

1245

International Brotherhood
Of Electrical Workers
Local 1245, AFL-CIO
August 1997
Vol. XLVI No. 8

UTILITY REPORTER

Preserving Overtime:
How Did Your Senator Vote?
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PG&E

Injury data concerns Call Centers

A rash of recent injuries topped the list of concerns discussed at the most recent meeting of the Call Center labor-management committee at PG&E.

According to data provided by management, employees at the company's four Call Centers sustained 34 OSHA-recordable injuries during the first six months of 1997. Management suggested many of these were probably repetitive stress injuries. There were three lost-time injuries during this same period at the Call Centers.

Under the ergonomic standard recently enacted by Cal-OSHA, additional training and work station evaluations are required when two employees performing identical work sustain injuries within the same year.

The union indicated that the company must provide employees enough time to make needed adjustments to their workstations in



Representing the union at last month's Call Center 94-53 Committee meeting were (counterclockwise, from right): Melinda Phipps, Fresno; Karen Russell, San Jose; Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier; Gail Coffin, San Jose; Susan Tso, San Francisco; Christine Schirneck, Sacramento; Kim Reed, Fresno; Felicia Mack, Sacramento; Steve Starling, San Francisco. Representing the company were Don Payne, Fresno CC Director; Steve Rayburn, Senior Industrial Relations Rep.; Donna Lau, San Francisco CC Director; and Filomena Gogol, Sacramento CC Director.

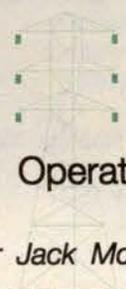
cases where those workstations are shared by two or more employees.

The union requested that employees be provided with a copy of Letter Agreement 92-24 (the agreement covering use of Video Display Terminals) as well as ergonomic information contained in the Code of Safe Practices.

ISO

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Independent System Operator

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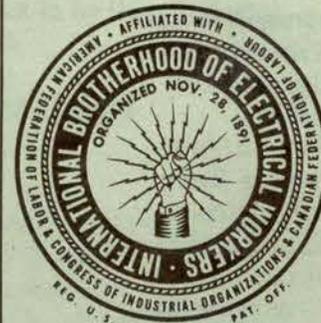
Negotiating pension and LTD benefits at PG&E on behalf of the union are (from left) Julie Rodriguez, Mike Grill, John Martinez, Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell, and Brian Kapau. Providing input to the committee on pension issues are members of the San Jose Chapter of the Retirees Club (from right) Jack Hill and Orv Owen.

Talks begin on PG&E pension & LTD benefits

Negotiators for Local 1245 and PG&E met last month to begin discussions on pension and long-term disability benefit levels.

The union put forward an initial proposal, which the company is now considering.

The talks were mandated by the 1996 general bargaining agreement between PG&E and the union.



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CALENDAR

August 16
Gas & Electric Rodeo
Rancho Seco, Ca.

September 1
CELEBRATE LABOR DAY!

October 11
Pin Dinner
Reno, Nev.



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Workers here and abroad

Rolling the union on...

Gates' Big Day: It was a good day for the stock market, and a great day for Microsoft chairman Bill Gates, already the richest man in America. Thanks to a jump in the value of Microsoft stock, Gates made \$3 billion on July 16. That's \$3,000,000,000. If he worked an 8-hour day, that's \$375 million an hour.

The Mouse Leaves Haiti: After scathing criticism of its labor practices by union activists, Walt

Disney Co.'s largest subcontractor in Haiti said yesterday that it was terminating nearly all its Haitian business. Charles Kernaghan of the National Labor Committee, a founder of the "Mickey is a Rat" campaign, said the subcontractor is leaving Haiti because it wants to use factories in China and Indonesia, where workers make as little as six cents an hour. Wages in Haiti ranged as low as 28 cents an hour.

Attack on Overtime Pay (I): A San Francisco Superior Court judge ruled in late June that the Industrial Welfare Commission has the authority to eliminate daily overtime. The California Labor Federation, which filed the suit, said it would appeal the ruling. Meanwhile, both the California Assembly and Senate passed bills to restore overtime pay for work in excess of 8 hours in a day (see Pages 8-9), but Gov. Wilson is expected to veto the measure.

Attack on Overtime Pay (II): Senate Republicans in June failed to end a filibuster which blocked their attempt to let employers substitute comp time for paid overtime. The Republican legislation also would have let employers create 80 hour "work periods" before paying overtime. "The bill's real purpose is obvious: to allow employers to work with employees more hours a week at no additional cost," said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.

Embezzled Workers: Tens of thousands of laid-off workers, convinced that their unemployment benefits were embezzled by local officials, staged huge protests last month in southwestern China. Protests began in June when more than 100,000 unemployed textile factory workers took to the streets in Sichuan province demanding government assistance and accusing local officials of stealing their unemployment funds.



WORKERS ARE FALLING BEHIND (1980-1995)

MINIMUM WAGE - UP 37%

FACTORY WAGES - UP 70%

CONSUMER PRICES - UP 85%

CORPORATE PROFITS - UP 145%

CEO PAY - UP 499%

Sources: Business Week, Bureau of Labor Statistics, AFL-CIO

Kaiser Hit: Business at 47 Kaiser Permanente hospitals and clinics slowed to a trickle on July 17 as 7,500 registered nurses launched a two-day strike across Northern California. Nurses said the strike was intended to protest wage and benefit cuts proposed by Kaiser, and to alert the public about the effect of cost-cutting on the quality of health care service.

Strawberry Union, Yes: Gargiulo, the largest direct employer of strawberry workers in the country, officially agreed in June to allow its workers to unionize, marking a giant victory for the United Farm Workers union, which is seeking to unionize California's strawberry pickers to increase wages and improve living conditions. In a related development, hundreds of Gargiulo workers will share a fund of \$575,000 won in an out-of-court settlement with the support of the UFW. Three workers had filed suit charging the company had forced them to work without pay before and after their shifts.

Fujimori's Headache: Thousands of workers marched on President Albert Fujimori's government palace last month, tossing stones and chant-

ing, "Down with the dictatorship." Fujimori has come under attack for suspending democratic institutions and imposing austerity measures.

Scab Chase: A recruiter from Volt Services Group seeking to hire scabs was chased out of Boston by striking Teamsters and Jobs with Justice activists, Labor Notes reported. Unionists went to the recruiter's hotel to apply for the jobs; they reported that the recruiter hid in his hotel room and then checked out a day and a half early. They said he interviewed few, if any, real job applicants.

Labor Gains: The labor-backed New Democratic Party won 21 parliamentary seats in Canada's June election—up from just nine in the last election. The increase gives the NDP official party status, with a research budget and the right to question the government in Parliament.

Want a Job? Go to Jail: The Green Bay Press Gazette reports that an employer in northeast Wisconsin has closed two of its three plants, cutting its workforce by up to 40%, while hiring prison inmates to do the same work.

Help families of Brocchini, Galindo

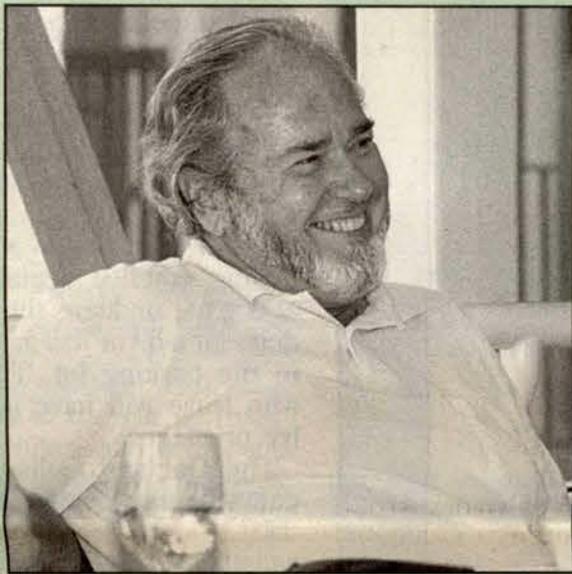
Donations are being sought to assist the families of two linemen: Michael Brocchini, who died April 1 after a sudden illness, and Sammy Galindo, who was fatally injured in a January accident. Please help if you can.

Michael Brocchini

Make check payable to:
Brienne & Nicholas Trust Fund
Mail to:
Violet Brocchini
Brienne & Nicholas Trust Fund
45323 Park Sierra Dr. #315
Coarsegold, CA 93614

Sammy Galindo

Make check payable to:
Liza Galindo
Mail to:
Renee Cederquist
PG&E Livermore Service Center
3979 First St.
Livermore, CA 94550



Van Dyke: a skilled defender of the union contract

Those who knew Ron Van Dyke's work are in complete agreement on this point: he was a skilled defender of the labor agreement.

