

7/12/66

# SC Nurses' President Expects No Walkout

By John Elliott  
Sentinel Staff Writer

The president of the Santa Cruz chapter of the California Nurses association said today she definitely does not expect a walk-out of nurses at County General hospital, despite a simmering dispute over salary scales.

In the wake of mass resignations by nurses at Eden hospital in Castro Valley, Mrs. E. J. Platt of Boulder Creek, president of district 13 of the CNA and a member of the newly organized economic development committee at County General Hospital, said negotiations here should alleviate the need for resignations or walk-outs since "our administrators are willing to talk with us."

If negotiations should fail, however, "we're prepared for it," she said. She did not indicate what action would be taken in case of negotiation failure.

As CNA president of district 13, Mrs. Platt heads a group

of about 100 registered nurses. She noted there are 163 registered nurses in the district, which is composed of the city of Santa Cruz.

Mrs. Platt's statement came a day before a closed meeting between economic development committee representatives and representatives of County General's administration. Mrs. Platt said she will attend tomorrow's noon meeting but indicated the nurses will not present concrete salary increase proposals.

The proposals, she said, have been prepared and will be presented only if the hospital administration indicates it is willing to accept them without major revision or negotiation.

If not, she said, the proposals will not be disclosed at the present.

The nine members of the economic development committee are to meet with Dr. William Cress, medical director for County General; Dr. Gilbert Dunnahoo, county health director, Carl Millar, county administrative officer, and Tom Black, chairman of the board of supervisors.

Mrs. Platt said district 13 and the committee at County General are working closely together in the latter's bid for across-the-board nursing salary increases. Salaries there at present call for a beginning wage of \$433 and increase to \$527 after five years.

A similar but more advanced dispute in Fremont resulted in raises of more than \$100 per month for registered nurses.

In an open letter this week to members of district 13, Mrs. Platt dealt at length with the question of "professionalism," and said today, "I've been very proud of all the girls. They've acted in a very professional manner throughout." Her actions and suggestions, she said, are aimed at preventing "hot heads" from bringing discredit on the profession of nursing and local nurses.

In the six-page open letter, Mrs. Platt noted the district held its first full-scale effort to reorganize on August 20, 1965 and its election of officers on May 31, this year.

Then she declared: "Whenever a new organization faces its first test of strength there is a natural tightening of all its defenses, stimulated out of a need for unit in purpose and goal."

"It is so with us now. To the north of us we find our neighboring districts finding the courage to elevate their professions economically and in practice."

She then asks, "Do we here have the courage to do the same?"

In partial answer to her own question she asks that CNA members "realize that dedication without the dignity of material and spiritual recompense is merely servitude, regardless of motivation."

However, "the nurse who joins the economic battle for money alone and does nothing in regard to the performance of her profession is losing out on the greatest dividend this battle can give."

Stating in the letter her approval of the way the local issue has been handled, Mrs. Platt declared local nurses "have no desire to either paralyze a needed hospital facility, nor imperil a community in regard to its personal welfare."

Nurses will not be satisfied, she said, "until the general public is aware that their demand for adequate remuneration is not a selfish desire for individual wealth. It is instead a desire to give nursing the impetus and the professional standing it deserves."

Friday has been set as the deadline for San Francisco Bay Area-wide salary settlement by 1250 nurses in 30 hospitals who declare they will join 91 of 107 registered nurses from Eden hospital who walked out earlier. No Santa Cruz county hospitals are included in the present CNA ultimatum.

Ralph Hartley, chief negotiator for the CNA, declared the present situation amounts to "a revolution" of nurses who have "been kicked around so long in every way that nobody ever dreamed they'd do this."

The association is asking \$650 per month for beginning nurses and \$950 a month for those with 10 years experience. Granting increases demanded, said Mark Berke, chief negotiator for the area's hospitals and administrator of Mount Zion hospital in San Francisco, would boost costs to patients by from \$15 to \$18 daily.

At Eden, the surgery floor was closed and the hospital accepted only routine obstetrical, orthopedic and medical cases. Volunteers helped supervisors and physicians care for 91 patients and 10 babies.

According to Mrs. Wilma McCarthy, chairman of the nurses' professional performance committee at Eden, "we did not walk out on the patients. A month ago we gave the hospital notice of intent to resign and two weeks ago we presented our letters of resignation, effective July 10. We were concerned about the patients, but the hospital worked out no plan of patient care despite this month's notice."

## Heads SC Board



John Melendy was elected president of the Santa Cruz city board of education for the 1966-67 term by fellow trustees last night. Melendy, who had been vice president of the board, succeeds Dr. Ambrose Cowden. Lloyd Hebron was elected vice president. Trustees passed a resolution commending Cowden, who said he first accepted the board presidency "reluctantly" but added he has found it an "experience" that he is "grateful for having had."

## Strike Halts Courthouse Construction