

Two PUC Decisions affect work, privacy



utility reporter

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—Photo Courtesy of PG&E News Bureau

What is missing here at Ocean Avenue and Junipero Serra in San Francisco? You see a street like this and the absence of something improves your whole outlook on life. Please see the accompanying story on the PUC's encouragement of further underground distribution and the implications it will have for our members' job opportunities.

PUC protects phone privacy

Los Angeles

Next time you call to or from PG&E there will have to be a "beep" tone when the call is being monitored, according to a PUC Decision upheld here recently.

The original decision "found the promotion of privacy of communications to be a reasonable condition of service in the public interest

and ordered that when subscriber monitoring equipment was used, notice be given of monitoring to the parties of a monitored conversation."

The matter was reopened when it appeared certain telephone companies and some public agencies did not feel the above language applied

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Water Dept. negotiations complete

"Interim bargaining on Water Department problems has been successfully concluded with significant improvement in promotional opportunities and demotion protec-

tions," Business Manager Weakley reports.

"Wage levels in Water classifications have been materially improved and a small but significant

group of Local 1245 members has gained some of the recognition it has long deserved," he said.

Ron Weakley headed up an employee committee composed of Albert Beebe, Shasta Division; Clifford Logan, Drum Division; John Miller, Stockton Division; Marion Bennum, De Sabla Division; and Stanley Parsley, Colgate Division, which spent some seven months resolving the bargaining issues.

Bargaining sessions, brought about by a Company commitment made during General Negotiations, commenced on March 30, 1967. The first meeting involved discus-

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Underground methods Open up more jobs

"... The people of California, through their elected representatives, demand undergrounding of new and existing overhead electric and communications facilities," the PUC's Decision Number 73078 reads.

"It is also clear from the record that electric and communications utilities, both privately and publicly owned, are aware of this demand and are willing to accommodate it, but are not in complete agreement as to the methods to be used," it continues.

"The Commission is aware from the record that not only does underground electric and communications construction create considerable aesthetic value, but it includes features which promote safer and more reliable utility service. Further, the evidence indicates that considerable progress has been made in reducing the cost of electrical underground installations at distribution voltages and that presently there is little or no difference in

the cost between overhead and underground communications installations."

These conclusions are just a few of those reached by the State PUC

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YOUR Business Manager's COLUMN

By Ronald T. Weakley

Our 1966 PG&E settlement referred a good number of important items to interim negotiations and since January of 1967, we have cleared a lot of them off the deck.

In our November issue, we shall carry a detailed story written by Senior Assistant Business Manager L. L. Mitchell, regarding what has been done on these leftover items and what is still left to be done.

A lot of time, work and considerable expense has gone into these interim negotiations for various departments and groups. Involving our members off the job is costly but the money is well-spent. We note with pride that our people off the job continue to participate directly in negotiations at the top level whenever major changes are under discussion which affect their departments, and that they do a fine job for their fellow employees.

My Assistants—L. L. Mitchell and John Wilder—along with a number of Business Representatives, have also served well in handling the interim negotiations under my direction.

* * *

We have also made a lot of progress in cutting down the case load of the PG&E Review Committee through intensified efforts on the part of Union's Members of this im-

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YOUR *Business Manager's* COLUMN

By RONALD T. WEAKLEY

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important labor-management committee and Company's members have done likewise.

* * *

We have held many Stewards' Conferences around the System and these communication and education efforts are paying off. Our Stewards are turning out in good numbers, despite the personal and family problems involved in attending Union functions on Saturdays. I salute these fine members and I appreciate the sacrifices their families make to help build and maintain this personal and family service organization.

* * *

Our apprenticeship and training activities are getting off the ground as PG&E moves steadily ahead on its program to improve sharply the total training activity on its vast system.

It is my view that this operation

will become one of our most important Union functions as more and more employees become involved in training, retraining, testing, etc., as part of our joint labor-management developed and approved programs.

These programs will have bugs in them to begin with but time and experience will work them out. Both parties to our agreements are pledged to cooperate toward the objective of achieving a model skill development program within the utility industry and I believe that it is our Union duty to spend time, funds and continuing efforts to do our proper part in this excellent endeavor.

* * *

The accident prevention program on the PG&E System should be overhauled, in our opinion. We concede that employee attitudes and other factors such as chronic rule-breaking, bear on the problem but

"The Hot Line"



we do not concede that management is without sin because we see unsafe practices condoned every day under the very eyes of certain supervisors who know better or should know better.

On August 31st, we had a sort of "summit conference" with some high level PG&E executives on the subject of job safety. We jointly reviewed a number of recent serious job accidents and discussed the whole subject of safety in considerable depth and at times, with considerable heat.

