PUC Eliminates PG&E Employee Utility Bill Discount

In a decision delivered on September 6, the Public Utilities Commission ruled that PG&E must end its 70 year practice of granting utility bill discounts to employees of utility companies nationwide customarily receive discounts on their home gas and electric bills as a fringe benefit. The Commission ended this practice at PG&E because it created the potential incentive to maintain traditional (energy) usage patterns and encouraged energy waste.

Statements in the body of the Commission's decision, however, seem inconsistent with its conclusion. The PUC found "that energy consumption of PG&E employees on the average approximates that of non-employees" and that there was "no evidence in this record that discounts discourage conservation".

The decision came on a 3-2 vote, with Commissioners Sturgeon and Symons voting to retain the discount and Commissioners Dedrick, Gravelle, and Batinovich voting to eliminate it. The employee discount was one of several issues decided by the PUC in the course of approving a PG&E rate increase.

The decision represents the first known instance of the Commission regulating how a utility may pay its employees. Issues relating to wages and fringe benefits are normally decided jointly by an employer and a union through the process of collective bargaining. For example, the employee discount has been a part of the union contract since 1943. The Union believes that the PUC has overstepped its authority and is interfering with federally protected labor-management relations.

Efforts to reverse the decision are now in progress. Union attorneys have filed a request for a rehearing of the issue. If the PUC denies the request or refuses to change its position after a rehearing, the Union will litigate the issue before the California Supreme Court, and if necessary will take the case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Members are urged to continue signing petitions and writing to the Commissioners. Since the Commissioners who opposed the discount are appointees of Governor Brown, letters to the Governor would also be helpful.

Hundreds Protest in San Francisco

Over 300 IBEW members gathered September 22nd at the Public Utilities Commission offices to protest the PUC decision ending the PG&E employee discount. The spirited group, which had participants from nearly all PG&E divisions, marched in front of the building and listened to speeches condemning the Commission's action. Speaking first was Business Manager Dean Cofer, who stated that the discount was a benefit guaranteed by the contract and that the PUC was interfering in federally protected labor-management relations. He promised that the Union would go to the Supreme Court if necessary to win back the discount.

Following Cofer was Jack Henning, Executive Secretary of the California Labor Federation. Henning criticized the logic of the PUC Decision, which said the discount was being eliminated to save energy even though there was no evidence that discounts discourage conservation. He cited the decision as another example of extreme environmentalism hurting the interests of working people. Henning pledged the support of the 1.7 million member Federation in regaining the discount.

The size and enthusiasm of the audience emphasized the concern felt by the membership over the loss of the discount. They handed leaflets out to the public and carried signs in a picket line that stretched across an entire block. Many members took the day off without pay or used a day of vacation and traveled long distances to attend the rally.

Leaders of Bay Area central labor councils also turned out to demonstrate their opposition to the PUC decision.

1979 I.B.E.W. Founders' Scholarship Application Now Being Accepted

Local 1245 proudly announces that the IBEW Founders' Scholarship Program for 1979 is now accepting applications for scholarship candidates. Up to twelve scholarships are open to IBEW members who have been in continuous good standing for at least four (4) years by the time they begin college study or original members of a local union chartered less than four (4) years. It is further required, where applicable, that apprentices shall have completed a full, formal apprenticeship as established in their trade and area. The Founders' Scholarship Program is an adult program for qualified IBEW members. It is not open to sons and daughters of members, unless the sons and daughters themselves are qualified.

Rules and other important information regarding the scholarship program are available upon request. Please direct all such requests and inquiries to the Scholarship Administrator at the IBEW's International Office, 1125 — 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Please note that all application forms, student records, and other required materials must be received by the Selection Committee by January 31, 1979.

Editor's note: This scholarship program is sponsored by the International Office of the IBEW. Please do not confuse it with our Local 1245 Scholarship Program, for which applications and information will be available in 1979.
American manufacturers who place profits before people have found another reason to exploit cheap labor overseas.

