

## Union launches boycott of Seaside Co.

### Dispute stems from purchase of Holiday Inn

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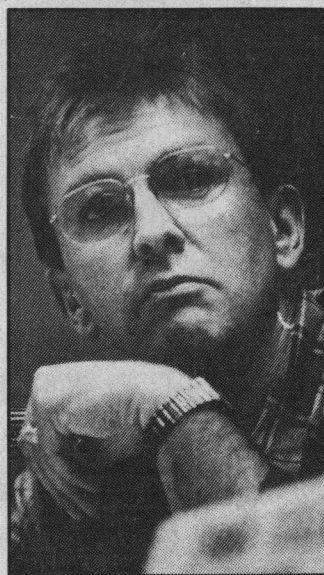
SANTA CRUZ — A labor organization is mounting a statewide, tourist-season boycott against the Boardwalk and other Santa Cruz Seaside Co. holdings.

Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union Local No. 483 is urging a boycott against the Seaside Co., owners of the Boardwalk amusement park, the Cocoanut Grove/Sun Room, Sea and Sand and Carousel motels, and the Holiday Inn.

Members of area community organizations and local elected officials confirmed Wednesday that they have received union letters announcing the boycott and asking them not to patronize Seaside Co. holdings.

The union's unsuccessful efforts to unionize the Holiday Inn — purchased by the Seaside Co. in November 1989 — are the crux of the boycott drive. Direct negotiations between the union and the Seaside Co. stalled in September, said Local 483 organizer Frank Curiel. The union is calling for arbitration to end the eight-month deadlock. Some 80 Holiday Inn workers were members of Local 483 until shortly before Seaside Co. purchased the Ocean Street hotel.

Holiday Inn workers, said Curiel, have experienced "a deterioration of benefits" since the Seaside Co. buyout. "The other problem is



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— Louis Rittenhouse,  
city councilman

that the company wants to have the workers be 'casual' and 'part-time' while they're working full time.

"We're pretty far apart in negotiations and it was decided by the workers in January that were going to start a boycott of all Seaside Co. (businesses) to put on economic pressure to bring them back to the bargaining table," Curiel said.

Spokeswoman Ann Parker said the Seaside Co. had yet to see the effects of the boycott.

"We haven't really noticed much effect (on business) because of union activities," said Parker. "We strongly believe and hope this indicates that people realize this is a very complex situation, and because of that it doesn't have simple answers. Also, hopefully people re-

alize that the Seaside Co. is concerned about the situation and is trying to deal with a difficult situation in the best way possible."

Seaside Co. representatives declined to speak about specific labor issues. "The correct place for those issues to be dealt with is at the negotiating table," Parker said.

Curiel — who took over as the Local 483 organizer a week ago — described himself as "no stranger" to boycotts. Curiel said he would use "high-tech" boycott strategies against the employer. Previously, Curiel helped coordinate the long-running table grape boycott for the United Farm Workers union.

"I'll be looking ahead to see which clients are using (Seaside Co.) facilities," he said. "Instead of being in a defensive position, I



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— Fred Keeley, chairman  
Board of Supervisors

want to take the offensive. We'll be putting picket lines at the Cocoanut Grove and other facilities."

The union, he said, is developing a "de-marketing plan" to discourage Northern California tourists — especially those who belong to other unions — from visiting the Boardwalk this summer.

Board of Supervisors chairman Fred Keeley, "answering as an individual," said he will respect the union request. "I won't be attending and I won't be scheduling any events there."

Santa Cruz Mayor Jane Yokoyama and City Councilman Don Lane said they would honor the boycott whenever possible.

"As an individual, I said I would try and honor it," Yokoyama said. "As a mayor, I said that we would

try to but that we had to be realistic . . . . The city has no official policy and I don't plan to put it on the (council) agenda as a policy item."

Lane said, "In terms of my personal approach, I am avoiding the Holiday Inn. I am resisting attending events there. But it's not an absolute thing. If in order to do my job I feel like have to go to the Holiday Inn, I would. But anything I see as discretionary, then I won't go."

Councilman Louis Rittenhouse acknowledged he had received a letter asking him to boycott the Seaside Co. "They've sent me correspondence to that effect. I looked at it and tossed it . . . .

"I see it as a situation between the employees at the Holiday Inn and the Seaside Co., and it would

seem to me that the last time I was at the Holiday Inn everybody was awfully happy working there."

Both the Holiday Inn and the Cocoanut Grove/Sun Room are the site of many local business, community and political conferences. The Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce uses both venues regularly, and would be hurt if public officials and community leaders refused to attend events there, said chamber of commerce executive director John Lisher.

"I don't know why they're trying to penalize us," Lisher said. "I'm certainly concerned by this."

"It works a real hardship in trying to forge a better public-private partnership."

The chamber's monthly "Good Morning Santa Cruz" breakfast — with downtown rebuilding the topic — is Wednesday. Former City Councilman John Laird, now the executive director of the Santa Cruz AIDS Project, originally said he would attend the event.

"It's a decision I've got to make. I had already RSVP'd to go . . . I just have to decide whether to cancel my reservation. I'll probably honor the boycott for now," Laird said, adding that he like to see the Seaside Co. and the union "settle this so as not put the rest of us in this position."

Lane said, "It's critical that this get worked out. In a sense, we're in a dynamic where, either way, somebody's kind of getting hurt. If we could just resolve the dispute it would be good for the workers, good for the Boardwalk, and good for the city, too."

"I know that a boycott, as much as it hurts the Seaside Co., it also hurts the city. It is a genuine dilemma."