We suggested more joint activity in this area of concern to everyone who works on the job or who runs the job, as part of our labor-management operations under our contract.

We have not yet had any tangible response to our suggestions but we understand that serious consideration will be given by top management to what was discussed on August 31st and that we will hear from PG&E as soon as the subject matter has received proper study.

* * *

Attempts by certain contractors and construction unions to grab off more of our work is being strongly resisted by this writer.

With layoffs occurring in General Construction and some signs of workload trouble in certain areas and departments within the Divisions, we are taking all steps possible to convince PG&E that more, rather than fewer, work opportunities should be made available to the Company's own employees rather than to outsiders who don't give a hoot about PG&E's existence, future economic security or even its survival, when the chips are down.

I take a strong position on this with PG&E and with any outside group or force which may threaten the job security and job improvement opportunities rightfully those of our people.

Being a "PG&E'er" carries with it the rightful expectancy that the heads of the "family" won't give

away the store to outsiders for short-term economic advantages, because if they do, there's not much point in talking about "PG&E'ers" at all.

* * *

Some special area meetings are under consideration for the purpose of improving membership-leadership communication. We are also developing materials for use in an educational feature concerning the Local 1245-PG&E Union Pension Contract which we will kick off after the first of next year, so that our improvement proposals will be well thought out and reasonably attainable through the process of collective bargaining.

We are scheduled to serve notice regarding our 5-year term Union Pension Contract on November 1, 1968, and we plan to be ready in all respects for that important personal and family security benefit which Local 1245 has proved is a major example of the value of Union membership as it affects current and retired employees of PG&E.

* * *

We lose Business Representative Jim McMullan to self-employment in a business enterprise and we shall miss him very much. Jim was a fine Steward, Committeeman and Business Representative.

My personal good wishes go with Jim as he assumes new responsibilities in a new field of endeavor and I know that thousands of Local 1245 members join with me in thanking him for past efforts in behalf of his fellow Union members.

Dave Reese, Lineman from Woodland, has joined the Staff of Local 1245 and has been assigned to East Bay Division to work with Representative Pete Dutton.

Dave's 12 years of service with PG&E were matched with Union activity. He served as Unit officer, Steward, Grievance Committeeman and Sacramento Division Advisory Councilman. We welcome him aboard.

EDITORIAL:

Working behind the scenes

That man in the grey suit sprinting up the steps of the State Building in San Francisco—the group in a huddle outside the County Courthouse in Merced—that gentleman emerging from the State Capitol with a concerned look on his face.

Far from the dust and dirt of the yard and job, these men are doing a job too—for the membership of Local 1245 and working people generally.

For, these days, this too is "where the action is"—and this is where battles in behalf of employees must be fought—in the hearing room, the court room, and the corridors outside the cloak room.

Not all of the people in attendance at these hearings represent average citizens who have to work for a living. In fact, chances are they represent narrow interest groups which gain only at the expense of the average taxpayer. The Labor Movement is usually outmanned and outgunned (at least financially) at these hearings and proceedings, but it has principle going for it. Its reputation as the lobby for "all the people" is well deserved.

So Local 1245 will continue to have a representative from the Business Manager's Office at PUC hearings which affect our members and the consuming public; its lawyers, representatives and key members will still be in evidence in courtrooms in Merced and elsewhere; and its registered legislative advocate will continue to be there when the California Labor Federation lobbyists need allies on an issue decided by our Executive Board in accordance with the opening passages of our Bylaws.



the utility reporter

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after an investigation involving 36 days of public hearings in San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego; 55 witnesses; 75 exhibits and 4,802 pages of transcript.

The PUC-initiated investigation, was divided in three parts:

1. Service connections.
2. Conversions.
3. New construction.

The September 19th decision ruled on the first two parts, but left the third for a future order.

1. Service connections

Before this decision, a PUC order precluded PG&E from installing **underground** services on private property. Under this decision, the customer (or applicant for service) will, at his expense, perform the necessary trenching, backfilling and paving on his property and shall furnish, install, own and maintain termination facilities on or within the building to be served. Then the utility, at its expense, will furnish, install, own and maintain the underground service lateral to the applicant's termination facilities outside the building.

If utility-owned transformers are installed on the applicant's premises, the foregoing also applies to primary distribution lines (in addition to secondary, service lines).

If conduit other than C.I.C. (cable-in-conduit) is required, the applicant will furnish and install it. However, work required to be performed by the applicant may actually be performed by PG&E with the applicant reimbursing the utility for the cost involved.