Confronted with strict health and safety codes in the United States, manufacturers of toxic substances have found it cheaper to endanger the lives of workers abroad than to build safe plants at home.

When the Environmental Protection Agency in 1974 restricted the use of two highly toxic pesticides in the U.S., Shell Chemical Co. shifted production to the Royal Dutch Shell plant in Holland. From there the company continued shipping the pesticides to Brazil, where they have been linked to the poisoning deaths of 15 children.

Again in 1976 when EPA banned the sale of Phosvel in the U.S., the Veliscol Chemical Co. closed its Chicago operations and moved to Japan.

Another major U.S. firm has taken its asbestos textile manufacturing opera-
tion across the Mexican border, where cancer-causing fibers endanger the population without government interference.

Similarly, zinc smelters have been taking their operations to other parts of the world rather than design environmentally sound facilities in the U.S.

Arsenic plants have been moved to Mexico and benzidine dyes are being manufactured in India, Poland, Romania and South Korea where labor is cheap and health and safety laws nonexistent.

American jobs are being traded away for foreign lives in South Korea, Chile, Brazil, India, Iran, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Venezuela, Taiwan, Mexico, Spain, Japan and Indonesia.

Foreign workers are being exposed to unsafe levels of zinc, benzene, asbestos, vinyl chloride and pesticides.

This latest version of the runaway shop is also contributing to increased unemployment in the U.S., as well as creating a larger balance of trade deficit.

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A record return on investments

Corporate profits fuel inflationary surge

The tire and rubber industry showed a 40 percent profit hike and aircraft company profits increased 33 percent.

Electric and electronic equipment makers showed a 170 percent increase in earnings and non-electrical machinery had a 88.4 percent profit boost.

Profit margins on sales have been increasing because prices have been rising faster than labor costs, labor economists point out.

Profit margins for the last two years were the highest recorded since 1968.

All non-financial corporations enjoyed a 54 percent earnings boost from 1970 to 1977, the Commerce Department reports.

Besides enjoying increased profits, corporations are boasting a record return on investments. Conservative estimates show that the return to investors was as high or higher last year than in 14 of the past 25 years.

Accompanying the increase in profits and prices have been increased executive salaries. Chief executives of International Harvester, American Broadcasting Co. and Gulf Oil earned more than a million dollars apiece last year.

Overall, executives gave themselves a 12.4 percent raise last year, compared to the 7.6 percent hourly wage increase allotted their production workers.

The rapid hike in profits has also yielded large dividend payments to corporation stockholders. Dividends increased to $41 billion in 1977, a 15 percent increase over 1975.

After paying their stock dividends and investors, corporations have still retained record profits.

Housing costs outpace incomes

The costs of buying and maintaining a home are increasing much faster than the average family income, recent figures show.

Homeowners are paying more for financing, land and land development than for the actual construction of the home, industry representatives admit.

Between 1949 and 1977, financing costs rose from 5 percent to 11 percent of the final sale price and land costs jumped from 11 percent to 25 percent of the home's price tag.

In addition, interest costs soared 150 percent from 1970 to 1974.

While construction costs have fallen from 69 percent to 56 percent of the price of a new home, nonfixed costs of home operation continue to soar.

Real estate taxes alone have increased at an annual rate of 13 percent from 1970 to 1976. Heat, utility and insurance costs rose 12 percent annually and mortgage rates are expected to reach 10 percent or more by the end of the year.

All of these factors have contributed to the final price of new and old homes alike, forcing consumers to choose between spending more than they can afford or paying more money for less space than they need.

The medium sale price of a new home increased 144 percent from 1965 to 1977, while the consumer price index for the same period rose 92 percent.

Existing homes cost 130 percent more this year than in 1968. Today, 36 percent of the family income is needed to keep up the home, while only 28 percent was required in 1965.

As costs seem to outpace income, housing experts are predicting that more consumers will opt for apartments, condominiums, clustered houses and other forms of land-conserving shelter.