Van Dyke, a Local 1245 business representative for 24 years, retired last month.

"Ron's legacy is no bullshit, just straight shooting," said Assistant Business Manager Roger Stalcup.

As secretary of the Review Committee, Stalcup has seen more grievances than most. Grievances filed by Van Dyke, he said, were invariably based on "good sound contractual arguments."

"Ron was a very skilled defender of the contract," said Stalcup.

"His grievances were well-researched," said Joel Ellioff, who shared a General Construction assignment with Van Dyke. Ellioff also credited Van Dyke for his "sense of fairness."

At times Van Dyke's no nonsense approach did not endear him to particular members.

"Ron would not pursue grievances for members if he didn't think there was a grievance," said Stalcup. "He didn't babysit people."

Van Dyke was initiated into Local 1245 on July 1, 1960, when Dwight D. Eisenhower was president and Elvis was king. He was hired as a union business representative in April of 1973, resigned in February of 1980 after a disagreement with the previous business manager, and was rehired six months later after the election of Business Manager Jack McNally.

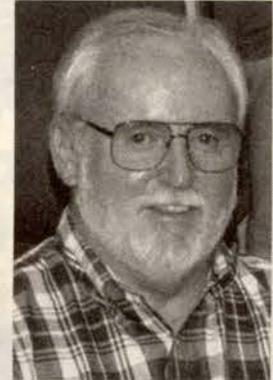
"Ron represented the members and he represented them well," said McNally. "He knew the contract and he made sure it was fairly enforced."

Van Dyke was originally assigned to serve the members in San Joaquin Division. In 1976 he also picked up Linmore Irrigation District and portions of the US Bureau of Reclamation. In 1980 he represented General Construction, an assignment he continued until 1993 when he was assigned to the Bakersfield area. In 1996 he was assigned to Fresno Division, where he remained until his retirement last month.

How serious is PG&E about meeting the competition?

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

Competition in the electric services industry is a serious threat to many of our members at Pacific Gas and Electric, but is PG&E taking that threat seriously?



The threat to jobs became very clear on May 6 when the California Public Utilities Commission ruled that competition would be permitted in "revenue cycle" activities. This competition will directly affect our members in meter reading, billing, and collections, and could affect employees in customer service operations.

Independent energy service providers were thrilled with this part of the CPUC decision. They want competition in the revenue cycle because they believe that the party who sends out the bill has a tremendous advantage when it comes to marketing various energy services. Clearly, serious competitors will make every effort to capture billing and other "revenue cycle" work.

Is PG&E going to be a serious competitor? Or is the company letting opportunities slip away?

PG&E could seek to offer meaningful real-time pricing to all of its customers, and promote metering and billing options in support of this service. But they're not.

PG&E could actively identify customers who would benefit from exceptional power quality, and seek to sell power quality services to them. But they're not.

PG&E could offer to consolidate bills of customers with multiple accounts. But they don't appear to be doing this, either.

PG&E should identify every good idea of the competition and try to offer the same or better service. Of course, PG&E should aggressively try to retain all the work it already has.

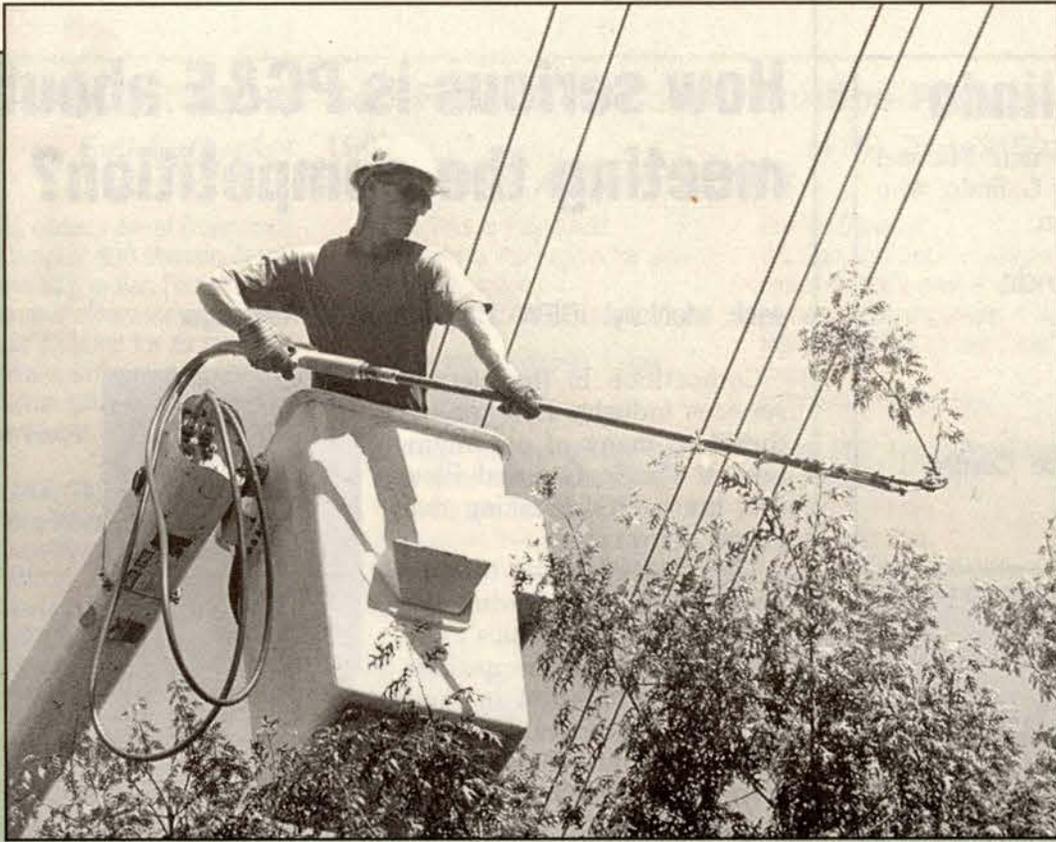
San Diego Gas and Electric and Southern California Edison have said they will perform all

the metering and meter reading work they can get—even for customers who choose another energy supplier. PG&E, on the other hand, has indicated it *might* seek to perform metering and meter reading for customers who go with another supplier, but reserves the right to not pursue that work.

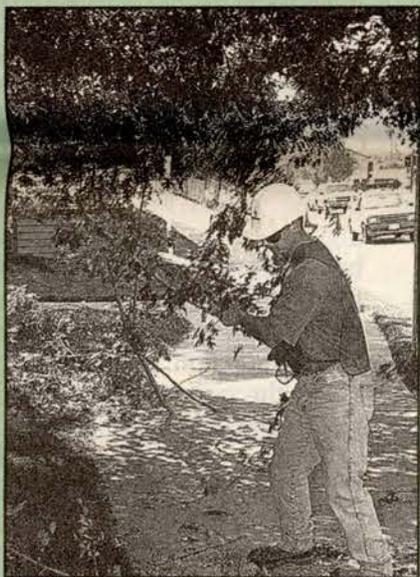
None of this bodes well for the continued health of PG&E Co., the regulated part of PG&E Corp. While some people within PG&E are trying to promote the continued health of the regulated utility, there isn't much evidence that the company is taking action in that direction. It seems more likely the company is conceding defeat, piece by piece.

At the same time, PG&E Corp. is gearing up PG&E Energy Services, an unregulated and non-unionized company designed to pursue the same type of work currently performed by our members at PG&E Co. You have to wonder: will PG&E Energy Services be a responsible corporate citizen providing union jobs for California, or will it be just another out-of-state shop like ENRON's billing facility in Ohio?

PG&E Co. has been exhorting its employees to go all out to help the company meet the competition, and our members have responded with many innovative ideas. The results will be even better when employees are convinced that management isn't just sounding the charge, but leading it as well.



Davey Tree members at work in Walnut Creek



Trimming trees around PG&E power lines in Walnut Creek, Ca. recently were Local 1245 members at Davey Tree (clockwise from above left): Daniel Ray, Geoffrey Schoevar, Jose Lopez and Daniel Sweitzer.



Get discount tickets for A's vs. Giants!

Union members have a chance to celebrate Labor Day while watching the Oakland A's battle the San Francisco Giants at Oakland Coliseum on Sept. 1.

For \$6, union members can enjoy the game, a hot dog, soda and chips, as well as a spectacular after-game fireworks display.

