

VFW Condemns Berkeley City Council for Permitting Marine Harassment

Feb 04, 2008

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is furious with the Berkeley, Calif., City Council, calling their actions “outrageous and idiotic” following their recent vote to give the boot to a U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting Station.

“The resolution is a direct insult to not only the Marines Corps, but also to all members of the nation’s armed forces,” said George Lisicki, national commander of the VFW, the nation’s largest organization of combat veterans. “Their recent actions represent a calculated effort to legalize harassment of one of our nation’s most elite military organizations. If there were ever a prize awarded for lack of appreciation and awareness for what our military has contributed to preserving our way of life, the Berkeley City Council would certainly win the trophy.”

The Berkeley City Council, on Jan. 29 by a vote of 6-3, told the Marines at the downtown recruiting station that they are not welcome in the city. Furthermore, by an 8-1 vote, the council voted to give anti-war groups the right to harass the Marines, even giving protestors a parking space in front of the recruiting station. The only council member to vote against both proposals was Gordon Wozniak, with council members Betty Olds and Kriss Worthington joining Wozniak in voting against the council’s resolution to boot the “unwelcome intruders.”

“The city council leaders need to be reminded that all the freedoms we enjoy as Americans have been earned by generations of patriots who were willing to fight to protect the liberties we, as Americans, enjoy,” said Lisicki, a Vietnam War veteran from Carteret, N.J.

What Lisicki said also troubled him was the failure of city authorities to do nothing when Code Pink, an antiwar group who originated the complaint against the Marines, defaced the front door of the recruiting station by altering the sign “U.S. Marine Corps Officer Selection Office” to “U.S. Marine Corps Officer Assassination [sic] Office.”

“If anyone has earned the right to have a presence in any community in this nation, it would be the U.S. Marines,” said Lisicki. “The Marine Corps is welcomed in every city and town

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across the America except for the City of Berkeley and by the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Iraq and Afghanistan."

The national commander also is encouraging its 2.3 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliaries to e-mail or call city council members.--*By Gloria Montgomery*

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