

UTILITY REPORTER

NRC SET TO WEAKEN
PROTECTIONS FOR
NUCLEAR WORKERS — PG 6



Customer Service Representative Nancy O'Dell handles walk-in traffic at Sierra Pacific's Reno office. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)

Changes challenge Sierra Pacific reps

Customer service representatives at Sierra Pacific Power Co. are working hard to make sure that customers don't fall between the cracks as the company struggles through a protracted period of management changes and corporate reorganization.

Don't think that it's been easy.

Since last November, customer service reps in Sierra Pacific's Reno office have worked under two different supervisors and two different managers. That has meant adapting to abrupt changes in management style, according to Gretchen Djukanovich,

See PAGE 8

Training, compensation are part of package

PG&E, union agree on commercial driver's licenses

Local 1245 and Pacific Gas & Electric have reached agreement on how to meet new state requirements concerning commercial driver's licenses.

Because California has increased the number of vehicles that can be operated only by persons carrying commercial licenses, many union members found they were no longer legally qualified under the new requirements to drive the vehicles they had been driving all along. In the new letter agreement, the company and the union agreed on a method for employees to volunteer for commercial license training and on a formula for compensating employees who hold the licenses.

The agreement "provides additional income for employees to carry commercial driver's licenses," said Local 1245 Asst. Business Manager Roger Stalcup, "but does not build it into the job definition."

At each headquarters, the company will designate enough non-entry level positions to be able to operate all available equipment requiring a commercial driver's

license. This number will generally be 125 percent of the number of pieces of equipment requiring a commercial license to operate.

The company will then solicit "bids" from all non-beginning level employees in the department who are qualified by possession of a Class "A" license. Awards to qualified bidders will be in order of those employees with the greatest service, without regard to classification.

Successful bidders with a weekly base rate of \$715 or greater will receive a lump sum annual premium of \$600. Employees with a weekly base rate less than \$715 will receive a lump sum annual premium of \$500.

In addition to this pool of drivers, employees who generally work on crews will also be entitled to obtain a commercial driver's license at company expense. If these employees are asked to use

their commercial licenses, as in the case of a temporary upgrade, they will be paid a daily premium of \$2.50 if their weekly base rate is \$715 or greater, or \$2.00 if below \$715.

Members wanting more details on the commercial license agreement should contact their business representative. Those interested in positions requiring the commercial license should obtain a commercial driver's license as soon as possible.



Trade unionists from Hungary's new labor movement visited Local 1245 and this power station in Pittsburg during a June tour of the US. Story on page 4. (Photo: Ed Caruso)



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CALENDAR

July 14 - Outside Line Shop Steward Conference-San Bernardino

Aug. 11 - East Bay Shop Steward Conference-Walnut Creek

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WIPA



HUGHES CREW

Outside Line members were at work this spring for R. C. Hughes, performing modifications to Southern California Edison's Stetson Substation in Hemet, Ca. Sitting, from left: Bob Thompson, 25 years in the union, Ray Boisvert, 38 years and Roy Dunkin, 6 years; standing, from left: Rod Walser, 20 years, Keith Terry, 3 years, Bill "Kinky" Catalfo, 21 years, Jerry Girard, 15 years and Dan Scott, 34 years. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)



Dispute over foremen

Union complaint targets Bureau of Reclamation

An attempt by the United States Bureau of Reclamation to strip foremen and working foremen out of the Local 1245 bargaining unit has prompted the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to file a complaint with the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

The Bureau first proposed the bargaining unit changes during negotiations with Local 1245 in late 1989 and early 1990, according to union attorney Tom Dalzell. The union ratified a new agreement with the Bureau early this year after the Bureau withdrew the proposed

change in the foremen's status.

However, on Feb. 14 the Bureau notified Local 1245 that it was unilaterally removing foremen and working foremen from the bargaining unit. In succeeding months, the Bureau unilaterally imposed similar changes upon other IBEW locals, prompting the International union to become involved.

"We were the guinea pig," noted Dalzell.

The union maintains that the Civil Service Reform Act, passed in the 1970s, protects workers who were part of a bargaining unit at the time of the Act's passage from sub-

sequent changes in the bargaining unit. In effect, current employees were "grandfathered" in under the terms of the Act.

The Local 1245 foremen fall within the provisions of that Act, Dalzell said, making it illegal for the Bureau to remove them from the unit.

In all, about 20 foremen

and working foremen were affected by the Bureau's action. The union represents approximately 200 Bureau workers.

"This is part of a set of continuing problems with the Bureau," said Dalzell, noting that the union had to take the Bureau to arbitration over wages in 1989.

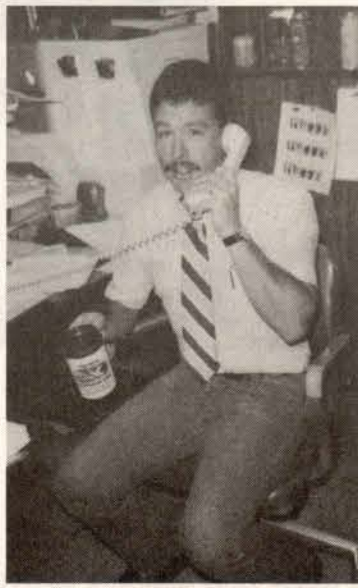
Vocational school grant awarded to Carson City, Nev. graduate

Tawnie Vonasek, daughter of Local 1245 member Ronald Vonasek, has been awarded the union's Trade and Vocational School Grant for 1990.

Vonasek, who resides in Carson City, Nev., graduated from Carson High School in

January. She said that she intends to use the award to study interior designing at Books College in Long Beach, Ca.

Ronald Vonasek is an equipment operator for Sierra Pacific Power Co. in Carson City.



AL, IS THAT YOU?

When union steward Al Simms successfully bid to water systems subforeman at PG&E's Balch facility, his co-workers challenged him to come to work looking like a subforeman. Simms, former unit chairman and now vice-chairman, obliged by showing up in a necktie. Al's 'new look' probably didn't last too long, but it won rave reviews.

New methods at Utility Reporter

If your *Utility Reporter* has looked a little different to you the past two months there's a reason for it.

In June, Local 1245 began publishing its paper in-house, using desktop computer equipment. Although there has been no major effort to change the newspaper's style, a few style changes proved

unavoidable during the transition. As we explore all the possibilities of our new equipment, other small changes may appear in the newspaper's style in coming months.

Readers' comments on the newspaper's appearance and style, favorable or otherwise, are always welcomed.



Airspace union negotiators (center to right) Bill Lafay, Christa Rockell and Rick Sidman.

Airspace workers ratify first contract

Operations and maintenance personnel at the newly-organized Airspace Technology Corp. ratified a contract last month that provides 16 percent in wage hikes over a three-year period.

In addition to wage increases, Airspace employees will have fully-paid medical insurance for themselves and their dependents, according to Local 1245 Business Rep. Corb Wheeler. Dental insurance is also provided.

The agreement grants employees 11 paid holidays and 80 hours of personal time off per year. Employees with over one year of service will be entitled to 80 hours vacation, with 120 hours after three years, 160 hours after 10 years and 200 hours after 15 years.

The pact contains a shift differential provision and also grants a 50 percent "height premium" for work performed at heights over 100 feet.

Concord Cable pact rejected

Local 1245 members employed by Concord Cable TV overwhelmingly rejected the company's contract offer last month. Money issues were the major consideration in the vote. Employees believe that wage and health care provisions must be improved. Bargaining has been scheduled to begin again this month. Local 1245 represents about three dozen Concord Cable employees.

