



# utility reporter

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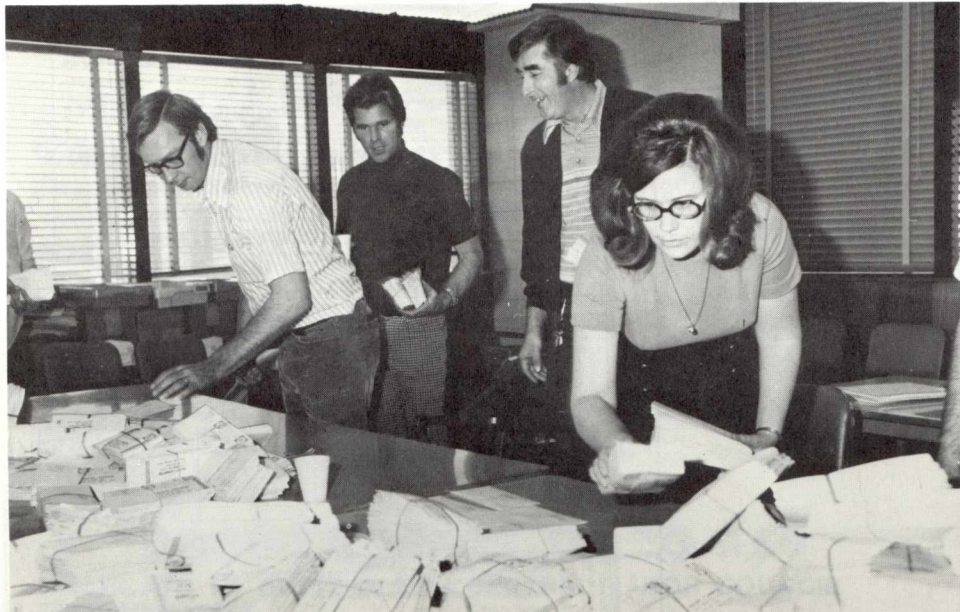
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

JANUARY, 1975

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Local Union 1245, AFL-CIO,  
P.O. Box 4790,  
Walnut Creek, Ca. 94596



## PG&E Members ratify wage offer



Shown above and below are some of the members of the ballot committee as they prepared to count ballots for the PG&E Wage Negotiations Ratification. The ballot committee consisted of: James Airheart, San Joaquin Division; Robert J. Azevedo, Shasta Division; Rayphe Brewer, General Construction; Robert A. Burchfield, East Bay Division; Alan D. Carrell, Colgate Division; Gerald A. Cepernich, San Francisco Division; Rene Giger, General Office, Clerical; Dorothy L. Hill, San Francisco Division, Clerical; Arlene Koch, Sacramento Division, Clerical; Jack E. Marley, General Construction; J. A. Oliveira, Stockton Division; Victor Patton, Drum Division; Orville H. Stovall, North Bay Division; Robert L. Thomson, San Jose Division; and F. O. Watkins, Coast Valleys Division. Alternates: J. S. Russell, Humboldt Division; Harvey R. Ar-buckle, De Sabla Division; and Cecil M. Shore, North Bay Division, Clerical.



Local 1245 members employed by Pacific Gas and Electric Company have ratified an 8.5% wage increase which will be retroactive to January 1, 1975. The ratification was carried out by a mail referendum ballot submitted to the membership on December 31, 1974 with ballots collected from the Post Office box by a committee of rank and file members at 10:00 a.m. January 16, 1975.

The results of balloting announced by this committee on January 17, 1975 showed acceptance by both the clerical and physical units. The vote counts in the physical were 5225 for acceptance and 3063 to reject; the clerical vote was 1185 to accept and 292 for rejection.

A total of 9825 ballots were returned during the two week voting period; a participation rate of 67%. The ballot committee of fifteen members checking eligibility were pleased to announce that a new process of coding return ballot envelopes not only increased productivity, but also reduced the number of ballots rejected due to inability to verify membership.

The agreements called for a wage reopener in the second year of the three year agreement if the Consumer Price Index reached 149.0 for October 1974. After the Bureau of Labor

Statistics announced the 153.0 index for October, the Union and Company commenced bargaining. After six meetings of tough bargaining the parties reached a tentative agreement which provides for an 8.5% across-the-board increase to all rates in the bargaining unit. The increase will provide an average of \$21.20 per week for all employees in the two bargaining units and produces \$24.85 per week for the journeyman, electrician, lineman and comparable classifications.

A provision for further increases in July 1975 is based on a cost of living trigger if the May 1975 Consumer Price Index reaches 163.5 or higher in accordance with the following schedule:

Index for May 1975	Wage Increase
163.5 through 164.2	0.5%
164.3 through 165.0	1.0%
165.1 through 165.8	1.5%
165.9 through 166.6	2.0%
166.7 through 167.4	2.5%
167.5 through 168.2	3.0%
168.3 through 169.0	3.5%
169.1 and above	4.0%

A wage opening is provided for January 1, 1976 with both parties free to bring one subject to the bargaining table as part of the negotiations.

### YOUR Business Manager's COLUMN ECONOMIC ACTION

L. L. MITCHELL

Last month I wrote that governmental action was necessary if we were to create a turn around in our difficult economic situations. I suggested that Congress must act on its own to provide the solutions if the President did not propose programs to do the job.

Since then both Congress and the President have spoken. Now that proposed solutions have been expressed we must await the result of these rhetorical exchanges. It appears a consensus has been reached on the problem which must be answered first. That is, we are in fact suffering a recession and this must be slowed despite the inflationary cost.

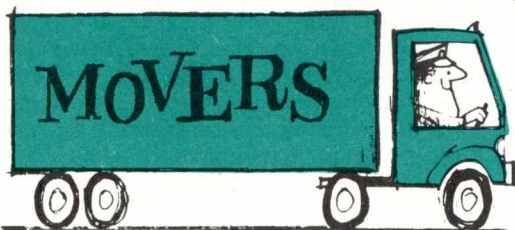
President Ford has put forth a very controversial program. However, it will start debate and hopefully action by the Congress. Assessing the President's proposals from the working person's point of view, it is not very appealing. The conservation of gasoline through increased prices will not restrict the wealthy in any way. A tax refund for those who have little or no income means nothing. Those who would receive the maximum tax refund would no doubt

not spend it in any event. So, each item could be criticized or praised, and will be in accordance with the affect it has on the person reviewing it.

The saving grace is that the commitment for action has been made. The solutions will not come easy, but Congress now has the ball and they have the President's recommendations... good, bad or indifferent. All of us should be deeply concerned over the final determinations and should let our legislators know our feelings. You can rest assured that the organized pressure groups with vested interests will be out in force. I would urge you to write or contact your Congressman and express your support or misgivings on the various issues as proposed or as amendments or substitutes measures are brought forward.

We can't sit back in silence and then complain about what government has or has not done. "They" are not the ones to blame. We have a new Congress. "We" are responsible for their election. If we are to have a Congress responsive to the people — the people must let their views be known.

... HAVE YOU MOVED?



MY NEW ADDRESS IS:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN TO:

P.O. BOX 4790, WALNUT CREEK, CALIF. 94596

# Just lying here thinking and observing

by Ken Lohre

Respect for those who are ill; respect for the angels of mercy (nurses); respect for physicians and respect for the volunteers who give freely of their time to help those who are ill; are some of the things your editor has learned first hand in the past few days.

