Local 1245 Renews Competitive Scholarship Contest

The Executive Board of Local 1245, IBEW, has announced the fifth annual competitive scholarship contest. The purpose of this contest is to provide a grant in aid for scholarships to college, thereby making financial assistance available toward the attainment of a higher education.

1. The grant will be as follows:
   $250.00 per year for four (4) years, as long as a C (2.0) average is maintained and the parent maintains their membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.

2. In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a son or daughter, natural, legally adopted or the legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must also be a high school senior who has graduated or is graduating in 1973 or a junior in a junior college.

3. The Scholarship Grant will be made only to that candidate who intends to enroll in any college certified by their State Department of Education and accredited by the local Accrediting Association.

4. Applications may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245 at the union office or by calling the Union Office or by using the form printed in the Utility Reporter.

5. Checks will be paid directly to the college upon presentation of tuition bills to the local union.

6. Applications shall be accompanied by a written essay, not to exceed five hundred (500) words, on the subject, "What should be Labor's Position on Nuclear Generation?"

7. Essays should be submitted on 8 1/2"x11" paper, on one side, preferably typed and double spaced with applicant’s written signature at the conclusion of the essay.

Applications and essays must be mailed to the Local Union, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, California 94596, by registered or certified mail only, and be received no later than 10:00 a.m. on Friday, July 2, 1973.

(See Page Two for Application Blank)

YOUR Business Manager's COLUMN

THE ENERGY CRISIS

L. L. MITCHELL

Making predictions can be hazardous. To do so often leaves the door open for error. However, nearly every government, industrial and economic expert is stating we will have an energy crisis in the U.S.

Many believe the crisis is already here. Reading of temporary shortages of gasoline in certain areas, curtailment of interruptable gas customers, bans on connection of new gas customers in a number of cities and brownouts in densely populated areas may be more than indicators that a crisis can develop.

In attending the conferences of the utility unions, both IBEW and others, we find many of the employers in real trouble because of the energy problem and this of course affects the employees as well. The natural gas shortage is a problem to both gas and electric utilities. In addition to this, the utilities face major problems in regard to facilities sitting and the other environmental concerns.

Some few say the energy crisis is one of low prices for energy rather than a lack of energy sources. It is true that primary energy sources such as coal, oil, water power, uranium, solar energy, oil shale etc. are a part of our nation's economy. But sources they are certainly not finite. Further, research on utilization of the resources mentioned have not yet produced proven means to utilize them all nor use certain of them in the manner required under present environmental demands.

What is done to answer these problems will have a direct bearing on all of us in the utility industry. Our jobs and our future promotional opportunities will be directly affected.

The utilities have embarked on the most ambitious research and development program in their history. Sixty-one million dollars have been pledged by 96 companies to the Electric Power Research Institute through which all segments of the electric utility industry including federal, state and local cooperatives will participate. This group will be most important in providing future energy needs of our nation. It is estimated that some 75 million in 1973 and (Continued on Page Two)
The Health Care Crisis

Less than 10 years ago—in 1965—the average patient's cost for a day in a general hospital was $45. Today, it is $105.50, an increase of more than 130 percent. Ten years ago, the average hospital stay was a little less than $300. Today, it is about $800, up about 160 percent.

Over-all, health costs have risen an average of 11.6 percent a year for more than 10 years. In an effort to meet legal requirements and to meet objections of many of these critics the utilities spent 2.1 percent of their capital investment for underground lines and air and water quality control facilities.

Pension Benefits

The Energy Crisis

(Continued from Page One) 118.9 billion in 1974 will be spent in industry research alone.

Coal gasification is getting major attention and importation of liquefied natural gas will play a big part in meeting short range shortages. Experiments with extraction of Kerogen from shale should be under way in six tracts in Wyoming, Colorado and Utah once legal steps have been concluded to allow the government to put these tracts out to bid.

