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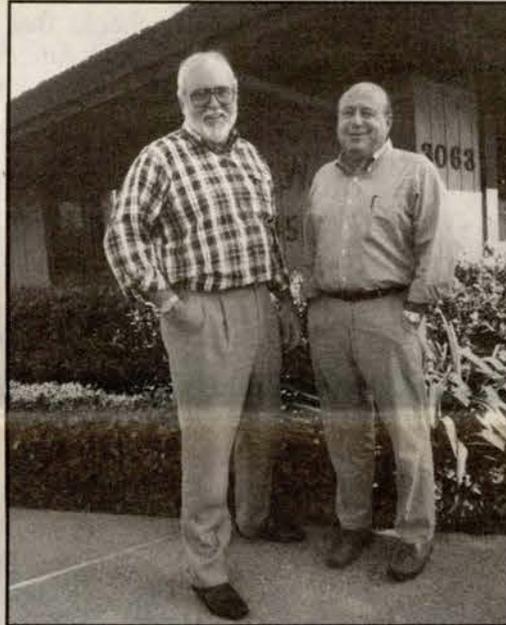
International Brotherhood
Of Electrical Workers
Local 1245, AFL-CIO
October 1993
Vol. XLII No. 10

UTILITY REPORTER

Save Public Education!
Vote 'NO' on Prop. 174

No Layoffs!

Customer Energy Services will still be downsized, but union secures pledge from PG&E that no CES employees will be involuntarily terminated.



Business Manager Jack McNally (left) and Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell relax for a moment in front of the union hall after accomplishing what seemed impossible a few months ago: bargaining a 'No Layoffs' commitment from PG&E.

By Eric Wolfe

Local 1245's aggressive defense of the labor agreement paid big dividends this month when PG&E agreed to a policy of "No Layoffs" during the current downsizing of the Customer Energy Services (CES) workforce.

The union also secured a pledge from the company that Gas and Electric T&D Division employees currently working in an apprentice classification or higher will not be demoted as a result of current downsizing activity.

Averting involuntary layoffs became a top priority for the union last spring after PG&E announced that lack of work made workforce re-

ductions necessary. The company eventually settled on 1200 as the approximate number of CES bargaining unit positions it wanted to eliminate as soon as possible, mostly in Division Gas and Electric T&D.

"Our position all along has been that PG&E could restructure Gas and Electric T&D without forcing people out of their jobs," said Business Manager McNally.

"We made a lot of progress toward that goal when we

negotiated the Voluntary Retirement Incentives and the voluntary severance program during General Bargaining. Now we have a firm commitment from the company that there won't be any involun-

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Phone consolidation talks accelerate

Local 1245 last month stepped up its resistance to PG&E's intended method for staffing the new regional telephone centers.

In a series of meetings with management in recent weeks, the union insisted that Title 18 bidding procedures for the initial staffing of the telephone centers

were inappropriate and inequitable, and that the union was prepared to go to court to block consolidation. PG&E indicated in early October it was reassessing its options for staffing the centers, but had not formally responded to the union when the Utility Reporter went to press.

The union's position is grounded in Title 19 of the

Clerical agreement, which spells out layoff and demotion procedures when "lack of work" situations occur.

"When they close those local centers, those people's jobs are finished," said Business Manager Jack McNally. "Whether they hire on at a regional center or not, that person's

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CALENDAR

October 16
Public Sector
Stewards Conference
Sacramento, Ca.

October 23
Stewards Conference
Stockton, Ca.

November 2
ELECTION DAY

November 6
Stockton Pin Dinner
Modesto, Ca.



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WIPA



Workers here and abroad

Rolling the union on...

Vote NO on 174: The California Labor Federation urged the defeat of Proposition 174 in the Nov. 2 election. Prop. 174 would drain massive amounts of money away from public schools. Unions once fought to create a system of public education. It's time to fight again—this time to save it. See Page 16.

Meeting change

Unit 3511, Auburn: The Dec. 7, 1993 meeting has been rescheduled for Dec. 14. It will be held at the Moose Lodge.