I've also learned that some of the rules or policies of hospitals border on the ridiculous or insane. Example: they faithfully awaken me and Roy Edmundson, a charter member of 1440 Steelworkers, from a sound sleep between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. to take our temperature and then wake Doug Frye, the guy next to me and put him on the scales and weigh him. His son is a painter for G.C. and a member of Local 1245. (Small World)

Perhaps there's a good explanation for this early hour lunacy, but for the life of me I can't figure it out. The old saying that a "bitching soldier is a happy soldier" might well apply to many hospital patients. We gripe mainly to ourselves and once in a while to the nurses. Doug has been telling them for at least 5 days not to bring apple juice, but what to his wondering eyes should appear on almost every meal tray they bring here, (you guessed it) apple juice.

There are many little things which I could poke fun at, but I'm no comedy writer, therefore I'll concentrate on some basic thoughts I've had since arriving in Kaiser Hospital in Walnut Creek.

I have a slipped or herniated disc and consequently have been placed in traction for approximately 2 weeks. A pain in the lower back in one sense and a pain just a little lower than that in another sense.

After a few days of observation I believe that myself and some of the other members of Local 1245, IBEW - affiliated with the AFL-CIO could take a few lessons from an even older union, the B.O.M. (the Brotherhood of Man) as they operate within the hospital.

It's hard to put some of my feelings into words but I'll give it a try. The basic theme is caring for and relating to people.

The nurses, and nurses' aides in general, have got to be one of the greatest groups of people God saw fit to put on this earth. It takes a special kind of person to administer to the needs of those who are ill and dying. The nurses and orderlies have more direct contact with the hospital patients than the doctors. They often provide the last bit of comfort and attention that a person receives before they die. They watch people die inch by inch, they see some go very rapidly and they see many others get well and go home to their families and friends.

When family, friends or even acquaintances die, no matter how close or distant the relationship, there is a feeling of emptiness. The nurses and nurses aides as well as the doctors can't help but feel the same and yet they go on day after day.

They put up with passes from the men who aren't so sick. They put up with the disgruntled and upset patient who isn't such a bad person under normal circumstances, but when they are upset and afraid about what the future holds, they take it out on the people who work at the hospital. Then of course they put up with the few people who are basically difficult and hard to get along with at any time.

Why do they do it? For money? Chances are a clerk working for PG&E will earn more than they do. Is it just a job; another way to earn money? Some days it is just a job and for a few that's all it is, but for most it's an attitude, a way of life. An opportunity to reach out to others. They are people caring about people and not just "loved ones."

What does this have to do with the members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and specifically the members of Local 1245? I think it has a lot to do with us.

For one thing it gives us something to aspire to. For another it serves as a reminder to put some brotherhood back in the Brotherhood. I don't know how many times I've heard recently that "the union isn't like it used to be," or "everybody is out for themselves, the only goals seem to be monetary." That isn't the kind of attitude or people who built our union nor is it the kind that will keep it going. Our members must reach out to other members they work with. They must care.

My stay here has been fruitful and my back still isn't well. We have something to learn from these people. Think about it.

# DON'T MISS THIS CHANCE

- To Make Sure The Next Presidential Campaign Is Run Honestly
- To End The Influence Of Big Money
- To Build A General Campaign Fund, So All Candidates Have An Equal Chance

CHECK THIS BOX ON YOUR FEDERAL INCOME TAX FORM

# Put your money where your mouth is

Your federal income tax form gives you and all other taxpayers a chance to put your money where your mouth is.

Because of Watergate and the revelations concerning campaign funding, millions of Americans rightly were disgusted and incensed over the impact of big money on politics. Congress did something about it, finally, by enacting an election reform law that should avoid the worst abuses of the Watergate type.

But you and other citizens can do your part, too.

On the front of your federal tax form is a little box. By checking it, you can direct the IRS to take \$1 (or \$2 on a joint return) from the tax you're paying and put it into a presidential campaign fund for 1976.

The fund will be shared equally by candidates of the two major parties and on a sliding scale basis by candidates of other qualified parties, if any.

It is in reality a "citizen's fund" to help guarantee that each major party candidate will have the same amount to spend, so money will not be a key factor in the election. The real factors will be the right ones—programs and policies of the candidates. Two million, fifty seven thousand, seven-hundred ninety one.

**It costs you nothing. You're not being asked to add \$1 (or \$2) to your taxes. All you do is authorize IRS to take it from taxes you have to pay anyway.**

It's the citizen's way of relieving the candidates of the pressures, and temptations, of fund-raising and of assuring a presidential election in 1976 that will be settled on the basis of issues, not bucks.

# Jack Jones

could have won \$50.00 if he had noticed his Union membership card number in the December 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

## the utility reporter

Telephone (415) 933-6060

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# Shopping tips from soap to peanut butter

by Sidney Margolius Consumer Expert for Utility Reporter

Some soaps are advertised as good for holding on to husbands; others, for holding on to friends.

Whatever your own objective, soap has become surprisingly expensive. In the three years since we previously priced soaps, various brands have gone up 40 to 120%. A floating soap that was 11¢ two years ago now costs 19¢. A small bar of a deodorant soap that was 12¢ now sets you back a quarter. You can pay as much as 39¢ for some of the more elaborately-packed deodorant soaps.

The increase is attributed by the soap industry to the higher prices of waste fats used to make soap. But the increases still seem exaggerated, since they amount to more than the manufacturers' entire costs for ingredients.

Only in the past few years have consumers been able to compare costs of different brands. Before 1971, the soap industry had been a privileged sanctuary, immune from the requirement to show net weights that all other grocery-store products had to meet.

It pays to check the weights. Floating soaps, which can do that because they have air pumped into them, look bigger than others. "Frame" soaps also look bigger than hard-milled soaps which are pressed together. (You can tell milled soaps by their smooth, shiny look.)

You can't judge how much you get from the face appearance. Some 5-ounce deodorant bars look bigger than Zest, which is 5.75 ounces.

What makes you buy what you do?

In the case of soap, a Procter & Gamble official testified at Senate hearings some years ago, consumers "simply buy according to personal preference as to color or the one that may be mildest or has the most appealing fragrance."

As in our previous surveys, Sweetheart and Ivory cost least, comparison-shopper Jane Harmon found. In deodorant soaps, Zest again was lowest, mainly because it's the biggest bar. The only cheaper deodorant soap was a house brand at about half the price of the national brands. Larger bars were cheaper.

Deodorant soaps especially are likely to vary in price. We found Zest selling anywhere from 28 to 35¢; Irish Spring, 26 to 31¢, and so on. Costs in

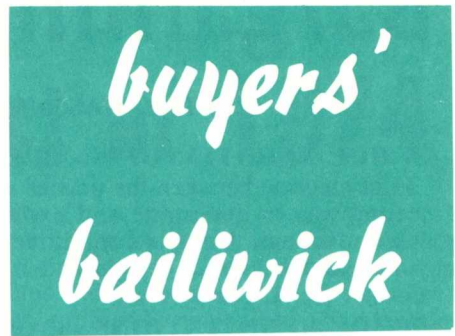
your own neighborhood may vary, but the comparative values will be much the same.