The Airspace workers helped insure the strength of their union by negotiating union security and dues checkoff provisions into the contract.

Wages will rise by 6 percent in the first year, and by 5 percent in each of the succeeding two years.

The agreement covers 47 Airspace personnel.

APPOINTMENTS

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

General Construction Joint Grievance Committee

David B. Klingerman (Alternate)
Charles McAlister (Temporary)

PLO Joint Grievance/Labor Management Committee

Manuel Burruel, Jr.

LOCAL UNION 1245

Local Union Health and Safety Committee

William T. Hunt
Gary Hanson

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCILS

Marysville Central Labor Council

Patrick C. Gates

CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

California State Association of Electrical Workers

Jack McNally
Howard Stiefer
Jim McCauley

Mike Davis
Darrel Mitchell
Gary Hughes
Landis Marttila
William G. Fairchild

California Labor Federation 18th Biennial Convention

Jack McNally
Howard Stiefer
Jim McCauley
Mike Davis
Darrel Mitchell
Gary Hughes
Landis Marttila
William G. Fairchild
Tom Riley

Nevada State AFL-CIO Convention

Kathy Tindall
Robert Vieira
John Stralla
Stephanie Baber

IBEW Ninth District Progress Meeting

Jack McNally
Howard Stiefer
Jim McCauley
Barbara Symons
Ed Mallory
Ron Blakmore
Mike Davis
Tube Dudley
Kathy Tindall
Gene Wallace
Sam Tamimi
Gary Mai
Bobby Blair
Art Murray

Health care group wraps up study

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

This month we are putting the final touches to the bargaining proposals as we prepare to exchange proposals with Pacific Gas and Electric Co. on July 31.

In addition, we will wrap up the Joint Study on Health Care discussions and submit a joint statement to the parties for consideration in negotiations.

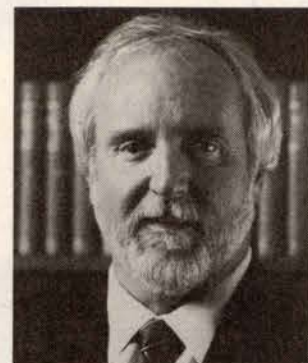
The activity of the Joint Study group included ten full-day sessions to explore the issues and concerns surrounding healthcare benefits for PG&E. There were several subcommittee meetings as well, which gathered data or reviewed issues in greater detail for presentation back to the full committee.

The Joint Study group met with leading experts in the field of health care to discuss the factors leading to the continuing rise of health care costs, review the latest developments in efforts to contain costs, and look at new concepts in benefit designs.

The group reviewed with consultants both the experience and utilization of the PG&E management flex health plans and the bargaining unit health plans.

Five insurance companies, Metropolitan Life, Prudential Life, Cigna, Blue Shield, and Blue Cross, were invited to present the plan products and network of providers they had to offer.

Dr. Henry Simmons, president of the National Leadership Coalition on



Health Care, addressed the Joint Study group on the health care crisis from the national point of view.

He explained that the Coalition was a nationwide organization of corporations, labor organizations, consumer groups and the providers of medical care coming together to work for a comprehensive restructuring of the nation's health care system with the aim of improving quality, achieving universal access, containing costs and enhancing competition.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers is a member of the National Leadership Coalition. PG&E just recently joined the Coalition.

The Joint Study group was presented with comprehensive data and information concerning medical and health care. This information should be valuable to the parties for the deliberation in the bargaining process.

The parties will be well educated on the issues of medical care and should address the subject in an intelligent and fair manner to find common ground at the bargaining table.

Trade unionists help chart new future for Hungary

On June 25 a delegation of Hungarian trade unionists visited Local 1245 headquarters in Walnut Creek during a ten-city American tour. Although the delegates come from many different trades, including an electrical worker, they are all aligned with the Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions, a new labor movement in Hungary that is challenging the Communist Party-dominated unions.

Despite their relatively small numbers, they believe they have an important role to play in the new economic order that is emerging in Hungary.

To find out more about their hopes for the future, the *Utility Reporter* interviewed Tamas Reti, director of the Academy of the League of Independent Trade Unions (FSZDL).

UR: For decades you've lived in a planned economy dominated by the Communist Party. What would you like to see in its place?

Reti: We support state, private and mixed [ownership of] property. We also are supporting so-called employee ownership where the

worker has some stock shares. The last forty years... we had a very authoritarian system. Hungary got into a very acute economic and political crisis. Now we support private ownership, but with a strong union movement where the workers are defended by strong unions.

We are fearful of this transition from a communist economy to a market economy, that there are very high social costs of transition. There can be very greedy capitalists in Hungary who don't respect any human rights or labor rights. It could happen that we get back into an economy as bad [as before].

UR: Could you replace large state-run enterprises with smaller collective enterprises run by the workers themselves at the worksites?

Reti: It's a very hard question to answer. Just take an enterprise which has obsolete equipment, and it got into bankruptcy. Who wants to own it? No one. Who has the money to update a state-owned enterprise? The people don't have enough capital to buy. This is the Czechoslovak economy [model]. They are supporting this idea that you have to distribute the commonwealth among the

workers. But I think you get something free, it isn't good. Because you have to respect the value of everything.

UR: How does life change for workers when state-run enterprises are sold to private interests?

Reti: If there is a capitalist, let's say, going to buy a former state-owned enterprise because this enterprise got into bankruptcy and the state is unable to finance it, it happens that he fires one-third of the employees and the rest who stay have much better pay. And the people who manage to stay because they are better educated and more skilled, they are happy. They are not concerned who owns the factory. They are fully motivated to work. The communist system prevented that. They were not paid. So the system [developed] a kind of second economy. So he was more concerned to save things for the second economy. So everyone would fulfill only half his capacity for the state and try to save over for the private [economy].

UR: What happens to the workers who are not able to stay on at the plant?

Reti: So far the layoff hasn't

'The last forty years... we had a very authoritarian system. Hungary got into a very acute economic and political crisis. Now we support private ownership, but with a strong union movement where the workers are defended by strong unions.'

reached a considerable extent. The unemployment rate is only one percent in Hungary. But it's increasing very fast. Why is it so low? Because management is not interested to save on labor, because labor is very cheap. They are not concerned how many people they can afford. It's a surplus of labor that is existing in the factories. We are for structural change, which I think would cause high level of unemployment. A lot of industries are loss makers. They lose money.

UR: Is profit-making the union's only concern then?

Reti: Of course the unions in Europe are for social democracy, for the rights of the people. We can say as much slogans as you want. But in the present situation we simply cannot afford it. So what can be done is to give full freedom for the private initiative at home and hope that the stronger, more able people will pull up the weaker. And in this game, the unions have to play an important role to control this transition [to make sure the weaker don't get crushed].

UR: When did the new union federation come into existence?

Reti: It started in May 1988. The first union was the union of scientific research workers. The whole idea came from the white collar workers. And this was at that time more of a political movement against a one-party state. Many people who belonged to the opposition joined us because we were the start.

Then the one-party system started to fall apart and the multi-party system was accepted by the Communists. Then the Democratic League of Independent Unions, the umbrella organization, was formed in December 1988.

UR: Is this new labor federation affiliated with any political party?

Reti: Our position is to be neutral. We don't support any party, but we support any politicians who are defending the rights of labor. There are one or two parties to which we are very close, and of course we are against the Communist Party.

