New Health Plan Drive Started

An improved national health care program that has the strong support of organized labor was unveiled as the answer to the need for quality medical services for all Americans at a price they can afford.

The proposed Health Security Act of 1971, sponsored by a bipartisan group of senators and congressmen, embodies the best elements of bills calling for national health insurance that were introduced in Congress last year.

Besides improving services for all citizens, the National Health Security program is designed to expand the resources of the nation's entire health care system. This would include recruiting and training more doctors, nurses and medical technicians along with support for innovative health plans and group practice development.

A full range of medical coverage would provide for the prevention and early detection of disease, the care and treatment of illness, and medical rehabilitation. Partial coverage is proposed for dental care, skilled nursing home care, psychiatric treatment and prescribed medicines.

The starting date for benefits would be July 1, 1973, after two years of mandatory legislation of the program under a proposed Resources Development Fund.

The legislation calls for general tax revenues of the federal government to provide 50 percent of funds for the program. The other half would come from a health security tax on employers, workers and self-employed individuals.

AFL-CIO Legislative Director Andrew J. Biemiller pointed out that under the proposal there would be no increase in taxes for workers earning less than $7,800 a year.

Biemiller represented the Federation of bills calling for national health insurance that were introduced in Congress last year.

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A Reminder

Beginning January 1, 1971, employee contributions to the PG&E Retirement Plan have been cut in half, as a result of the provisions of Local 1245’s Benefit Agreement with PG&E. We quote pertinent language:

PART VI—TERM

Section 3.04 “During 1969 and 1970, (contributions were)”—each year, 1% percent of the first $3600 of Covered Compensation, and 2% percent of the Covered Compensation in excess of $3600.

Section 7.01 and 7.02 “During 1971 and 1972, (are now)—each year, 5% percent of the first $3600 of Covered Compensation, and 15% percent of Covered Compensation in excess of $3600.

This provision also applies to Pacific Gas Transmission and Standard Pacific Gas Line employees.)” Participant contributions are neither required nor permitted on Covered Compensation for any period after December 31, 1972.

PART VI—TERM

Section 6.01—“A Union Pension Contract, having taken effect as of January 1, 1964 and having been amended January 1, 1969, January 1, 1964, and last amended on January 1, 1969, and herein referred to as the ‘Benefit Agreement,’ shall continue in effect as amended for the term January 1, 1969, to January 1, 1974, and shall continue thereafter for terms of one year each unless written notice of termination is given by either Union or an Employer to the other ninety (90) days prior to the end of the then current term.”

Section 6.02—“If either an Employer or a Union desires to amend this Benefit Agreement, it shall give written notice thereof to the effect that the parties have had at the end of the then current term, in which event the provisions of the Amendment shall be binding upon the parties only after the parties have agreed to the terms of such Amendment.”

Section 6.03—“Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 3.20 of Part VI of the By-Law providing for the termination of the Benefit Agreement, a Bill of Sale of any part or all of the property or the ownership shall be made out to the other party on notice of termination as provided in Section 6.01 of this Part VI.”

Section 6.04—“Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 6.01 of this Part VI, an Employer may forthwith terminate this Benefit Agreement, as it applies to such Employer, in the event that the Employer calls upon or authorizes employees of such Employer individually or collectively to cease or abstain from the performance of their duties for Employer, and such Employer may forthwith terminate this Agreement, as it applies to such Employer, in the event that the Employer causes any lock-out.”

In general, the foregoing sections of the Union-Company Benefit Agreement (except that while employee contributions have been reduced 50% as of January 1, 1971, they will be completely discontinued as of January 1, 1973.)

Beginning of the Benefit Agreement will occur during 1973 and an amended Agreement will be effective on January 1, 1974, under the provisions of Part VI—Term.

Union’s bargaining program for the 1973 Benefit Agreement opening is of course yet set, but certain long-term goals will be sought again in 1973, according to Business Manager Ron Weakley.

