

Strike Halts Work At New Courthouse

By Wallace Wood
Sentinel Staff Writer

Strikes by cement finishers and a reported lockout by painting contractors spread today to the county courthouse site and some subdivisions.

It was part of a general strike picture of idled thousands of workers and delayed construction jobs throughout California, with no negotiations in sight.

Pickets showed up this morning at the site of the county's \$6.2-million governmental center, under construction by Jasper Construction company. They represented Local 379 of the Operative Plasterer and Cement Masons.

Work was halted completely on the project as other union workers honored the pickets.

Work stoppages continued at the UCSC campus. Only one project — Cowell college — is still proceeding. Robert B. Davis, superintendent of Branagh Construction company, said his firm has signed an interim agreement with the cement masons which allows work to proceed.

About half of the 175 painters in Painters Local 1026 are reported idle in Santa Cruz as a result of a "lockout" by painting contractors, union officials claim.

Painters went off work on such projects as University Terrace July 6, following the expiration of work agreements.

Charles Downey, secretary of the district council of painters in Palo Alto, declared that members of the Santa Cruz County Painting and Decorating Contractors "simply closed their doors last week."

He claimed he has telegraphed local contractors in regard to strike talks, but has received no answer. "Our workers are not picketing anyone," he said.

Though the head of the Painting and Decorating Contractors here was not available, a spokesman said many contractors are doing their own work, while others have gone "on vacation."

Clarence Hodges, estimator

for Jasper Construction company, said the courthouse work stoppage "isn't hurting us right now, but could hurt us if it lasts for very long."

He said a subcontractor is sinking caissons for 180 pilings on the courthouse site, and this is the only work affected.

Henry Weaver, business agent for the cement masons, said today many county contractors have signed interim agreements with his union, and work is continuing on both Santa Cruz and Soquel High school projects.

Pickets are out on Granite Construction company's widening project on Soquel drive near Cabrillo college, however.

Both Granite and Jasper, along with some contractors on UCSC projects, are members of the Association of General Contractors (AGC).

Most strikes by building tradesmen are aimed at the AGC, Weaver said, and "no negotiations are in sight."

Negotiations, if they are held, would take place between statewide members of the cement masons and the AGC in San Francisco.

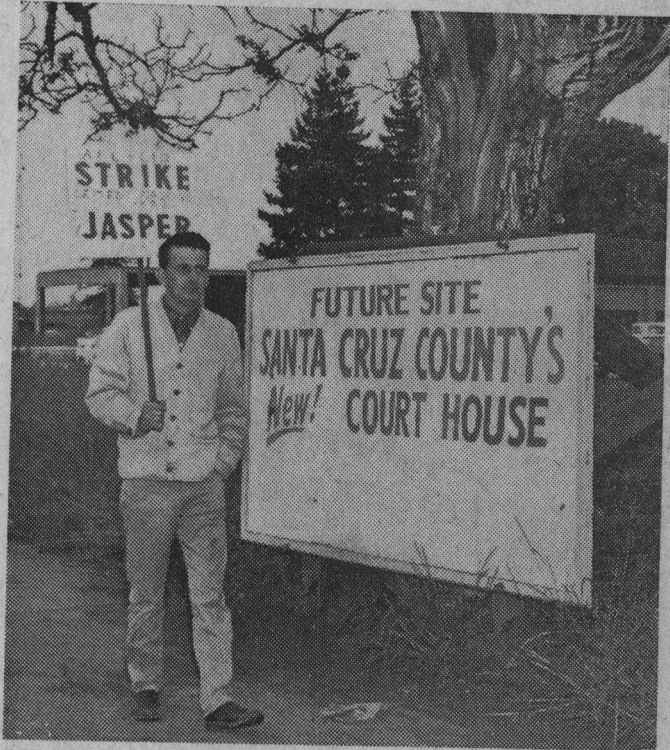
At the UCSC campus halted jobs are the field house, under construction by Jasper; the library, by Rothschild, Rassin and Weirick of San Francisco; natural sciences by Nomellini Construction of Stockton, and College 2 by Williams and Burrows of Belmont. All firms are members of the AGC, or have not signed interim agreements.

The field house completion date is considered critical by university officials. It is to serve as an all-purpose building during first-year classes this fall.

Interim agreements signed by non-AGC members, Weaver said, provide only that the contractor will abide by whatever decision is reached between the AGC and the cement finishers.

Downey said the painters' local "has no intention whatsoever of picketing any projects."

New Courthouse Picketed



The building strike hit the new county courthouse and governmental center this morning as picket Richard

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McGuire represented Cement Masons Local 379. The Jasper Construction company of Santa Cruz is building the \$6.2-million complex.