2. Conversions

The PUC's action is designed to increase the current tempo of undergrounding existing overhead systems. As it said at the outset:

"The Commission on June 22, 1965, instituted this investigation to determine what revision of existing rules, what new rules, or new rates would be required to stimulate, encourage, and promote the undergrounding, for aesthetic as well as economic reasons, of electric and communications services and facilities.

"However useful and often necessary had been the seemingly total preoccupation with the engineering and commercial aspects of our utilities, the time had long passed when we could continue to ignore the need for more emphasis on aesthetic values in those new areas where natural beauty has remained relatively unspoiled or in established areas which have been

victimized by man's handiwork."

PG&E and San Diego Gas and Electric, during the PUC proceeding, moved to have the Commission make interim orders putting into effect the Companies' proposed changes in their existing rules. These motions were denied by the PUC Examiner at the time, renewed by the Companies on the last day of the hearings, and taken under submission by the Commission itself.

PG&E's proposed changes with regard to underground service connections were similar to those finally ordered by the PUC. Southern California Edison proposed no change in its presently filed tariff schedules for service connections, and objected to being covered by any rule on conversion based on proposals made by San Diego G&E or Pacific Gas and Electric.

PG&E's proposal on conversion to underground provided for 2 per cent of certain electric revenues collected from each city, county or city, and county in the previous year to be spent in undergrounding. This section of the proposal assumed all such work would be done under local ordinances; other sections provided for property owners having one block or 600 feet of overhead and those not covered by the first two sections; applicants under the last two sections would pay the difference between the cost of a new equivalent overhead system and the underground system.

In testimony on this proposal, the City of Oakland stated the "two percent conversion rules" were designed to limit rather than encourage undergrounding which utility companies have tended to resist. The City and County of San Francisco felt the rule was reasonable.

The Federal Government, as represented by the Department of Defense, supported the concept of undergrounding utility lines in furtherance of beautification. It suggested dual electric rates for overhead and underground as a means of having the users of utility services bear what the Federal Government believed to be the significantly greater cost of underground distribution.

The State Public Utilities Commission Staff found PG&E and SD-G&E had experienced a very minor decline in rate of return due to conversion to underground; it found the idea of a percentage limitation on conversion expenditures was necessary to keep an undue burden off the other ratepayers'



Down comes one of the 67 poles removed by PG&E crews during the conversion of Berkeley's University Avenue to underground.

shoulders. But the PUC Staff suggested that after several more years' experience, the conversion programs can be reviewed to see the desirability of a uniform statewide conversion rule, and also to see the desirability of expanding the conversion programs.

The Commission itself, in discussing the record before it, stood for a reasonable balance between the prohibitive cost of converting to underground in 10 years (the short run)—and following a two percent formula which would not produce spectacular results in this century (the long run). It stated its policy of encouraging undergrounding, but expressed its concern over unreasonable burdens falling on the general ratepayer.

The PUC placed no absolute limit on conversion expenditures, gave the utilities the responsibility of converting, believed the large electric utilities could budget significant amounts for 1968 aesthetic conversions, and, expected increasing amounts to be budgeted in subsequent years. Each electric utility will be expected each year to file with the Commission a statement on the annual budget for replacing overhead with underground facilities, together with the amounts allocated to each city and unincorporated area; each utility will also file an annual report on the conversion work accomplished.

Commission members Mitchell, Gatov, Symons and Morrissey (with Commissioner William M. Bennett being necessarily absent from the disposition of the proceeding) signed the order which requires the various utilities to file within 30 days rules in compliance with the PUC's decision.

PUC protects Phone privacy

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to them while various other companies, including American Airlines and those represented by the California Manufacturers Association petitioned to continue monitoring without notice to the parties to a telephone conversation.

Gas and electric utilities took the position: "that their utilization of monitoring equipment is in furtherance of a proper business purpose which in no way conflicts with the concept of privacy of telephone communications. These subscribers urged that Decision No. 69447 be modified to remove the requirement that an audible tone warning device be attached to monitoring equipment."

Mert Walters, representing Business Manager Weakley's office, stated Decision No. 69447 is based on sound principles, that the basic concepts therein are proper and should be maintained, but that Local 1245, IBEW is not opposed to modification of the mechanics of decision implementation providing its basic concepts are maintained.

Four other unions and the ACLU lined up with Local 1245 on the issue of protecting the privacy of telephone communications. In opposition were various airlines, collection agencies, municipalities and counties, newspapers, telephone answering services, utilities and a transit district.