Some of these are:

1. Return of all employees’ contributions to the PG&E Retirement Plan to those who made contributions prior to or up to January 1, 1971.
2. Improved normal retirement benefits.
3. Improved early retirement benefits.
4. Improved survivor benefits.
5. Improved Group Life Insurance, Long-term Disability Plan, Savings Fund Plan, etc.

Copies of the Local 1245—PG&E Benefit Agreement are available on request. See your Steward or Business Representative.
February Buying Calendar: Values in Rugs, Squares

By Sidney Margolius

12-inch carpet squares needed for a 12-foot by 12-foot room. Or you can buy a similar-size foam-backed carpet with vinyl for $60, or a blend of polypropylene and nylon for $75-$80.

But the squares help solve problems for rooms with recesses and floors you want to cover completely. Too, stained, damaged or worn squares can be removed and new ones installed.

Be careful about quality of squares. Compare depth of surface pile and find out what fiber it is. Some promotional stores are openly breaking the law by advertising carpet squares at such low prices as 29 cents each without identifying the fiber. Nylon squares normally cost more than nylon blended with rayon, and polypropylene more than nylon.

Some of the low-price squares being advertised are seconds. These may be satisfactory if not too many handmade or minor defects. But secondly, you can't always tell until you open the boxes, although you can use the spotted ones under furniture. Plain colors cost least; patterns, more; shag squares, most. The shag surfaces hide defects more than seamless squares are not too visible in any case.

This is a reasonably good time to buy carpeting. Prices are the same as last year and in some cases, especially nylon rugs, even below a year ago.

ROOM-SIZE RUGS: Continuous filament nylon rugs and carpeting are lowest in price but quality varies considerably from thin, loosely made, and cheaply dyed, to heavy, closely tufted, polypropylene or polyester fiber (such as Dacron) and acrylic (such as Acryilan) usually costly more.

In general, polyester ranks high on most of the factors you look for in quality. Polypropylene, polyester is high in abrasion resistance and has better crush resistance than either, as well as better soil resistance than nylon (but not polypropylene).

Acrylic rugs most resemble wool in "hand" and appearance and have good crush resistance like wool but are not as abrasion-resistant as the other synthetic fibers.

What about polypropylene—the newest rug fiber? As noted, it is high in a number of factors including abrasion and soil resistance and is easy to maintain. But it is not as soft or warm as either older fibers in crush resistance and retention of appearance.

The carpeting business has long been notorious for its advertising tricks. One often used by promotional stores is advertising low prices but actually cutting the availability only a few rather unattractive colors and patterns when you get to the store. In any case, it is true to trade you up to higher price goods.

Such claims as "wholesale prices," "industrial quality" or "three full rooms" for unusually low prices, also often are devices used by sellers aiming to trade you up.

Foam-backed rugs are usually least costly but are questionable for heavy traffic areas because of some tendency of the cheaper foam backings to shred after hard wear or cleaning.

Look for at least an inch of foam backing and a minimum weight of the carpeting of 88 ounces per square yard. You may not be able to carry a scale around to weigh carpeting. But if the store can't assure you of the weight, at least you can roughly judge heaviness of carpeting and closeness of tufts as guides to comparative value. Also note that a good-quality foam backing won't crumble when rubbed briskly or crink when bent.

Food Buying Calendar: Pork offers best values this month with prices of broilers also held down by the heavy supplies of pork—"their competitor. Prices of loin roasts are down most sharply with many specials also on hams and ribs (shoulder).

The U.S. Agriculture Department also lists penne as in heavy supply and "it's a good time to buy."

Winter Risks Shown in New Product Safety Survey

By Sidney Margolius, Consumer Expert for Utility Reporter

The most dangerous object around your home in the winter is probably a heater or furnace, a new survey by the Food & Drug Administration's Product Safety office has found.

The FDA now keeps track of the most hazardous products through a system of recording injuries reported by hospitals throughout the country. The first report was very revealing. It showed how careless it is to handle these higher-risk products, the FDA says.