Kerogen has characteristics of regular petroleum crude oil, but after extraction from the shale it requires special transportation and refining due to its texture which is much like molasses. There are also huge volumes of shale residue which must be disposed of. This again means vast sums of money to be spent on R & D to provide the technology for making practical use of this product.

In an effort to get the utilities to think about energy conservation and to keep objections of many of the consumers are bound to rise unless the conditions which exist, the quality and the service will also be criticized.

I would hope our employers realize the necessity of full communication and joint action by the Unions and the Company in developing programs needed to meet the common interests of the Employer and the employee in many of the problems which are appearing.

I would stick my neck out and predict that there will be an energy crisis, but further that management and labor within the industry will join more closely together to meet their common needs. We will still maintain an arm's length relationship on traditional bargaining issues but in the end both must recognize the dependence of one to the other. Joint activity in promoting the industry with consideration for the security of the employees must benefit both parties, and this will come to be.
Some Helper: $1.20 for 36 Cents Worth of Noodles

By Sidney Margolius, Consumer Expert for Utility Reporter

Supermarket shelves and airwaves are being saturated with more new versions of Hamburger Helper and Skillet Dinners. The success of the original Hamburger Helper containing cuts of potato has stimulated introduction of similar products based on noodles, rice, macaroni or pasta in imitation of versions of baked chicken and seafood, Oriental vegetables and so on.

All you add is the meat, manufacturers say. You really add the money. The fact is, the advertising-dominated public is being persuaded that you can add $1.30 and make five servings. Since the value of the packet of cheese sauce is about 12 cents, you really are paying 48 cents for six ounces of ordinary dried noodles, or at the rate of $1.20 a pound. Dried noodles, of course, bought under their own name, are worth 56 cents a pound. The Hamburger Helper made on diced or sliced potatoes are an equally impressive achievement in comparable rice or noodles. But the Hamburger Helper, canned potatoes are available for 18 cents a pound, and dried potatoes at 37 cents a pound. Better still, the Helper providing mainly diced potatoes and onions is 51 cents for a large box but not at the rate of $1.20 a pound. Even this year ordinary potatoes are 15 cents a pound.

For the cheeseburger macaroni Helper, after deducting the value of the cheese sauce, you pay 32 cents for actually 9 cents worth of macaroni. Another “skillet dinner” you pay 89 cents for about 9 cents worth of rice plus a dried tomato sauce.

The Oriental skillet dinners also are expensive. One brand gives you, in effect, 32 cents worth of Oriental food for 92 cents; the mixture consists mainly of a 28-ounce can of chow mein vegetables packaged in an additional box with a packet of sauce. The sauce is mainly starch and flavorings, including imitation chicken flavor. For this combination, you pay “just add chicken” you pay 95 cents. If you simply bought the same amount of ordinary rice, vegetables and chicken, you would pay 63 cents.

The manufacturers also are promoting the tuna Helper. This tuna Helper is merely our old friend dried noodles again, this time with some carrots and peas and a dried white sauce. You supply the can of tuna.

Pecifically, there is little additional convenience in any of these products. In every case the helpers are merely ordinary noodles, macaroni and rice which have to be cooked. Often young housewives buy these products because they aren’t sure how to make the sauce. But easy-to-use ingredients such as cheddar cheese, tomato sauce, cottage cheese and herbs are available at relatively low expense. Of course, you may not be able to buy imitation chicken flavoring readily, but you could always use a few bits of real chicken.

Beware Meat ‘Patties’

Another way food processors are getting more money for less meat is in this time of high meat prices is in beef and veal patties which are not meat at all. For example, one brand of patties actually has water, soy flour, vegetable protein and various flavorings added. Even with these inexpensive ingredients, such patties often are $1.20 a pound. There is nothing wrong with extensions such as soy flour. But we can add them ourselves and not pay meat prices for them.

It’s also wise to watch out for other meat products with added ingredients that raise the price unduly. One retailer adds garlic to a sausage mix and raises the price 10 cents a pound at Easter. Supermarket News reported. On butchers may add green pepper, onions or other seasonings to hamburger patties, give them fanciful names, and charge more.