It pays to stock up when you find a special price. Then you can remove the wrappers and let the soap dry out so it won't melt into a soft blob that vanishes before your eyes.

**PEANUT BUTTER CLAIMS:** Those Skippy TV commercials comparing peanut butter with meat have been slapped down by the National Advertising Division of the Council of Better Business Bureaus. The commercials claimed, "With today's prices, more and more shoppers are switching to peanut butter... Ounce for ounce, peanut butter provides about as much protein as lean hamburger."

## COMPARATIVE SOAP COSTS

	Size	Avg. Price	Cost Per Oz.
Sweetheart	3.25 oz.	13¢	4.0¢
Ivory	4.5	18.5	4.1
House brand deod.	5.0	21.1	4.2
Ivory	3.5	16.3	4.7
Woodbury	4.75	23	4.8
Zest	5.75	31.5	5.5
Dial	5.0	28.1	5.6
Palmolive	5.0	33	6.6
Camay	5.0	33.2	6.6
Lux	5.0	33.2	6.6
Palmolive Gold	5.0	34	6.8
Safeguard	5.0	34	6.8
Palmolive	3.5	24	6.8
Camay	3.5	24.3	6.9
Lux	3.5	25	7.1
Dial	3.5	25.2	7.2
Irish Spring	5.0	36	7.2
Phase III	5.0	39	7.8
Irish Spring	3.5	28.1	8.0



While the Best Foods Division of CPC International argued that peanut butter really is high in protein, the review board was concerned about the comparison with meat. The commercial showed a shopper asking a butcher for "a nice portion of Skippy Peanut Butter." The butcher says, "More and more shoppers are switching to peanut butter."

Peanut butter truly is one of the cheapest sources of protein. It ranked third in protein costs in a list of 38 protein foods we recently compared. It was outranked only by canned mackerel and dry peas and also probably by soy powder, which we did not include.

But the TV commercials omitted one fact. The protein in peanut butter is not "complete" as in foods from animal sources such as meat, fish, eggs and milk products. Peanut butter is low in some of the essential amino acids. However, grain products like bread, even though incomplete in their own protein, do have amino acids which supplement those low in peanut butter. Thus, a peanut butter sandwich does provide complete protein, especially if you also eat each day some of the food from animal sources.

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# 1975 Financial forecast and consumer tips

by Sidney Margolius Consumer Expert for Utility Reporter

Battered by a record peacetime inflation of over 12 per cent in the last 12 months, with wages lagging behind, workers in general suffered a loss in real spendable earnings, amounting to about 5 per cent in 1974 for a family of four. That's a \$5 a week cut in real pay.

But 1975 may be a year of readjustment and "catch-up." The cost of living appears to be headed higher but is unlikely to rise as abruptly as last year. While housing costs are still moving up, some food prices recently have turned down.

This does not mean food will be truly reasonable in 1975. The reductions on some products start from a high level.

On the basis of present price trends, I estimate that average living costs will go up another 6 to 8 per cent in 1975 on top of the increase of over 52 per cent since 1967.

It's useful to identify the most persistent cost problems so you know what you have to cope with in 1975, and how some people may be dealing with these expenses.

The four big problems are: (1) the continuing high cost of food; (2) a further climb in the already staggering cost of housing and rentals; (3) the wild leap of over 18 per cent in car ownership costs in the last 12 months; (4) the persistent long-term increase in medical costs—up another 12 per cent the past 12 months.

**FOOD:** Cheaper beef, at least until

next summer, will help keep your food bills at present levels or even a little below. Meat, poultry and fish usually take 35 per cent of your food dollar.

That doesn't mean you can ease up on comparing values or even increase meat use. Selected beef cuts have come down 3 per cent this year. But they went up 72 per cent since '67.

As well as beef, frozen fish is cheaper. But you can expect to pay more for pork and poultry this year.

Underlying reason for the drop is that producers have been shipping more grass-fed young beef because of high cost of grain feeding. Grass-fed beef is leaner and cheaper, and because more is being shipped at a younger age, is more tender than it usually is. Where it's available in stores, often under such names as "Economy" or "Thrifty" beef, consumers have been buying it eagerly.

Other big cost cutters recently have been five and six-pound packs of hamburger, offered by some stores as much as 60 per cent below usual tags. Soyburger—hamburger with 20-25 per cent soy protein—is being featured again. Stores usually sell it for 15-20 cents a pound less than regular hamburger, and as little as half the price of so-called ground chuck.

Some staple vegetables, especially potatoes and onions, are cheaper. But the spectacular decline in farm prices of onions, currently reported to be as low as 3 cents a pound, has not been passed on to consumers. Our check in

three major cities finds store prices 17 to 20 cents a pound, down only 3-4 cents from a year ago.

Several other staples now cost less. Rice and beans have dropped due to big crops. Coffee is cheaper. Sugar is dropping although tags are still exorbitant. Many sugar-using products are still rising. Some cookies have gone from 33 to 99 cents a pound in less than two years, according to Arthur Gerstenberger, Manager of the Hanover, N.H., consumer co-op. Be careful in comparing prices, Gerstenberger's report shows that some cookie packages are a full 16 ounces, others are only 14.

Sales of soft drinks already are falling due to the price jump. You now pay at the rate of 65 cents a quart for many soft drinks. In contrast, milk is 40 cents a quart or less in some areas, reconstituted orange juice only 45 cents. You also can reduce sugar use by avoiding presweetened cereals and buying canned fruits in light syrup instead of heavy. The difference usually is about an ounce of sugar, for which you pay a high extra price in any case.

Consumers are shopping more widely to hold down food costs. In 1954, only 59 per cent of shoppers visited more than one supermarket in a month, Burgoyne, Inc., a research company, found. By 1963, 75 per cent shopped more than one super.

**HOUSING:** Prices of new houses have gone wild. The median national

tag now is \$36,900 compared to \$28,000 two years ago. Authorities say there's an eight-month supply of unsold dwellings. Tags on older homes have risen substantially, if less dramatically. The median now is tagged \$31,870—up 10 per cent from a year ago. Moderate-income families have been priced out of even this market. Last year, 54 per cent of the used homes sold for under \$30,000. Recently, only 46 per cent went at those prices.

One helpful event is the recent decline in mortgage interest, although rates still usually are 8-9 per cent.

**CARS:** Consumers are noticeably delaying purchases of new cars. But sales of used cars have boomed. So have their prices—up 24 per cent on average in just a year.

The geniuses of Detroit outsmarted themselves by hiking prices an average of about \$1,000 in a little over a year, with biggest percentage increases on smaller cars. These typically were raised 15-25 per cent while the bigger ones went up 10-15. The result is a big backlog of small models with room for wheeling and dealing in price.

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## Attend Unit Meetings

# Bargaining Roundup

## PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

### AD HOC NEGOTIATIONS - CLERICAL HOURS:

First meeting between the parties was held on January 23, 1975. Purpose of this meeting was to determine and explore the problem and to formulate plans for future meetings. Union's committee is composed of Mary Ann Agler, Barbara Symons and Eduardo Vallejo and is being assisted by Senior Assistant Business Manager M. A. Walters.

