UWUA Rumors Debunked

"Layoff Scare" Home to Roost

A king-sized UWUA rumor came home to roost last week but not without first doing a lot of damage to the morale of PG&E employees and the PG&E itself.

The rumor was thrown out by a minor UWUA official in the Napa district and it spread like wild-fire around the four Bay Divisions until it was picked up by the San Francisco Examiner and brought to the attention of company officials who denied it.

The Napa UWUA official had been going around his sector telling employees that 3000 layoffs were pending. He inferred that unless employees stayed close to the UWUA they could expect little protection if any. Several violations of the current UWUA-PG&E contract were violated by the company. That contract is supposed to protect all PG&E employees, regardless of their union affiliations.

SIGNIFICANCE
It is significant that on the same day that Utility Facts was deploring such tactics for organizational purposes, and explaining to employees the groundlessness of such rumors, the company also denied them after they were called to its attention by the Examiner, Utility Facts had no "inside" information on the matter. In fact Utility Facts had no "inside" information on the current UWUA-PG&E contract being violated by the company. That contract is supposed to protect all PG&E employees, regardless of their union affiliations.

That Spongy UWUA "Island"—Seven Ghosts Walk In UWUA Headquarters

The ghosts of seven UWUA locals are walking around the union offices of the UWUA Joint Council in Oakland. After nine months of furious effort to salvage an organization out of the Fisher-inspired interference that broke up the old UWUA Joint Council, Local 134 is the only UWUA prop that is left. It is far from the closely knit, effective organization needed to bargain effectively for the UWUA members.

Yet Local 134 is the principal mouthpiece and front for all that remains of the old UWUA in the Bay Area. There appears to be little liaison between the other UWUA locals which are supposed to be members of the Joint Council. As was often the case before the bolt to the IBEW, the remaining few UWUA locals go their individual ways and UWUA executive officer Shedlock is the receiver, trustee and vote-caster for the paper UWUA locals.

DO-NOTHING
Today, the UWUA Joint Council, supposed to coordinate the aspirations of the membership of eight UWUA locals, is really composed of Local 134 in the majority and executive officer Shedlock, who represents the paper unions.

Practically nothing of benefit to the 5,000 Bay employees covered by the UWUA "quickie" contract has come out of the Council since Brotherhood of Consolidated Edison Employees President Fisher sent Shedlock out here from the East to run things the ConEd way.

Mr. Shedlock now represents on the Joint Council the employees from Redwood - San Mateo, Richmond, Martinez, Santa Rosa, Wilson, Ukiah, Lakeport and San Francisco, who are in fact solidly IBEW.

An example of the liaison between the ghost representatives of the Joint Council is well illustrated by the story in issue of Utility Facts telling about a Napa UWUA official peddling rumors of impending layoffs, while Shedlock was denying them. The ghosts were recently unable to take effective action on layoffs out of seniority, mainly because the ghosts from the paper unions had no such problem so they couldn't be bothered.

NO PUSH
Other examples which typify the Joint Council's lack of cohesion and unity were the passage by the Council of a resolution affecting the interest of PG&E members, and the negotiations of another local with the company which eliminated valuable system-wide seniority rights of certain steam plant employees. Only the repeated blasts from IBEW officials and from Utility Facts have prevented a repetition of such shenanigans.

The present state of Joint Council impotence stems from the lack of democracy and autonomy in local matters in the UWUA locals. Meeting turnouts for the paper locals have been nil and not much better for the more authentic locals. Interest shown by those who do show up at meetings has been languid, no proposals for doing something about the Joint Council's inactivity or about present conditions in the four Bay Divisions have come from the floor. There has been a general air of (Continued on Page 3)

Ed White Reports On N. Bay Activity

By ED WHITE

We continue to make gains in membership in the North Bay Division. Much whistling in the dark by a certain member of the UWUA in certain parts of the North Bay hasn't changed the situation. Perhaps some of supposed information that this member was putting out was given to him as gospel truth. In these days of rapid communication, however, the putting out of misinformation might bounce back at one.

We are sure a much safer way is to make sure of the facts before going overboard and spreading something that sounds like good propaganda.

We will have more on organizing in the North Bay Division in the near future. Meanwhile, let's keep nothing but the facts on the subject. Facts are what the PG&E employees are going to insist on.

Economic Program

After exhaustive study by committees of the needs and aspirations of PG&E workers an 18 point economic program has been adopted by the representatives of all seven L. U. 1324 units.

The program will be presented in an article in Utility Facts next week.

It is a long-range program and flexible to the extent that it may be modified or expanded after IBEW becomes the official bargaining representative through the initiative of the employees themselves.

Watch for it next week. The program will contain some of the most popular items now in force in West Coast contracts where the IBEW is the one organization on the system plus some items especially tailored to the needs of PG&E workers.
More About the UWUA 'Scare' And The Real Score on the 'Layoffs'

Below are two stories that came about because an irresponsible UWUA official in Napa went around his district saying that 3,000 PG&E employees were about to be laid off. He thought such a scare would bring the members of his deteriorating local closer to the UWUA because he was the boss who would deal with the company for any members laid off out of seniority.