Many industry analysts already note the trend toward bigger homes and extra family rooms, bathrooms and air conditioning has slowed down as the costs of these items has grown in recent years.
in a surprise ruling issued on Septem-
ber 25, 1978, the California Public Utilities
Commission moved to eliminate the
PG&E employee discount on utility gas
and electric bills. The Local Union mem-
bership is presently engaged in a letter
writing campaign and petition drive to
reverse the PUC's irresponsible ruling.
By the time this issue of the Utility Re-
porter reaches the field we will have
already held our protest rally at the PUC
Building in San Francisco. I am confi-
dent that the rally will attract a large
number of participants. Brother Jack
Hennig, Executive Secretary of the
California Labor Federation, will be a
guest speaker at the rally along with a
number of other distinguished labor
leaders and legislators.
In addition to being contrary to
Federal labor statutes that protect the
discount as a subject of collective
bargaining, the Commission's ruling to
eliminate the discount, over the next five
years, is illogical and asinine. Your
Local Union immediately filed a formal
request for a public rehearing. If the
PUC denies the rehearing, or in the
event they refuse to reverse their deci-
sion, the Local Union will proceed to
litigate the issue before the California
State Supreme Court, and if it becomes
necessary, the case will be taken on to
the U.S. Supreme Court.
Keep up the pressure. If you haven't
written the PUC protesting their action
yet, please do so now. Make sure that
you, your family, friends and neighbors
sign the petitions being circulated by
your Shop Stewards.
All of you have undoubtedly heard of
the small fish (approximately the size
of a ten cent piece) that is threatening to
stop the construction of a huge dam in
California also have our own version
of a multi-million dollar project, is called
the Harvest Mouse. Do you have any
idea what the Harvest Mouse is? Let's try
to develop a case for the Harvest Mouse
differ from your common, everyday
field mouse? Professional mouse
watchers indicate that the only
difference is that the Harvest Mouse has
an orange belly and eats pickleweed
which gives it a high tolerance for salt.
But, like the tiny Snail Darter, the Har-
vest Mouse (with the help of bleeding-
heart, no-growth environmentalists) has
the uncanny strength to halt construc-
tion of projects that are vital to the public
interest.
The recent Public Utilities Commissi-
on's decision, and the case of the Har-
vest Mouse, are both good examples as
to why your Local Union is, and must be,
included in politics and in labor-manage-
ment coalitions. What we achieve at
the bargaining table, and/or our future
job security, can be taken away from us
by the politicians in Sacramento or
Washington, D.C., with the stroke of a
pen. Likewise, the no-growth environ-
mentalists would, if given their way,
deny the utility industry the expansion
and construction ability so vital to our
jobs and the future of California. This
is why, as a Local Union, get involved in
politics and labor-management coal-
itions. We, as working men and women,
must support candidates for political
office that are friendly to labor and labor's
goals. In my opinion the labor movement
has been at an ineffective it could be,
or should be, in the area of political in-
volve. It is not enough to support
elect and individuals who profess to
support labor, unless we follow up and
remove them from office if they double-
cross us (as many labor supported politi-
cians have done in the past). We must
support those politicians who support labor, but more importantly,
we have to know and remember our
enemies and see to it that they are not
elected or re-elected to public office.

PG&E

Cited for Asbestos Violations

Arthur Carter, Chief of the State Divi-
sion of Occupational Safety and Health
(DOSH), said that his staff investigation
disclosed a serious health hazard to
workers at the plant, due to asbestos
debris and scrap from pipe lagging and
insulation. He said the hazard justified
citing PG&E for a serious violation of
Section 5208 (c) of the General Industry
Safety Orders (GISO) which requires that
asbestos spills must be cleaned up
promptly. The company was also cited,
under GISO section 5208 (i) which re-
quires that caution labels be affixed to
containers of asbestos.
A penalty totalling $1,000 was
assessed against PG&E for the serious
violation.

In answering the complaints, DOSH
hygienists inspected the workplace and
found excessive amounts of asbestos
debris and waste. Carter said PG&E has
agreed to eliminate the asbestos debris
and scrap while maintaining medical
monitoring of employees who may have
been exposed.

