the people of Berkeley to work with the existing sanctuary to provide the bedding, food, medical aid, legal help and friendship the men may need," the council said.

EMPLOYEES

It admonished city employees against aiding "any investigation, public or clandestine, of the sanctuary" or joining in the arrest of any military dissenter therein.

"If the Federal Government takes action, that's fine," Kallgren explained, "but our officers will not cooperate with them as they normally do."

What presumably prompted this hands-off section was a report that a Berkeley police officer had been doing undercover work in the churches' setup.

Kallgren noted too that the action was not intended to "excuse any individual from the consequences of his actions."

The resolution passed by a 6-to-1 vote about 12:30 a.m., with little debate. The reason for the late vote, Kallgren said, was that the draft had not been completed in time to take up at the start of the session and had to await the end of a three-and-a-half-hour hearing on another matter.

The negative vote was cast by Tom McLaren, conservative. Wilmont Sweeney, vice mayor, abstained.