

Club Owner Negotiates

Continued from Page 3

Club Owner Negotiates for Peace at Ilikai

By Lee Catterall
Star-Bulletin Writer

Attorneys for the Ilikai Hotel and a Family Court judge who runs a nightclub there were to meet late today to work out an interim agreement on noise levels and security.

The agreement would, at least temporarily, set a maximum level at which the club could play its recorded music.

Also, as proposed by the hotel's attorney, the agreement would require the club to hire an armed, off-duty Honolulu police officer as well as an in-house security guard and require the club to consult with the hotel before making any changes or scheduling any special events.

Attorneys Jerry Hiatt, for the hotel and Ronald Au, for Family Court Judge Richard Y.S. Lee, agreed to try to reach the agreement after a lengthy meeting today with Circuit Judge Richard Au.

Judge Au is hearing the hotel's lawsuit to end Lee's lease for the nightclub because of alleged damage to the hotel's reputation.

In testimony yesterday, Lee maintained he owns "a first-class operation" in his nightclub called HELL, previously the Canoe House at the Ilikai.

"It's like any other nightclub you see in a hotel operation," Lee said.

The hearing coincided with the Judicial Selection Commission's published notice yesterday that Lee's six-year term on the bench expires this year. The commission is inviting comments for submission by Monday.

JUDGE AU joined Ilikai attorney Jerry M. Hiatt in asking about whether Lee had recently changed "the whole morality" of the nightclub since acquiring it in 1981. The judge said Hiatt's questioning of Lee suggested



Au

Lee

that "the law of Hotel Street" had entered the Waikiki hotel.

However, Lee said the hotel has sought to "dictate all policy" in his nightclub since some Ilikai residents complained about noise from the club early this year.

Lee said he believes the noise problem has been solved.

If he agrees to obtain hotel officials' prior approval of his decisions about the nightclub, Lee said, "They might as well run my business."

"We didn't think it was required by the lease, based on prior business practices," he said.

The hotel tried unsuccessfully in November to obtain a court order blocking the performance of a troupe of female impersonators called the Rhinestone Scandolls Revue.

LEE SAID the show now plays in six to 10 cities in the United States, including in "major hotels," and received a "family rating" in Las Vegas.

Hiatt also criticized HELL's August advertisement in the University of Hawaii-Manoa's fall class schedule, showing two women dressed in black leotards, leather and chains and holding whips.

Lee said he did not think the ad was offensive to UH students.

"Some of them don't think anything of it," he said. "Some of them laugh about it."

Hiatt also was critical of what he called a "naughty dance con-

test" at the nightclub earlier this year, with patrons "stripping each other" to near nudity.

Lee said he was aware of a dance contest but did not know whether it was "naughty."

"I'm not sure who did what," he said.

HIATT ALSO contended there have been "numerous reports of incidents of violence" at the nightclub, but Lee said he was unaware of excessive violence.

In some cases, Lee said Ilikai security guards have been "deliberately provoking our customers into fights." He said hotel officials have been "setting up my nightclub so they can terminate the lease without giving me fair market value."

Outside of court, Lee said that hotel officials want to "rub my name in the dirt" and force him into bankruptcy.

Lee also owns the Angles nightclub operation, formerly Opus, in the Ilikai.

His leases have six and seven years remaining, Lee said. He said he offered to sell them back to the Ilikai last year and asked the hotel to have the leases appraised for their "fair market value." Lee estimated they are worth more than \$600,000.

Hiatt said he was unaware of such an offer. He said Lee offered to sell back the HELL lease for \$400,000, which Hiatt said is "way more than it's worth."