In households, as well as furnaces and heaters, many accidents involve storm doors, sun lamps and snow blowers. In sports equipment, skis and snowmobiles are the leading source of product-related injuries, followed by ice skates and snowmobiles.

Second in frequency were fires, including appliance fires, the report said. Then came to a rise, causing the front end to become airborne. As it came down, one of the skis momentarily dug into the snow. The machine flipped end over end.

A human's glove caught in the chain drive while he was engaging the clutch on a snow blower. Another man removed a protective guard to disengage the blower's ignition switch. The machine started and injured the man.

One man's glove caught in the chain drive while he was engaging the clutch on a snow blower. Another man removed a protective guard to disengage the blower's ignition switch. The machine started and injured the man.

Snowmobiles already have become a major hazard. In a case reported by the report, February 4, 1971, a man rode one down an incline at 40 to 50 miles an hour and then came to a rise, causing the front end to become airborne. As it came down, one of the skis momentarily dug into the snow. The machine flipped end over end.

Undoubtedly some of the many product-related accidents that abound in

(Continued on Page Seven)
Interim Committees Begin Meetings with Company

(Continued from Page One)

with the Company. The first meetings were used to set the ground rules for the balance of the meetings and to exchange some initial ideas and philosophies on the problems we are attempting to solve.

Nothing substantial took place at the first sessions that could be reported on at this time. Bulletins will be issued or reports made which will relate what takes place in the future committee meetings.

Your continued support and patience is needed as we try to work out some of the job-related problems that you face.

Shown on this page and on page five are pictures of some of the members of the committees which met in January.

From left to right are: Wayne Greer, Gas Serviceman-East Bay Division, Ivan Keener, Air Conditioning Serviceman-Stockton Division and Russell Fox, Service Operator-San Joaquin Division and Advisory Council Member.


Frank Moran, left, Line Dept.-Colgate Div. and Robert Hansen, San Francisco Div. Line Dept., are also on the committee discussing job duties in the Line Dept.

Bob Storrs, Bus. Rep., was also involved in the General Construction Lines of Progression Committee meeting.

Frank Moran, left, Storrs, Bus. Rep., was also involved in the General Construction Lines of Progression Committee meeting.
REACHING THE UNION MEMBER

By KEN LOHRE

Why should we worry about reaching the new member or the new person paying agency fees, as long as we get his money? This attitude exists in the labor movement and this in itself, along with many other reasons is why we should reach the Union member.

The Officers and Executive Board of Local 1245 are concerned with the problem of reaching the new member and consequently Dave Reese and I were appointed as delegates to attend an AFL-CIO conference on "Reaching the Union Member."

One of the many things that we learned at the Conference is that the Labor movement in general is facing some real difficulties within its ranks and from an anti-labor atmosphere in Washington, D.C. Our ability to arm ourselves with the proper knowledge and skills will determine the future of Labor as we know it today.

If we fail, the responsible unions will go down with the irresponsible ones. This means that John Q. Lineman, Sally R. Clerk, Gus Gasman, Joe Tree-trimmer, Stanley Steamcat and so on and so forth, will be temporarily without a voice and at the mercy of his or her employer.

Just what is the problem or the danger that we face? The first problem we face comes from within the house of labor and involves the International Unions and Local Unions who are not listening and responding to the needs of the membership and who are not communicating, either at all or properly, with the rank and file.

Many of you have read where union members are going on wildcat strikes against the advice of their elected leaders. This problem has two sides; the members could be striking because their elected officials are not listening and responding to their needs at the bargaining table. This is a problem that must be solved, but at the same time the member should be aware that he might defeat his own purpose if he continues to ignore the legally supported positions of the contracts they are working under and that if they don't stop striking voluntarily, their right to strike will be taken away by the government.

A classic and current example of this can be made by pointing to what is happening in England today. Wildcat strike after wildcat strike has forced Parliament to consider a law which would eliminate or severely curtail the workingman's right to strike.