DOSH hygienist Douglas Krause, who
conducted the investigation, said PG&E
has cooperated fully in correcting the
conditions alleged in the employees' complaints.

DOSH is a unit of California Occupa-
tional Safety and Health Program
(CAL/OSHA) in the State Department
of Industrial Relations, directed by Donald
Vial.

Utility Reporter—September, 1978—Page Three
State Council Adopts Affirmative Action for Women in Apprenticeship

The California Apprenticeship Council approved changes in the California Plan for Equal Opportunity in Apprenticeship on Thursday, September 14 in San Francisco following six hours of public testimony on the plan.

The council unanimously approved the plan which was rewritten in order to comply with new U.S. Department of Labor regulations concerned with women in apprenticeship.

The plan includes goals, timetables and outreach programs that state-approved apprenticeship programs must implement in order to increase the number of women in these programs. Similar guidelines are already in effect for minorities.

Views on the plan were generally divided between the sexes. Of the approximately 30 people from throughout the state who came to address the plan, 14 men generally opposed it or parts of it.

Women who attended the hearing unanimously favored it although some did express objections to certain elements of it.

Susie Suafi of the Women in Apprenticeship Program, Inc. of San Francisco, favored the plan but suggested to the 14-member council that the state should set guidelines on the selection of pre-apprenticeship programs. She also pointed out a provision in the plan where it "may go against Bakke." That provision is concerned with the awarding of special credits or points for those who have completed a pre-apprenticeship program.

Men representing several trade organizations generally expressed fears that women would drive men out of the labor market. Also voiced were the traditional arguments that women could not handle certain jobs such as cement work because of the strength required.

Comments were met with boos and hisses by the women in attendance.

Councilperson Donald Vial cited figures early in the meeting that showed just where women were in the apprenticeship trades in the state. In December, 1975 there were 300 women in 59 trades which was about 1 percent of the total number of apprentices, he said.

In July 1978 there were 980 women apprentices in 101 trades of 2.7 percent enrollment.

"While these figures show a definite progress, they indicated we have a long way to go," proclaimed Vial.

President Carter meets in the Cabinet Room of the White House with trade union editors, members of the International Labor Press Association's executive council, for a pre-Labor Day news conference. I.B.E.W., Local 1245 member Kenneth O. Lohre (5th from Carter's right) was among the group which questioned Carter on legislative and social issues of particular concern to Labor. "Ken, former editor of the UTILITY REPORTER, currently serves on the ILPA Executive Council, is president of the Western Labor Press Association and associate editor of the EAST BAY LABOR JOURNAL, published by the Alameda Central Labor Council. Local Union 1245 is extremely proud of our members in the news and congratulates Brother Lohre for his contributions to the labor movement.

Sunne McPeak was the top vote-getter in the June primary election, besting the incumbent Supervisor and three other challengers for the District 4 Supervisoral seat. Mrs. McPeak received 41% of the votes cast and faces the incumbent Supervisor in a November run-off election.

I.B.E.W., Local 1245 is one of many labor unions to have endorsed Sunne McPeak's candidacy during the primary election period. Other unions that have endorsed Mrs. McPeak include: Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers, Local 1-5; Retail Clerks, Local 1179; Teamsters, Local 315; Communication Workers of America, Local 9402; International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 1230; Service Employees International Union, Local 535; and Steelworkers of America, Sub-District 3.

"The support I received from labor unions was a key factor in my success at the polls in the June primary," according to Sunne McPeak. "By working with union members and making effective use of their help in my run-off campaign, I know we can win by a comfortable margin in November," states Mrs. McPeak.

Recording Secretary Kathy Tindall was recently accepted into membership of the Anne Martin Chapter of the National Women's Political Caucus in Nevada.

Women and Credit Histories

In the past, credit accounts for a married couple were often listed only under the husband's name. If a woman was widowed, divorced, or simply wanted credit in her own name, she had no credit history to show her reliability for making payments. Many women have been denied credit because they could not prove their ability to handle credit.