Union members will have exclusive use of the stadium beginning at 1 p.m., where activities on the infield will include events with the Oakland A's trainers, music and other festivities. Union members can stay to watch batting practice beginning at 3 p.m., or leave the stadium for a bit of "tail-gating" in the parking lot. Those who leave will have re-entry privileges.

The Oakland Coliseum, conveniently located by I-880, is a totally union-built and union-operated stadium. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the stadium.

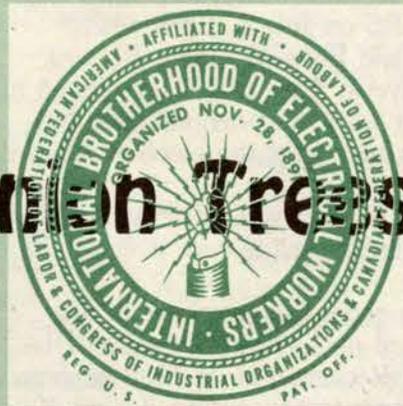
For information on how to purchase your tickets, contact your business representative or call Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier at (510) 933-6060 ext. 315.

No downside to hike in minimum wage

A year after the federal minimum wage was hiked by 50 cents to \$4.75 an hour, there is no evidence of negative impact, the Economic Policy Institute found.

In fact, teenage employment, which some claimed would drop because employers would cut back on hiring to make up for increased wages, actually increased.

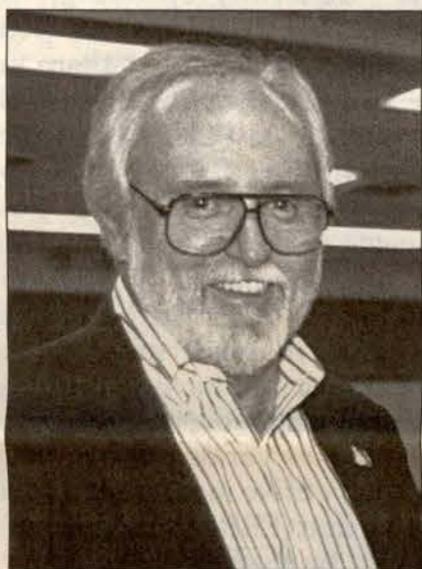
The federal minimum wage will rise to \$5.15 an hour in September. Citing the study, Sen. Edward Kennedy introduced a bill to raise the minimum wage to \$7.25 an hour by 2002.



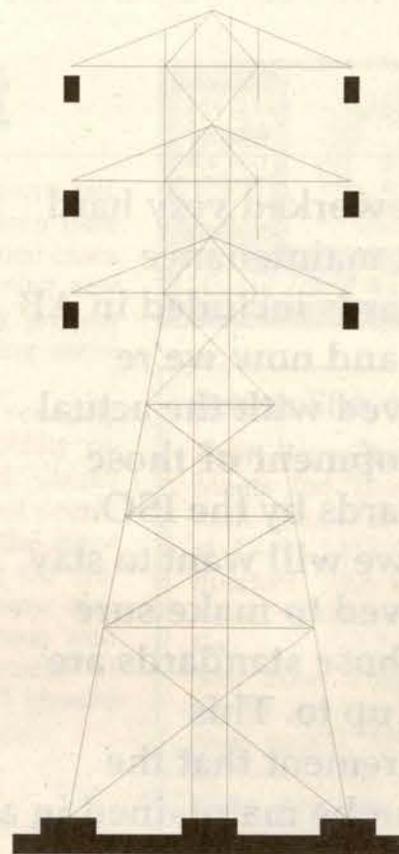
Union Trees!

ISO

Inside the Independent System Operator



Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally was recently appointed to the governing board of the newly-created Independent System Operator (ISO). In this interview with Communications Director Eric Wolfe, McNally discusses the ISO, its mission, who it represents, and why the union is involved.



Q: Why was the Independent System Operator created?

McNally: With the restructuring of the electric utility industry in California, the first step was to provide competition in the area of generation, so that anyone could build a generating plant and sell electricity to anybody they wanted to. For that, you needed infrastructure that could be utilized by all generators and all customers. So the intention was for the transmission grid in California to be developed into an independent system operator, where the utilities still own and maintain their transmission grid, but control of the grid goes to the ISO. It becomes the air traffic controller, if you will, of the flow of electrons so that everybody gets a fair shake in the delivery of electricity and generators get their electricity delivered to their customers. You don't want each generator building its own transmission lines—it would be a wasteful duplication of what's already there. The idea was to create an independent organization that would govern the use of the existing transmission grid in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

Q: How is the ISO structured?

McNally: Assembly Bill 1890 purposely designated a variety of different interests that would make up the ISO governing board. You have private utilities, public utilities, independent generators, consumer groups, marketers, environmental groups, representatives for large users, for small users, for non-users—

Q: Non-users?

McNally: I think the term is "non-participant." It refers to people, like me for example, who don't directly participate in the use of the grid. What AB 1890 tried to do was cover every base. It is a very broad base of stakeholders and therefore it's not easy to get consensus amongst them.

Q: Besides yourself, who represents labor on the ISO?

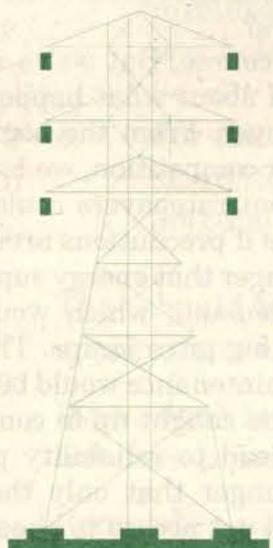
McNally: I am the only one who represents labor. Labor was not designated a seat, per se. But I was appointed to fill a "non-participant" seat, in part because our union has played a pretty big role in this whole debate over electric markets.

Q: That role has been to protect the interests of our members?

McNally: Of course. But we've also been very concerned about what happens to the average ratepayer. From the beginning of the debate over competition, we have taken the position that ratepayers could be hurt in several ways if precautions aren't taken. There's the danger that energy supply could fall short of demand, which would mean shortages and big price jumps. There's the danger that maintenance would be deferred as everyone gets caught up in competition, which would lead to reliability problems. There's the danger that only the biggest consumers will get access to cheap power. And in the long run, there's the danger that resources won't be available for training, which could lead to a shortage of skilled workers to operate and maintain the system.

See NEXT PAGE

We worked very hard to get maintenance standards included in AB 1890, and now we're involved with the actual development of those standards by the ISO. And we will want to stay involved to make sure that those standards are lived up to. This requirement that the system be maintained in a manner that is acceptable to the ISO provides a certain measure of security in terms of jobs as we head into this new competitive environment.



From PAGE FOUR

Q: How can an organization with so many different interests at the table speak with a coherent voice?

McNally: Not very well! The investor-owned utilities, along with the large public utilities, pretty much know what's entailed in running a transmission system. But many of the other governing board members are not that well-schooled in this sort of operation. So it takes some time in the meetings to educate people. But we are moving along, and people are being educated.

Q: Are the ISO board members strictly limited to the task of making the system run efficiently and reliably, or do these different constituencies have opportunities to promote their own particular agendas? Is the ISO a battleground for different interests to fight it out?

McNally: I don't think it's a battleground. The ISO's mission is outlined in AB 1890. They are to act as in a non-discriminatory way to provide for the movement of electrons by all the generators. The problem is whether the system is adequate. I'm not totally up to speed on all this, but there are a couple of places within the grid in California where there are some constraints. If you get a lot of traffic some hard choices are going to have to be made because there's constriction, inadequate transmission capabilities. I think you'll eventually see more transmission lines built to accommodate some of that. The ISO, by the way, is responsible for insuring that there are adequate sources of generation in California.

Q: Having an adequate supply is obviously a key part of reliability. But how about reliability from the standpoint of maintenance? Is the ISO also responsible for making sure that equipment is kept in good repair?

McNally: AB 1890 requires the ISO to establish inspection and maintenance standards in order to insure reliability of the transmission system. So the ISO is currently going through that process. Landis Marttila, who's a member of my staff, represents me on that task force to develop those standards. The ISO has not actually adopted these standards because they're still working out some of the details.

Q: Do we envision any major obstacles to getting standards in place? Any contentious issues?

McNally: I don't think so. The utilities are a little concerned. They don't want prescriptive standards that spell out every little thing they're supposed to do. But we're looking at performance standards. I don't think there's going to be a problem. One good thing I hope that comes out of this is that there will be an end to the game playing, where you'll do maintenance for a while, then decide you need

some resources for other things and so you stop doing maintenance. You can get away with that for a while. What happened with PG&E a couple of years ago with all the outages is evidence of what happens when you let maintenance go. But with the standards that will be developed, and the fact that some of this stuff will be public record, I think the incentives will be there for the utilities to maintain the system on a regular basis.