In times of high meat prices, it also is important to watch the amount of fat in hamburger, and weights of packaged meats. In one recent year, the major variations from marked weights found by the Nassau County, N.Y., consumer affairs department, were in packaged meats, with over twice as many shortweights as overweights.

COURTS ORDER PYRAMID REFUNDS BUT NEW PLANS ERUPT

By Sidney Margolius, Consumer Expert for Utility Reporter

Remember Glenn Turner and his Koscot mini-oil cosmetics and Dare to be Great motivation course? And William Penn Patrick’s Holiday Magic cosmetics? The differences in sentencing go beyond violent and non-violent crimes and are based on incongruities in the law which favor persons of higher economic and social status.

The Federal Trade Commission also has made a complaint against Holiday Magic. As previously reported here, Patrick also is involved in a number of other pyramid plans. One is called Dynamic in Motion. Most of the cheese sauce, you pay 32 cents worth of macaroni. Another “skillet dinner” you pay 89 cents for about 9 cents worth of rice plus a dried tomato sauce.

Remember Glenn Turner and his Koscot mini-oil cosmetics and Dare to be Great motivation course? And William Penn Patrick’s Holiday Magic cosmetics? The differences in sentencing go beyond violent and non-violent crimes and are based on incongruities in the law which favor persons of higher economic and social status.
Several years ago an idea was put forth for discussion on the establishment of a Labor-Management meeting, wherein the Shop Stewards, the Business Representatives and various levels of Supervision would meet on a regularly scheduled basis. The object of the meeting was to establish better lines of communication and to eliminate some of the problems that were being caused by a breakdown in communication between management and labor at all levels.

The concept was agreed upon in the 1970 negotiations and put into effect on a trial basis. It was so successful that it was incorporated into the bargaining agreement on June 25, 1972. Each Field Division in Mid-Pacific Region 2 of the United States Bureau of Reclamation has their own meeting.

Although philosophies of the two parties may vary, the differences are not so much that they cannot co-exist and complement one another.

The discussions are very open and to the point, and all criticisms are taken as constructive and not personal. The agendas are open but the meetings are not designed to take the place of the grievance procedure.

This is not to say that there are no problems, and some very heated discussions take place. Problems still exist within the meetings. The disagreements are serious and heated, but they are worked out in a cooperative spirit. The meetings serve to strengthen the relationship between management and labor, and to improve communication and understanding.

TRACY

The following people were present at the Labor-Management meeting at Tracy Field Div.: Robert Mason, Chief of Tracy Field; Ray Stroh, Chief of Tracy Pump; Dale Anderson, Chief of Water Opr.; Don Simpson, Admin. Offr.; James L. Brown, Supvr.-Elec. Eng.; Dudley Lions, Jr., Chief Opr.; W. E. Fullmer, Canal Supt.; Tracy; Paul Jones, Canal Supt., Los Banos; Jerry Taylor, Pers. Offr.; Bill Feltz, Chief Shop Steward and C&I Mechanic; Jack Burger, Canal Mtman.; Carl Schleiss, Mtman.; John R. Speirs, Electrician; Tom J. DeMoville, Electrician (O'Neal); Henry B. Lucas, Bus. Rep.

SHASTA

The following people were present at the Labor-Management meeting at Shasta Field Div.: Felix Dashen, Chief, Shasta Field Division; H. Leeman, Chief Operator; Nola Matthews, Personnel Mgmt. Specialist; Leroy C. Ferguson, Plant Mechanic; Bob Lamphill, Electrician; Ron Clarno, Utilityman; H. B. Lucas, Bus. Rep.; Dudley Mums, Chief Civ. Eng. Br.; John H. Lineback, Plant Mechanic; Willie R. Stewart, Bus. Rep.; Tom Gamble, Chief O&M Branch; David Lyngholm, Head, Electrical Maintenance; Dave Prosser, Head, Mechanical Maintenance; Donald Brent, Administrative Officer.