Congress passed two federal laws that help women solve their credit history problems:

* The Equal Credit Opportunity Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex or marital status in any aspect of a credit transaction.

* The Fair Credit Reporting Act protects consumer privacy and makes certain that a credit bureau will accurately report a person's credit history.

What can you do to assure that you have an accurate credit history on file?

* If you have credit accounts now, make certain that the histories of these accounts shared by you and your husband are reported in both names.

* If you open a new account, start building a good record by opening an account with a local store or service.

* If you have credit accounts now, make certain that the histories of these accounts shared by you and your husband are reported in both names.

* If you open a new account, make sure you indicate on the application whether or not you want to share the account with your husband. (If you do, the creditor will report information in both names, not just your husband's.)

* If you changed your name, ask your creditors to change your name on all your accounts, also.

Next, check with the credit bureau to make sure you do have your own credit history and that it is accurate.

What can you do if you think you have been unfairly denied credit?

* Request the specific reason that your application was turned down. If it was rejected because of a credit bureau report, ask the name of the credit bureau.

* Give the merchant any information that your

* * *

To find out what information they reported about you, if you do this within 30 days after their credit report was used to deny your application, you will avoid paying a service fee for this information.

* Ask the credit bureau to reinvestigate the information they have about you, if you believe it is inaccurate. Have them put the results of their reinvestigation into your file.

* Report any unfair or discriminatory practices to your local and state consumer protection agencies. Please send a copy of your complaint to the FTC. Your letter may help reveal a pattern of discrimination requiring action by the Commission.

For more information about your rights to your credit history and to fair credit reports about that history, just write to: Credit Histories, Division of Credit Practices, BCP, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, D.C. 20580.
Transmission line job in the Cottonwood area. The footings will start to go in within a week. This is about a six mile job.

Cottonwood teams working as dock crews for Sierra Pacific's cross state high voltage line which was awarded to Tri-O Electric, Inc. is now in full swing. We have about 40 men on the job at the present time. We will be building a high voltage line which will be a 62-mile portion and it is expected that it will be put out to bid in the near future and up this number in the near future and underwway. We have four men on the job now and one of them is employed by Sierra Pacific Power Company in the Reno/Carson areas.

Crater Electric was awarded a six mile wood pole transmission line job for Plumas-Sierra in Portola. This job is now underway. We have four men on the job at the present time. We will be building up this number in the near future and hope to get this line complete before the snow flies.

The Melones switchyard job and the Sierra Pacific Power Company's cross state high voltage line which was awarded to Tri-O Electric, Inc. is now in full swing. We have about 40 men on the job at the present time. We will be building up this number in the near future and hope to get this line complete before the snow flies.

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Hundreds of Local 1245 Members

Utility Reporter—September, 1976—Page Six
members Rally in San Francisco

PUC
REVERSE YOUR DECISION
Brother Larry J. Grubert was presented an I.B.E.W. Certificate of Recognition for his part in the incident which is described below.

On April 30, 1977, Brother Larry Grubert and a friend, Larry Friberg, were leaving Van Damme State Park Beach when they heard cries for help from two divers in the nearby water. Upon answering their call, Grubert and his friend found one diver unconscious and the other attempting to save his companion. After the unconscious diver was pulled into the boat Mr. Grubert began external cardiac compression while Friberg began mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. They continued their efforts until the diver was taken to Mendocino Coast Hospital, where, despite their efforts the diver did not survive.

Local 1245 commends Brother Grubert for his quick and knowledgeable response in a crucial situation.

On November 23, 1977, Brothers Wells, Connolly and Maxey were sent to Redding to help repair some lines that were out due to storm damage. Brother Connolly climbed the pole to let the line down so it could be repaired when it contacted the 12KV line, causing a "flash". Mr. Connolly received about 7200 volt shock, knocking him upside down and unconscious. Jerry Maxey was the first to reach Brother Connolly and he straightened him up and got him to start breathing. By this time Buck McDowell had joined them on top of the pole. Together Brothers McDowell and Maxey, along with Brother Lee Wells who was handling the hand line on the ground, worked to lower Brother Connolly to the ground.