UR: How many unions are affiliated with this new federation?

Reti: About 50. There is affiliation according to profession. There are independent unions in separate factories. The electrician [in the delegation] works in a power plant of 2000 workers. These workers established a new union with 30 people. They are only 30 but they enjoy the sympathy of [the rest of the workers]. They managed to get for all the workers a 25 percent wage increase. And they managed to fire the general director. So even if they are small in number, they have power. So the League is only 100,000, while the Communists are declaring they have 3.5 million, but it is very misleading to compare these two figures, because a lot of people just because of inertia don't leave [the Communist-affiliated union].

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Visiting trade unionists from Hungary are joined by their interpreters and Business Manager Jack McNally during a visit to Local 1245 headquarters in Walnut Creek last month. The unionists are part of a resurgent labor movement in Hungary that is helping to challenge the Communist Party's monopoly on power. (Photo: Ed Caruso)



Tamas Reti (center), director of the Academy of the League of Independent Trade Unions (FSZDL), chats with two of his fellow Hungarian trade unionists during their visit to Local 1245 last month. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)

UR: Your movement would appear to have historical momentum on its side. How long can that momentum last?

Reti: This is a basic question. I'm not sure that we could win. It's still open.

UR: Does that mean the Communist Party bureaucracy could win?

Reti: The state-run unions have a huge apparatus. They are still very strong. They have the assets of the union, huge buildings, summer vacation houses, everything. It happens that they want to join us to save themselves. But this is very dangerous because they could eat us, [take us over].

UR: How optimistic do you feel that workers in Hungary can achieve economic development while retaining justice for workers?

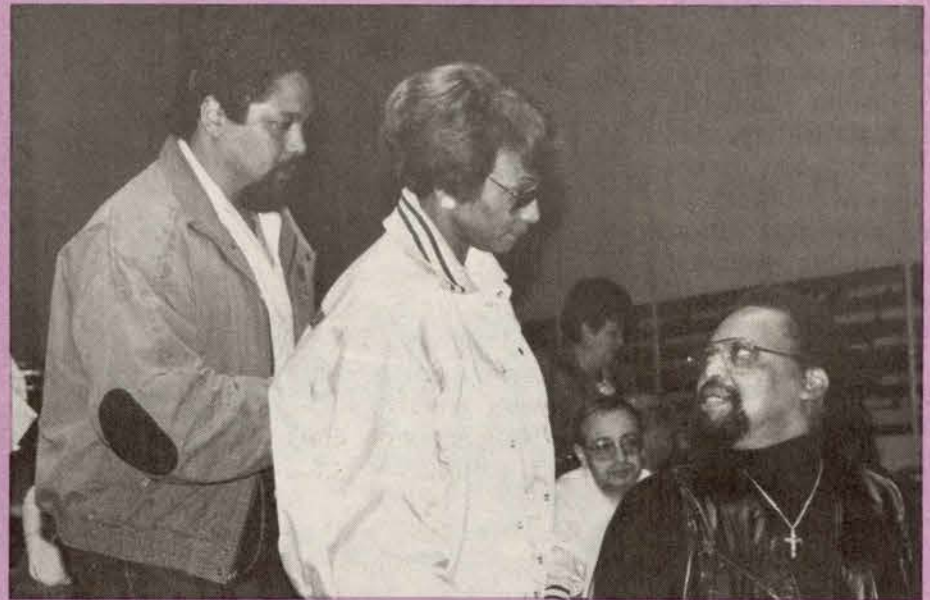
Reti: I have a double mind. As an economist I am fairly pessimistic. But as a union

leader I have to be very optimistic because I have to convince the people that this is the only way out.

It's really very hard to get out of this bottom line that we got from this Bolshevik order. I think what we are doing is very exceptional, to make a command economy into a market economy and to create a democratic society. In the Communist labor code, which was never enforced, there were very strong union rights. We are fearful that in a market economy with a new labor code, which is needed, unions would have less rights than before, on paper. But we want to have a real functioning bargaining process, at the plant level and the national level. For us, I think the West European model is closer than your model because you are too much decentralized. We want to have collective agreement on the industrial level and national level and not just on the plant level.

'The electrician [in the visiting delegation] works in a power plant of 2000 workers. These workers established a new union with 30 people. They are only 30 but they enjoy the sympathy of [the rest of the workers]. They managed to get for all the workers a 25 percent wage increase. And they managed to fire the general director.'

Local 1245 shop stewards attend training conferences



Gwen Wynn chats with Rudy Woodford during Local 1245's San Jose Regional Training Conference for PG&E shop stewards in May. (Photo: Landis Martilla)

Local 1245 shop stewards discussed drug testing and commercial drivers license issues at training conferences in Concord on April 28 (right) and in Fresno on April 21 (below).