The rumor spread so rapidly that it came to the attention of the San Francisco Examiner, which asked PG&E officials for comments, which were published on October 5th. Local 1324 IBEW through the columns of Utility Facts sought to allay the hysteria generated by the Napa rumor, in a story which appeared in an issue of the same date, October 5th.

What The Examiner Said About the Jobs Rumor:

"Recurrent rumors of 'mass layoffs' by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company were denied today by both officials of the utility here and in San Francisco. "A spokesman in PG and E's East Bay Division said that not only was the firm not reducing its work force here, but actually is hiring additional help. "In San Francisco, a company official confirmed the report of an overall reduction in manpower, but pointed out that such a move is normal at this time. "It's just our usual change-over from summer to winter operations, he explained, 'plus the fact that a large number of major construction projects started since the war are being completed.'

"Many of those laid off were students who returned to school, it was pointed out."

What Utility Facts Said About the Jobs Rumor:

"To still the swelling resentment against UWUA do-nothings, a UWUA official of the Napa local — supposed to be a responsible individual — has been telling a nearby group of about 20 employees that there weren't going to be any layoffs. (See story on this elsewhere in this issue.)

Officials of Local 1324 IBEW have been in close contact with several key IBEW members in the Napa district. Those members reported that the counter UWUA statements succeeded in confounding the confusion of the UWUA members. Fostering confusion has been one of UWUA's favorite tactics for maintaining its position where it still has operative locals.

The IBEW will continue its efforts to cut through that confusion with facts bearing on all issues wherever and whenever it can. Reports indicate that Utility Facts has been helpful in this respect."

Everyone Welcome

However, Local 1324 organizational meetings then were held in some of the remaining UWUA local union areas. When they are held, PG&E employees are urged to get to these meetings. The important issues will be discussed there in detail. Questions will be welcome and invited. Meanwhile, those employees who are desirous of learning more about IBEW and who feel that the eyes of the boss or the UWUA may be watching them have been told by IBEW members there that they had better stay in line — 3000 layoffs were in the making.

"The inference was unmistakable — stick with us or we'll stand aside when you get sacked. "So long as the company's multi-million dollar expansion program is incomplete, PG&E employees can rest assured that any lay-offs that are made will be in restricted areas and of a temporary nature for every department is going to carry a heavier work load so long as it is supposed to end."

"It is likely to be enlarged, if anything, because California is still the fastest growing state in the Union and the Bay Area is showing the largest percentage of that growth. "True, the big jobs in the Feather River Canyon are nearing completion. But some of the biggest have yet to throw their loads out onto the lines. Preparations to receive those loads are still going on and will continue to go on for some time to come. Additional lines and heavier line loads mean more work for everybody for the Utility worker's basic commodity is electricity. The more of it handled the more work for every department."

The huge Moss Landing and Antioch sub-stations are nearing completion. Their prospective loads will make a lot of work for PG&E employees. "To still their production help eliminate existing shortage of facilities, but it will go a long way toward attracting in new industry to serve the growing population, thus making more jobs for utilities workers."

"Of course the speedup permitted by the UWUA has made possible some of the recent spotty layoffs. The UWUA would do well to see that the temporary layoffs that do occur take place according to the seniority provisions of the contract it is supposed to enforce instead of going around creating hysteria in some sectors for organizational purposes."
Look For NLRB Election Soon

**IBEW President Talks With NLRB**

An election date was expected to be set soon so that PG&E employees can select what they deem to be the best union to represent them in collective bargaining with the company. Those who have worked so diligently and earnestly in the IBEW campaign are confident an announcement would be forthcoming soon.

For the past three weeks Local 1324 members and officials have been preparing vigorously for the election in the expectation that an NLRB announcement would be forthcoming soon. Basis for this optimism, which has been reflected in the columns of Utility Facts recently, is a letter from Int'l. Pres. Dan W. Tracy, dated September 12.

In that letter Tracy states that he personally contacted Paul Herzog, chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, in Washington, D.C., requesting a progress report on the IBEW petition for an election.

**PROGRESS OF IBEW ELECTION PETITION**

Mr. Merritt G. Snyder
215 Ottawa Street
San Francisco 11, Calif.

Dear Sir and Brother:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter dated September 10, 1949, in re case of Local 1324 IBEW, now before the NLRB, Washington, D.C.

This office has not received any information of interest on this case of Local 1324 before the board until I appeared before the chairman of the board, Paul Herzog, and I am informed by him the case is now being processed and will be speeded up and a decision will be forthcoming as rapidly as possible.

Because of the backlog of cases before this Board, I do not look for a decision during the month of September. Regardless of any rumors being circulated (by the UWUA) the board is processing the case. I must feel we will get some action before the first of October. It is my feeling that there will be no further delays except any instituted by the board.