Q: The Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) is the federal agency responsible for regulating electric transmission, and the ISO is now responsible for transmission in California. Are these two agencies going to get into jurisdictional disputes?

McNally: Generally speaking, AB 1890 acknowledges that FERC has jurisdiction over the transmission system, but there are some issues to be worked out with the ISO. The members who sit on the ISO and the Power Exchange governing boards were appointed by a group called the Oversight Board. AB 1890 provides for appeals of governing board decisions, and says those appeals go to the Oversight Board. But FERC has questioned that procedure in tariff proceedings. So a number of things still have to be worked out, and we're currently going through that process as the ISO makes various filings with FERC to get the competitive market up and running. The hope is that FERC will sign off on the whole process by the end of the year.

Q: Who's on the Oversight Board?

McNally: The Oversight Board's made up of three appointees by the governor, and the chair of the Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee, which is Diane Martinez, and the chair of the Utilities Committee in the Senate, which is Steve Peace. And there are three business people, who are appointees by the governor. And those three are the only ones who vote.

Q: Does the existing of the ISO, and your presence on it, affect members of our union in any way?

McNally: Very definitely. We worked very hard to get those maintenance standards included in AB 1890, and now we're involved with the actual development of those standards by the ISO. And we will want to stay involved to make sure that those standards are lived up to. This requirement that the system be maintained in a manner that is acceptable to the ISO provides a certain measure of security in terms of jobs as we head into this new competitive environment. There are also job security issues with respect to generation. The ISO has been involved in a lengthy discussion about must-run power plants, which could drastically effect our members.

INDEPENDENT SYSTEM OPERATOR

Q: What is the must-run issue?

McNally: The ISO is trying to determine how many plants should be designated as "must-run" power plants—plants that have to remain in operation to assure adequate sources of energy for the citizens of California. At the same time, there is a process underway at the CPUC dealing with the divestiture of power plants, so the issue of must-run plants came up in those proceedings. The CPUC commissioners asked the utilities to determine which plants are needed to make sure there is adequate energy for customers, to determine which plants are must-run plants. We're talking about fossil fuel plants. PG&E said all its fossil plants are must-run except one. Out of 12 fossil fuel plants, Edison said it had six that are "must-run." The free marketers objected to that, saying the utilities were trying to maintain a measure of market power, and that in fact they didn't need all those plants. The ISO then commissioned an independent study. The study determined that approximately 90% of the plants would be needed as must-run plants.

Q: 90% of fossil fuel plants?

McNally: 90% of *all* the plants in the state of California. The ISO's Grid Reliability and Operations Committee, which I sit on, received the results of this study and then had to make a recommendation in terms of policy to the entire ISO governing board. The utilities, of course, felt the study vindicated their position that these various plants were needed as must-run plants. I raised the issue that not only does it vindicate the utilities, but it seems to me that, based on this report, we don't have *enough* designated must-run plants. The committee, nevertheless adopted a resolution that said there are a large number of plants that are going to be required to provide service to California, but that we're going to leave the exact number up to the ISO when it is up and running. In the meantime whatever plants have been designated as must-run would remain as they are, and the ISO later on could require additional plants to sign must-run contracts if needed.

Q: Sounds like they're ignoring the study.

McNally: In a sense. Then the study went to the full board of the ISO. When the free marketers saw the results of the study they were very skeptical of it. They amended the resolution to say that the ISO should make it a priority to keep the must-run plants to a minimum. I objected to that. I felt we were supposed to be representing the citizens of California, and that we had an obligation to safeguard reliability and the adequacy of generation going into 1998. The only evidence the ISO had on the subject was this study, which said we are going to need almost 90% of the plants as must-run. The plants PG&E and Edison had designated as must-run fell

far short of that target. I felt the ISO members were basically ignoring the study, and that more consideration needed to be given to the problem. But the resolution was put to a vote with that amendment attached to it. I was the only "no" vote.

Q: Why would the ratepayer representatives not be in support of your position on that? If generation is inadequate and supplies fall short then it's going to be the consumers who are hurt by outages and price spikes.

McNally: Well, there are different points of view on this. The marketers don't want *any* must-run plants, because they want to have the least amount of regulation possible. So let's say there are not enough must-run plants, and you come to a period in time where you desperately need generation. What do you think you're going to pay for that generation? I can see a situation develop where the ISO could be held hostage, in a sense, by some of these independent generators. They could be charging a dollar a kilowatt hour. On the other hand, if you look at the people in TURN, who allegedly represent the consumer, they are caught up in this belief that competition will bring a low price. They think if you have a large number of must-run plants under contract, prices will be kept artificially high because there won't be enough competition. They think fewer must-run plants means more competition which means lower prices. I tend to believe that that's not how it would happen. I think it's more likely the ISO would be held hostage to some degree by the independent generators to get higher rates. The whole issue of must-run plants is a balancing act, no question about that. But it's absolutely essential to insure that there are adequate sources of generation for the requirements of California's citizens. You can't leave that up completely to the open market, or people are likely to find they have electricity one day but none the next day.

Q: How long is your term for?

McNally: I think AB 1890 provides for staggered terms, not longer than three years. But because of a number of problems in the early stages, everybody was appointed for one year. So next March they will establish staggered terms, probably three-year terms.

Q: So would you want a full term on the ISO?

McNally: I think it's important for the union to have a seat at that table, yes I do. It's a good source of information about what's going on, and to evaluate whether certain provisions of the law are being upheld, and to make sure that a high level of reliability is maintained for the citizens of California--which also increases job security for our members. Somebody has to speak up for the average consumer, and if we aren't doing it I am not sure who will.



Let's say there are not enough must-run plants, and you come to a period in time where you desperately need generation. What do you think you're going to pay for that generation? I can see a situation develop where the ISO could be held hostage, in a sense, by some of these independent generators. They could be charging a dollar a kilowatt hour.

Overtime vote review

On May 22, did your State

Key

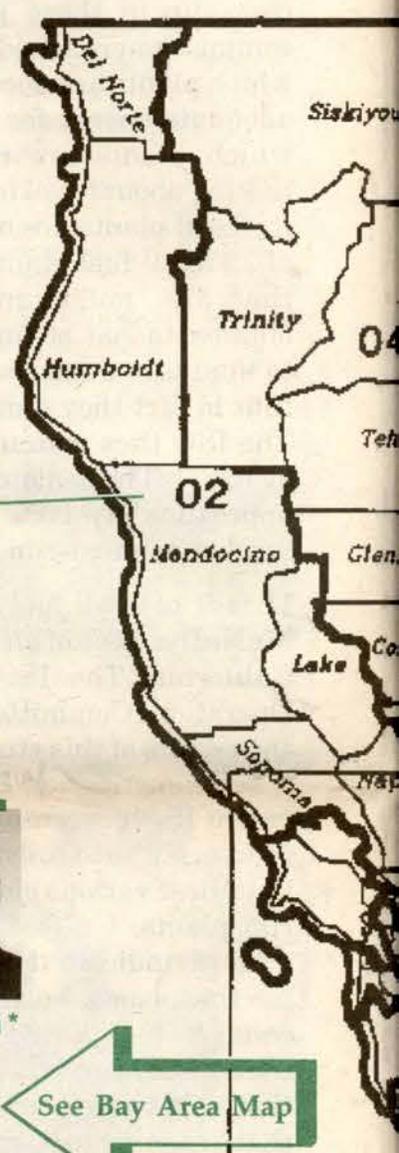
Voted to Save
Overtime Pay

Voted to Kill
Overtime Pay

How did your
State Senator vote?

*Senator Patrick Johnston was not present for the May 22nd vote, but voted to Save Overtime Pay in a committee vote.