Nuclear plant workers face increased health risks as NRC

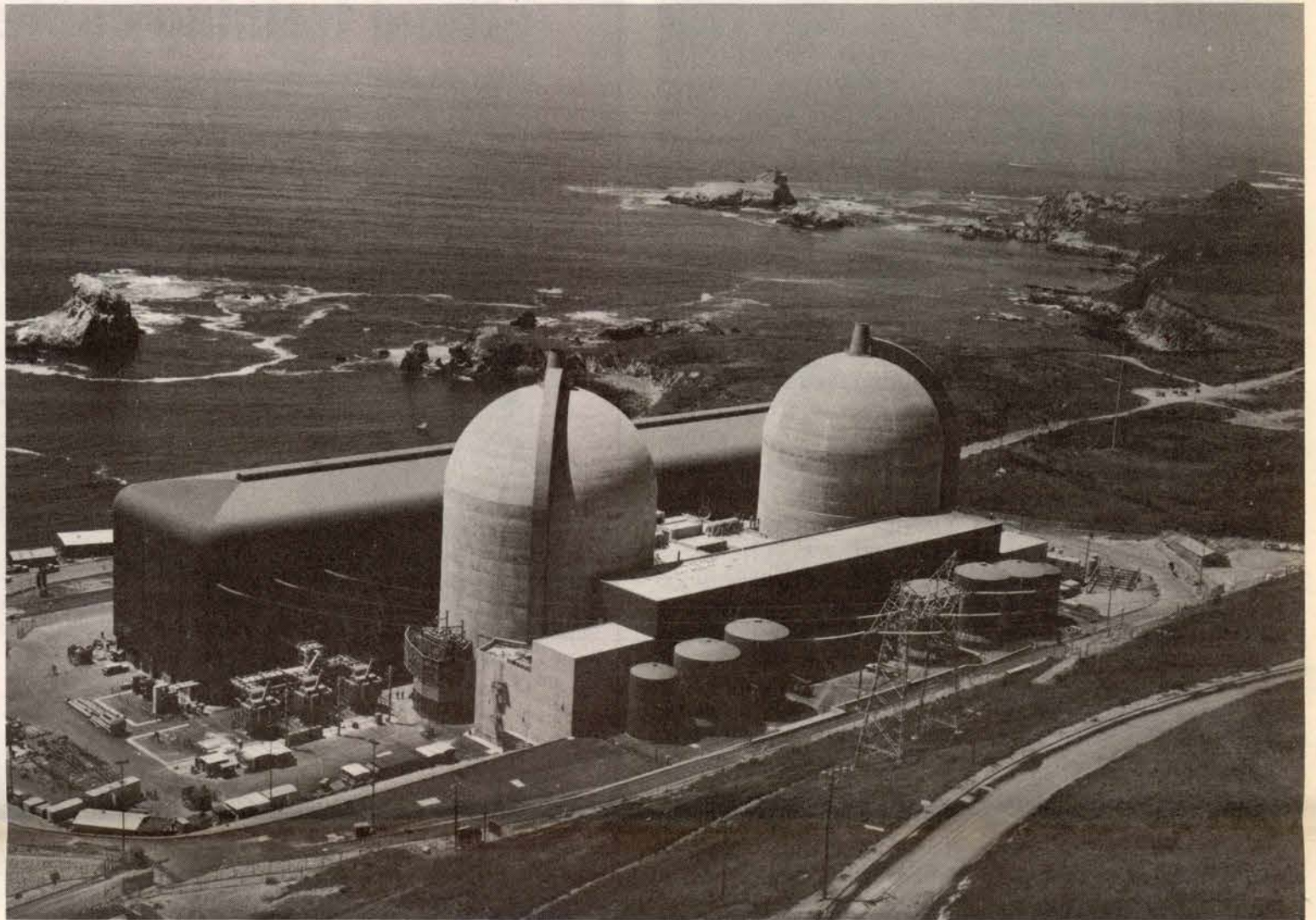
By Eric Wolfe

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is in the final stages of adopting new radiation standards that will permit nuclear power plant operators to expose workers to increased levels of radiation despite mounting evidence that any increase in exposure increases the risks of getting cancer.

The new standards allow companies to subject workers to "planned special exposures" of 5 rems above and beyond the current annual maximum of 5 rems "normal" exposure, meaning that some workers could receive a total of 10 rems per year of external exposure. The standards also greatly increase the allowable dose to various internal organs, including the lungs, gonads and thyroid.

The NRC, which could give final approval to the new standards as early as this month, maintains that the new standards pose no additional health risks for nuclear workers. But the workers themselves are not likely to draw much comfort from the scientific record.

The International Commission on Radiation Protection (ICRP), an advisory group of radiation scientists from around the world, established the modern occupational exposure limit at 5 rems per year in the 1950s. That limit was based largely on evidence that survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bomb blasts suffered adverse health effects from exposures in the 20-25 rem range.



NRC standards determine how much radiation workers can be exposed to, including Local 1245 members employed at the Diablo Canyon nuclear facility (above).

However, in the 1960s and 1970s new evidence indicated that radiation exposure was more dangerous than previously thought. A study of 30,000 workers at the Hanford, Wash., nuclear installation, for example, revealed that the number of cancers was 10 to 30 times greater than expected from exposure to the 5-rem per year occupational standard. The study, conducted by Dr. Thomas Mancuso with U.S. Dept. of

Energy funding, correlated deaths from multiple myeloma and pancreatic cancers with exposure to radiation at levels averaging less than 2 rems per year.

Alarmed by what he had found, Mancuso in the late 1970s called for a ten-fold reduction in radiation exposure limits for nuclear workers. But the ICRP moved in the other direction. Not only did it fail to recommend a reduction in the 5 rem limit on external exposure, in 1977 it adopted ICRP-26, which called for increasing allowable dose rates for internal organs. The proposed new dose rates were 20 rems per year to gonads (an increase by a factor of four), 42 rems per year to active bone marrow (an increase by a factor of 8.3), 42 rems per year to lungs (an increase by a factor of 2.8), 33 rems per year to breasts (an increase by a factor of 2.2), and 50 rems per year to thyroid and bone

surfaces (an increase by a factor of 1.7).

These recommended exposure levels form the basis for the exposure levels that the NRC is now on the verge of approving for workers at all NRC-regulated facilities, including Local 1245 members at the Diablo Canyon nuclear plants.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers opposes the provision of the new regulations that would permit workers to receive up to 10 rems per year as a result of the "planned special exposures."

Significant additional risk

According to International Rep. Paul Shoop, "planned special exposures" might mean lower overall exposure to the entire workforce by allowing one experienced worker to stay longer on a particular task, rather than splitting the task up among multiple workers. But the

worker called upon to absorb the extra radiation assumes significant additional risk.

"We have people in maintenance, health physics, instrument people who do get these kinds of exposures," said Shoop, "and they would be getting the 'planned special exposures.'"

The ICRP recommendations drew a stinging rebuke from one of America's leading health physicists, Dr. Karl Z. Morgan, himself a former chairman of ICRP as well as the former director of the Health Physics Division at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

"This increase might be justified were the risk of radiation-induced cancer much less than we perceived it to be almost 30 years ago," but in fact, Morgan wrote in 1987, "just the contrary is the case."

Even as Morgan wrote, disturbing new information was emerging from a joint

"This increase [in exposure limits] might be justified were the risk of radiation-induced cancer much less than we perceived it to be almost 30 years ago, but just the contrary is the case."

Dr. Karl Morgan, former chairman, International Commission on Radiation Protection (ICRP)

NRC moves to weaken radiation protection standards

U.S.-Japanese study of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bomb victims. The new research, funded in part by money from the U.S. Dept. of Energy, indicated that less radiation was released than originally thought at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which means that the observed health effects were caused by smaller doses than previously assumed. On the basis of these findings, two of the researchers calculated that the health risk from low dose radiation is 11 to 16 times greater than previously assumed by the standard-setting commissions.

The U.S.-Japanese study was taken very seriously by the scientific community. It prompted the National Academy of Sciences last December to declare that the risk of dying from radiation-induced cancer is now four times greater than previously assumed. Even the NRC has acknowledged that "everyone is pretty much in agreement" on the National Academy of Sciences figures, according to NRC spokesman Alan Roecklein.

Commitment to safety?

Although no single study can offer the definitive answer, virtually all research indicates that substantial risks exist even at currently permissible exposure levels, certainly far greater risk than the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is prepared to acknowledge. The fact that the NRC is preparing to forge ahead and loosen standards raises serious questions about its commitment to worker safety.

A U.S. Senate aide who

closely follows nuclear issues called the move to relax standards part of a "tragic historical pattern" by the U.S. government.

'Official disbelief'

"They ignore the early warning signs that the standards are inadequate," the aide recently told the *Utility Reporter*. "Then victims start to appear and then 'official disbelief' sets in until the evidence is so overwhelming that they have to do something. But by that time it's too late to protect those people who could have been saved."

In the early part of this century workers suffered because so little was known about the dangers of radiation. An epidemic of diseases among radiologists finally led to the establishment in 1920 of the first radiation limit of 52 rems per year. (A rem, standing for Roentgen Equivalent Man, is a unit of radiation measurement which estimates the degree of biological damage from a certain amount of absorbed radiation.)

As cancer incidence increased among doctors and patients treated with x-rays during the 1930s, the limit was reduced to 36 rems per year for external x-ray exposure. Deaths among watch dial painters, who worked with luminescent paint containing radium in the 1930s, led to the first limits on internal exposure from radionuclides deposited inside workers' bodies.

During World War II, when the U.S. government was developing the atomic bomb, patriotic fervor damp-

ened any critical evaluation of radiation exposure from the new nuclear weapons technology. Scientific evidence thus took a back seat to political expediency, an arrangement that many believe continues to this day.

However, the atomic explosions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki presented irrefutable evidence that radiation exposure, even at relatively low levels, is deadly, leading to the creation in 1956 of the current annual occupational exposure limit of 5 rems.

As the evidence continues to accumulate it becomes increasingly clear that there is no "safe" level of radiation exposure.

