

# State Union Rebuffs Chiefs: No Strike Now

By GENE SPAGNOLI

Albany, March 31 (News Bureau)—In a runaway vote, more than 1,000 angry delegates of the giant Civil Service Employees Association upset today a bid by their leaders that the 147,000 members of the union strike at midnight tonight. The delegates set a new strike date of April 29.

But after a tumultuous four-hour meeting punctuated by bitter parliamentary wrangling, raucous debate and shouting matches, the delegates adopted a plan that could lead to a strike April 29 if the financially pressed Carey administration does not accede to their demands.

The plan called for:

- An immediate appeal to the courts to ask the state to show cause why seniority-based pay boosts, dropped in the 1975-76 state budget, should not be restored.

### 3d Year Starting

- A report by April 14 by a neutral fact-finding panel to lay the groundwork for salary adjustments in the third year — which begins tomorrow—of the CSEA's three-year contract with the state.

- A "by-the-book" slowdown of up to two weeks if Carey and the Legislature do not accept the fact-finders' recommendations.

The union staffs institutions across the state.

As the third year of the union's contract approached, the state rejected the CSEA's bid for a 15.5% wage increase and, instead, offered a one-time bonus of \$250, costing the state \$50 million, to be paid next July 1.

Smarting at that impasse, CSEA President Theodore Wenzl went into the delegate meeting at 1 p.m. today, at the Palace Theater here, and pushed through a vote for an immediate strike.

It was difficult, through the noisy confusion, to determine whether the voice vote had passed. But Wenzl declared that it had and, before stunned delegates could speak, declared the session adjourned and walked off the stage.

But that was only Act I. Wenzl had hardly disappeared



CSEA President Theodore Wenzl (right) in discussion with aides after he returned to union meeting in Albany theater. UPI Photo

when a thunder of shouts flooded the cavernous chamber. A pert young blonde raced down an aisle and to the stage and lifted

to talk to the crowd. But she and Dol Bendet, a New York City CSEA delegate, found that the microphones had suddenly gone dead.

Finally Irving Flaumenbaum, leader of the Nassau County delegation, took the rostrum and got the meeting running again.

The first move the delegates made was to rescind the Wenzl-backed strike vote.

"We have the same goal, despite this confusion. And that is to get the governor off his butt and sit down and talk to us like human beings," Flaumenbaum told the roaring crowd.

Then, for hours, during which they seemed to be united on only one point—that Gov. Carey had broken his campaign promise to help them—the delegates argued and rejected several motions, including a resolution to strike on April 14.

Then, finally, they adopted their four-week plan of action. By that time, Wenzl had returned to the meeting, to be met with jeers.

Wenzl announced that he and Gov. Carey had expressed willingness to reopen the deadlocked negotiations, at which a health-benefit plan and improved disciplinary procedures are on the table.

After the initial vote to strike, the state won a temporary restraining order against the walkout from Albany Supreme Court Justice Edward Conway, and state officials began setting up plans to cope with the walkout at mental institutions and prisons.