

"I was approached then by Lt. Steve Clark and other police officials who directed me to leave or face arrest," Norse said. Lt. Clark is known as "Because I Can, Clark," a name activists tagged him with when he seized a homeless man's only blanket at 3:00 a.m. on a cold night for evidence of sleeping when a photo would have sufficed.

Lt. Clark twisted Norse's left hand behind his back, inflicting a "pain compliance" procedure. "Though I told him repeatedly that I'd leave willingly once he clarified I was under arrest and told me the charge, he refused to do so, grew more angry and more violent, and forced a scream out of me," said Norse.

The abuse continued even as Norse was complying with exiting the meeting. Then Clark shoved Norse's injured hand into a too-tight handcuff which resulted in neurological damage and loss of feeling in parts of his left hand still evident three weeks later. Norse described Clark's behavior as illegal because he initiated and continued a physical assault before announcing Norse was under arrest, when he was neither a flight risk nor a danger to the public.

Norse was later informed that Mayor Rotkin had charged him with "disrupting a public meeting." He was not charged with resisting arrest.

Lt. Clark's "furious" attitude, according to Norse, was verified by Michael Tomasi, a City Hall perennial. "I heard Lt. Clark say, 'I will hurt you!' to Robert Norse while he was in handcuffs," said Tomasi.

While Clark twisted Norse's arm, despite the complete lack of resistance, he spoke in an angry, threatening manner, saying: "You're never going to do what

you did in City Council again. You will follow my orders. You're going to be hurt if you do that again!"

Clark was breathing heavily, almost panting, as he twisted and pushed Norse towards the police car. With his wallet pulling heavily at his swim shorts, Norse pleaded for Clark to let go of his hand "or my pants will fall down." Instead, Clark shoved him forward which dislodged his shorts so they fell down around his ankles leaving him publicly exposed. Then Clark berated Norse for it and ordered him to pull up his shorts.

"My hands are handcuffed behind my back," Norse replied. "How am I supposed to do that?" Another officer pulled up his shorts. Then Lt. Clark took Norse to sit on a low concrete wall just outside of the City Hall building. As he sat there, Michael Tomasi came nearby.

Clark sat down right next to Norse and coldly told him: "You are going to regret you sued me. You took me into court and my lawyer's going to take your trust fund. I've hired Paul Meltzer; we're going to take every penny you've got. You've crossed the line. If you ever don't leave when I say leave, you are going to get hurt!"

Since Norse carries a tape recorder, he kept it on throughout Clark's initial assault. At the jail, Clark confiscated it "for evidence." Norse signed the slip "under protest." Later, Clark commented jovially to Norse that the tape he had confiscated was blank.

Norse faces arraignment on misdemeanor charges on July 20, 2005, in Santa Cruz Superior Court. Norse's federal lawsuit against the City of Santa Cruz over a previous false arrest is scheduled for trial in February of 2006.