A study of nuclear workers published this year in the *British Medical Journal* found evidence that children are six to eight times more likely to develop leukemia if their fathers receive a lifetime occupational radiation dose greater than 20 rems. Under the new NRC standards a worker can be exposed to 10 rems in a single year. The British study also found that children faced greater risk of leukemia if their fathers were exposed to as little as *one rem* during the six months immediately prior to the child's conception.

No excuse

If ignorance of the dangers was an excuse in the first decades of this century, it is certainly an excuse no longer. But the NRC doggedly insists that loosening the exposure standards poses no additional risks for workers.

When asked by the *Utility Reporter* if the NRC was making the determination that 42 rems per year of exposure to the lungs was no more risky than 15 rems per year, NRC spokesman Roecklein said:

"Yeah. There's a recommended acceptable risk level of, I don't know, some number, and we establish limits and stay within that. So the new information [the 1977 ICRP recommendation now being adopted by the NRC] is that in order to produce

Virtually all research indicates that substantial risks exist even at currently permissible exposure levels. The fact that the NRC is preparing to forge ahead and loosen standards raises serious questions about its commitment to worker safety.

some number of cancer cases we can tolerate more dose than we could before."

Even if one accepts the premise that it now takes 42 rems to produce "x" numbers of lung cancers instead of just 15 rems, the NRC's reasoning is blood-chilling. Rather than rejoicing at the knowledge that fewer people will die at the 15-rem level than we previously had supposed, the NRC says we should raise the exposure limit until we hit a pre-established quota of cancer deaths.

Roecklein rejected the idea that caution would dictate, at the very minimum, keeping the internal exposure limits the same.

"We're already cautious. We're already as safe as you can possibly get and still have the industry," Roecklein said. He did not, however, explain how the industry was able to survive with the 15-rem limit on lung exposure up until now but could only survive from here on out if the limit was increased to 42 rems.

'Spurious arguments'

Morgan, who in 1947 authored what was probably the first scientific paper ever published on internal dose, says the new ICRP standards on internal exposure are based on "spurious arguments" that cover up the real motive for raising exposure limits, which he says is "to cut down on the costs of radiation safety in the plants that are growing older."

The standard-setting boards are "just going ahead and taking care of their aging plants and sloppy operations," Morgan charged, referring

to the ICRP recommendations upon which the NRC standards are based.

Conflicts of interest

Morgan told the *Utility Reporter* that members of the ICRP and the US-based National Council on Radiation Protection "have conflicts of interest so great" that if everyone in these organizations who works for the nuclear industry or receives research funds from it would resign, "there probably wouldn't be anyone left."

While the looser standards may ultimately allow costs to be reduced at nuclear plants as they age and grow more radioactive, not all utility companies necessarily support the change. The new standards will require new methods of measuring internal exposure, and implementing these methods will cost money.

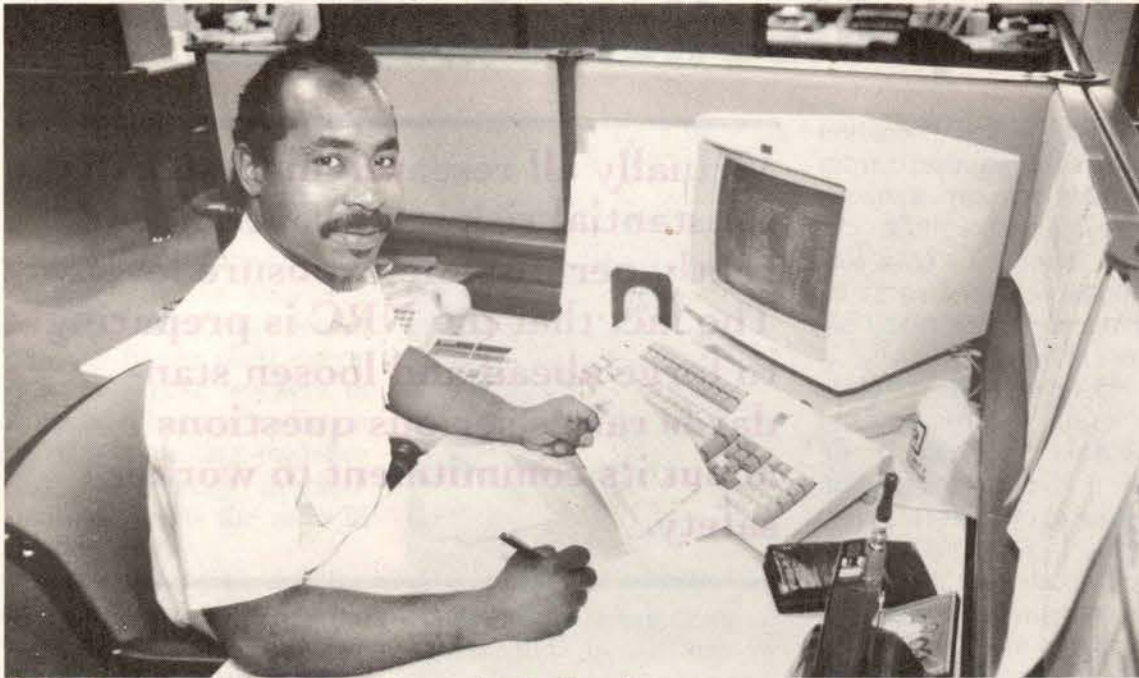
The IBEW is less concerned about revisions in the internal (as opposed to external) exposure limits because most nuclear workers represented by the union are employed at commercial nuclear reactors.

"At the power reactors we have very few internal exposures," said Shoop of the IBEW. But internal exposures are of great concern to the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union, which represents nuclear workers at fuel fabrication, mining and milling operations where internal exposures are a more serious problem.

"Certainly we are not interested in loosening the stan-

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A study of nuclear workers published this year in the *British Medical Journal* found evidence that children are six to eight times more likely to develop leukemia if their fathers receive a lifetime occupational radiation dose greater than 20 rems.



Keith Carthen, customer service rep (collections).



Gretchen Djukanovich, telephone services supervisor.



Patty Dearing takes a turn at the edit desk.



Shop steward Betty Newberry (right) and Heather Vanlandingham (left), whom she is training, are joined by Lead Rep Judy Mason. (Photos: Eric Wolfe)

Sierra Pacific service reps carry on despite corporate restructuring

from PAGE ONE

a customer telephone services supervisor. She says the shakeups have put extra stress on the company's workers.

Djukanovich, herself a union member prior to becoming a supervisor, said one of the biggest headaches during the transition has been not having enough people to answer incoming phone calls. That means customers sometimes have to wait.

Sierra Pacific undertook the restructuring to streamline company operations, reduce levels of management and consolidate operating functions, according to company news releases. Local 1245 Business Rep. John Stralla says that the workforce agrees there was too much management, but he thinks the company's reorganization went too far.

Stralla says that the company, in the view of many employees, "got the ball and ran off the field with it."

And the changes keep on coming. In May the company announced the election of William L. Keepers as Sierra Pacific's new president and chief executive officer.

Will continued change at the top translate into further shakeups down through the ranks? Employees have little choice but to wait and see.

And while they wait, they carry on, bearing the responsibility of providing continuity for the customers no matter what's going on behind the scenes.