Anti-labor forces are ready and waiting for the American workers to make themselves just half as vulnerable as the workers in England have done and they will pounce on us with the quickness of a coiled rattlesnake.

Good effective communication is the name of the game and the answer to our problems; for in order to educate each other, we must be able to communicate with each other.

There are four major sources of communication in the structure of Local 1245. They are: the Member, Local 1245, the International Office and the AFL-CIO. In order to succeed and answer the aforementioned problems within this four-level structure, the communication must be two way.

The purpose of the conference was to improve and to find new ways of communicating with the members of the various unions represented. It began by placing emphasis on the young worker and his attitudes towards his union. You might find it interesting to know that in some unions you have to complete your apprenticeship before you become a voting member and that can be anywhere from four to six years.

We found that many of our programs were being made as suggestions to other unions as means of improving communications. Our Advisory Council and Stewards training sessions are new ideas to some unions.

These programs must be continued and expanded in order to meet the needs of our members. We must also look to the more modern and effective methods of communication, such as radio, television and certain social and sporting events.

Labor has a history that must be spread to all people as well as Union members and T.V. would be a good method.

Each of us should be reading the textbooks that our children are using in school and find out what they are saying about unions. If it seems to be something other than the truth you should let your Business Representative know about it.

The lives and needs of our members are very complex and each person has to be thought of as an individual. This is one of the traits of the younger generation; they prefer to "do their own thing," not worrying anyone and not being worried by anyone. This concept should have a great deal of appeal to the older worker also. How long have we been saying that the employer should treat us as individuals?

The term "generation gap," is just another way of saying that there is a lack of two-way communication and it exists between the young and old members in our own union as well as in our homes.

Local 1246 is making improvements and trying to respond to the needs of all of our members. We picked up some ideas at the conference which we will be discussing as ways to improve our Local Union.

All levels of Labor should consider a new approach. Our new approach should revolve around the concept of asking ourselves what is wrong with us and our methods of communication, rather than what is wrong with our members that they don't come out to the Union meetings and participate.

Contract Provisions Explained

(Continued from Page Six)

January. The physical agreement is being worked on but will take longer to prepare. We hope these will be in the hands of the printer by the middle of February. No dates have been set for receipt of printed booklets on any of the PG&E agreements as yet.

Printing of Pacific Tree and Davey Tree agreements are in the process of being duplicated and should be available shortly. Distribution will be made as soon as possible after receipt of the finished product.

Shown above are Sally Kelly, Clerk B, East Bay Div. and L. L. Mitchell, Sr. Asst. Bus. Mgr. who are also on the Clerical committee.

Shown above are the members of the Clerical Lines of Progression Committee; from left to right are: Gordon James, Clerk C-San Joaquin Div., Wayne Fletcher, Meter Reader-Sacramento Div., Shirley Storey, Bus. Rep. G. Houston, Clerk B-San Francisco Div., Ed Vallejo, Clerk C-General Office, and Jack Mill, Clerk B-San Jose Div.

New Holiday and Vacation Provisions Explained

The new I.B.E.W.-PG&E Collective Bargaining Agreements covering Physical and Clerical Employees provides for a new holiday entitled Employee's Birthday Holiday. This Holiday differs from the other eight only in its scheduling.

Inquiries have been received by both Union and Company regarding the possible conflict between the scheduling of the fixed Employee's Birthday Holiday and the observation of the other holidays provided for in Title 103. Joint talks have been held with Company and Union clarifying language contained in two sections in the Holiday Title. These sections in the printed agreement will be worded as follows: (The revisions have been printed in bold face type).

103.2 (14.2 Clerical) (a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c) hereof, an Employee's Birthday shall be the work day immediately preceding his next work day which next follows his birthday.

103.3 (14.3 Clerical) Except for an Employee's Birthday Holiday, when any of the above holidays falls on a Sunday the Monday following shall be observed as the holiday.

Guidelines on application of the provisions pertaining to the Employee's Birthday Holiday have been distributed to supervisors by the Company and this article is for the purpose of informing the membership. It is hoped you will keep it for later use.