WILLOWS

The following people were present at the Labor-Management meeting at Willows Field Div.: C. Carlson, Chief O&M Willows; Joel C. Berry, Admin. Offr. Berry, Irrigation Manager; Ed Carpenter, Foreman II; George N. Bradshaw, Gen. Clerk-Willows O&M; William C. Hart, Pro. art, Bus. Rep.; Hank Lucas, Bus. Rep.
Establish Successful Labor-Management Meetings

A was in the managementShop presented the better and to problemsbreakdown, levels, upon it into it was so ordered ent on division of theclamam-. The two recourses cannot be anxious to open dicisms and not open signed evance we are heated problems still come up, but they are usually resolved within the confines of what the agreement and common sense dictate.

The membership is not always getting the answer they want to hear, but they do get an answer within a relatively short period of time.

A side benefit of this program has been better communication between the Stewards and the Union. The Business Representative has established a better line of communication with the Stewards as well as with all levels of Supervision within the Bureau.

The "proof of the pudding" or the success of the meetings has been proven by the fact that since the program was started, there have been no formal grievances filed.

The "new concept," which has been so successful, would not have been possible except for the support given the meetings by the enlightened top level management in Mid-Pacific Region of the Bureau.

An important by-product of the meetings is that it has improved employee morale, productivity, and membership.

The success of this program in the Mid-Pacific Region of the U.S. B.R. should be an example for all of us in the Labor-Management field to emulate.

The following people were present at the Labor-Management meeting at Fresno Field Div.: Harvey Williams, Chief of Operations; George Hunter, Head of Friant Section; Irv Curran, Canal Supt. (Orange Cove); Ed Williams, Canal Supt. (Lindsay); E. J. Wilson, Canal Supt. (Delano); Lynn Whipple, Admin. Officer; Evelyn Chamblin, Personnel Asst.; Carl Cook, Chief Steward, Electrician; Jim Beasley, Maintenance Man; Lloyd Gammel, Mech., Dam Operation; Frank Belknap, Canal Maint.-Opr. Gen. MPE; Herschel West, Canal Maint.; John McManus, Bus. Rep.; Hank Lucas, Bus. Rep.; William C. Hickerson, Sac. Ofc. Person. (Mgmt.)

FRESNO

The following people were present at the Labor-Management meeting at Folsom Field Div.: H. B. Lucas, Bus. Rep.; Ed Axtell, Chief, Folsom Fields Div.; Dorothy Weisinger, Secty.; Dewey J. Music, Administrative Officer; Ed Pruett, Ground Maintenance; Alf Croxes, Chief Maint. Br.; David Poore, Mechanical Engineer; Norman Miller, Chief Shop Steward, Elec. Test; James R. Lineback, Shop Steward, Mechanical; Chester A. Wright, Shop Steward, Electrical Maint.; Wilbur Stufferind, Shop Steward, Operators.

Utility Reporter—April, 1973—Page Five
Bargaining Roundup

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

Gas Street Department
Latest proposal from Company still being studied by Local Union office.

Terminal Operators
No change since last reporting.

General Construction Lines of Progression

Civil, Gas & Hydro: Union has received Company's listings of classifications of equipment for Gas and Line Department. Union's committee met on April 18 and will meet again on May 8 to go over these listings and prepare a counterproposal.

Field Office Operation and Process Centers: No change since last reporting.

Marysville Gas Load Center

Attempting to arrange meeting with Company.

Technicians
No change since last reporting.

SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY

General wage negotiations meetings were held on April 3 and April 4. Tentative agreement was reached on a 6.5 wage increase for all bargaining unit employees. The committee consists of Carol Myers, Ronald L. Borgognone, Robert Holliday, Wesley Griffin, John Stralla and John Wilder. Membership is presently balloting on this issue. Consolidation of Gas and Gognone, Robert Holliday, Wesley Griffin, John Stralla and John Wilder.

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Attempting to arrange meeting with Company.