### AD HOC NEGOTIATIONS - CABLE SUB FOREMAN:

Parties met for the second time December 6, 1974 and did reach some areas of potential accord. While some matters still remain to be resolved, scheduling of future meetings are being held up pending local meetings on a number of matters within San Francisco Division. Union's committee is composed of Ron Fitzsimmons and Gene Sheldon and is being assisted by Senior Assistant Business Manager M. A. Walters together with Business Representative Frank Quadros.

### NUCLEAR POWER PLANT OPERATORS:

Company submitted a proposal to Union under date of December 13, 1974. This proposal outlined provisions relating to licensing and requalifications of operators in nuclear power plants together with compensation for AEC required licenses. The parties met to discuss this proposal on January 10, 1975 at which time Union outlined its objection to Company's proposal. Union's committee is composed of Richard D. McKenna and Chester A. Bartlett and is being assisted by Senior Assistant Business Manager M. A. Walters.

### SUBSTATION AND HYDRO INTERIM NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Union's Committee met with Company on January 14, 1975. Committee is working on final draft of the Agreement. Committee is composed of Bill Hosford, James Heiser, Bill Wade and Herman Reuther, with assistance from John J. Wilder, Assistant Business Manager of Local 1245.

### GAS METER SHOP CONSOLIDATION

No change since last report.

### WATER DEPARTMENT INTERIM NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Committee is preparing proposals for submission to Company in the near future. Committee is composed of Joe V. Robinson, Jr., Stockton Division; Cleve O. Bowman, Drum Division; Emmett Prindiville, San Joaquin Division; Alvin R. Knudsen, Colgate Division, assisted by various Business Representatives from Local 1245.

### PRESSURE OPERATORS INTERIM NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

This committee has been formed and the first meeting is scheduled for February 11, 1975 to develop proposals. Committee consists of Harold A. Keelen, North Bay Division and John B. Selstad, San Joaquin Division, assisted by John J. Wilder, Assistant Business Manager of Local 1245.

### GEYSERS POWER PLANT

Committee met with Company on October 31, 1974. No progress at this time.

### P.G.T. VOTING:

At press time members employed by Pacific Gas Transmission were voting on a wage reopener for the second year of their agreement. The tentative agreement calls for an 8.5% wage increase effective January 1, 1975, with a cost of living clause for July 1, 1975. The ballots which are being sent to a P. O. box in Walnut Creek will be picked up and counted on January 30, 1975.

### STAN-PAC RATIFIES:

Members employed by Standard Pacific Gas Lines have voted to accept an 8.5% general increase which is retroactive back to January 1, 1975. The settlement, which is for the second year of the agreement, also calls for a cost of living clause for July 1, 1975.

### ALAMEDA/CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT:

On January 9, 1975 Union's negotiating committee for A. C. Transit consisting of Ted Ewing, Ed Sheldon and Veodis Stamps, concluded negotiations with the following improvements: wage increases of 23c per hour effective 9/1/74, 22c 7/1/75, 20c 7/1/76, together with a Cost of Living Clause providing quarterly increases of 1c per hour for each 0.5 increase in the C.P.I. Other improvements include tool allowance of \$50.00 per year for replacement of personal tools, coveralls and raingear to be furnished by District; one additional holiday (employee's service anniversary date); reimbursement for all miles outside of Alameda or Contra Costa Counties of 15c per mile for a call back; 12 days of sick leave after two years of employment and payment of first day sick leave after three days of sickness; all additional premiums needed to continue medical benefits paid by District plus reduction of yearly deductible to \$25.00 and current dental plan of 80 - 20 shall be 90 - 10 effective 3/1/75.

### CITY OF ALAMEDA:

Based on the provisions of the current Memorandum of Understanding wages were increased 8.5% effective 1/1/75.

### BAY CABLEVISION, INC.

Proposals exchanged. No meeting date set for first negotiating session. Union's committee is composed of Robert Grey and Veodis Stamps, Business Representative of Local 1245.

### CALIFORNIA-PACIFIC UTILITIES COMPANY - Benefit Committee

Participants from the various IBEW Locals who have Labor Agreements with California-Pacific Utilities Company will attend meetings to discuss ways and means to improve benefits for California-Pacific Utilities Company employees. Next meeting is scheduled for January 29, 1975.

### OROVILLE-WYANDOTTE IRRIGATION DISTRICT

No progress since last report. Meeting scheduled for January 23, 1975.

### CITY OF HEALDSBURG

Results of negotiations provide for a 10% general increase to be effective 1/1/75. Other changes included 12 days instead of 10 days of vacation for employees with between 5 and 10 years with the City. The days before Christmas and New Year's as holidays in lieu of Admission Day together with a special adjustment for the classification of Electrician, and minor changes in the grievance procedure. Union's negotiating committee consisted of Clyde Boyd and Robert Jensen, together with Business Representative Corbett Wheeler.

### NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Local Union 1245 members employed by the Nevada Irrigation District voted on December 18, 1974 to accept the results of this year's negotiations. Terms of the settlement provided for a 10% general increase effective 1/1/75 for Water Division employees and maintenance of parity with PG&E for Power Division employees. The latter is still subject to final approval by the District's Board of Directors. Improvements were made in the medical and life insurance programs and a Long Term Disability program was established, as were provisions for compensation for unused sick leave upon termination.

### RICHVALE IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Results of negotiations between Local Union 1245 and District provide for a 10% general wage increase effective 1/1/75, together with the establishment of the day after Thanksgiving as a paid holiday. Union's negotiating committee consisted of Troy Kellett and Business Representative Tony Morgado.

### TRI-DAM PROJECT

Negotiations have been concluded between Local Union 1245 and the Tri-Dam Project on a one year agreement. Terms of the agreement are for an 8 1/2% general increase to be effective 3/1/75, establishment of the day after Thanksgiving as a paid holiday and improvement in shift premiums from 15c and 20c to 20c and 25c. Also obtained were improvements in vacations. Business Representative Pete Dutton, together with Bill Cashman, were members of Union's negotiating committee.

### SOHNER TREE SERVICE, INC.

Negotiations were on wages for the second year of a two year agreement. Local Union members rejected Company's first offer by a margin of two to one. This offer provided for various increases ranging from 8% to 9%. After this rejection, negotiations were resumed and a new offer is currently being voted on by a mail ballot. The new offer provides for a general wage increase for all employees of 9% effective 1/1/75.

### OCEAN VIEW CABLEVISION, INC.

Agreement unsigned by Company as of this date. Union will take legal action if signed contracts not received within a short time.

### STORER CABLE TV (Rohnert Park and Fairfield)

Committee has had several negotiating sessions. Next meeting scheduled for February 6, 1975. Union's committee is composed of William Fredericks, Rohnert Park, and Anthony Crittenden of Fairfield, assisted by Albert E. Sandoval, Business Representative from Local 1245 and Assistant Business Manager John J. Wilder.

## Union members make more

Union membership is worth anywhere up to 40 percent in higher wages.

A study in the current Monthly Labor Review, published by the U.S. Labor Dept., found that organized craftsmen showed the highest differential between union and non-union workers — a difference of "about 20 to 25 percent more per hour than the earnings of workers who had similar characteristics, but were not members of unions," according to a May, 1973 review.

"For white and black men in the transportation equipment operative occupations, the union-non-union differentials were around 40 percent," reported Paul M. Ryscavage, an economist with the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"THE EFFECT of unionism for women in clerical, operative, and service jobs ranged from 20 to 25 percent," in favor of union workers, the report continued.