In order to explain the several situations effecting the day on which the Employee's Birthday Holiday would be observed, we have used both verbal and graphic Illustrations. Our examples are predicated on a Sunday-Saturday work week and a Monday Friday work week in the basic work week.

In the graphs an Employee's birthdate is shown as and the Employee's Birthday Holiday is the day which is observed as a Holiday as ***.

In providing the solution to many of the questions raised, the key is understanding that the date of birth is not necessarily the day which shall be observed as the Holiday. It does set the day which, connected with the normal non-work days, will become the fixed day for the Employee's Birthday Holiday.

Normally, if an employee's birthdate falls on any day from Saturday through Thursday, his Employee's Birthday Holiday will be on the Friday following the birth date.

We are listing four examples which explain most common applications of an Employee's Birthday Holiday:

1. Where the employee's date of birth falls on any work day in the work week, except on another holiday that falls on the last workday of that week, as shown in Item 3 below, the employee will observe the Birthday Holiday on his last workday that week. For example, assuming that his birthdate falls on Tuesday, the Employee's Birthday Holiday *** would be taken on Friday of that week.

2. Where the employee's date of birth occurs on a non-work day (other holidays provided in Title 103 are non-work days), the employee will observe the following Friday as the Birthday Holiday. Thus, if the employee's date of birth occurs on either Saturday or Sunday and these are his non-work days, then he would work Monday through Thursday of the next week and observe that Friday as his Birthday Holiday. (Work Day)

3. An employee's date of birth and the day he would observe his Employee's Birthday Holiday could fall on the same day in only three situations:
   (a) The employee and his immediate monthly rate supervisor by written agreement, made thirty days or more in advance of the employee's birthday, establish the actual birthday as the Employee's Birthday Holiday.
   (b) If an employee's date of birth occurred on Friday, then he would observe Friday as his Employee's Birthday Holiday.
   (c) If the same employee's date of birth occurred on Wednesday and the following Thursday, the employee could request that his Employee's Birthday Holiday be on the Thursday following his birthday. If the employee's date of birth fell on one of the other holidays provided for in Title 103, then he would observe his Birthday Holiday on the same day (Thursday) as his date of birth.

4. When an Employee's Birthday Holiday would normally be observed on Friday, the last work day preceding his normal work days, but that day would also be one of the other Holidays observed as provided in Title 103, the Employee's Birthday Holiday would be observed on the Thursday, the day preceding the other Holiday (103.2 (c)).

All of the above situations would obviously occur only when an employee and his monthly-rate supervisor have not made an agreement in which the employee would observe some day other than the fixed Employee's Birth-

Day Holidays shown.

Section 103.2 (b) provides that an employee, by written agreement with his immediate monthly rate supervisor, establishes his Employee's Birthday Holiday on the Friday of the week following the week in which his date of birth falls. The above examples as his Birthday Holiday. Such an agreement must be reached at least thirty days in advance of his birthday. If an employee is eligible for his Birthday Holiday on the first of the year, he may by this writing extend his Employee's Birthday Holiday to the first day of any work day dur-

ing the year, either before or after his actual birthday. If an employee does elect to reschedule his Birthday Holiday, the original computed Birthday Holiday becomes his Employee's Birthday Holiday on the new date.

The rules regarding pay (and expenses for General Construction employees) on Birthday Holidays are the same as on other regular holidays and are covered in General Construction Vacation (and also General Construction). For example, if a Birthday Holiday falls during the period when an employee is a casual or probationary, he has the day off without pay. If a casual or probationary is allowed to work on his Birthday Holiday, he receives overtime pay. Such an employee may, of course, reschedule his Birthday Holiday to another date in the calendar year subject to written agreement.