Local 1245 cannot praise the actions of these men enough. Their quick and professional response to a crisis situation will long be remembered and appreciated by Brother Connolly and the Union.

GC Line Crew

Shop Steward Jerry Johnson and all Union PG&E General Construction Line Crew take a photo break. They were in the process of installing a 21KV for change over from 12KV when Business Representative Mickey Harrington visited the job site.

S.F. Electric Crew

Shop Steward Hector Hernandez and crew members Howard Williams, Ron Toso and Lance Lott are shown above. They were working in the San Francisco area when Business Representative Frank Quadros visited the job site.
RCA Service Company. The first bargaining sessions began on August 1 and 2. Good progress was made. The negotiating committees met again on September 15. The Company had prepared a full proposal. Bargaining was completed and the membership received approximately a 12 percent increase. However, we received the news that the tracking station in Ely, Nevada most likely will be closed by March 31, 1979. Thanks and appreciation to the negotiators coming next year.

Jack Lynch — Ely Telephone Group. We incorrectly reported this as the Elko Group in last month’s Nevada News. CP National - Winnemucca membership rejected the Company’s original proposal. They voted again and ratified Company’s proposal on September 18. They were open for wages only and received a 7 percent increase.

Jack Lynch — Winnemucca. We incorrectly reported this as the Elko Group in last month’s Nevada News. CP National - Winnemucca membership rejected the Company’s proposed contract, Union contacted the Federal Mediation Service to get help in settling this Agreement. The Union’s committee and Federal Mediator Sherm Warady met in Reno. There were five issues open. We were able to resolve four, and were at an impasse on the fifth. Commissioner Warady adjourned the negotiating session and placed us on an on-call basis. He requested Ron Janess and Frank Anderson as Company spokesmen and myself as Union’s spokesman to attend the meeting on September 11 where we hammered out the final issue that was holding up settlement. The membership overwhelmingly ratified on September 15. Many thanks must go to Union’s hard working committee of Janet Petersen, John Petersen, Ray Paoli and Barney Guzenski. We also appreciate the time and efforts of Commissioner Warady.

CP National — South Lake Tahoe — Gas. This Agreement has been reached and has been ratified by the membership. A very successful Shop Stewards Meeting was held in Reno on September 16. We had members in attendance from CP National - Telephone and Power Groups in Elko, Mt. Wheeler Power, Sierra Pacific Power, and a number of the ladies who work for Lynch Communications.

A couple of special Stewards meetings will be scheduled in the near future to acquaint the new Stewards in the Elko Telephone Group with their new Agreement. A meeting in Elko, Nevada.

Pat Watson (left) and Lin Welch sign the roster at the CP National Telephone Ratification meeting in Elko, Nevada.

Guest Editorial

By Bayard Rustin

Confusion rather than accurate information is the product of most modern advertising, if you plan to market a non-nutritious breakfast cereal, you simply emphasize that each morsel is sugar-coated, shaped like personal zodiac signs and enjoyed world-wide by Olympic athletes. By stressing these inconsequential points, attention is cleverly diverted from the most pertinent fact — the cereal is worthless junk.

Just as corporations have successfully marketed junk foods, junk cars, and other junk products, some business-supported groups are now selling junk political ideas. Foremost among these Cracker Jack proposals are the so-called “right-to-work” laws. The original political junk food.

While appearing to offer job security and full employment, “right-to-work” laws offer neither. Instead, they are intentionally designed to weaken unions, lower wages, and keep workers in their place. All this is accomplished by imposing a compulsory “open shop,” even when a majority of workers democratically opt for union representation.

Essentially, the open shop arrangement — favored by employers since trade unions emerged over a century ago — allows a few workers — the free riders — to enjoy all the benefits of collective bargaining without paying a cent toward the upkeep of their union. Such an unfair system necessarily militates against the development of strong unions, and provides the employer with numerous advantages.