The Commission found that monitoring was useful in training employees, and that a "beep" tone tended to destroy the usefulness of monitoring—but other means of training employees adequately existed (it listed eight steps without the use of monitoring). Since February 16, 1966, when monitoring was ruled out officially, the PUC has found no evidence efficiency of operations or service to the public has significantly decreased.

The California PUC also included in its findings: All parties to a telephone conversation should know they are being monitored so they can determine how much privacy they want;—no third party can decide this for him;—therefore, appropriate notice must be given to all parties that their words are being monitored, recorded or otherwise intercepted.

The Outdoor Scene

by Fred Goetz

Some mighty big fish were taken, sea-runs in particular, from the waters of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and British Columbia, according to recently-released information from **Field and Stream Magazine**.

Largest silver salmon for 1966 can be credited to Ed Martin of Eugene. He was trolling a hotshot lure — medium-size, red-metallic finish—in Siltcoos Lake. It is nestled on Oregon's central coast with a short-river outlet to the Pacific Ocean. Suddenly, a lunker silver took hold and immediately stripped off yards and yards of line, thrashing and jumping on the surface of the lake in the process. Martin eventually eased the finny moose to bulwark and boated it, a 25-lb., 5¼-ounce specimen, subdued on 15-lb. test line! Second largest was a 23-lb., 10-oz. silver (Coho) — by John W. Smart of Seattle, taken from the Quillayute River of Washington on—get this—6 lb. test line!

Top stream rainbow, otherwise known as steelhead, was a 30-lb., 2-oz. specimen from British Columbia's famed Kispiox River but as usual, the year's largest rainbow was taken from a familiar ILWU fishing haunt, Lake Pend Oreille, Idaho, a 30-lb., 12-oz. Kamloops by Verlas J. McClure.

Wade Lake, Montana, produced the biggest brown trout last year, a 28½ pounder, eased boatside on 4-lb. test line and duped with a Red Dot Wonderlure. Second largest brownie was credited to Lonnie Humphrey who subdued a 20-lb., 1-oz. brown on 6-lb. test line and Big Butch lure from Sullivan Lake in Washington. Top cutthroat trout of the year was a 6½ pounder, taken from Henry's Lake, Idaho by Dick Gaumer on a Queen Bess fly.

Top Dolly Varden was credited to Fritz Fuhrmann, a 25 pounder, eased from Adams Lake in British Columbia.



Shuswap Lake, B. C.

Water Dept. negotiations complete

(Continued from page one)

tion on a Company proposal submitted March 16th. Delays were caused by the difficulty in trying to find answers which would provide a uniform basis to meet the needs of both employees and the Company on a system-wide basis. Each Division has different problems and over the years varied means of handling them have been developed.

The new conditions and wage rates became effective on October 2, 1967, after being signed by Weakley. The agreement provides for amalgamation of crews working on domestic water and water collection with universal classifications of Water Systems Repairman and Water Systems Subforeman. This was accomplished by expanding job definitions to cover duties previously performed by the Flume

Repairman and Pipe Fitter classifications. A 24-month progressive wage rate was established for the Repairman job to cover the apprentice classifications which were abolished. The classifications of Rough Carpenter and Blacksmith were eliminated and incumbent employees slotted into the wage schedule for Systems Repairman.

Western Canal employees, long feeling that they were improperly classified, will now be reclassified to Canal Maintenceman, a new classification title on Pacific Gas and Electric, which will have a wage progression starting at \$133.90 per week and progressing by 6-month increments to \$148.15 after 18 months. Reclassified employees will receive approximately a 28 cents per hour increase over their former rate.

Ditch Patrolman, Ditch Tender, Lake Tender, Water Treatment Op-

erator, Water Meter Repairman, and Water Serviceman classifications received increases under the revised schedule. Increases for incumbents in Water classifications range from \$3.25 to \$14.25 per week.

Adjusted job definitions and revised lines of progression were provided which should eliminate problems of diversity found from Division to Division. Due to the problems still existing in San Joaquin Division, where the Water Department organization include a Hydro Maintenance group, studies and discussion will continue to provide for a gradual modification there to provide conformity to the rest of Company's system. Where applicable to present classifications in San Joaquin Division, the agreement will become effective on the same date as the rest of the system.



Some of those in attendance at the Bakersfield Saturday session—former Executive Board Member Albert G. Callahan is identified in the right foreground.



Business Representative Wayne Weaver stands to introduce Business Manager Weakley (on Wayne's left) at the Bakersfield Special Meeting held Saturday, October 7th in the Hacienda. Also seen at the head table are Vice President Marvin Brooks, left, Southern Area Executive Board Member Herb Dickenson, and, at right, Senior Assistant Business Manager L. L. Mitchell.