The findings varied considerably for age, education, region, and occupation. However, with these characteristics held constant, the "union effect was estimated to be about 12 percent for all workers."

For white men of similar characteristics, it was estimated to be about 8 per cent. Among black men it was estimated to be about 27 percent. Among black women and white women the effect was estimated to be 19 per cent for black women and 22 percent for white women.

"THE INTERACTION of union

and occupation," the study said, "was found to be particularly strong in the blue-collar job; from 10 to 25 percent could be added to usual hourly earnings over and above the separate effects of union membership and occupation."

For white union men in the white collar area, the differential ran as high as 26 percent while differentials were even higher in the non-farm laborer and transportation occupations. They went as high as 34 percent for non-farm laborers and 38 percent for transportation operators. In the service occupations, the differential was about 16 percent higher for a union worker as compared with a non-union worker.

"UNION differentials were about the same for white and black women in most of the occupations in which they are concentrated," the study showed. "The differential in the clerical occupations was around 20 percent for both. In operative and service occupations, however, the white union member earned 37 percent more an hour than her non-union counterpart, while among black professional women no differential existed."

"Regardless of region," the study declared, "black men experienced larger union-non-union earnings differentials than white men. Differentials were particularly high for blacks in the South Central, South Atlantic, and Pacific Coast States, undoubtedly reflecting the low hourly earnings received by non-union workers."

# Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974

With the beginning of 1975 the Fiduciary Responsibility and the Reporting and Disclosure Provisions of the law became effective. The basic requirement of the law with regard to Fiduciary Responsibility is the "prudent man rule" which states that fiduciaries are required to discharge their duties with respect and to act as a prudent man would in the conduct of these affairs.

The January 1, 1975 effective date for certain fiduciary responsibility provisions may be postponed until June 30, 1975 providing the plan applies for such postponement in accordance with regulations issued by the Secretary of Labor.

The new law replaces the Welfare Pension Disclosure Act of 1959 and requires several new and expanded reports. The law requires an annual information report and an actuarial evaluation at least once every three years to the Secretary of Labor. It also requires the plan to provide participants with a summary plan description, ratification of modifications in the plan, and a summary of the annual report.

The Labor Department is currently in the process of developing new reporting forms and writing regulations on reporting and disclosure. However, due to the lateness of regulations and forms, the deadline date of April 30 that the plan administration must file the reports may be postponed to a later date.

The Termination Insurance provisions were made effective on July 1, 1974 with the first premiums due on October 1, 1974. The purpose of the Termination Insurance is to guarantee the vested benefits of plan participants in the event a pension plan is terminated. All vested benefits are guaranteed, except for increases granted in the five-year period immediately prior to plan termination.

The law establishes the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation in the Department of Labor. The Corporation is funded by annual premiums paid by plans covered by the law. The amount of the premium is \$1.00 per participant for single-employer plans and 50 cents for each participant for multi-employer plans.

Some of the principal provisions of the law and their effective dates are as follows:

## FUNDING

The new law requires that pension plans be adequately funded to cover vested liabilities. The minimum amount which an employer must contribute each year to a defined benefit plan is the amount of that year's normal cost, plus an amount to fund the past service liability of the plan over a period of up to 30 years for single-employer plans and 40 years for multi-employer plans. An alternative funding method is available for multi-employer plans. For purposes of the law, the term, "multi-employer plan," means a plan maintained pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement, to which more than one employer is required to contribute, and to which no one employer makes as much as 50 percent of the contribution.

Funding requirements for plans already in existence go into effect January 1, 1976. For those plans which are collectively bargained the effective date is either the end of the present contract or January 1, 1981, whichever is earlier.

## Participation and Eligibility Requirements

Under the law, all covered plans must allow full participation after an employee reaches the age of 25 and has obtained one year of service. Plans are not allowed to discriminate against older employees, except that employees hired within five years of normal retirement may be extended from participation in fixed benefit plans. For participation requirements, the term, "year of service" is defined to be 1,000 hours worked in a 12-month period. This definition also applies to a year of service for vesting requirements but is not applicable in defining a year of service for the accrual of benefits. For accrual purposes, a year of service may be 1,600 or 1,800 hours, but benefits must be accrued on a pro rata basis down to 1,000 hours. The effective date of this provision of the law is January 1, 1976 except that for negotiated plans certain supplementary features the end of the contract or January 1, 1981, whichever is earlier.

## Vesting

The law requires that vesting be provided in any covered plans and accepts any one of the following three provisions as meeting the vesting requirement:

- (a) Ten-year service rule—One-hundred percent vested after 10 years of service.
- (b) Graded 15-year service rule—Twenty-five percent vested after five years of service, increasing five percent per year for each of the next five years and 10 percent per year thereafter until 100 percent vested after 15 years of service.
- (c) Rule of 45—With five or more years of service, 50 percent vested when the employee's age and years of service add up to 45. Vesting is increased 10 percent per year each year thereafter. In addition, each employee with 10 years of service, regardless of age, must be 50 percent vested; each employee with 15 years of service must be 100 percent vested.

As noted previously, a "year of service" for vesting purposes is defined as 1,000 hours worked in a 12 month period.

There is a special vesting rule for contributory pension plans. This rule allows a participant who leaves the plan to withdraw his contributions, if allowed by the plan, and retain a vested right to that portion of his benefit based on the employer's payment. This rule applies only if the person withdrawing is more than 50 percent vested.

The law also requires a plan administrator to report the hours of all participants who terminate with a vested right to the Secretary of Labor. Those hours will then be forwarded to the Social Security Administration, where they will be kept on file, and each employee will be notified of his vested benefit when he retires. Vesting provisions take effect on January 1, 1976 except that for negotiated plans certain supplementary features the end of the contract or January 1, 1981, whichever is earlier.

## Joint Survivor Option

The law requires that every plan provides a 50 percent joint survivor option. The option is to be made available to all employees who retire and is automatic, unless the employee elects not to take the option. The effective date of this provision is the same as that for vesting and eligibility requirements.

## Portability

The law does not require the establishment of a mandatory portability fund. It does, however, allow for the voluntary, tax-free transfer of funds from one pension fund to another, if it is agreed to by both plans and the employee.

In conclusion, the foregoing is intended to outline the major provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974. It does not include the exceptions, of which there are several, to each major provision. The Department of Labor is currently in the process of writing the regulations which will layout how the law is applied. To date there are no regulations written except for the one that states how to get a postponement. In the coming years there will be many administrative and legal decisions which will broaden and further define the law and the technical changes which will be required in most pension programs.

It should be noted that the new law sets minimum standards for pension programs and does not require and present benefit to be reduced or any reduction in our bargaining goals.

# NOTICE

## To all employees covered by the Line Construction National Pension Trust Plan (Multi Employer Plans)

### Editor's Note:

This notice is published pursuant to guidelines for submission of application for postponement of the effective date of certain fiduciary responsibility provisions of the new Pension Reform Law. The guidelines provide that any plan administrator, trustee, named fiduciary or other individual duly authorized to act on behalf of a plan may apply for a postponement. The guidelines further provide that the individual who applies for a postponement must notify the plan participants that he or she has applied. Inasmuch as Local 1245 participates as a trustee for the Line Construction National Pension Trust Plan, the above notice is intended to meet the notice requirement.