Save It



Lee



Thompson



Greene



Johnston*



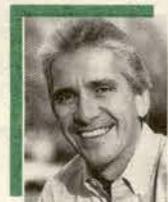
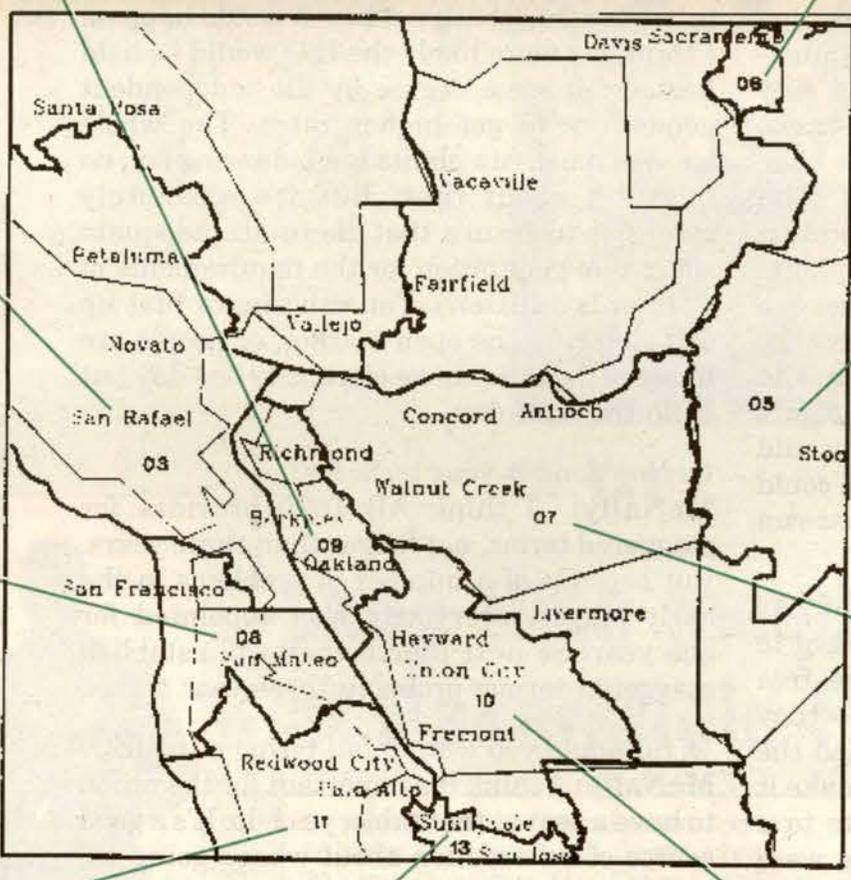
Burton



Kopp



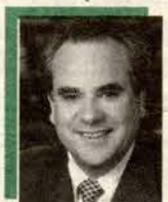
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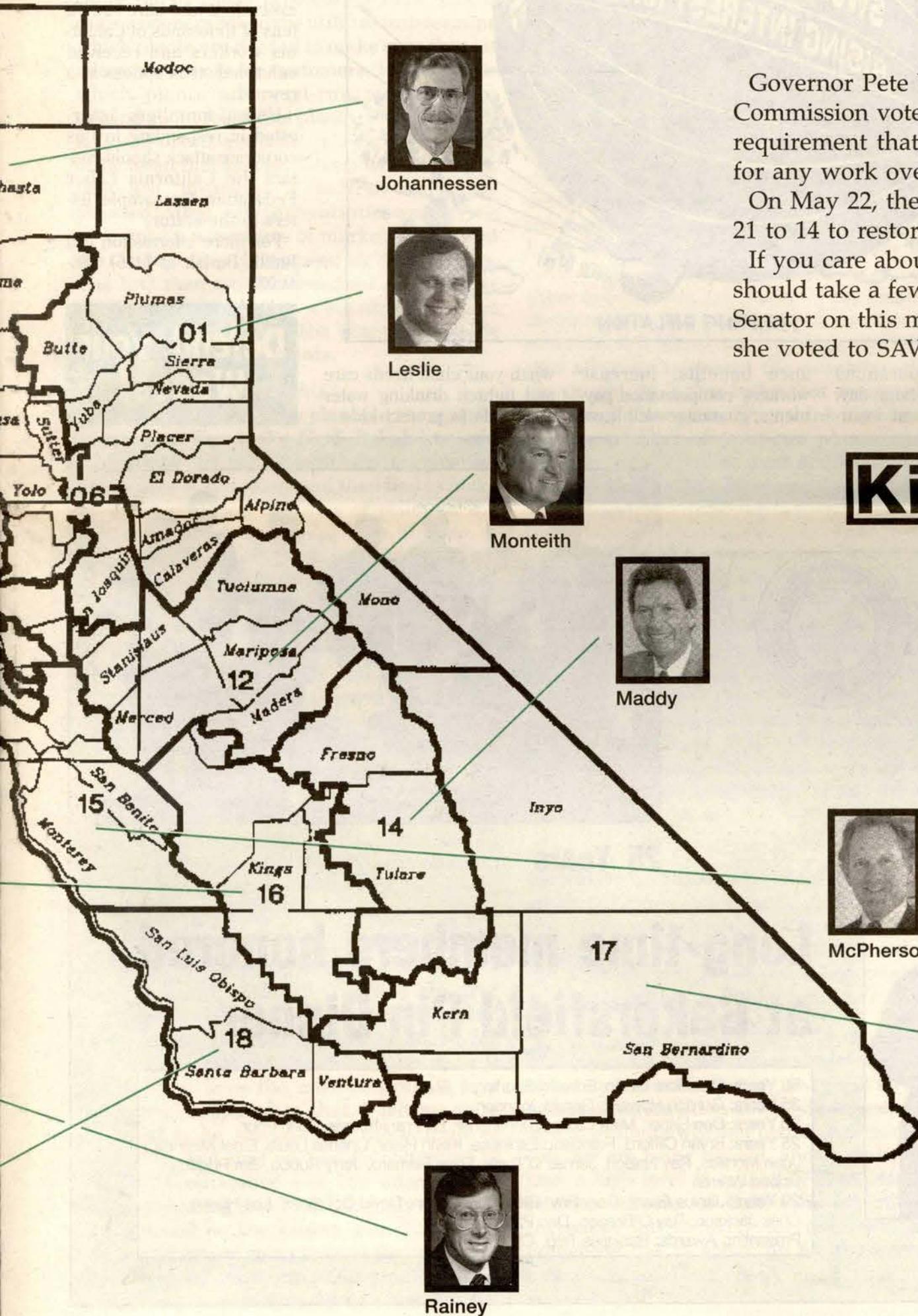


O'Connell

See Bay Area Map

Reveals Senators' true colors

Senator vote to save overtime pay, or to kill it?



Governor Pete Wilson's Industrial Welfare Commission voted April 11 to abolish the requirement that employers pay time-and-a-half for any work over eight hours in a single day.

On May 22, the California State Senate voted 21 to 14 to restore overtime pay.

If you care about your overtime pay, you should take a few moments to locate your State Senator on this map, and find out whether he or she voted to SAVE or KILL overtime pay.

Kill It

Corporate media blitz attacks pro-worker legislation

Businesses that have laid off thousands of workers and made millions of dollars in profits are rolling out a public relations campaign to label worker protection and environmental bills "job killers."

Calling itself the Coalition on California Jobs, the group is actually a bunch of large corporations intent on keeping labor costs down.

The Coalition, which includes Chevron, Arco, Texaco, the California Chamber of Commerce and the California Manufacturers' Association, aims to influence the media and sway public opinion with a media blitz running Aug. 22 to Aug. 28.

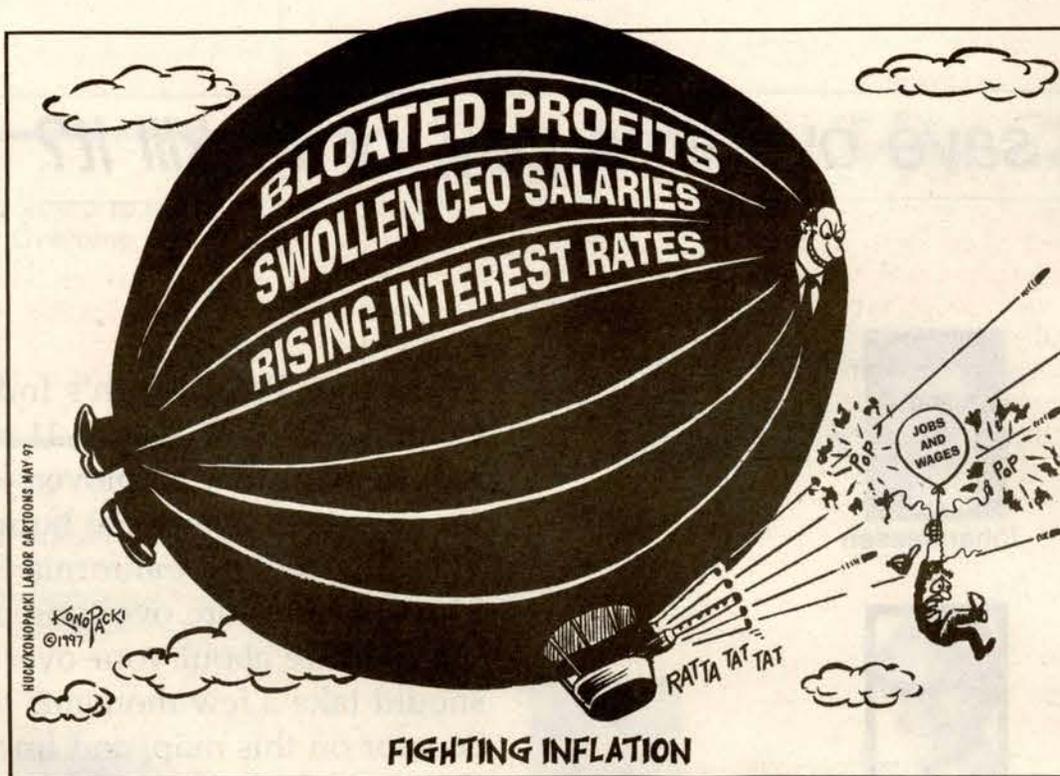
The ad campaign is an exercise in pure greed, according to Art Pulaski of the California Labor Federation.

