

Dissident 29th Brigade GIs backed at church rally

By Mary Adamski
Star-Bulletin Writer

About 15 members of Hawaii's 29th Infantry Brigade joined a crowd of 100 that met in their support last night at the Church of the Crossroads.

Only three of the 15 brigade members spoke, and

several of the others polled said they had no definite intentions of taking advantage of the church's offer of sanctuary to anyone who decided to go AWOL rather than to Vietnam.

Several were among the reported 300 or so men who will be shipped to Vietnam Sunday, according to James Douglass of the Resistance.

"The reason men are being shipped out is a result of the petition demanding deactivation," Douglass said.

After about two hours of support statements, a Kailua member of the brigade told the audience — which was composed largely of University of Hawaii students — that they were clouding the issue.



ALL AGES—University of Hawaii students, members of the 29th Brigade and parishioners mix in the audience at the Church of the Crossroads protest meeting.

"They are not keeping to the primary point, which is the deactivation of the 29th," said Spec. 4 William Harris.

"THE ISSUE is not the war in Vietnam.

"They have gotten off the track in covering this person's moral decision and this person's religious beliefs."

Harris said that the issue for himself and for many of the soldiers is the practical matter, that their continued active duty is not necessary or does not follow normal procedure.

The reasons which military petitioners cited in circulating petitions at Schofield Barracks were echoed in a petition circulated last night by the newly organized "Citizens Committee for the Deactivation of the 29th."

Mrs. Carol Kreiger, wife of a brigade lieutenant, cited the arguments against continued active duty by the reserve unit as:

—The unfairly high proportion of Hawaii men called up.

—The fact that the crisis for which they were called, the Pueblo seizure, has passed and other reserve units

are being deactivated.

—The intention of the reserve program, which is to supply local units in a national emergency, is being changed by breaking up the 29th as individual replacements into other units.

Spec. 4 Andrew Leonard, from Cleveland, Ohio, told the group, "I value my personal peace of mind more than anything else, it no longer matters most whether my mother thinks I'm right or my girl."

LATER, LEONARD told a

reporter, "I love my country and I value the system. If I fight this, I want to use the system. If there's something wrong with the system, it should be fought, too."

Spec. 4 Michael Slosek, of Hollywood, Calif., said, "I resent being put in a position where I'm told, America gave you all these rights, now go and kill for them. You don't get rights by killing."

"I find that I not only have to rock the boat, but get out of it," Slosek said, but he later told a reporter that he

hadn't made up his mind about going AWOL and taking sanctuary.

Other speakers included Jon Witeck, Steven Kubota and Harold Shin, Resistance leaders, Linda Delaney, president of the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii, Jon Olsen of the Peace and Freedom Party, Honolulu attorney Brook Hart and Howard Knight, a San Francisco attorney.

One vigorous voice was raised in opposition to the protesters.

Carey Hooser, 67, whose wife is a member of the church. He berated the soldiers, their supporters and the church.

"What is happening today I blame on the ministry, the teachers and your parents," he said.

"This is the best country in the world and if you don't believe it, you'd better get out of it."

Hooser got snickers when he said "Whether the war in Vietnam is right or not, don't know" but he left to a rousing round of applause from the students.