

Monterey Bay *Bulletin*

Labor Contracts Update

Travelodge Boycott Facts

The owner. Kilsoo Seo lives and owns a video store in Bethel, Alaska. Seo purchased the Monterey Bay Travelodge, under the business name SNKF, Inc., in April 2002. Seo purchased a \$1 million house in the new Seaside Highlands development in Seaside, California in 2004.

The workers. 12 housekeepers and 1 maintenance worker are employed by the Monterey Bay Travelodge and are members of UNITE HERE Local 483. They are all Latino.

The workers' families. The Travelodge workers have 24 children.

The union. UNITE HERE Local 483, founded in 1937, represents over 1,600 hospitality employees on the Monterey Bay.

The contract. The union contract, which included full employer-funding of the employee health insurance plan, expired on December 31, 2003.

The owner's actions. Seo stopped negotiations with the union on July 29, 2004. Through his attorney, the Littler Mendelson law firm, Seo then issued his "last and best" offer, demanding the end of his employees' health and pension plans, an hourly wage freeze at \$8.84, and reduction in time off. On October 1, 2004, Seo instituted these terms without agreement by Local 483.

The conflict. The first of more than 100 picket-line demonstrations at the Travelodge, organized by Local 483, began on July 29, 2004. Over 3,000 people have participated in these public actions supporting the Travelodge workers.

The current situation. Seo has refused to talk with the union about his actions (See article to right). 13 workers and their 24 children are without health insurance. The Travelodge workers continue their call for a boycott of the Monterey Bay Travelodge.

Community Protests at Monterey Bay Travelodge Boycott continues into 4th Year

Marking the 3rd year of the international boycott of the Monterey Bay Travelodge, 120 protesters marched and chanted over bullhorns in front of the hotel on November 28, 2007.

The *Monterey County Weekly* reports: "Despite a four-year fight for a new union contract at the Monterey Bay Travelodge, housekeeper Juana Enriquez says she is not ready back down. Enriquez is the union shop steward for UNITE HERE Local 483 and a 16-year Travelodge employee. Despite her seniority, Enriquez earns barely above the state's minimum wage.

Kilsoo Seo, the motel's owner, has frozen Enriquez's

wages and those of 11 other housekeepers at \$8.84 an hour.

Seo also took away the workers' health insurance and pension plans in 2004.

'He wants us to quit,' Enriquez says. 'It's not going to happen. We are fighting until the end.'

Ms. Enriquez's words were echoed by community leaders at the conclusion of the November 28 rally. Mel Mason, Past President of the Monterey County NAACP, told the crowd, "We have

stood by these workers from the beginning, and we will stand by them however long it takes to get justice!"



Monterey Bay Travelodge workers and their community supporters protest in front of the hotel on November 28, 2007. The rally drew 120 participants, marking the 3rd year of the Union boycott of the hotel.

Travelodge Owner: "No reason" to meet with Union

The contract conflict at the Monterey Bay Travelodge, already into its 4th year, appears to be headed for more, given recent written comments by owner, Kilsoo Seo.

Mr. Seo wrote in a Decem-

ber 3, 2007 letter to 27th District California Assemblymember John Laird, "I have no reason to start negotiations with the Union at this time."

In the letter, Seo also complains that the hotel's "economic position has not

improved over the past two years."

In each of the past two years, total hotel revenue in Monterey County has reached record-setting levels, as evidenced by hotel (transient occupancy) tax returns.