

# Progress reported in food-worker talks

Progress was made this week in negotiations between representatives from the Teamsters and the two frozen food plants where union workers have been on strike for three and a half months.

A session was held between the union and representatives of Richard A. Shaw Inc. Wednesday and both sides said they felt the other was making movement toward a settlement.

"I get the feeling the union would like to settle as soon as possible," said Steve Shaw, company vice-president. "It's a new feeling compared to earlier talks. Everybody seems to want to keep moving forward."

Shaw said talks have brought the two sides to some middle ground, mainly in the area of health and welfare and in "doing some housekeeping in grey areas of the contract."

Sergio Lopez, a business agent with Teamsters Local 912, said he felt the union was getting a better understanding of what needs to be resolved in the strike.

"I detect more of a willingness on the part of Shaw," said

Lopez. "but we are still a long ways from a settlement."

Lopez also said talks held yesterday with representatives of Watsonville Canning and Frozen Food Co. went well.

Smiley Verduzco, president of Watsonville Canning, said talks were "cordial" and the two sides accomplished what they expected to accomplish.

"We discussed the non-economic issues; the economic issues, which are the real issues of the strike were not discussed at all."

Earlier this month the Teamsters and Watsonville Canning agreed to conduct a market study on the state of the frozen food industry. Verduzco said he is now reviewing a recommendation from the attorneys from both side about the scope of the study and how much of the information should become public.

Verduzco said the next step in getting the study done will be to select an accounting firm.

No further talks will be held between the Teamsters and either company until after the first of the year.