Certainly any customer

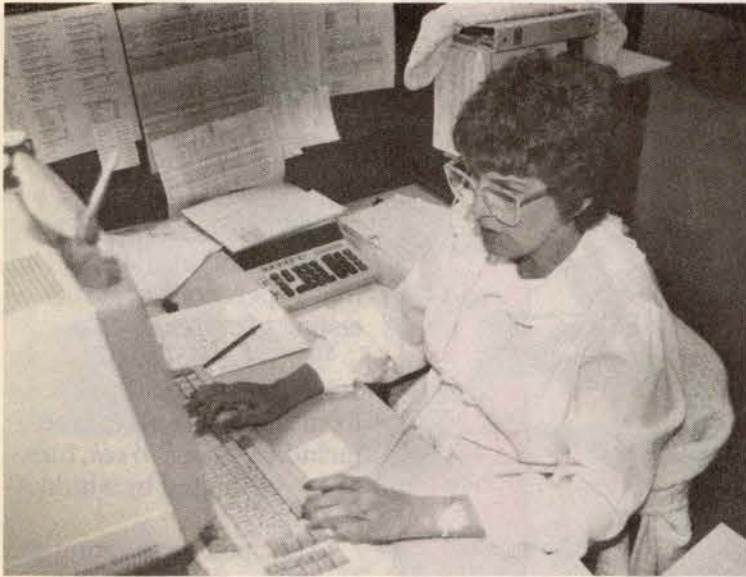
walking in off the street and meeting Nancy O'Dell would find him or herself in capable hands. O'Dell, a union steward with 33 years at Sierra Pacific, handles walk-in traf-

see PAGE NINE

Will continued change at the top translate into further shakeups down through the ranks? Employees have little choice but to wait and see. And while they wait, they carry on, bearing the responsibility of providing continuity for the customers...



Laurie Wojcik, customer service rep (bankruptcies).



Judy Sharpnack, customer service rep.

Sierra Pacific service reps

from PAGE EIGHT

fic at the Reno office. Whether she's signing someone up for a new hookup or helping a current customer deal with a delinquent bill, O'Dell is on the company's frontline.

"The majority of the customers who come in are pleasant," says O'Dell. "The majority of the time I enjoy waiting on customers. People who move in from out of town will come in and tell you about things. It makes it interesting."

Sometimes, however, customer service reps have to go to the customer.

Keith Carthen, for example, has the job of pursuing delinquent customers who don't walk in through the company's front door.

Despite the unpleasant associations that some people may have with the word "collections", Carthen hardly comes across as the mustachioed villain at the door demanding the rent from

granny. Carthen says he would much rather work with a delinquent customer to work out a payment plan than to shut off their power.

The company, he notes, offers a 48-hour extension plan that buys a customer time to evaluate the situation. The company also offers an extension agreement that permits a customer to work out a payment plan.

"At times it's a thankless job. You get cussed out. You feel bad but you gotta do what you gotta do," Carthen says.

And for now what customer service reps at Sierra Pacific have to do is carry on the company's business while management figures out who's in charge. Despite the difficult circumstances, Djukanovich says the workers have risen to the occasion.

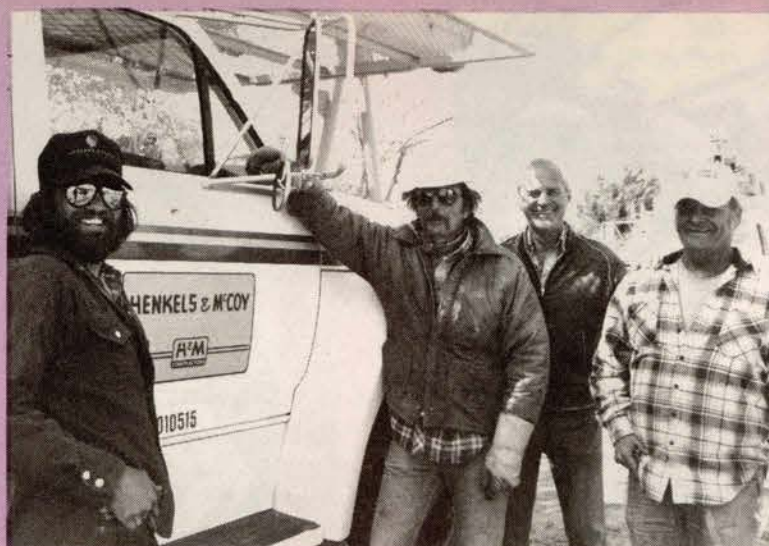
"They've done really well and I don't think one customer has suffered because of [the change in management]," Djukanovich says.



Sylvia Pendleton, customer service rep (collections).



Bargaining between C.P. National and physical and clerical workers represented by Local 1245 is slated to begin July 16. Meeting in S. Lake Tahoe to prepare for the talks are union members (standing, from left): Mike Rosenberg, serviceman and steward, David Rust, gas serviceman, Susie Rust, steno clerk, Brian Piazza, meter reader; (seated, from left) Debbie Walsh, customer service rep. and Bryan Wasson, utility man.

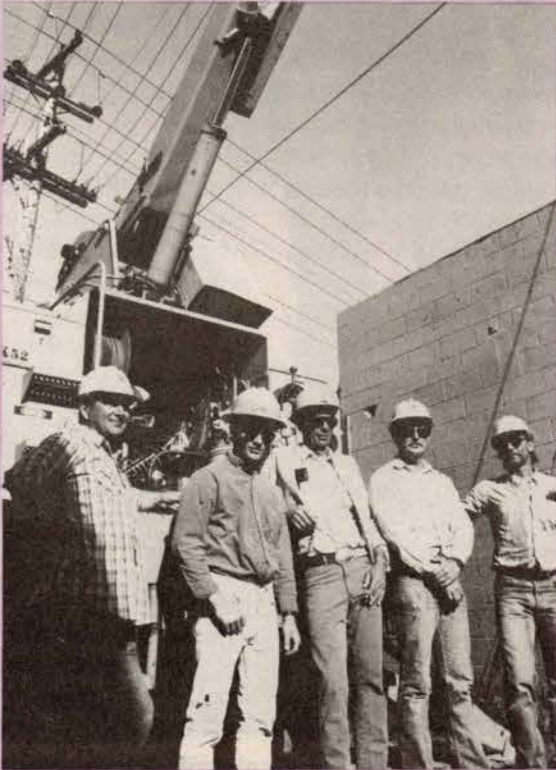


Outside Line members of Local 1245 tying in wire for Henkels & McCoy in a residential area of Apple Valley, Calif., from left, are: Jimmy Mays, lineman, 15-year union member, John Benedict, lineman, 22 years, Don Worrell, foreman, 33 years, and Dan Crandall, groundman, 22 years.

A Local 1245 crew of Outline Linemen pause for a picture after a day of ground framing in a residential area of Apple Valley, Calif., for Henkels & McCoy. From left: Shawn Gibson, groundman, seven-year union member, Mark Ellis, lineman, 13 years, and Al O'Neal, lineman, 30 years.