All steps necessary to comply with the new federal legislation on pension and welfare plans are being taken by the Line Construction National Pension Trust Plan, it was announced today by Mike Kelly, Chairman, and Robert P. Johnson, Secretary, of the Board of Trustees.

The Act goes into effect in stages. Vesting requirements will become effective in 1976. Requirements for additional reporting to members and to the federal government go into effect in 1975.

New provisions for the careful handling of the pension funds become effective January 1, 1975. A few of these new provisions may require amendment of certain of the present plan documents. Recognizing that these changes might take time to work out, Congress gave the Secretary of Labor authority to postpone the effective date for these particular changes to the end of 1975.

The Trustees of the Pension Plan have asked for a postponement of the effective date to July 1, 1975. Only certain limited and largely technical parts of the law are involved, as follows:

**Section 402** — This includes designating certain persons or officers as so-called "named fiduciaries", writing any allocation of responsibilities for administration of the plan into a plan document, and adding to the plan any authority to hire advisors or to delegate management of investments.

**Section 403** (but not its subsection c) — This includes writing into the plan the allocation of legal responsibilities between the trustees and any investment manager (such as a bank) or insurance company; also, exactly how the assets of a plan are to be distributed in case the plan terminates.

**Section 405** (but not its subsection (a) and (d)) — This includes the extent of responsibility of one trustee or other "fiduciary" if another trustee or fiduciary does not fulfill the requirements of the law.

**Section 410(a)** — This would void any present provision protecting trustees from damages.

Postponement of the effective date of these provisions is being requested to allow sufficient time for the Trustees, with the assistance of their professional advisors, to work out the proper amendments to Plan documents to assure compliance with the law.

The requested postponement will not adversely affect any interest of the employees covered by the Plan. On the contrary, undue haste to meet the January 1 deadline might result in decisions that prove to be inefficient or otherwise adverse to the employees' interests.

Any covered employee, pensioner, or beneficiary who wishes to comment on the requested postponement may do so by writing to the: Office of Employee Benefits Security, Labor-Management Services Administration, U. S. Department of Labor, P.O. Box 176, Washington, D.C. 20044.

The Fund's trustees intend to keep members informed of the changes that will be made in the benefit plan.

# A Scouting family



This photo shows the Nelson children. Seated is Carol Braswell; standing from left to right are: Dean Nelson, Bill Nelson III, Louis Vance Nelson, Don Nelson and Ken Nelson.

Brother Bill Nelson, Hydro Electrical Machinist in the Feather River Canyon, has six very good reasons to be proud of his family (see pictures).

All five of Bill's sons have earned the Eagle Scout Badge, which is the highest and most honored rank in Scouting. Not to be outdone by the male children in the family, Bill's daughter, Carol, has earned the Curved Bar, which is the highest and most honored rank possible to attain in the Girl Scout movement.

Bill's children come by their interest and scouting ability naturally. Brother Nelson has been active in Scouting for many years as a Scoutmaster and Scouter and is a recipient of the Silver Buffalo which is the highest meritorious service award that the Boy Scouts of America bestows on adult male scouters. The children's mother has also been active for many years as a Den Mother and Scouter and has also been awarded the Silver Antelope which is the highest award bestowed on female scouters by the Boy Scouts of America.

The Officers and Staff of I.B.E.W. Local Union 1245 join in saluting the W. E. Nelson, Jr. family.



Shown above are Mr. and Mrs. Bill Nelson with their son Louis in the center.

## U.S. Postal Service to Issue Collective Bargaining Stamp

The U. S. Postal Service today announced that it will issue a postage stamp commemorating Collective Bargaining.

Date and place of issuance of the stamp will be announced later.

Collective Bargaining, a social force that stabilized labor-management relations, is almost as old as the United States.

The first recorded instance of bargaining was in 1799 when the Philadelphia cordwainers — which was the old-fashioned name for shoemakers — refused a wage cut and

were locked out. A committee representing both factions met and resolved the differences.

A more clear-cut instance of bargaining came in 1809 when New York journeymen printers submitted wage demands in writing, which were settled by a joint committee.

As early as 1914, federal concern with labor-management relations was demonstrated in the Clayton Act. Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, termed it "the most important and comprehensive measure ever enacted

## U.S. Workers best producers

American international executives find that workers in the United States have an edge over their foreign counterparts in over-all labor performance; The Conference Board reported this week.

According to a survey of 70 top international managers from the U.S., American employees rate especially high in productivity, labor stability and general performance on the job.

The survey, which appears in the December issue of The Conference Board Record, uses criteria such as quality, costs, availability, skills and union-management relations to compare U.S. and foreign labor.

A number of the executives feel that the lower paychecks of foreign employees are offset by other factors. Unstable union-management relations, labor scarcities and uneven work skills to be found in many countries tip the balance in favor of the U.S. worker.

Even if the American worker is "somewhat overpaid," in the view of one manufacturer, "in the longer run this may be offset by his productivity and general availability."

Labor stability is considered a key measure of workers' performance by most of the survey participants. Many give the United States high marks for comparative labor peace.

Australia, the United Kingdom and Italy are most frequently cited for strikes and other labor dissension, which drive up costs and lower productivity. Political instability in areas such as Latin America, Africa, Asia and Italy is also considered a deterrent to quality performance.

An insufficient labor force or a lack of skilled workers can cut across worker productivity and inhibit industrial growth, according to a number of the executives surveyed. Labor scarcities in Holland, Belgium, Germany and other European countries, as well as in less developed nations, are a source of worry to them.

Many respondents believe that American workers often outperform workers abroad because U.S. labor is better educated and usually better trained technically. A very high premium is also placed on supervisory skills and managerial expertise, in which domestic operations are felt to be superior.

In addition, the cost advantage of foreign labor is shrinking fast, making the U.S. more competitive. Wages and salaries in Europe, Japan and Australia have risen sharply, and some executives say that overseas labor costs there already equal or exceed American payroll expenses.

Calif. AFL-CIO News

## Consumer Price Error

An error in the calculation of the national consumer price index over the past seven months will result in a lowering of the index by one-tenth to three-tenths of a point, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced.

The CPI is used as a benchmark to determine increases in the wages and benefits of millions of American workers and retirees in both the federal and private sectors.

Nat Goldfinger, director of the AFL-CIO Dept. of Research, said it is impossible at this time to estimate how many workers under escalator clauses may be affected by the downward revision of the CPI. He said the error's effect on current agreements would have to be considered contract by contract.

"It's important that unions with escalator clauses be alert to this downward revision in the CPI," Goldfinger noted. "Some employers may attempt to put into effect retroactive reductions in their cost-of-living escalator contracts."

In its announcement, BLS said the CPI for April through October would be revised to take into account a

recently discovered error in the used car component of the index. For the past seven months, the agency indicated, it has over-estimated used car prices and in turn the overall cost of living.

"It is estimated that the correction will lower the U.S. city average all-items CPI levels by 0.1 to 0.3 index points," BLS said. "For example, the previously published index for October of 153.2 is likely to be reduced by 0.3 index points."

"While the impact of the error is small in relation to the total changes in the all-items CPI over this period," the agency noted, "BLS is issuing this statement because the CPI is used to escalate some income payments."