Technicians
No change since last reporting.

MOUNT WHEELER POWER, INC.


CITIZENS UTILITIES COMPANY OF CALIFORNIA

Benefit Committee. Charges that were filed with the National Labor Relations Board have been heard. The Board recommended that the parties take this disagreement to arbitration. The Board also stated that they will watch how this case proceeds to see whether they should take any further action.

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Sacramento - Drum Stewards Meet

The photos above and below show most of the participants of the joint stewards' meeting.


Headed for Depression?

Where is the country heading, with still galloping inflation, profiteering running wild, with millions unemployed, and many more destitute, yet wages are being held down?

Up to now, it has been only organized labor, and groups like the senior citizens' organizations, and a few groups that speak for the poor that have been warning the country of what lies ahead.

Therefore we were a bit surprised, almost shocked recently to see a large advertisement in the Wall Street Journal bearing a headline shouting, "HOW TO BEAT THE DEPRESSION THAT IS SURELY COMING!"

The ad read in part:

"Think of it! Five million Americans are currently unemployed. Seventeen million are on relief and 20 million more are living under poverty conditions! That's one-fifth of the population. Twenty per cent of the nation already is in the throes of depression, and that figure is growing daily!"

"In Dallas, 25 per cent of the office space is vacant. One of America's 50 largest banks is reported about to close down . . . In New York and other big cities, landlords are abandoning once lucrative properties. In the world of high finance, where the goal was diversification and the watch-word was acquisition, the cry is now divestiture. Pare down! Lighten the load! Get ready!"

"Look at the plight of our cities. Municipal governments virtually bankrupt! A shortage of housing, an over-abundance of people, a racial problem growing worse instead of better! Air and water polluted. Education deteriorating. Drug usage and violent crimes still on the rise."

As the ad points out:

"Right now, there are more economists than you would suspect who are utterly convinced that the depression is coming, and soon; and as desperate as the present administration is to have you believe otherwise, the economic indices from here and abroad support that contention right down the line!"

Unfortunately the advertisement was not proposing any solutions to any of the problems cited but rather was addressed to the greedy plutocrat with advice on how to take advantage of the economic situation, thus:

"And there have always been stocks that were going up while most were going down. "You can, you know. It is possible! You don't have to be a millionaire to do it. There have always been men who made money while others were going broke. There have always been businesses that flourished while others were going under. There have always been stocks that were going up while most were going down."

"And there have always been men living securely and well while others were scuffling merely to stay alive! There are techniques to use, there are methods that work! You don't buck the tide, you swim with it. You don't join the depression. You join it! And you do it with knowledge. With know-how. By knowing what to do and how and when to do it!"

"It turned out that the ad was for a book on "How to Beat the Depression That Is Surely Coming!" by Dr. Robert Persons, Jr., a former business analyst of Business Week magazine."

While the tone of the ad obviously appealed to the fears and greed of individuals with money who want to preserve their position at any cost, the ad did confirm that not only is the labor movement convinced that President Nixon's economic policies are heading the country for disaster, but many in the business community start talking like this, it's high time that the people in the Nixon administration in Washington reverse their course to what appears to be certain disaster.

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"'Right now, there are more economists than you would suspect who are utterly convinced that the depression is coming, and soon; and as desperate as the present administration is to have you believe otherwise, the economic indices from here and abroad support that contention right down the line!'"

When people in the business community start talking like this, it's high time that the people in the Nixon administration in Washington reverse their course to what appears to be certain disaster.

—From the Union Advocate

Business Manager L. L. Mitchell is shown responding to questions from the stewards, with Bus. Rep. Ed Fortier looking on.
Editorial Potpourri

MEAT BOYCOTT

The meat boycott is over and the prices are somewhat unchanged. Meat prices were frozen at an all-time high. The fact that the boycott did not bring prices down should not be construed as a defeat for the consumer groups and ultimately the consumer themselves. Two weeks prior to the boycott, the administration had a policy of not interfering with food prices. The day before the boycott was to begin, meat prices were frozen.