The bills under attack by

these large corporations would save the 8-hour day, raise unemployment insur-

ance benefits, increase workers' compensation payments, guarantee sick leave

when your child needs care and tighten drinking water standards to protect kids.



"The corporate spin-doctors dub them "Job Killer" bills," said Pulaski. "Does anyone really think these people are concerned about job loss for working people?"

Pulaski said the real "job killers" are the corporate executives who have laid off tens of thousands of California workers and received enhanced stock options as a reward.

Union members interested in responding to this corporate attack should contact the California Labor Federation for sample letters-to-the-editor.

For more information call Judith Barish at (415) 986-4003.

Defend Your Wages!



30 Years



25 Years



20 Years

Long-time members honored at Bakersfield Pin Dinner

- 50 Years: Theodore Olson, Edward Sparling
- 35 Years: Gordon Howard, Gerald Johnson
- 30 Years: Dee Fisher, Mike Cross, Lon Fisher, Bill Frankhouser, John Prior
- 25 Years: Bryan Clifford, Francisco Espinosa, Kevin Heier, Charles Louie, Emet Miranda, Juan Morales, Ray Nelson, James O'Togle, Dave Romero, Jerry Rubbo, Jim Rogers, Robert Warren
- 20 Years: Janice Grant, Gary Ray, Ellen Christensen, David Dobrenen, Lee Haring, Chris Jackson, Ray O'Bregon, Dan Patrick
- Presenting Awards: Business Rep. Chuck Davis

SSI is vital part of our social safety net

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is part of the nation's social safety net, providing cash assistance to aged, blind and disabled individuals who have little or nothing in the way of resources.

While the program is administered by the Social Security Administration, it is funded by general revenues and does not take money from the Social Security Trust Funds.

In 1996, the SSI payment was \$470 a month for an individual and \$705 for a couple. If an individual or couple had another source of income, however, these amounts would be reduced. Many states provide supplements to SSI payments in

By Orv Owen

In our continuing series on important policy issues facing today's seniors (and the seniors of tomorrow), this month's Retirees Corner focuses on Supplemental Security Income, using information from the National Council of Senior Citizens.

Supplemental Security Income is a vital source of income for poverty-stricken seniors and others. Do we really want to deprive the poorest among us even as Congress contemplates tax cuts to further benefit corporations and rich Americans?

Remember—stay informed. And keep the faith!

order to raise the income of older and disabled people above abject poverty.

To qualify, a person cannot have more than \$2,000 in resources or a couple more than \$3,000. Private homes and personal property needed to maintain life are not counted in determining resources. Because current benefit levels only

guarantee an income at 75 to 80% of the poverty level, there have been calls to increase benefits to at least the poverty level.

False Choices

SSI is a "welfare" program, and as such is under attack by those who would eliminate all such programs. Already, under the newly

passed welfare reform bill, thousands of children have been notified that their cases will be reviewed using new criteria which may prevent them from receiving assistance.

Congress has recently tightened the eligibility requirements for SSI. Claims have been made that people who do not need the assistance are cheating the system. Arguments have also been made that those who are disabled because of "lifestyle choices" should not receive assistance.

Real Solutions

In 1991 a blue-ribbon panel examined SSI and issued several recommendations. These recommendations include increasing the benefits to at least the poverty level.

The panel also recommended that people who receive in-kind contributions of food, clothing, shelter, or live with family or friends see no reduction in their SSI benefits.

Also recommended were an increase in the amount of allowable resources and giving SSI beneficiaries automatic eligibility for Medicaid.

None of these recommendations have been acted upon.

IBEW
Local
1245



Retirees Corner

Retiree Club dates

East Bay Chapter:
Meets 2nd Thursday each month, 10 a.m., at Local 1245 headquarters, 3063 Citrus Circle, Walnut Creek, Ca.

San Jose Chapter:
Meets 1st Thursday each month, 10 a.m. at Local 332, 1870 Stone Ave., San Jose.



EAST BAY CHAPTER

Exchanging ideas at a recent meeting of the East Bay Chapter of the Local 1245 Retirees Club in Walnut Creek are (clockwise from upper right): Sarah Kelly, Mike Silva, Ron Meier, Tom D.S. Young, Bob Himelick, Don Hardie and Ralph Weidling.

Boycott Kmart

Bay Area Kmart stores are the target of a boycott by Local 870 of United Food and Commercial Workers.

The boycott was called after Kmart fired, threatened, spied on and harassed employees who tried to unionize. Most workers are employed only a few hours a week. Elsewhere around the country Kmart has been found guilty of age discrimination and spying on employees.

Boycott Kmart!

Report on NAFTA benefits is 'incomplete & misleading'

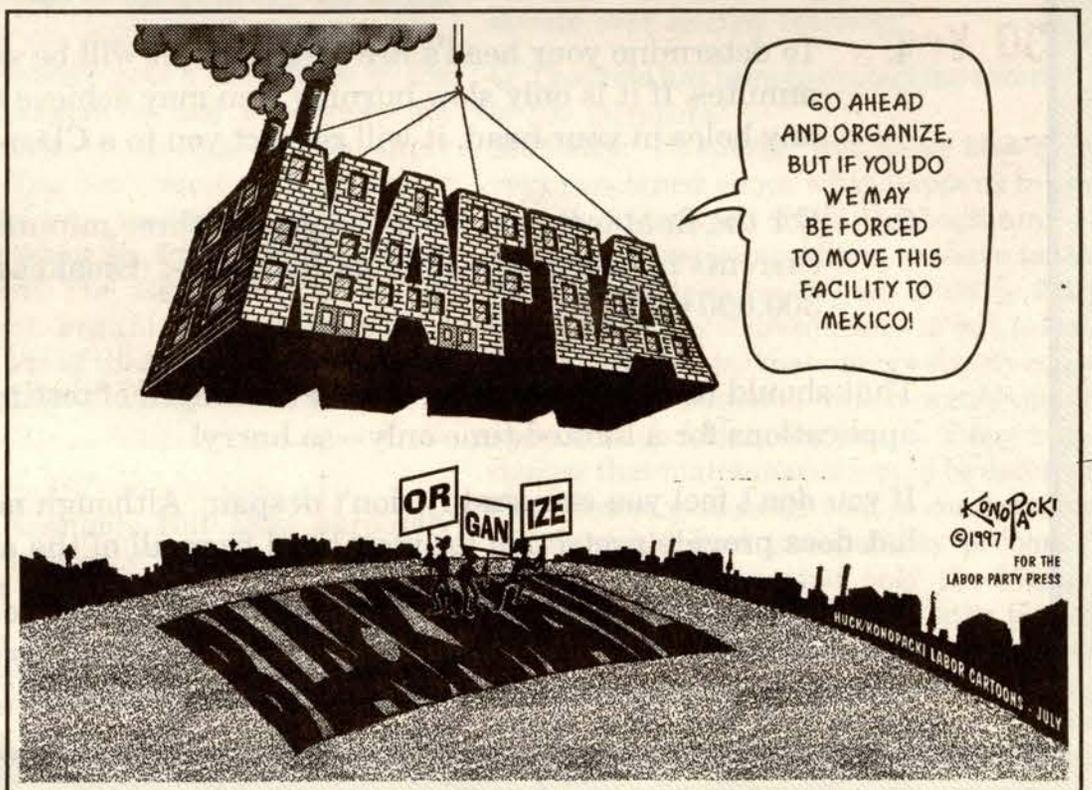
A recent Administration report praising the North American Free Trade Agreement "is incomplete and misleading," AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said.

"It attributes all positive economic developments in the United States, Canada

and Mexico since 1993 to NAFTA, while stubbornly insisting that any negative outcomes were unrelated."