By deliberately and repeatedly confusing the issues, “right-to-work” forces have scored some key victories during the last two years. In Arkansas, for instance, they successfully blocked a spirited attempt to repeal that state’s compulsory open shop law. And in Louisiana, the proposed legislation outlawed all forms of union security clauses. Now, the business-supported National Right-to-Work Committee has opened shop in Missouri with the hope of selling its sugar-coated, but hazardous proposals. Fortunately, many key black leaders in Missouri and across the country fully understand that a victory for “right-to-work” could very well spell disaster for the black community, economically as well as politically.

For black people, the economic consequences are especially clear. As numerous studies have shown, black union members earn substantially more than non-union blacks. In 1974, for example, the median weekly income of black union members was $169, while non-union blacks received only $124 — a difference of more than a third. By weakening unions through compulsory open shop laws, the economic security of thousands upon thousands of black union members will be jeopardized.

To sweeten the bitter economic impact of “right-to-work” laws, their leading proponents assert that “union free” states and localities quickly attract business investment which creates more jobs. The facts, however, tell a different story. A few years ago, the former Governor of Kansas — one of 20 “right-to-work” states — claimed that such laws actually discourage industrial development. Furthermore Professor Daniel H. Pollitt of the University of North Carolina concluded that a variety of studies “indicate that right-to-work states have not received more than their proportionate share of a new industry, and that the enactment of right-to-work laws is in no way responsible for the increase in non-farm employment.”

While business groups supporting “right-to-work” efforts claim to be solely concerned with protecting the freedom of their employees, they are, in reality seeking to protect their own freedom — to fire workers at will, to pay low wages, and to keep fringe benefits minimal. Moreover, they also seek to neutralize labor as a political force by weakening unions in the shops.

At the political level, then, “right-to-work” is also a challenge to the black community. If these deceptive proposals — favorites of the New Right — win approval in Missouri or any other state we can expect a lengthy parade of other conservative measures, such as cuts in school budgets, reductions in desperately needed social services, and “tax reforms” that aid the rich. In short, another “right-to-work” victory, especially this year, will further encourage the peddlers of political junk food.
The 31st I.B.E.W. International Convention, scheduled to begin October 2, 1978, is just around the corner.

Your delegation, elected June 17, 1978, is composed of the following persons:

- Peggy Babbage
- Hank Lucas
- Nannette Brownlee
- Manny Mederos
- Madeline Cherry
- L. L. Mitchell
- Dorothy Fortier
- Frank Quadros
- Mickey Harrington
- Lee Thomas
- Red Henneberry
- Kathy Tindall

In addition to the delegates shown above, Business Manager Dean Cofer and President Ron Fitzsimmons will serve, by virtue of their office, as delegates representing Local Union 1245 at the Convention.

Your delegation, headed by Business Manager Dean Cofer and President Ron Fitzsimmons, has been instructed by the membership to support the following actions at the Convention:

- Resolution asking the I.B.E.W. to endorse and support passage of the Equal Rights Amendment;
- Resolution seeking the creation of a Women’s Affairs Committee;
- Resolution seeking a Constitutional Amendment substituting Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure for Roberts Rules of Order; and
- Executive Board Action (Item 639 of the May Report) instructing delegates to oppose any increase in per capita payments to the International.

Resolutions submitted by other I.B.E.W. Local Unions will also be acted upon at the Convention. Those Resolutions will be distributed to each delegate with recommendations from the Resolutions and Law Committees at the Convention’s opening session on October 2.

On August 11, 1978 a pre-convention meeting was held at Local Union Headquarters and another will be held October 1 in Atlantic City. The purpose of these and other scheduled private meetings for Local Union 1245 delegates are to determine the impact of proposed resolutions on our membership.

As stated by International Secretary Ralph A. Leigon, “Those are challenging and significant years for I.B.E.W. members and their two nations, the United States and Canada.” Local 1245 delegates are charged with a great responsibility.