The publicity that the boycott received was tremendous. It has been years and years since so many people in this country joined together on one issue. The power of consumers as a group was felt and should be remembered. It is just unfortunate that it takes such an extreme situation to bring them together for concerted action.

HEALTH CARE CRISIS

How can we boycott the *zx? doctors?

Looking at the events which brought about the meat boycott, it is a wonder that more clamor hasn't been created by the alarming increases in the cost of health care. The costs of health care are up and the quality is down. The percentage increases in health care costs are far greater than those at the meat market.

The only problem with a boycott in this situation is that you would be putting your life on the line. When a person is critically ill they must have medical care. The fact that a boycott is not practical should not stop the consumer from generating such an outcry that the administration will again open its ears and hear the people say that they want the Health Security Act passed.

Get mad again, Mr. & Mrs. Consumer, help push H.R. 22 and S-3 and let them know in Washington that you will settle for nothing less.

PENSION BENEFITS

(Continued from Page Two)

actuarial equivalent basis; that is, the retirement benefit is reduced by an amount that will result in the same ultimate cost to the plan as if the worker retired at the assumed normal retirement age.

Most actuaries estimate that reducing the normal retirement date (with no reduction in benefits) by one year would cost in excess of 8% of the total cost of a Pension program.

An increasing number of plans are establishing a negotiated percentage in place of the actuarial reductions. An example—the P.G.E. Retirement Plan provides an early retirement option. An employee may elect this option anytime between the ages 55 to 65. For each year he retires before his 65th birthday his pension would be reduced 3%. This means that an employee who retires at age 60 would have his normal pension reduced by 15%.

Another method of providing early retirement is using a formula which combines age and years of service. When age and years of service equal a specified number, an employee could retire with no actuarial reduction for age applied to his pension. Here again cost is involved and this method by itself does not encourage early retirement.

Another area of concern with early retirement is Social Security and how it is affected. An employee who retires early and does not pay into Social Security the last few years before age 65 will probably receive less in Social Security than if he worked until 65.

With these problems of cost, negotiated pension plans have in the last few years made some gains in providing a better deal for those who want to retire early. Automation and technological changes in some industries have brought pressures to subsidize early retirement. The argument that early retirement reduces the work force thereby creating more jobs has been used, but industry doesn't seem to care about unemployment when it may cost a few extra bucks.

Health Care Crisis

(Continued from Page Two)

action is taken . . . we will have a breakdown in our medical care system not only in the U.S., but in the world. Unfortunately, the administration has done little of a substantive nature in the intervening years to counter the health care crisis that has long since arrived.

The crisis in cost is amply demonstrated by the figures above. But there is more to the tripling of health costs in the U.S. than inflation. In 1972, $6,576 for a family of four. Treatment and recovery from a coronary now averages more than $15,000 (enough to cause a relapse).

Even something as commonplace as an appendectomy has become a matter of high finance. To bid your appendix farewell in New York today costs $1,200.

HIGH COST PLUS INEFFICIENCY EQUALS HEALTH CRISIS

This fact illustrates a key point in any discussion of harnessing health costs and changing the structure of health delivery: It is not just catastrophic illnesses that require new forms of coverage and delivery, but all types of health care. Everything about it is costly beyond the means of most Americans.

Does the sky-rocketing cost mean that health care is improving as a consequence? In some instances, yes. Sophisticated, expensive equipment and treatment have been developed to contain some major diseases (most of this development, however, has come from the federally-financed National Institutes of Health). But over-all, the answer is no. In certain key indicators of the general health of a nation's people, the U.S. has slipped badly. In 1950, our nation had the 85th lowest infant mortality rate in the world. Today, we are 15th among nations. In 1950, we were 13th in male life expectancy. Today, we are 27th. We rank 7th in the death rate of mothers in childbirth. Interestingly, all the countries that rank ahead of the U.S. in these and other major health indices have a national health program.

