



PHOTO: JOE DANIELS

Battered Women Protest Program Budget Cuts

A group of battered women and their friends demonstrated at the County Courthouse Tuesday to protest the next round of budget cuts planned for the Women's Crisis Support and Shelter Services.

Because of a steady loss in funding from all sources, the program is already operating with around half the budget it used to have. A few years ago, the program had a budget of more than \$230,000. This year that figure dropped to \$120,000. And it will drop even further if the Board of Supervisors approves the County's Administrative Officer's (CAO's) recommendation to pare another \$10,000 from the program.

Earlier budget cuts have already led to the elimination of counseling services in the Santa Cruz area. The program still offers counseling in Watsonville, shelter for battered women and children, help in getting restraining orders and referrals to other programs. It has not yet been decided what services would be reduced or eliminated if the next \$10,000 cut is approved, program director Sandy Pawula told the *Express*.

"Over the last few years we've had a 50% budget cut and I don't know how much more we can take and still deliver services," Pawula said. "We know the County is short of money but the issue

is whether to cut social services or someplace else."

The next demonstration is planned for June 1.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY FIGHTS FOR BUCKS. Just up the elevator from the battered women's demonstration, District Attorney Art Danner launched a campaign to make sure his office does not lose two attorneys under next year's budget. Danner said the cut, which is recommended in the CAO's budget, would leave only 11 prosecuting attorneys in the County.

Criminal prosecution is an easy sell politically and Danner has been good at holding onto his budget during the cutbacks of recent years. The CAO recommended elimination of the two attorneys as part of the January, midyear, \$5 million reduction, but the Supes were persuaded to save the money elsewhere.

In making that recommendation a second time, CAO George Newell pointed out that the attorney staff in the DA's office has actually grown by 28% since money got tight with the passage of the Jarvis-Gann property tax initiative.

But there are signs the entire criminal justice arm of County government is ready to mount a public campaign to make sure that budget cuts are made elsewhere and Danner is the most likely leader of that effort. The

most likely target for the pressure is Aptos Supervisor Robley Levy, who faces an election next year and is generally the swing vote on the Board. Levy's political future became more difficult last week when George Tunno, President of the Soquel Chamber of Commerce, announced his candidacy 13 months before the primary.

MELLO CONDO BILL APPEARS DEAD. State Senator Henry Mello's controversial attempt to guarantee the due process rights of condominium converters failed to make it out of an Assembly committee the second time on Monday and appears to be dead at least for this session of the legislature.

Early this year, Mello introduced legislation that would have overruled San Francisco's two year ban on large condominium conversions. If the bill had passed, the city would have been forced to process the conversion applications that were already made before the ban went into affect last December.

The bill gained quite a bit of notoriety because Mello freely admitted he was carrying it for apartment investor Richard Traweck, who had already paid his fees and was standing in line to convert a 720-unit apartment complex when the moratorium happened. Traweck has made some very large contributions to state legislative candidates from both parties, including Mello, and the Fair Political Practices Commission is investigating the possibility those contributions were not disclosed as required by law.

The San Francisco *Examiner* put a number of reporters on the story of this relatively small piece of legislation. And San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein, who appeared personally at the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee on Monday, said some very uncomplimentary things about Mello during the controversy.

Last week, the committee was deadlocked 4-4 on whether to send the bill to the full Assembly. After Mello made a few amendments, the bill actually lost support and the committee killed it by a 6-3 vote. Previously, the Senate had approved the legislation.

DOWN BY THE BOARDWALK. The attempt by employees of the Seaside Company's Cocoanut Grove and Wellington Restaurant to vote on union representation appears headed toward a

months-long postponement.

An overwhelming majority of the people working at those two establishments have already signed cards asking for a vote on representation by the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union. But the company has protested that the vote should include all of the Seaside Company's workers, not just those at the Grove and Wellington's.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has already held a series of hearings on the bargaining unit dispute — the first on May 4 in Oakland, with two more days of testimony in more recent sessions held in Santa Cruz. The NLRB has not given word on when the issue will be resolved and a vote on the union held.

It would be far more difficult for the union to win an

election among the more than 600 people who work for the Seaside Company than among the less than 100 who work for Wellington and the Cocoanut Grove. Most of the people who work for the Boardwalk during peak season are younger, have no intention of staying at the job for more than a few months and have less reason to think union than the more stable workforce at the Grove and Wellington's.

COMING BACK AT YA. A group of Santa Cruz women decided it was time to throw a little blood back at Army recruiters on Tuesday.

An unknown number of unidentified women who are disenchanted with the military approach responded by

tossing containers of their blood at the recruiting station at Seabright and Water Street.

The protest was intended to dramatize a connection among war, rape and control of the world by corporations and armies that work for them. "I wanted them to see what blood looks like," one of the tossers told the *Express*. "They will continue to meet with responses from us."

Sergeant McKabe from the recruiting office confirmed there is blood in his hallway. McKabe added that someone had thrown paint on cars at the recruiting station Wednesday morning and expressed his appreciation that water-based paint was used.

— BJ