**BEING PROCESSED**

Tracy was advised that the PG&E case is now being processed by the Board, and that this processing will be speeded up and a decision forthcoming as rapidly as possible.

**The National President's personal assistance was provided immediately after it was requested by Int'l. Rep. Merritt Snyder to debunk UWUA propaganda to the effect that the case would never be processed and no election would held.**

That such propaganda was spread at all (and we can quote the Newscast of the UWUA) is an insult to the intelligence of PG&E workers, who know that the NLRB effect that the case would never be processed and a decision would be forthcoming as rapidly as possible.

**Because of propaganda circulated by the UWUA to the effect that no election would ever be handed down in this case, the International officers of the IBEW have interested themselves in progress of the election petition before the Board.**

**NO UWWA**

That complication of the UWUA that they have a special pipeline of connection with the NLRB has so far proved to be groundless. IBEW officers find that the case is getting the same consideration as other important cases before the Board.

It should be born in mind that the IBEW has a large backlog of cases; that the Company's effort to have 51 classifications excluded from the bargaining unit will require exhaustive study; and that the IBEW itself kept the case out of the Hands boards until only recently by resorting to every legal delay it could muster.

Tobriner planned to confer with President Tracy on legal aspects of the L.U. 1324 campaign and then stop off at the American Federation of Labor convention in St. Paul, Minn., on his way back to San Francisco.

Upon his return he will have a timely report on its findings.

**Meter Readers Hit By UWUA Laxity**

A bulletin which apparently came out of the office of Personnel Manager H. C. Day was recently posted on the bulletin boards for the past three weeks. It stated the following:

That date is important. We'll come back to it later.

More important is the bulletin which in effect advises the Meter Readers that they are going to have to work in the rain henceforth and that they had better buy a lot of special clothing to protect their health.

“With the approach of the rainy season, "the bulletin begins, "this is to advise each meter reader of the necessity of being properly equipped with sufficient water proof clothing to protect (himself) in rainy weather.

The bulletin then goes into a detailed description of the sort of clothing the Company will expect the meter reader to purchase (at the meter reader's own expense and without any compensating raise in wages) and ends with the warning that lack of proper clothing will be no excuse for not completing routes.

Apparently the meter readers are expected to make the same number of calls during the rainy season as they have been making in the dry season. There is no reference to the fact that too many trips in the rain could result in a trip to the hospital.

But that is beside the point. What is to the point that in the past the meter readers have not been required to work outside in inclement weather. The reason why they have not lies in Article 8.215 of the IBEW Constitution and By-Laws (Continued on Page 4)
L.U. 1324 Requests Even Break On Bulletins

L.U. 1324 officials are asking the employer for an even break this week in the use of employee bulletin boards after it became known that 1324 IBEW members had been told not to post meeting notices and other information pertinent to the campaign.

We assume the Company feels it is under obligation to bargain with UWUA because that outfit has the quickie contract negotiated early this year while the IBEW was seeking an election to prove that a majority of PG&E employees were fed up with UWUA misrepresentation.

SENTIMENT

Naturally at the time the election petition was filed by IBEW nothing short of an election could have foretold the real sentiment of the employees. However, the IBEW was confident enough of its position to ask UWUA and Company for a consent election. The UWUA was not interested.

At the time a similar situation had arisen in reference to use of the bulletin boards and the Company apparently cleared it up. That is as it should be for the act upon which the NLRB is based says that the employer has no right to intimidate his employees in an election campaign.

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

With its personnel department in close touch with the progress of the current campaign, the Company should be aware of the preponderance of UWUA sentiment around the system.

L. U. 1324 is certain that the Company does know of this sentiment, that it also knows full well the rights that its employees enjoy relative to the use of employee bulletin boards, but that it may not know about the recent intimidation of certain of its supervisors.

L. U. 1324 feels that these supervisors, in forbidding the posting of L. U. 1324 IBEW meeting notices, may have acted out of personal favoritism to the UWUA without Company blessing or knowledge.

If this is the case the interference with L. U. 1324's right to use the bulletin boards—based on the principle of free speech and guaranteed by the National Labor Relations Board—will undoubtedly be stopped.

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

San Francisco Unit 3

A letter from International President D. W. Tracy, I.B.E.W., concerning L. U. 1324, N.L.R.B. case in Washington and I.B.E.W. Attorney Matt Tobrma being on a trip east to the capital on union business sent some news items given in a short report to members by International Representative Snyder. Reason for the brief report by Bro. Snyder being that he wanted full time for a membership discussion on P.G.E. worker contracts and opinions on union company issues in the San Francisco area. Committee reports followed and a barage of member-fellow worker contact reports were given, seniority clauses, lay-offs and a new type button for campaign purposes coming under discussion.

Brother Hastings, from the Martinez unit, a believer in I.B.E.W. and in unions to the extent of consistently attending various unit meetings besides his own, and doing active organizing work for the I.B.E.W., gave a report of substantial progress in the Napa, San Rafael and Vallejo areas.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

UNIT 3