As devastating as the soaring cost of health is the lagging method of health care delivery. None of the marvelous new equipment, nor the progress in cure for major diseases, has made important impact on the crazy-quilt way health care is administered.

The sheer ineffectiveness of the distribution system would wreck any other industry, and itself contributes heavily to the cost crunch. Hundreds of general practitioners, and specialists, in one community, for example, may all be taxing for the same extremely costly equipment, far more than is required to serve the community's needs. All that fancy equipment has to be paid for, and in the end, the health consumer coughs up for the medical profession's conscious-consumption.

Compounding these problems is a serious shortage of health personnel and a maldistribution of the supply. There is a shortage of 50,000 doctors, 20,000 dentists, 150,000 nurses and 280,000 other health specialists and professionals. By 1980, these shortages are expected to increase by 50 percent. The imbalance of distribution is glaring. In New York City, there is an over-all ratio of 278 doctors per 100,000 population. But in the densely populated ghetto areas the ratio is only 10 doctors per 100,000 residents. Nationally, there is one doctor to every 12,000 persons in the inner cities but one for every 200 persons in well-to-do suburbs. The poor simply do not get proper medical care. Rural areas, too, suffer. Some 115 rural counties have no doctors.

So, health care costs are going out of sight, and health care delivery is as out of date as the ox-cart. The combination adds up to a crisis in health care in the United States.

Various proposals have been offered to meet this crisis. Only one will deal with it fully and frontally, the Health Security program supported by the AFL-CIO. It has been introduced in the House by Rep. Martha Griffiths (D.-Mich.) as H.R. 22 and in the Senate by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D.-Mass.) as S. 3.

Other major plans have been proposed. One by the Nixon Administration relies on the private health insurance industry—and that's like leaning on a broken crutch. The other by Sen. Russell Long (D.-La.) supposedly would cover "catastrophic" sickness, but doesn't really do it.

Memo from COPE

Editor's Note:

In the May issue of the Utility Reporter we will print descriptions of the three Health Care proposals being discussed in Washington. This Country is in the middle of a Health Care Crisis and it is very important that you educate yourself on this subject.

Robert A. Anderson

From San Jose Clerical, could have won $50.00 if he had noticed his Union membership card number in the March issue of the Utility Reporter. This month's number is as well hidden as it was last month. Don't miss out, read your Utility Reporter.

LOOK FOR YOUR CARD NUMBER
Recall Campaigns Miss Used Car Buyers

Unsuspecting used car buyers throughout the nation may be buying cars with possibly defective engine mounts, or faulty rear axles, or steering wheel spokes that may break, or air heaters that may emit carbon monoxide, or other possibly life-threatening flaws.

This happens because many owners who have been receiving recall notices by certified mail simply have not been having the possible recall-related defects examined or corrected. These cars, after a while, may be sold to private parties or traded in on new models. The new owners of these used cars may have no knowledge that recall campaign letters were ignored by the previous owners.

The extent of this problem is spelled out in the article, "Must Recall Campaigns Bypass the Used Car Buyer?" appearing in the October issue of Traffic Safety magazine, a publication of the National Safety Council. The author is Jim Kielty, road safety supervisor in the Council’s public information department.

"During fiscal 1972," according to Kielty, "domestic and foreign automobile manufacturers issued recall notices for more than 14 million cars. More than 30 million cars have been issued recall notices for the inspection and correction of possible safety defects since passage of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, the federal legislation pertaining to car recalls.

What has been the response to the recall campaigns? "The auto makers," says Kielty, "estimate that about 90 per cent of the owners of new cars ... bring in their vehicles for the necessary, serious repairs. With cars four or five years old, the figure falls to about 50 per cent."

The author cites one owner who received a notice for a possibly defective air heater in her six-year-old Corvair. The notice pointed out that the air heater may have become defective and that, if this happened, exhaust fumes might enter the passenger compartment. But this owner did not want to spend the time or money to have the heater examined for the possible defect. Instead she decided to practice her own form of preventive maintenance: she now drives with a window rolled down.

