

REVIEW COMMITTEE

PG and E

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D.J. BERGMAN, CHAIRMAN

- DECISION
 LETTER DECISION
 PRE-REVIEW REFERRAL

De Sabla Division Grievance No. 10-77-78-18
P-RC 415
Wearing of Neckties

February 9, 1979

MR. R. A. COOK, Chairman
De Sabla Division
Joint Grievance Committee

The above-subject grievance has been discussed by the Pre-Review Committee prior to its docketing on the agenda of the Review Committee and is being returned, pursuant to Section I B(1) of the Review Committee procedure, to the Joint Grievance Committee for settlement in accordance with the following:

The case concerns the wearing of neckties of male clerical public-contact employees in De Sabla Division. The Joint Statement of Facts indicates that prior to the Summer of 1976, a shop steward in the Chico office met with the Customer Operations Manager and requested the necktie policy be relaxed in the Customer Services offices. The necktie policy was modified shortly thereafter based on (1) an air conditioning problem in the Chico Customer Services Office, and (2) the casual nature of community standards present in Chico. This practice continued until the end of September, 1977, when the General Office Customer Services Department advised the Division that they were in conflict with the systemwide tie policy. As a result, the new "tie practice" was discontinued and is the subject of this grievance.

On September 23, 1977, all offices in De Sabla Division were informed by letter that all males in public-contact work were to resume wearing ties immediately. Subsequent to the issuance of the September 23, 1977, letter, the shop steward again met with the Customer Operations Manager discussing the possibility of the temporary relaxation of the tie rule during the summer periods. The record indicates that there was an agreement to relax the "no tie" rule during this period of time. However, a disagreement ensued relative to the period of time. The shop steward was of the opinion that it would be in conjunction with daylight savings time - from late April to late October; and the Customer Operations Manager opined that the "summer period" should correspond with the temperature conditions in the Sacramento Valley or from June through September.

The Pre-Review Committee finds itself in an awkward position as a result of the events surrounding this grievance. In 1974, the Review Committee, in Review Committee Decision No. 1337, agreed to the reasonableness of dress code for male employees in the Customer Services Department when meeting face-to-face with or in direct view of customers. At that time, the Review Committee thought this would establish a systemwide guideline for the Divisions to follow, and if changes were forthcoming, they would be pursued through collective bargaining between the Company and Union. As it has turned out in De Sabla Division, the bargaining took place

February 9, 1979

locally, which appears to be the major problem in resolving this grievance. The male employees in the Division, at one time, convinced Management to relax the no tie policy for a considerable period of time, and Management, in part, agreed on the basis of an air conditioning problem in the Chico office. It is interesting to note that the no tie rule continued for approximately 18 months, obviously, during the winter months when air conditioning presumably was not a problem. Further, the case is complicated by the issuance of the September, 1977, letter mandating that the Division offices follow the systemwide policy of male employees wearing neckties and, then sometime in early 1978, the entrance into local negotiations in an attempt to relax the policy during the "summer periods." The Pre-Review Committee can find no consistency whatsoever in the Division's application of the necktie policy, and for this Committee to render a logical and reasonable decision is virtually impossible. The guidelines established in Review Committee Decision No. 1337 are still in effect and can only be changed through collective bargaining between the parties. However, in view of the De Sabla situation, the Pre-Review Committee is of the opinion that the no tie policy should continue for the "summer periods" starting June 1 of each year and ending September 30 of the same year until such time as the parties change the practice. This decision applies only to the De Sabla Customer Services Offices and is without prejudice to either position of the Company or Union, and the case will not be cited in other Customer Services offices throughout the system.

This case is considered closed on the basis of the foregoing and the adjustments provided herein, and the closure so noted in the minutes of your next Joint Grievance Committee meeting.



D. J. BERGMAN, Chairman
Review Committee



L. N. FOSS, Secretary
Review Committee

DJB:rto

cc: RDMullikin
IWBonbright
LVBrown
Personnel Managers