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Embittered City Lifeguards Turn In Their Gear

Santa Cruz' striking beach lifeguards-more bitter than ever now that the city has fired them officially-vowed this moring to "escalate pressure" against the city and take their grievances to court.

They said they had been offered support by the City Employes Association and had been contacted with more offers of help by representatives of the AFL and Teamsters. They are slated to huddle with a Teamsters man tonight.

The pledges of reprisal came this morning at lifeguard headquarters on the municipal wharf as the guards turned in their equipment and received their final paychecks.

Yesterday, Lifeguard Lieutenant Douglas Rowe said the guards today would tell the city they had gotten their

point across to the public, the strike was ended and that they would go back to work.

This morning, however, Rowe said yesterday's information was erroneous, that the strike would continue and the guards ' picket line remain intact.

At the equipment turn-in, the guards' animosity was directed specifically against Aquatics Director Dean Hovey. Lifeguard Captain Alan Hilton told him, "You let us down. Thanks for all the help we didn't get."

The guards maintain they have been fired unlawfully, since provisions of the National Labor Relations Act provide the right to strike. The city maintains, however, that state law forbids employes of California cities from striking, and the firing of the lifeguards thus was legal.

The state law has been challenged many times in recent years, however, and a San Diego judge recently upheld the rights of employes of that city to strike. The decision, hower, still faces a test in appellate court.

The lifeguards reported they would take their own case to court, and have been receiving advice from a local attorney who might take the case to the American Civil Liberties Union.

City Manager Dave Koester said this morning that the fired lifeguards may submit applications for rehiring and the applications would be considered along with those received recently when the city began a campaign to recruit replacement guards.