What will be the result of her ignoring the recall notice? "If she does not tell the dealer or the next owner that the car has a potential safety hazard," says Kielty, "its next owner will be driving around unaware that the car he has just bought may be a death trap."

In preparing the Traffic Safety article, Kielty discussed the problem with several dealers. "Only one out of 10 Chicago-area car dealers contacted," according to the author, "claimed to provide both inspection and necessary recall-related repairs before putting the trade-in cars out on their used car lots."

How can the used car buyer make sure the car he is considering has had necessary recall-related corrections performed? He can have the dealer check the car’s serial number against the warranty processing centers of the manufacturers. Their data banks contain the serial numbers of all recall-repaired vehicles.

"Unfortunately," Kielty notes, "most used car buyers don't even realize how many different types of cars have been involved in recalls. Nor do they know enough to ask the dealer to check the particular car against the manufacturers' data banks."

The government has provided some assistance. All the vehicles involved in recall campaigns are listed in five separate issues of Motor Vehicle

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The Safety Scene

ANOTHER ARGUMENT FOR SEAT BELTS

This accident report and accompanying photographs are printed here as glaring proof that seatbelts can prevent injuries and fatalities, if they are used.

Fortunately, the only injuries sustained were a bruised right arm, shoulder, and leg.

On December 11, 1972, at 9:45 p.m., Hank Lucas, Business Representative for Local Union 1245, was traveling along Interstate 5, between Stockton and Tracy, when a series of events involving three separate objects—a parked diesel truck and trailer, a speeding driver, and Hank's car—led up to the pictured results.

Hank was driving in the far right lane of this three lane Freeway when he noticed a set of head-lights coming up behind him at a very high rate of speed. Just as this car was at the point of passing Hank, it swerved across the lanes toward him. The only place left to go was off onto the highway shoulder, which Hank did. Within the elapsed time of about a split second, the driver of the speeding car regained control and sped on by. Hank started to move off the shoulder and back onto the Freeway when he saw the parked truck. In an attempt to miss it, he pulled the car to the left, but it was too late. He caught the left rear wheel, causing, as was stated on the Highway Patrol report, "slight damage to wheel." The car made one complete revolution in mid air, landing upright on its wheels. It then started spinning end for end until it came to rest back off of the right shoulder, approximately 310 feet from point of contact. Also in its travel it removed 55 feet of the Division of Highways 6 foot chain link fence, and 4 steel posts, one of which came through the car window and speared Hank's briefcase which was sitting on the passenger side of the car.

The operator of the truck who watched the whole thing take place stated: "I never thought I'd see anybody get out of that car alive."

Safety Defect Recall Campaigns. These are available from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, in Washington, D.C. Each issue costs from $.30 to $.60.

What more can be done to correct the situation? The author makes the following suggestions:

"1) All used car dealers should make sure the necessary recall-type maintenance work has been performed on all the cars they sell. Dealer associations should require this. A more drastic method would be to make it a legal requirement.

"2) Insurance coverage might be refused to those vehicles that have not had possible defects corrected. This system also could easily include those cars sold by one private party to another.

"3) States with mandatory motor vehicle inspection should refuse to pass cars that have not had recall defects corrected. In the District of Columbia, the government is sponsoring a pilot program to provide car owners with this incentive.

More needs to be done to assure used car buyers that the vehicles they purchase are free from recall-related defects. "If unsafe vehicles continue to be only partially controlled in the present erratic fashion," Kielty concludes, "unnecessary and avoidable traffic deaths will surely result."

Editor's Note:

In reference to this, if you have difficulty in obtaining any information from the individual you purchase a used car from, contact your Business Representative for assistance, as the Local Union has on file in their research library the issues of the recall campaigns.

Glenn Larson, center, is shown with friend and family at a retirement party honoring Glenn. Brother Larson was a member of Local 1245's Safety Advisory Committee and served the Local for many years. Good luck in your retirement.