

Striking workers to get new Shaw offer tomorrow

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Representatives of Richard A. Shaw Inc. and the Teamsters union will meet tomorrow to review a new contract offer from the company.

Tomorrow's 9 a.m. meeting will be the second time company representatives have sat with union officials and rank-and-file members in an effort to explain their position, particularly concerning the intense competition they face from cheaper imports and non-union operations out of state.

"We are not presenting a full-fledged, final offer," company Vice President Steve Shaw said this morning. "It is a written proposal, but parts can be rewritten. We want to review some issues with the union and ask them what they would do in our situation."

Shaw said his offer to the union will not be affected by Monday's union vote, in which members rejected Watsonville Canning and Frozen Food Co.'s so-called "final offer" by 800-1.

Shaw returned to Watsonville yesterday after spending most

of the week in Atlanta at a national frozen-food convention. He said plants from Texas and at least 10 processors from Mexico made a strong showing at the convention.

"The highlight of the trip was having five fun-filled days without looking at a picket," said Shaw.

He said that "next to everybody had heard about the strike" and that most people gave their support to his company's attempt to reach wage parity with other frozen-food employers who pay lower wages.

"They know this is our last-gasp effort to become competitive," said Shaw. "We have no critics from our customers, even though there have been some bottlenecks in getting our products."

Shaw also said that his clients told him that just before the convention they had received letters alleging his plant was unsanitary.

Shaw said such claims were unfounded and that the issue has been referred to his attorneys to investigate the possibil-

ity of a slander suit.

Richard King, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 912, said the letter was sent on the initiative of the union's strike committee, but, although official stationery was used, the message was not sanctioned by him.

King also announced that talks are set for Nov. 7 with Del Mar Food Products. King said talks with Del Mar, whose 600 workers handle mostly fruit, will be "starting from scratch."

In other strike-related news, the Watsonville Police Department has requested mutual aid from other police agencies to handle the expected crowd that will be attending a rally this Sunday.

The noon rally, scheduled to form at Callaghan Park, has been organized by the Northern California Strike Support Committee. Organizers in San Francisco, where signs advertising the strike and Sunday's rally are posted, say they expect 2,000 people at the rally to demonstrate support for the strikers.