The AFL-CIO noted that under NAFTA, the trilateral trade deficit has quadrupled, 420,000 job opportunities have been lost, worker bargaining power has eroded and exposure to unsafe food, illegal drugs and unsafe trucks has increased.

NAFTA should not be judged by comparing it to a world without trade, but rather to an agreement "that protects workers, communities and the environment, as well as business interests," Sweeney said.



**Happy
Labor
Day!**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIES
General Administration Building
San Francisco, California

HARD HAT EXEMPTION



You can be exempt from the requirement to wear a hard hat. However, you will be required to obtain a certificate of exemption.

Basically, if your head meets the U.S. government standards for head protection, you do not need a hard hat. Contact the Safety Officer and he will schedule you for testing at the earliest possible time.

Upon completion of testing you will receive a beautiful embossed certificate suitable for framing, identifying your head as conforming to American National Standard Institute (ANSI) z-81.1 and z-89.2 Class A, B, C and D. You also will receive a wallet-sized card certifying your certification. You must carry this with you on the job.

The testing procedure includes the following:

1. A 24-hour water immersion test. Maximum permitted absorption is 0.9 percent by weight. Free air will be furnished by the company for the 24 hours.
2. Passing that, an impact test will be conducted. While lying horizontal with your head resting on a 0.79- inch steel plate, an eight-pound steel ball will be dropped several times from a height of 50 feet. You will pass if there is no damage to your head.
3. Next, your head will be subjected to a variety of acids, solvents, oils and industrial gases. It must pass with no deformities or obvious color change.
4. To determine your head's fire resistance, it will be submitted to a propane torch for five minutes. If it is only slow burning, you may achieve only a Class A or B rating. If there are any holes in your head, it will restrict you to a Class B rating.
5. For the final test, you must sustain for three minutes, 2200 volts AC, 60 Hz, with leakage currents not exceeding nine milliamperes. Breakdown threshold has been established at 300,000 volts.

That should be simple enough. Due to the length of testing, the Safety Officer will be accepting applications for a limited time only—so hurry!

If you don't feel you can qualify, don't despair. Although not as pretty as your hair-do, your hard hat does provide protection for your head from all of the above.

Remember, unless you receive an exemption certificate, you must continue wearing your hard hat at all times while you are on the job. Not wearing it is a privilege given only to those who undergo proper certification and are designated "HARD HEADS".

Prevent 'take-home' lead poisoning

The Occupational Lead Poisoning Prevention Program in the California Department of Health Services has developed a new bilingual (English and Spanish) poster which alerts employers and workers who work around lead to the dangers of taking lead home to children and other family members.

Dr. Barbara Materna, who manages the occupational lead program, reports that each year her program and local health departments throughout the state investigate many cases of "take-home" lead exposure. Take-home lead exposure occurs when a worker wears home work clothes and shoes which have lead dust on them.

This invisible toxic dust settles in the car or truck, on furniture and floors, and in the carpets of a house or apartment. Young children, who often put their hands in their mouths, can swallow this lead dust and be poisoned. Other household members can also swallow or breathe lead dust without realizing it.

Lead is especially dangerous to children under the age of 6 and to pregnant and

nursing women. Lead can damage a child's central nervous system and can cause attention and behavior problems, as well as decreases in IQ and reading and learning abilities.

This damage can have a lifelong effect on school and work performance. In adults, lead can harm reproductive, kidney, brain, and blood-forming functions.

In California, lead is disturbed and thereby becomes a risk in over 100



different industries. Children have been poisoned from lead brought home from radiator repair shops, scrap metal yards, metal casting operations, and construction work, to name a few.

The new bilingual poster was developed to illustrate how take-home exposure occurs and to summarize the

basic steps to take to protect families from this danger. It is designed to be displayed at work sites and in health care clinics.

Primary precautions include:

- Washing hands and face at the end of a work shift.

- Changing into clean clothes and shoes before leaving work.

- Taking a shower and washing hair before leaving work or immediately after getting home.

- Asking the family doctor to test children up to 6 years of age for lead.

The poster also states that employers in lead-related workplaces must have a lead safety program as required by Cal/OSHA.

In addition to the poster, OLPDP distributes English and Spanish language fact sheets on preventing take-home lead exposures, and other materials which educate employers and workers about preventing work-related lead poisoning.

To request copies of the take-home lead prevention poster, fact sheets or to obtain an order sheet for additional educational materials, call the Occupational Lead Poisoning Prevention Program's hotline: (510) 540-3448.

Conflicting studies on EMF risks

Investigators for the National Cancer Institute claimed last month that increased exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF) does not increase the risk of children contracting acute lymphoblastic leukemia.

The NCI study, conducted by Drs. Martha Linet and Leslie Robison and published last month in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, looked at 629 children with leukemia and 619 controls, and included actual measurements of EMF exposures rather than relying on estimated exposures.

Linet said the study "conclusively shows" no elevated risk and that parents should not be worried about power line exposure "experienced

by most children in this country."

However, not everyone was in agreement that the study puts to rest all concerns about EMFs.

"This was a significant study, but I don't think it can be viewed as the last word on the subject," said Dan Mayo, a Local 1245 lineman serving on the joint EMF committee at Pacific Gas & Electric Co. "This study focused only on residential exposure and wasn't designed to evaluate occupational exposure to EMFs. There are other studies out there that suggest some kind of link between various diseases and workplace exposure to EMFs."

A study by Dr. Maria

Feychting at Sweden's Karolinska Institute, published in the July issue of the journal *Epidemiology*, found that "persons who were exposed to magnetic fields both at home and at work are nearly four times as likely to develop leukemia as those who were not exposed to magnetic fields."

A study by Dr. N.T. Fear at the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford, England, examined national cancer registry data on 372,000 cases of brain cancer and leukemia, including 8,000 known to have occurred among electrical workers. "Significant excesses of around 20% were observed," Fear's team reported last year in the *British Journal of Cancer*.

Safety Matters

By the Local 1245
Safety Committee

Exercise caution when using your car phone

The *New England Journal of Medicine* recently reported that your chances of getting into an automotive accident is four times greater when using a car phone while driving.

In fact, while using a car phone, you are putting

yourself at the same risk as a person who is driving while slightly drunk.

When using a car phone, don't forget to keep your eyes and your attention on the road. Consider putting off less important calls until you are stopped.

Shock-absorbing lanyards

When inspecting your personal protective equipment, take a good look at your shock absorbing safety lanyards.

Are they in good working order? If your lanyards show any sign of being

activated, they are no longer useful in your protection. Most lanyards will show a sign—such as a tag on it—when it has been activated.

If you see these signs it is time for you to replace it.

Summer safety tips

Remember: heat can cause problems for those working indoors as well as those working outdoors.

If you work indoors, be sure your area is ventilated, wear lightweight water-permeable clothing that allows free air circulation, drink more water than your thirst requires, be able to recognize the signs of a heat-related problem.

Now is a great time to take yourself and family for CPR and First Aid training. You may be trained on the job, but what will happen if you are not around in a family emergency or if you yourself need help? You can contact your local Red Cross, Heart Association or Fire Department about training. The cost is minimal, and could save a life.

**Always
work safe!**

City College of San Francisco Labor Studies Program

Fall Semester, 1997

(415) 267-6550

Classes begin August 18, 1997

All classes are at Downtown Campus, 800 Mission St. (at 4th St.), in San Francisco unless otherwise noted. Fees are \$13/unit for all students, plus a \$10 per student fee. Some tuition assistance is available.