Unused Birthday Holidays are not payable on termination of employ-

ment. Once scheduled they are treated as any other regular holiday. They are not "in lieu" or "floating" holidays. For example, an employee terminating on January 31st does not receive pay for a Birthday Holiday scheduled for December 20. On the other hand, if he has rescheduled and taken his Birthday Holiday on June 4, he would not have to repay the holiday when terminating on January 31st.

It is very important that the established Birthday holiday be noted by each employee for this is a Holiday based on the individual employee's birthdate. It is a day on which a change in the fixed Employee's Birthday Holiday, it is his responsibility to make the request within the time limit and also bear in mind that Company requirement will not accommodate all requests made. We believe there will be mutual cooperation in making agreements to alter fixed Employee's Birthday Holidays. We urge supervisors to bear in mind the intent of both Company and Union to provide a choice of days for the employees where honest efforts on the part of a supervisor in developing schedules can make it possible. On the other hand, we urge our members to recognize scheduling problems when they are legitimate or when work demands are such that the employee problems for a supervisor.

Vacations:

Vacation earnings credits were changed and became effective January 1, 1971. The following provisions and changes for vacation payments on or after January 1, 1971, will be based on credits earned in the calendar year and not on hiring anniversary dates. One example should illustrate this point.

Employee "X" was hired September 19, 1927. He was born on January 17, 1906, and reached 65 in 1971. He will retire on January 1, 1971. He used four weeks vacation in 1970, his full allowance. Under the old provisions prior to January 1, 1971, he would have accrued vacation of 4/12 of the normal four weeks for his length of service based on 1/12 for each calendar year, after his anniversary date. This employee would have been entitled to seven weeks of vacation under the new provisions. He had no absence in excess of 22 days during 1970. He also works all required work days in January, 1971. His vacation entitlement is 22 days. Company has changed the calendar year employment credit earning period of four weeks, even though there were actually only 21 work days in January and will be 20 work days in February. This vacation, if not used, would be paid as vaca-

tion allowance at retirement and will be counted as part of his sixty month earnings offsetting a lower pay level of five years ago for pension purposes if not used before retirement.

This retiree gains fourteen days' of paid vacation over the previous agree-

ment and also gained a holiday for his birthday.

General Construction Vacation has been on an earned basis so the only change will be that vacations will be based on subtractions of 1/12 from a full vacation for absence of 22 day increments rather than credits of 1/12 for increments of 21 days worked in the calendar year.

Underground:

In providing the elimination of cartmen in the underground section of Electric T&D by placement in the apprentice cable splicer classification, an inequity was created which effects cablemen's helpers in that classification on or before December 18, 1970. These classifications were equivalent for bidding purposes and when the transfer of cartmen occurred, this, in prac-

tice, froze the cablemen's helpers out of advancement to cable splicers. It has been agreed by Company and Union that cablemen's helpers in that classification on or after January 1, 1971, will be paid as vacation allowance at retirement and will be counted as part of his sixty month earnings to offset a lower pay level of five years ago for pension purposes if not used before retirement.

General Construction Vacation has been on an earned basis so the only change will be that vacations will be based on subtractions of 1/12 from a full vacation for absence of 22 day increments rather than credits of 1/12 for increments of 21 days worked in the calendar year.

Contract Printing:

Due to the size of the physical agreement, the contract print will not be included in the schedule to be printed in separate booklets and the working conditions in another book. New wage booklets for July, 1971, wage rates will be put out when the full agreement has been determined by the B.L.S. index. Clerical agreements will be handled as usual. The wage schedules are now at the printers, the clerical agreement is being assembled to conform to the amendments and should be in the hands of the printer before the end of the
Apprenticeship Opportunity Opens

California-Nevada Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee has announced that it will accept applications to fill 15 vacancies for training Power Linemen for the Outside Electrical Industry in California and Nevada. Any individual who is at least 18 years of age, able to read, write, and speak English, has demonstrated a high degree of ability in mathematics and English, and who is a resident of the state of California or Nevada, is eligible to apply.