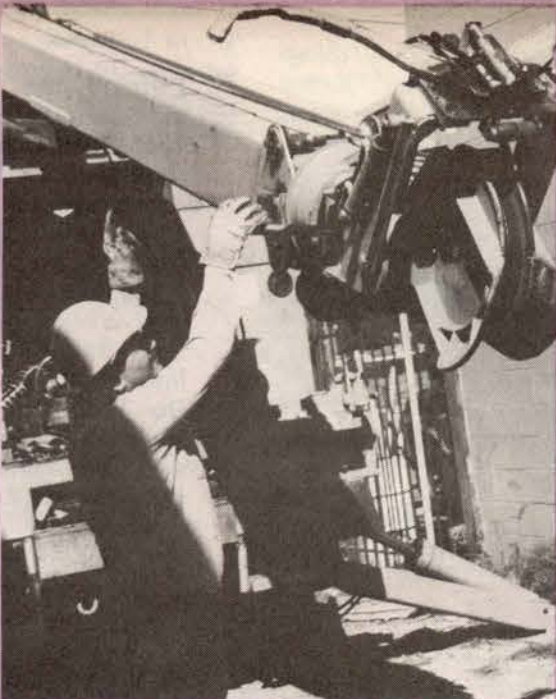
SMUD workers give city street a facelift



Working on the Franklin St. project are, from left: Ron Redding, line foreman light, Pete Henderson, apprentice lineman, Bob Cates, lineman, Harlan Wright, apprentice lineman, and Mike Fisher, lineman. (Photos: Eric Wolfe)



Putting the transformers in place.



Special equipment operator Mike Stemac.



Preparing the transformers for lifting.

A major thoroughfare in Sacramento is undergoing a facelift with the help of electrical workers for the Sacramento Municipal Utilities District.

"The city wants to beautify Franklin Blvd., so they

want to take all the overhead [lines] off of it and underground everything," said Ron Redding, line foreman light.

However, not all customers can convert to the underground voltages, so SMUD workers are setting poles nearby to provide them with power.

Poles are being placed at least 50 feet away from the street to fit in with the beautification plan.

The project spans over 20 blocks along Franklin St., from 33rd to 12th Ave. "It's quite a big job, coming down through here,"

Redding noted.

Recently the *Utility Reporter* caught up with one of the SMUD crews at 20th Ave. and Franklin. According to Redding, the crew had been on the job for 2-3 weeks. Another portion of the job was completed last October.

Drug poll's hidden agenda

A recent Gallup poll indicated that 62 percent of California workers favor pre-employment drug testing and that 46 percent favor random testing of current employees.

But the poll, which received widespread publicity from California news media, including *PG&E Week*, turns out to be tainted by a hidden agenda.

The poll was commissioned by the Institute for a Drug-Free Workplace, whose executive director, Mark De Bernardo, is a partner in the anti-union San Francisco law firm of Littler, Mendelson, Fastiff and Tichy.

One of the Institute's members is the Hoffmann-La Roche pharmaceutical firm, a major operator of drug-testing labs and a manufacturer of drug-testing equipment.

What's more, the pollsters didn't even ask real workers. Incredibly, 72 percent of the "workers" surveyed in the poll were professional or managerial employees.

Many workers genuinely do favor drug testing under some circumstances. But to use polling techniques in a cynical effort to manipulate public opinion for private gain casts a cloud over the entire polling profession.

Members approve agreement with Coldwater Creek

Local 1245 members ratified their first contract with Coldwater Creek Operator Corp., formerly GEO Operator Corp., last month.

The agreement provides a good package of wages and benefits, according to Assistant Business Manager Orv Owen. In addition to fully paid medical insurance for employees, the pact provides 10 holidays and a 401K plan.

Foremen will be paid \$21.95 to \$23.81 per hour, operators will earn \$17.22 to \$19.79, equipment operators will receive \$19.79 and beginning operators \$14.61.

The company operates steam wells at The Geysers.

Radiation exposure standards weakened

from PAGE SEVEN

dards to allow an increase in radiation exposure, either external or internal," said Nolan Hancock, a Washington-based OCAW official. "Our concern is to reduce the level of exposures to our people."

That view is shared by the AFL-CIO's Dept. of Occupational Safety, Health and Social Security, which charged in a written statement to the NRC that "the NRC has overlooked its primary responsibility in setting such standards—the protection of American workers and citizens exposed to radiation."

"The AFL-CIO believes that based upon evidence of risk and feasibility of control that the NRC should take action to significantly reduce permissible exposure limits for occupational exposure to radiation."

The NRC's own Office of Standards Development said in a 1979 internal memo to an NRC commissioner that the most immediate impact of looser standards "would be the relaxation of overexposure reporting requirements."

"In general, licensees are very sensitive about overexposure reports and will go to great lengths to avoid them, much to the benefit of the workers. Significant relaxation of overexposure reporting requirements would result in a concomitant relaxation of protection effort on the part of the licensees," the memo warned.

Unfortunately, as the NRC prepares to implement the new exposure standards, the current battle appears to be lost.

However, if nuclear workers choose to engage the fight they will discover they have important allies. Prior to an

ICRP meeting in 1987, over 800 scientists from 16 countries signed a petition requesting the ICRP to reduce its recommended maximum permissible radiation exposure levels.

Many of these scientists, including Morgan, do not oppose nuclear power. In a letter to the NRC two years ago, Morgan stated his belief that some nuclear power plants "have an excellent operating record" and that "we could have this industry without coverups and half-truths."

But dealing in half-truths, or at least refusing to confront the truth, appears to be the NRC's stock-in-trade. According to the Senate aide quoted earlier, the commissioners ignore the evidence "for years and years and years and don't do anything about it."

"And now they're poised to issue new standards. And what are these standards going to do?" the aide asked. "They're going to increase the body burdens of workers and not even change the external penetrating radiation dose of 5 rems per year," despite the National Academy of Sciences' assessment that radiation exposure now carries a higher risk of cancer than previously believed.

An NRC that truly valued the lives of nuclear workers would follow the example of the National Radiological Protection Board of the United Kingdom, which responded to the growing evidence of danger to workers by lowering annual maximum external exposure to 1.5 rems for British workers.

Apparently the NRC would prefer to count more bodies before taking positive steps to protect American workers.

Over 800 scientists from 16 countries signed a petition requesting the ICRP to reduce its recommended maximum permissible radiation exposure levels.

Learn about labor: take a class

Knowledge is power. Labor education classes offer union members a chance to become better

informed, and better prepared for the challenges of today's work environment. Check the following schedules for labor

education classes at Laney College in Oakland and San Francisco Community College.

Laney College Fall Semester, 1990 (415) 466-7263

Classes begin August 21, 1990

The American Labor Movement—History & Structure (3 units)

Mondays, 7-10 p.m.

The union movement's history and struggles, with emphasis on today's labor movement—what it is and how it works.

Labor Law and the Collective Bargaining Process (3 units)

Thursdays, 7-10 p.m.

Understanding the right to organize and bargain collectively in both the public and private sectors.

Grievance Handling and Arbitration (3 units)

Tuesdays, 7-10 p.m.

Learn to identify, investigate, present and resolve disputes arising in the workplace.

Rights and Discrimination in the Workplace (3 units)

Wednesdays, 7-10 p.m.

Practical guide to workers' rights and how to protect them through legal channels; excellent class for non-union workers as well as union members.

Short Term Courses

Labor and Politics (1 unit)

3 Saturdays: Sept. 8, 15, 22; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Overview of unions and politics; good background for understanding the fall 1990 elections.

Labor Relations in the Building Trades (1 unit)

3 Saturdays: Sept. 29, Oct. 6 and 13; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

A look at the collective

bargaining and grievance procedures in the construction industry.

Stewards' Training (1 unit)

3 Saturdays: Oct. 20, 27 and Nov. 3; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Intensive workshop on grievance handling, internal organizing and current issues affecting union stewards.

All classes meet at Laney College in Oakland (near Lake Merritt BART Station), Room B259. Cost is \$5 per unit.