The error in the calculation of the national consumer price index, as compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, has not and will not affect the P.G.&E wage opener. Even with the downward adjustment of the CPI the new figure for October was still well above the 149.0 level necessary to allow for a wage reopener.

The errors were discovered before the conclusion of bargaining for the 8½% increase for 1975, which was just ratified, and were considered in the establishment of the cost of living clause figures necessary to trigger further increases if the CPI goes above 164.2 in May of 1975. See the article on page one for a complete explanation of the wage increase and the cost of living clause.

Printed below are the corrections for the CPI previously reported in the corresponding issues of the Utility Reporter:

1974	Figures used	Corrected figures
August	150.2	149.9
September	151.9	151.7
October	153.2	153.0

touching the freedom of workers." The Act held that labor organizations were not illegal combinations in restraint of trade as they had been found by the courts under the Sherman Anti-trust Act.

Landmark federal legislation also included the Railway Labor Act of 1926, the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, and President Kennedy's Executive Order No. 10988 of 1962, which opened the door for union recognition and bargaining by federal employees.

# Appointments

## Negotiating Committees

### BAY CABLEVISION NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Robert Gray

### CATV DEVELOPERS NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Russell P. Jarvis

## Negotiating Committee (Interim)

### PG&E INTERIM NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Alvin Knudsen

### PG&E AD HOC COMMITTEE ON CLERICAL HOURS

Mary Ann Agler

Barbara Symons

Eduardo Vallejo

## Ballot Committees

### PG&E BALLOT COMMITTEE

James Airheart

Robert J. Azevedo

Rayphe Brewer

Robert A. Burchfield

Alan D. Carrell

Gerald A. Cepernich

Rene Giger

Dorothy L. Hill

Arlene Koch

Jack E. Marley

J. A. Oliveira

Victor Patton

Orville H. Stovall

Robert L. Thomson

F. O. Watkins

### SOHNER TREE SERVICE, INC. BALLOT COMMITTEE

Neil T. Bickerton

Darrel L. Mitchell

David H. Reese

## LABOR COUNCIL DELEGATES

### DELEGATE TO BUTTE-GLENN CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Mark G. Burns, Jr.

## Joint Grievance Committees

### PG&E HUMBOLDT DIVISION JOINT GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

Ronald Goldsmith replacing Howard Darington

# 28 \$500 SCHOLARSHIPS AT STAKE IN STATE FED CONTEST

Graduating seniors in California's public and private high schools have a chance to win one of the 28 \$500 scholarships at stake in the California Labor Federation's 25th annual Scholarship awards program if they get their applications into the Federation's San Francisco office by **March 7, 1975**.

Application forms, which must be accompanied by a transcript of the student's high school record, may be obtained from the principal's office at high schools throughout the state.

A two-hour examination to be held in all high schools in which applicants have applied on **Tuesday, April 8** will include both objective and essay-type questions.

Brochures describing the contest and providing a suggested reading list have already been sent out to public and private high schools throughout the state.

Four of the \$500 scholarships are sponsored directly by the Federation in honor of two former executive officers of the Federation—**C.J. (Neil) Haggerty** and **Thomas L. Pitts**.

Haggerty served as executive officer of the Federation from 1943 till 1960 when he was elected President of the National AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department. He died in 1971.

Pitts succeeded Haggerty as the Federation's executive officer in 1960 and served until 1970 when he retired

due to a physical disability. He died in Sept. 1971.

The other 24 awards are co-sponsored by the following Federation affiliates:

**Joint Board, Culinary Workers, Bartenders and Hotel, Motel and Club Service Workers, San Francisco; Los Angeles Building and Construction Trades Council; Los Angeles District Council of Carpenters; Northern California District Council of Laborers; Provision House Workers Union Local 274, Los Angeles; San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council; Southern California District Council of Laborers; Southwestern States Council of Retail Clerks.**

**The Building and Construction Trades Council, Orange County; Butchers Union Local 120, Oakland; Butchers Union Local 498, Sacramento; Carpenters Ladies' Auxiliary, California State Council; California State Council of Carpenters; California State Council of Culinary Workers, Bartenders and Hotel Service Employees; California State Council of Lathers; Communication Workers of America, Southern California Council; Culinary Alliance, Local 681, Long Beach; Culinary Workers and Bartenders Union 814, Santa Monica.**

## Health's-a-poppin'

# The anonymous Assassin ... Carbon Monoxide

by Marion Wells

Research Director, American Physical Fitness Research Institute

You can't taste, smell or see it, but even now this anonymous assassin may be lurking in your home or car, ready to attack. Only a few months ago it surprised some small children sleeping in the back of a moving station wagon, killing one of them. Its identity? CARBON MONOXIDE GAS!

Carbon monoxide casualties can be PREVENTED, but unfortunately, too many of us know too little about the insidious ways this killer can strike. The following information from health and safety experts COULD SAVE YOUR FAMILY'S LIVES.

Authorities explain that carbon monoxide (CO) does its deadly work by cutting off the supply of oxygen to your body's tissues. At high enough levels, it can strike you unconscious WITHOUT WARNING. JUST A FEW MINUTES' EXPOSURE to air containing about ONE PERCENT of it will very likely kill you.

According to a National Safety Council fact sheet, "If a victim remains unconscious in the CO poisoned air for some time, the after-effects may be lasting, resulting in permanent brain damage."

The risk of harmful effects may increase with concentration in the air, length of exposure, heat, altitude, physical activity and such diseases as asthma, anemia and heart or circulatory problems.

In everyday life, the MAJOR sources of carbon monoxide poisoning include improperly adjusted gas burners and gas heaters, gas hose connections, leaky gas pipes, inadequate drafts in furnaces and coal stoves, water heaters or room heaters without proper exhaust outlets and cars running in closed garages. With colder weather upon us, make sure all heating and fuel-burning equipment, furnaces, chimneys and flues have been inspected by qualified personnel for cracks, corrosion or clogging. Generally speaking, such safety checks are recommended at least once a year. ALL HEATING SOURCES SHOULD BE VENTED TO THE OUTSIDE. As an added precaution, be sure your home is properly ventilated and some FRESH AIR circulating at all times.

Whenever you travel in a car, carbon monoxide goes with you. It's given off in automobile exhaust. To drivers, this gas poses a double hazard. Besides threatening life, "It may affect a driver so that he loses control of his moving vehicle..." Some researchers suggest that even a short exposure to a heavy concentration of carbon monoxide may continue to affect you for hours to come.

Your life may depend on recognizing warning signals of possible carbon monoxide poisoning, which may include headache; dizziness; weakness; drowsiness; nausea; accelerated respiration; throbbing in the temples; full, pounding pulse; red or bluish/red skin; and others. In night driving, if oncoming lights appear unusually bright and the darkness unusually black, the reason could be carbon monoxide.

Always have good ventilation in your car, but should one or more such symptoms occur, act IMMEDIATELY to insure FULL CROSS VENTILATION. If symptoms don't subside, pull over and get out into the fresh air. When such episodes recur or more than one person in the vehicle is similarly affected, have your car inspected PROMPTLY. Authorities urge that "CO poisoning should be considered whenever someone collapses in a car..."