This is the second opening in the training program that started in July 1970, with local 1245 as a partner along with two other locals of the I.B.E.W., and the California-Nevada Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association. As of the present date, the initial group of 20 trainees are employed in the Industry with varying amounts of training, up to six months, already completed.

Woodcock termed the proposed program a "rapidly deteriorating health care system," Woodcock declared.

The Health Security Program would do the "whole job" of providing expanded services and enlarging the supply of medical professionals.

Biemiller recalled organized labor's long struggle for a comprehensive national health program dating back to the 1930s.

He has been in this fight ever since... We have met one rebuff after another. But those of us who have been in this fight are well aware of the obstacles that lie ahead, and we are equally aware that if we are to stop inflation in medical costs it can only be done by originating the delivery of medical care in a systematic intelligent way.

If the health security program had been operative in 1970, it would have delivered $41 billion in benefits—or 70 percent of the personal health care expenses in the United States.

But none of the $41 billion in expenditures would have been "new" money, the bill's sponsors explained, noting that this amount is already being spent for health care by individuals, employers and federal, state and local governments.

Under the proposed program, the same amount of money would provide more health services for more people by revitalizing the existing health care system and stemming the inflation in medical care costs.

The Health Security Program would be administered by a five-member board from the Dept. of Health, Education & Welfare, Policy, standards and regulations would be established by the board.

American Workers Struggling With New Style Class Warfare

We live in the most revolutionary society in the world. The pace of technological, social, and cultural change is more rapid here than anywhere else—and that pace is accelerating. We confront problems which no one else faces and we are on the verge of proposing our own alternatives. The answers will come, not from blueprints, but from living and grappling with the problems first hand.

To an extent not commonly supposed, answers to the problems of work come from the people. They express their experiences and insights of working people themselves, as each one seeks to develop and perfect himself through his daily work.

To fewer and fewer of the apostles of words and ideas really know very much about working people today. They should begin to learn before they prescribe.

First, they ought to know what the worker is not.

He is not a caroon. He is not a reactionary, and he is not a revolutionary. He is not a hard hat, but neither is he a head full of mush. He is nobody's fool and he isn't looking to be anybody's hero.

He didn't start the war in Viet Nam, although he has a better chance of losing his son there. He didn't create the military-industrial complex, although he is accused of depending on it for his job. He didn't make more than $8,000 last year, although his latest wage increase is said to cause inflation. He wasn't responsible for slavery, he didn't prosper from segregation and he is not a racist, although he may now be told to put his job on the line of a nation's atomic.

They should discover who the worker is.

He is the man who is living and grappling with the problems. He is the center of the most profound and far-reaching changes in our society. Not because he is an activist or a social innovator, but because he is on the line, at the point of production, where the heat is. He is bound to a technology that refuses to stand still and change his environment to adjust to it—and he has no cushion or surplus to shield him from constant instability.

He is caught up in all the social, cultural and political consequences of the dynamism of our times.

So not only must the worker struggle to make ends meet—no easy thing in this era of the New Hooverism—but he must also struggle to sustain a sense of who he is, a sense of his economic function and social identity, in a society where occupational obsolescence rivals the Detroit vacuum and where work patterns are about as stable as an ice cube on a radiator. This is, you might say, a continuing struggle against marginalization and uselessness. You might even call it a struggle for relevance.

As if he didn't have enough problems, the American worker has lately had to fend off a propaganda blitz aimed at blaming him for everything from Viet Nam to racism. This is a new style of class warfare, but with a curious twist. Twenty years ago, when you tried to organize a union in your plant, the boss denounced you as a Red. Now he and his friends at the country club denounce you as a reactionary pillar of the status quo. And so it has come to pass, in this Alice-in-Wonderland world that the well-to-do country club denounce you as a reactionary pillar of the status quo.

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as a result of labor’s efforts on behalf of 57 million wage earners in 4.1 million establishments, the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 was signed into law on December 29, 1970.

The effective date of the Act is April 28, 1971. The Secretary of Labor, whose job it will be of setting the standards, has two years to complete the drafting of the rules. Although this appears to be a long, drawn-out procedure, we feel most employers will cleanup their own “messes” before they are approached by the Labor Department.

