

Synanon and Bay City Talk 'Peace'

Center May Be Relocated in Friendly Pact

SANTA MONICA — Discussions are under way between the city and Synanon House, self-help center for narcotics addicts, which may lead to relocation of the center.

The talks were begun by City Atty. Robert Cocklins and Synanon's attorney, Fred Nicholas, in an effort to reach a friendly solution to differences between the city and Synanon which at times in the past have been bitterly fought.

Mutual Problem

"It's the first real, constructive attempt to solve a mutual problem," Nicholas declared. "Cocklins and I agreed that continuation of litigation would be time consuming and would accomplish little if anything.

"The intent of the discussions is to work out a compromise satisfactory to the city and Synanon," he observed. "I believe it is possible to do this."

Synanon, Nicholas said, desires to locate in an area where it will have no difficulty with zoning problems and will have adequate accommodations for 100 persons — including children.

Site Undermined

Officials of Synanon are exploring the possibility of renting or purchasing adequate facilities, he said. Whether the site will be in Santa Monica, city of Los Angeles or county territory remains to be determined.

The construction of a facility also is under consideration by Synanon officials, Nicholas said. Ways of raising funds to finance construction of a center have been discussed.

A supporting organization, Sponsors of Synanon, is planning a fund-raising program.

Hassle Starts

Peaceful settlement of the issue probably would call a halt to legal proceedings instituted by the city as well as the foundation.

The hassle between the city and Synanon began shortly after the center moved into quarters at 1351 The Promenade in August 1959. Eventually the city resorted to the courts to oust Synanon. The center and several of its officials were found guilty of violating city and state codes.

The center was ordered

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Peace Talks Started by City and Synanon

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to vacate the premises but
appealed to higher courts,
including the U.S. Supreme
Court, which refused to re-
view the case.

Decision Pending

Last July the State Legis-
lature passed an amendment
to the Health and Safety
Code which allows places
such as Synanon to operate,
providing it receives appro-
val from the State Board of
Medical Examiners.

An investigation of the
center was made and the
proposed regulations pub-
lished.

Execution of the order di-
recting Synanon to vacate
the beachfront location was

suspended by Municipal
Court Judge Hector Baida
until the board approves the
regulations.

Judge Baida, however,
pronounced sentence upon
Charles Dederich, founder of
Synanon. He was sentenced
to 30 days in jail last fall.