NEVER leave your motor on in a closed area. Even in an open garage or when parked WITH WINDOWS DOWN, it's safer not to leave your engine running for any length of time. Leaving car trunks or the rear windows of station wagons open while driving can create a vacuum effect which sucks deadly exhaust fumes into the vehicle. Keep these openings closed. The open rear window of a moving station wagon is no place to sleep.

Have your car's exhaust system examined for holes and leaks at REGULAR INTERVALS. Exhaust fumes can leak into the passenger compartment through holes in the floor, trunk, spare tire well or fender panels.

Are you a parking-garage attendant, cabdriver, traffic policeman, automobile mechanic, janitor or bus driver? These are among occupations more likely to involve carbon monoxide exposure, and such possible effects as nausea, headache or irritability may not be traced to the true culprit. If you can, take frequent "fresh air breaks" and eliminate any AVOIDABLE exposure.

One source of CO we can all avoid is a smoke-filled room or car. Cigaretts give off considerable carbon monoxide and high concentrations can accumulate in a closed space.

A final word to the wise. Some evidence indicates that you may be more susceptible to the deadly effects of carbon monoxide if your blood alcohol level is high. After drinking you may also be less alert to the danger and more likely to fall asleep. This is just one more reason to think twice about drinking and driving.

When it comes to carbon monoxide, carelessness can COST YOU YOUR LIFE. Don't let this killer take your breath away!

Provided as a public service by the American Physical Fitness Research Institute (APFRI), 824 Moraga Drive, West Los Angeles, Calif. 90049.

**State Building and Construction Trades Council of California; United Cannery and Industrial Workers of the Pacific, Wilmington; United Transportation Union, California State Legislative Board; Western Federation of Butchers; and two scholarships sponsored by the California Federation of Teachers.**

The scholarships are not limited only to those interested in a career in organized labor but may be used by

students to pursue any field of knowledge.

The scholarship funds will be deposited in any accredited college or university designated by the winners.

Further information may be obtained by writing to: **Scholarship Contest, Attn: Albin J. Gruhn, President, California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, 995 Market Street, San Francisco, California 94103.**

# The Safety Scene

## Administrative Interpretation of High Voltage Electrical Safety Order 2942(b)

### ADMINISTRATIVE INTERPRETATION NO. 53

#### SUBJECT:

Cleaning Insulators on High Voltage Transmission Lines

#### REFERENCE:

High Voltage Electrical Safety Order 2942(b)

#### BACKGROUND:

Suspension strings of insulators on high voltage transmission lines are being climbed on by linemen during the procedure of wiping or cleaning contaminated insulator surfaces. After climbing down the insulator string, the lineman often either stands or sits on the conductor at the lower end of the insulator strings, while cleaning the insulators. This procedure is used in lieu of aerial lift equipment, portable platforms or ladders. On some lines, there is a corona ring or shield at the top and bottom of the suspension string which makes it difficult for the lineman to get onto the insulator string.

On dead end insulator strings, the insulators are in line with the conductor, and often there are two parallel strings. A rope loop is tossed over the far end of this string, and the lineman sits on this rope and makes his way out to the end so he can clean the insulators.

#### INTERPRETIVE DECISION:

High Voltage Electrical Safety Order 2942(b) provides that the employer shall furnish suitable aerial lift equipment, portable platforms, or other devices to permit employees to work on insulators attached to poles, towers or structures when such insulators are not otherwise safely accessible. The phrase, other devices, would permit the use of a ladder to gain access to the insulators.

Climbing on the insulators does not provide the safe access required by this Order.

#### BY:

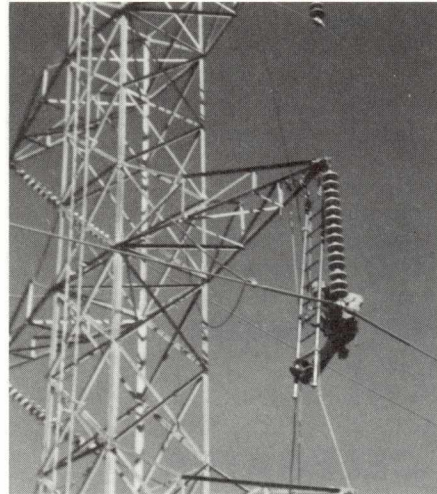
E. E. Carlton, Principal Safety Engineer  
Electrical Unit, E, E & R Staff

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 26, 1974

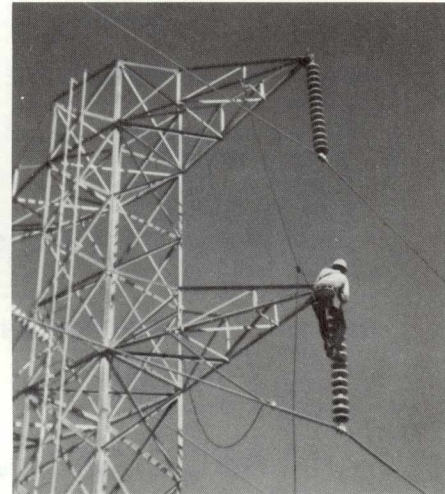
I wish to thank you for your interest, time and patience in this matter and sincerely hope that you will continue to work with the Division in the preparation of safety orders relating to work procedures.

Very truly yours,

R. Wilkins  
Chief



RIGHT WAY



WRONG WAY



This photo shows Gary Mai, right, shop steward and negotiating committee member, as he presents Donald L. Seibel with the I.B.E.W. Life Saving Award.

Brother Seibel received the award for his activities on Friday, February 8, 1974 at approximately 2:30 p.m. when City of Lodi Utilities Supervisor Clinton Faul was nearly electrocuted while working in an underground vault when he accidentally touched a 12,000 volt power cable.

Lineman Donald L. Seibel who was nearby quickly applied mouth-to-mouth resuscitation along with heart massage applied by Lineman Robert Butler. When they saw their efforts were successful an ambulance was sent for. This accident occurred in Lodi, California.

The above interpretive decision is a result of many months of investigations, meetings, correspondence and contracts with State agencies, other local unions and employer groups in the country.

The decision is an answer to a request by Business Manager L. L. Mitchell on August 29, 1973 for interpretation of Rule 2942(b), Access to Insulators. The question arose as a result of a three day layoff given to a Lineman in Company's Coast Valley Division as disciplinary action for refusing to climb down a string of 230 KV insulators in order to wipe them, in lieu of using an approved ladder.

December 5, 1974

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
Local Union 1245  
Box 4790  
Walnut Creek, California 94596

ATTN: L. L. Mitchell, Business Manager

Gentlemen:

This will acknowledge your letter of August 29, 1973, regarding the work practices employed by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company in the maintenance of insulator strings installed on high voltage transmission towers.

As you know, representatives of your organization, Pacific Gas and Electric, and the Division met to observe a demonstration of insulator wiping practices taught at the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Kettleman City training facility. In addition, representatives of your office have met in San Francisco with either Mr. George Sherman or Mr. Edward Brubaker who substituted for Mr. Sherman in his absence. The Division has also had several internal meetings with staff engineering personnel who have wide experience and background in the area of electrical work practices and procedures. The staff finally concluded that in light of the broad context in which High Voltage Electrical Safety Order (HV-ESO) 2942(b) was written that a clarification of its application was in order. Therefore, an Administrative Interpretation has been prepared and is included for your file.