Due to opposition from business, and their representatives, the bill that was sent to the President is a compromise between the stronger labor-backed Senate bill, and a weaker management bill, supported by the House of Representatives.

A.F.L.-C.I.O. President George Meany praised the job safety law but warned that unions will continue to press for a stronger law. He explained: “For the first time, we have the mechanism for setting safety and health standards by the Department of Labor. But mere setting of standards is not enough. There must be close scrutiny, constant policing, and prompt and adequate enforcement to make sure the goal of this legislation is realized.”

He continued: “We intend to make sure this is done, and if the enforcement machinery in this bill fails, we will immediately petition Congress to strengthen and improve it.”

Basic Provisions

The law will set up avenues for union safety committees to call for, and participate in federal inspections of allegedly unsafe plants or work areas. It provides: “Any employees or representatives of employees who believe that a violation of a safety or health standard exists that threatens physical harm, or that an imminent danger exists, may request an inspection by giving notice to the Secretary, or his authorized representatives of the violation or danger.”

"Subject to regulations, a representative of the employer and a representative authorized by his employees shall be given an opportunity to accompany the Secretary (of Labor) or his authorized representative during physical inspection of any work-place for the purpose of aiding such inspection."

If a violation is charged by the inspector, the Secretary of Labor may issue a citation specifying the problem. The citation will allow time for the employer to correct the situation. The employer also has 10 days in which to object to the citation.

In objecting to the citation, the employer will file an appeal with a three member commission, the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

The members of this body will be appointed by the President. The appointments will be for six years with a new member being named every two years.

A hearing will be held by this panel, to take testimony from company officials, workers, union leaders, and others.

When this Commission has ruled as to whether a violation has occurred, the decision may be appealed to a federal court of appeals by either the employer or the Labor Department.

If found guilty of a violation, the employer can be forced to pay as much as $1,000 a day for continued infractions of the Safety Standards. Criminal penalties also are possible, but only if it is proven there has been a willful violation of the Safety Standards, resulting in the death of a worker.

The controversial "imminent danger" clause was one of the weaker provisions taken from the management bill. In the labor-backed Williams-Daniels measures, the Labor Department could have ordered an immediate shutdown of a plant or operation deemed hazardous. The compromise requires the Labor Department to obtain a court order before shutting down any operation.

Other features of the Act that are important to employers and workers are:

Small business firms will be able to obtain federal loans to aid them in meeting the safety and health standards of the new law.

Also, one section of the Act will permit the Labor Department to put pressure on other agencies of the Government if it feels their enforcement efforts in the safety field are inadequate.

The bill also sets up a 15 member National Commission on State Workmen's Compensation Laws to study and recommend ways to improve state compensation benefits.

One draw-back to the new law, that the leadership of Local 1245 has concern over, are the provisions in the Act that State governments that want to ENFORCE their own programs in the field of safety and health will be able to do so if their standards meet the requirements of the federal law. The Secretary of Labor is given authority to approve or reject the State proposals.

We have watched the quality of enforcement in other State Agencies; the Division of Industrial Safety, the Workman's Compensation Appeals Board, etc. go steadily down-hill.

The intent of the various State bodies is to protect the workman before he is injured, and in the event of an industrial injury, to grant him fair and reasonable compensation for his disability.

But as a result of various appointments to these Boards and Panels, along with cutbacks of manpower and money to other Departments by the present Administration in Sacramento, Big Business now has the "pat-hand" over the workingman.

Just one of many illustrations that could be pointed out is in the area of unemployment benefits.

In 1966, 14.6% of the claimants out of every hundred who took their cases to the Unemployment Appeals Board came away a winner as opposed to 19.6% of the employers.

In December of 1969 the number of successful claimants had dropped to 7.4%.

As of last September the number of employers winning their appeals before the Governor-appointed Board had increased to 46.5%.