Your delegates are shown below:
What’s That Ringing In Your Ears?

by Marion Wells
Research Director, American Physical Fitness Research Institute

Doctors think Beethoven probably heard it, but it wasn’t music to his ears. Now there may be new help for the millions plagued with a problem—"as old as hearing itself." What is it? It’s head noise, ringing in the ears, or in medical terms, tinnitus. In two studies at the Ear Research Institute in Los Angeles, patients, whose tinnitus did not improve with standard treatments, were taught to control expansion (dilation) of blood vessels through biofeedback means. They were also taught to relax the tension of the muscles around the ears through the use of relaxation exercises. Some three fourths of those taking part reported some improvement. One in ten said their head noise disappeared completely.

Why can biofeedback help? Project director John House, M.D., believes it’s because "...tinnitus seems to be made worse with emotional tension or any physical stress." Reducing such factors may bring a degree of relief. Other things may also help head noise sufferers. First on the list is a good medical checkup.

That’s because tinnitus is a symptom with many possible causes. It’s produced when something irritates the hearing (auditory) nerve, whose function is to carry sound.

Possible causes of such irritation vary from ear blockage due to foreign bodies, wax or swelling to problems stemming from allergy, injury, infection, circulatory disturbances or systemic disease. Irritation may occur in any of several places: the outer, middle or inner ear, the nerve pathways or the brain.

Experts reassure us that head noise, in itself, won’t make you lose either your hearing or your mind. Nor does it automatically mean you’re going deaf.

Tinnitus "...may or may not be associated with hearing impairment," notes the Otologic Medical Group. But at times hearing may be temporarily affected when head noise is present. Tinnitus may be constant or may come and go. It may be "...mild or severe in intensity, and vary from a low roar to a high-pitched type of sound."

When a careful examination uncovers the cause, treatment may bring total or partial relief. In some cases, no significant medical reason for tinnitus can be found. If yours is one, the Otologic Medical Group has some suggestions which may ease your problem.

1. Make every effort to get enough rest and not get yourself overtired.
2. Try to reduce anxiety and tension.
3. The use of nerve stimulants is to be avoided. Therefore, excessive amounts of coffee (caffeine) and smoking (nicotine) should be avoided." Follow your doctor’s guidance.
4. Lessening head noise generally becomes more noticeable in quiet surroundings, such as when you go to bed. Other noise can help mask it and reduce annoyance. An automatic radio or loud ticking clock may help. "Noise makers" can also be purchased for this purpose.

There are ways to tone down the distress head noise causes, even though it may never be music to our ears.

Workplace Noise

OSHA regulations require your employer to limit noise exposure to 90 "decibels", or dB(A), averaged over an eight-hour period. There are shorter time limits for higher noise levels. For example, a worker may be exposed to 95 dB(A) for only four hours, 100 DB(A) for two hours, 105 for one hour, and 115 for fifteen minutes or less. Measurements must be made under normal working conditions.

If noise exposure is above these levels, your employer must use "engineering" or "administrative" controls — changing work processes, procedures, or design — in order to comply with the law. While such controls are being implemented, you must be provided with personal protective equipment — such as earmuffs or plugs — to protect your hearing. If the ear protection equipment is not comfortable, tell your employer.

If sound levels are above the OSHA limits, your employer must have a "continuous effective hearing conservation program", which may include hearing tests and periodic monitoring of noise levels.

If you want more details about OSHA’s noise regulations, or if you think an inspection of your workplace may be necessary, contact the Local Union Office.

One of the problems associated with noise exposure is a condition known as tinnitus. Tinnitus is defined as a noise in the ears, as ringing, buzzing, roaring, clicking, etc. If you suffer from this problem, there may be help for you according to Marion Wells, Research Director, American Physical Fitness Research Institute.

Davey Tree Employee Killed

Brother Raymond Manjares, a 29 year old tree trimmer employed by Davey Tree Company, was fatally injured on August 28, 1978. Brother Manjares was trimming a pine tree out of a 21KV line when the accident occurred. A more complete report will follow, pending the Santa Cruz coroner’s report.

Everyone must wear a hard hat including supervisors. To be on the safe side, even bystanders should wear a hard hat!

Fraternally, 
Frank Bealle

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