San Francisco Community College Fall Semester, 1990 (415) 241-2219

Classes run Aug. 20 - Dec. 17 unless otherwise noted

Labor Law (3 units)

Mondays, 7-9:50 p.m.

Laws covering collective bargaining, organizing, discrimination.

Workplace Issues for Gay & Lesbian Workers, (1 unit)

Mondays, Sept. 17-Oct. 29,

6:30-9:30 p.m., Mission High School

Responding to job discrimination.

Union Organizing (3 units)

Tuesdays, 7-9:50 p.m.

Strategies and tactics for workplace and community organizing.

American Labor Movement (3 units)

Tuesdays, 7-9:50 p.m.

History of work and workers.

Public Sector Labor (2 units)

Tuesdays, Sept. 11-Nov.

27, 7-9:50 p.m., 33 Gough St.

Labor relations in public sector.

Rights and Discrimination in the Workplace (3 units)

Tuesdays, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Dealing with discrimination.

One-On-One Communications Techniques & Strategy (3 units)

Wednesdays, 7-9:50 p.m.

Developing internal organizing campaigns

Pension, Health & Welfare Issues (3 units)

Wednesdays, 7-9:50 p.m.

Pensions, health & welfare plans and related issues for union negotiators and trustees.

Collective Bargaining (3 units)

Thursdays, 7-9:50 p.m.

Negotiations strategies and tactics.

Grievance Handling & Arbitration (3 units)

Thursdays, 7-9:50 p.m.

How to identify, investigate and resolve grievances; overview of arbitration

Steward & Leadership Training (1 unit)

Saturdays, Sept. 22, 29

and Oct. 13, 33 Gough St. Steward's role in grievance handling and building solidarity.

Also: non-credit Saturday classes in Assertiveness Training, Public Speaking, Parliamentary Procedure, and Update on Negotiations

All classes meet from 7-9:50 p.m. at the Downtown Center, 800 Mission (at 4th St.) in San Francisco, unless otherwise noted.



YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNIZED

Local 1245 honored several veteran members at the Colgate Awards Dinner in April. Pictured left, standing, from left: Business Rep. Jack Osburn, Ron Kelly, Norm Rush, Leroy Franklin II, Jim Kuhn, Roy Stevenson, Gary Anderson and Darrel Maynard. Seated, from left: Business Rep. Ed Fortier, Harold Patrick, Paul Felkins and F.M. "Scotty" Scott. At right, Kent Pascoe, a 26-year member with the Nevada Irrigation District, displays the retirement scroll he received at the Drum Awards Dinner this spring. With him is Business Rep. Ed Fortier.



**Please
Don't Buy**

National Boycotts Sanctioned by the AFL-CIO

**Please
Don't Buy**

ACE DRILL CORPORATION
Wire, jobber & letter drills, routers and steel bars
United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America International Union

AEROMEXICO AIRLINES
Airline passenger and freight carrier
International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers

BROWN & SHARPE MFG. CO.
Measuring, cutting and machine tools and pumps
International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers

BRUCE CHURCH, INC.
Iceberg Lettuce: Red Coach, Friendly, Green Valley Farms, Lucky
United Farm Workers of America

BURWOOD PRODUCTS
Manufacturers of plaques, clocks, and other decorative wall accessories
United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America International Union

CALIFORNIA TABLE GRAPES
Table grapes that do not bear the UFW union label on the carton or crate
United Farm Workers of America

CLARK GRAVE VAULT COMPANY
Copper and steel burial vaults
United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America International Union

CONTINENTAL AIRLINES
Continental airline carrier
International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, Transport Workers Union of America

EASTERN AIRLINES
International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, Transport Workers Union of America

FORT HOWARD PAPER CO.
Green Bay, Wisconsin and Muskogee, Oklahoma, Mardi-Gras, Page, Sof-Knit tissues and napkins, Antique towels, Pom-etts, Edon and Dolly Madison tissues
United Paperworkers International Union

GARMENT CORPORATION OF AMERICA
Work clothes and uniforms
Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers Union

GREYHOUND BUS
Bus company
Amalgamated Transit Union

HOLLY FARMS
Chickens and processed poultry products
International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen & Helpers of America

INTERNATIONAL PAPER COMPANY
Producer International and Hammermill bond, offset and writing paper and related products
United Paperworkers International Union

JOHN MORRELL & COMPANY
Meat products: John Morrell, Rath Blackhawk, Nathan's Famous, Tobins First Prize, Hunter, Tom

Sawyer, Krey, Partridge, Rodeo, Scott Petersen, Bob Ostrow, E-Z Cut, Table Trim, Golden Smoked, Carson Ribs
United Food & Commercial Workers International Union

JOHN PORTMAN COMPANIES
Shopping malls, hotels, property management companies, real estate development investment
Service Employees International Union

KAWASAKI ROLLING STOCK, U.S.A.
Motorcycles
Transport Workers Union of America

KRUEGER INTERNATIONAL INCORPORATED
Brand name chairs: Matrix, Poly, Dorsal, Vertebra, Stax, Afka, Modular, Auditorium and University Seating (for airports and auditoriums)
International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers

LA MODE DU GOLF CO. OF LOS ANGELES
La Mode and Lady La Mode men's and women's golf apparel
International Ladies' Garment Workers Union

LOUISIANA-PACIFIC CORP.
Brand name wood products: L-P Wolmanized, Cedartone, Waferwood, Fibrepine, Oro-Bond, Redex, Sidex, Ketchikan, Pabco, Xonolite
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, International Woodworkers of America

MOHAWK LIQUEUR CORPORATION
Mohawk labeled gin, rum, peppermint schnapps, and cordials

Distillery, Wine and Allied Workers International Union

NAPA VALLEY CO-OP
Bergfeld 1885 (Sauvignon Blanc) wine
Distillery, Wine and Allied Workers International Union

PLYMOUTH RUBBER COMPANY
Insulating material, rubber bands and vinyl products
United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum and Plastic Workers of America

R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.
Cigarettes: Camel, Winston, Salem, Doral, Vantage, More, Now, Real, Bright, Century, Sterling, YSL/Ritz; Smoking Tobaccos: Prince Albert, George Washington, Cater Hall, Apple, Madeira Mixture, Royal Comfort, Top, Our Advertiser; Little Cigars: Winchester
Bakery, Confectionery & Tobacco Workers International Union

ROME CABLE CORPORATION
Cables used in mining and construction industry
International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers

SEATTLE-FIRST NATIONAL BANK
Withdraw funds
United Food & Commercial Workers International Union

SHELL OIL COMPANY
Subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell (parent company of Shell South Africa); gasoline, petroleum and natural gas products
AFL-CIO

SILCO, INC.
National retailers of electronic equipment and appliances
International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen & Helpers of America

STERLING RADIATOR
Baseboard heaters for the home
United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America International Union

UNITED STATES PLAYING CARD CO.
Brand names: Bee, Bicycle, Tally Ho, Aviator and Congress
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union

*Boycott List provided by:
Union Label and Service Trades
Department, AFL-CIO*

Why bother to boycott?

Why do unions declare boycotts? There's usually a pretty good reason.

In an era when laws increasingly restrict workers' right to strike and many corporations try to bust unions, the boycott is sometimes the only weapon left.

A recently published remark by an Eastern Airlines management official shows the vulgarity and callousness that many workers are up against.

The Eastern official was quoted as follows in Newsweek magazine:

"We use the 'carrot and stick' approach at Eastern. We ram the carrot up their a - and use the stick to tamp it in a little more."