Labor 70: American Labor Movement (3 units)
Tuesdays, 7-10 pm
Unions, strikes, lockouts, slavery, Emancipation, victory, defeat, solidarity--that's labor history!
Instructor: Bill Shields

Labor 72: Labor Law (3 units)
Thursdays, 7-10 pm
Your rights as a worker in union and non-union workplace.
Instructors: Mike Gaitley & Antonio Salazar-Hobson

Labor 73: Collective Bargaining (3 units)
Wednesdays, 7-10 pm
Learn how to bargain for good wages, benefits, and working conditions, and how to organize to win good contracts.
Instructor: Albert Lannon

Labor 74: Economics for Labor and Community Leadership (3 units)
Mondays, 7-10 pm
The AFL-CIO has launched a nationwide economics education campaign. Find out

why. This is Paycheck Economics that works for you and your union.
Instructor: Ellen Starbird

Labor 88: California Labor History (3 units)
Mondays, 6:30-9:30 pm
Complements our US and Bay Area labor history classes by focusing on Southern California, the Central Valley and beyond.
Instructors: Sue Englander & Fred Glass

Labor 91D: Gay & Lesbian Issues in the Workplace (1 unit)
Mondays, Sept. 8 - Oct. 13
6:30-9:30 pm
450 Church St.
How to fight homophobia at work and create unity among your fellow workers for the benefit of all.
Instructors: Patti Roberts

Labor 94B: Childcare Workers' rights (1 unit)
Wednesdays, Sept. 24-Oct. 29
6-9 pm
1860 Hayes
For every childcare worker who ever yearned for good pay, decent benefits and a voice on the job.
Instructor: Kathleen White & Bill Shields

Labor 96A: Labor Relations in Hospitality (3 units)
Mon.-Wed.-Fri., 1-2 pm

Phelan Campus
It's San Francisco's biggest industry. We'll look at who owns it, who organized it, what labor relations are like there today.
Instructor: Bill Shields

Labor 96B: Labor Relations in Automotive (3 units)
Fridays, 8-11 am
1400 Evans Ave.
Labor relations, industry history, workers rights and safety on the job for your favorite fix-it-up man or woman.
Instructor: Bill Shields

SATURDAY CLASSES

Labor 103: Peer Counseling in the Workplace (1 unit)
Call for Dates and Locations.
Worker survival skills in today's cutback, cutthroat economy. How to access food, medical and other support services.
Instructor: Tom Ryan

Psyc 15: Assertive Behavior (1 unit)
Saturdays: Nov. 15 & 22
9 am - 5 pm
Phelan Campus
Standing up and communicating effectively for your rights in the workplace.
Instructor: Aliyah Stein

Labor lessons for kids



A labor studies curriculum is now available for elementary school children, thanks to the work of the California Federation of Teachers and the efforts of several teachers from around the state.

Two years in the development, "The Yummy Pizza Company" curriculum creates a role-play setting of work in a pizza factory.

In the beginning the students learn the differences between work and play, examine the reasons why people work, and see themselves as future workers. By the end they will have applied for a job, worked at it,

learned about cooperative work relations, experienced workplace conflict and conflict-resolution strategies, and learned about unions and what they do.

From sign-up sheets to membership cards and collective bargaining simulations, no aspect of the organizing and collective bargaining process is left out.

The curriculum booklet comes complete with everything needed to begin and complete the unit, including an explanatory note to parents.

For more information or to receive copies of the curriculum, call (510) 832-8812.

San Francisco State Labor Studies

Fall Semester 1997 (415) 338-2885

Classes begin August 27, 1997

Labor 250: Introduction to Labor Studies (3 units)
Tues./Thurs., 12:35-1:50 pm
Overview of history, economics, politics of labor in the US.
Instructor: Al Lannon

Labor 300: Research & Analysis of Contract Labor Issues (3 units)
Thursdays, 7-9:45 pm
Instructor: Brenda Cochrane

Labor 343: Women & Work (3 units)
Wednesdays, 7-9:45 pm
Instructor: Brenda Cochrane

Labor 677: Introduction to Federal Labor Law (2 units)
Saturdays: Sept. 13; Oct. 11; Nov. 15; and Dec. 13
9 am-5 pm
Instructor: Brenda Cochrane

Labor 510: Labor Economics (3 units)
Mon./Wed./Fri., 9:10-10 am
Economic issues in the

workplace: wages, hours, unemployment etc. The structure and function of the labor market.
Instructor: Don Mar

Labor 423: Affirmative Action (3 units)
Saturdays: Sept. 6, 20, 27; Oct. 4, 18; Nov. 8, 22; Dec. 6
9 am-2:30 pm
Analysis of affirmative action programs. How to do they work? What is the legal background? Have they been effective? The current debate.
Instructor: Tanya Russell

Labor 695: Union Internship (3 units)
Time arranged with instructor and union.
Instructor: Brenda Cochrane

Labor 699: Special Study (1-3 units)
Topics to be arranged with instructor.
Instructor: Brenda Cochrane

All classes at Laney College, 10th & Fallon Streets, Oakland (one block from Lake Merritt BART Station). Fees are \$13/unit, plus \$2 Student Center fee. Some assistance available.

LS 248GK: Workplace Organizing (3 units)
Wednesdays, 7-10 pm
Legal issues, building strong committees and coalitions, and winning strategies.
Instructor: Ellen Starbird

LS 30: Labor Law (3 units)
Tuesdays, 7-10 pm
The legal framework for the right to organize and bargain collectively; union, employee and employer rights in the public and private sectors.
Instructor: Will Flynn

LS 10: American Labor Movement (3 units)
Tuesdays, 7-10 pm
The history, culture and values of American workers and their

unions; how the labor movement came to be what it is and how it works; current issues.
Instructor: Albert Lannon

LS 14: Grievance Handling & Arbitration (3 units)
Mondays, 7:00-10:00 pm
Identifying grievances and negotiating solutions to workplace disputes. Union rights and responsibilities; arbitration as the final step.
Instructor: Albert Lannon

SATURDAY CLASSES

LS 210: Assertiveness Training (1/2 unit)
Saturday, Sept. 20
9 am-5 pm
Standing up effectively for your rights on the job; communicating clearly.
Instructor: Ksiel Sztundel

LS 48GC: Teaching Labor to Our Children (1/2 unit)

Saturdays, Sept. 6, 9 am-4 pm
Designed to aid teachers who want to introduce labor issues to their students, and for parents who want to pass the torch to their children.
Instructor: Fred Glass

LS 248GJ: Work & Family Issues for Home Care Workers (1 unit)
Saturdays, 10-11 a.m.
Handling problems of family conflict, bereavement and other issues in a supportive setting.
Instructor: Ellen Starbird

LS 248GE: Workers' Culture: Brining Labor Alive in Song (1 unit)
Saturdays, Oct. 4, 11, 18
9 am-4 pm
Working class art and artists. No experience or singing ability necessary.
Instructor: Pat Wynn

IBEW LOCAL 1245 UNION SHOPPER

**IBEW
1245** PIN

Goldtone
\$2.00
+\$.50 shipping



IBEW Hat!

Local 1245 IBEW
Black
Specify: Calif. map, Nev. map or
no map
\$6.50
+\$.75 shipping
(Note: One size fits all)



More Hats

Proud To Be Union Logo
\$5.00
+\$.75 shipping
Lineman Logo
\$5.00
+\$.75 shipping
(Note: One size fits all)

Stadium Jacket

Silver, Red
(Specify front or back logo)
S/M/2XL: \$35.00
3X, 4X: \$45.00
+\$3.00 shipping
Note: L & XL not available

Sweat Shirt/Crew

Blue, Gray, Black, White
M/L/XL/2X
\$15.00
+\$3.00 shipping
(Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery)



Jacket

Black with IBEW Logo
S/M/2X
\$26.00
+\$3.00 shipping
Note: L & XL not available

Sweat Shirt/Hooded

Blue, Gray, Black
M/L/XL/2X
\$17.00
+\$3.00 shipping
(Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery)

Bucket Bags

Lineman Logo in Center
\$7.00
+\$1.50 shipping

Club Shirt

(No pocket)
Black, Mint, Blue, Peach, Jade
Logo on chest
M/L/XL/2X
\$15.00
+\$2.50 shipping

IBEWomen Charm

14K Goldplated
\$5.00
+\$.50 shipping

Suspenders

Red, Yellow
Regular, Long, XL
\$10.00
+\$1.50 shipping

Lineman Pin

Goldtone
\$5.00
+\$.50 shipping



Coffee Mug

IBEW (Ceramic)
Blue
"Proud To Be Union" (Plastic)
White
\$5.00
+\$3.00 shipping

Golf Shirt

(With Pocket)
Navy, Red, Royal, White, Maize
Logo on sleeve
M/L/XL/2X
\$15
+\$2.50 shipping



T-Shirt

Ringer with IBEW Logo
S/M/L/XL/2X/3X, 4X
\$8.00
+\$1.50 shipping

Please cut here

Order Form

Quantity	Item	Color	Size	Price	Shipping	Total
1.						\$
2.						\$
3.						\$
4.						\$
5.						\$

Ship To:

GRAND TOTAL

\$

Name

Street Address (No P.O. Boxes!)

City/State

Zip

Phone #

Mail completed form with check or money order payable to:
IBEW Local 1245
c/o Office Manager
PO Box 4790
Walnut Creek, CA 94596



Rancho Seco

Sacramento, CA

August 16, 1997

Events: 8:00am - 3:00pm

Outdoor Family Fun!

Info & Gas Event Registration:

Heidi Haas
8-252-4244 (510) 866-4244
HAP1

Info & Electric Event Registration:

Sherri Southerland
8-477-2552 (510) 606-2552
SLST

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Local 1245



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