

City Council And City Employees Have Tough Time Finding Common Ground

By Don Righetti
Sentinel Staff Writer

The city won't sit down and talks to the union about employee grievances until the union qualifies for official recognition by the city.

The union can't qualify for that recognition until it supplies a list of the names of its members among city employees.

The city says the list is necessary because until it is supplied, the city has no proof the union represents the number of workers it says it does.

The union won't supply the list because it is holding it out as a bargaining point for automatic dues deduction by the city from employees' paychecks.

And so the city and the union tangled again last night.

"The fact that you don't choose to admit that we exist doesn't alter the fact that we should get together and talk these things out," declared Robert McLean, representative of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

"The council would be well advised to remember that 60 per cent of city employees chose to join the union and pay dues to it out of the miserable wages they get. It would be absolute folly to say that no problems exist and we don't exist, which is what you're saying."

McLean then stated that since the council has chosen not to recognize the union, perhaps it would rather hear from the employees individually. He said he could have them speak to the council one by one, but warned that such

a process would require approximately 12 hours.

Mayor Samuel Leask rose to the bait. He said the council meetings had always been open to city employees and challenged McLean to bring his members on.

Several city employees were in the audience, but only Kenneth Doler, president of the Santa Cruz local, accepted the invitation to speak.

Doler, himself a police officer, said the city's policemen couldn't support their families on their wages. He pointed out that the starting salary for a patrolman in San Jose is above the top patrolman salary in Santa Cruz.

"We want you to wake up and pay attention to our needs and wants," he said. "We ask for bread and you give us crumbs."

Doler's impassioned address thoroughly ruffled the feathers of Councilman Richard Werner.

County Jobs Included In Roads Budget

William Reimer