Its Feisty Best: "San Francisco was at its feisty best—and its most prosperous—when it was the strongest union city in the land and proud of it. There was cockiness in the salty air, not to mention fisticuffs along the waterfront and picket lines at the drop of a contract. Solidarity is a good feeling. When you joined a union you became part of something powerful and possibly dangerous...If the unions had held fast and those big paychecks were still coming in—the checks that created the first real American middle class—we wouldn't be in so

APPOINTMENTS

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

Special Advisory Committee on Phone Center Staffing

Donna Ambeau
Pam Caballero
Carole Pacheco
Maryann Navarros
Leslie Davis
Elaine Vargas
Therese Kennett
Barbara Fain
Norma Ricker
Bob Castillo
Cathy E. Wood
Charles E. Warren
Terri Ferguson
Dolly Gray
Howard Danielson
Thelma Dowell
John Martinez
Greg Spoonhour
Olivia Mercado
Art Garza
Mary Davis
Helen Munoz
Chris Habecker
Joy O'Hagan
Del Rodriguez
Dada Rao
Linda Bostic
Cathy Barber

San Jose Mock Work Station Committee (Letter Agreement 93-56-PGE)

Leslie Davis
Chris Habecker
Sheryl Guerrero

CITY OF SANTA CLARA

City of Santa Clara Negotiating Committee

Rich Hill
Tyrone Taylor
Jim Hershman
Doug Baldanzi

SOUTH SAN JOAQUIN IRRIGATION DISTRICT

South San Joaquin Irrigation District Negotiating Committee

Ron Strmiska, Jr.
Robert Geer
Sam Bologna
Frank Avila
Luz Juarez

LASSEN MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT

Lassen MUD Bargaining Committee

Richard Carr
John Deal
Lorie Hamilton
Kent (Kelly) Holmes

NEVADA IRRIG. DIST.

Nevada Irrigation District Negotiating Committee

Jeff Huey
Tom Santos
Tom Thurn

MODESTO IRRIG. DIST.

Modesto Irrigation District Negotiating Committee

Steve Auldridge
Harvey Frantz
Sam Gibson
Karin Jackson
Donald Ludlow
David Pittman
Kenneth Raven

HENKELS & MCCOY, INC.

Henkels & McCoy General Bargaining Committee
Teague Cadez



much trouble, and an army of old brothers wouldn't be on the bricks, asking for spare change. People want to work. Nothing I've seen, heard or read convinces me otherwise."—Herb Caen, *San Francisco Chronicle*, Labor Day 1993

Corporate Flight

Chamber: At a recent press briefing, the US Chamber of Commerce passed out commemorative coffee mugs. Printed in small letters at the bottom were the words "Made in China," according to the Wall Street Journal.

Factory Seized:

Hundreds of chemical workers in Crotone, Italy, last month set barrels of phosphorus afire on local roads then barricaded themselves in their factory to protest against the planned closure of their factory. "All we want is the possibility to work, for ourselves and our children," said the wife of a worker facing layoff. Unemployment, at dangerously high levels throughout Italy, is 40% in the area where the protest occurred.

Diamond Walnut

Fast: Workers who were permanently replaced by Diamond Walnut began a liquids-only fast to protest their treatment at the hands of their employer and to publicize the

need to pass the Workplace Fairness bill, which would outlaw the use of permanent replacements. More than 500 Diamond Walnut workers—mostly women with an average of more than 20 years of service to the company—were permanently replaced after going on strike two years ago.

Grape Boycott

Backed: The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in August unanimously endorsed the United Farm Workers boycott of California table grapes. The action was taken to honor the late Cesar Chavez, to call attention to the use of pesticides in grape production, and to call attention to obstacles the UFW faces in trying to organize farm workers.

Chavez Institute:

San Francisco State University created the Cesar Chavez Institute for Public Policy in honor of the founder of the UFW. The Institute will sponsor studies on critical public policy issues facing Chicanos in California.

Back in the USA:

For the first time since 1991, color VGA computer monitors are being assembled in the US—by IBEW members. DataComp Corp. of Vienna, Va. will produce 14, 17 and 20-inch models.

Brother Mike Robinson

Local 1245 mourns the death of Outside Construction Lineman Mike Robinson, who was fatally injured by electrical contact on Sept. 27 in Spring Valley while performing work on 4KV conductors from an aerial lift truck.

Brother Robinson, 47, was employed by Hawkeye Electric, a contractor for San Diego Gas and Electric.



PACIFIC GAS TRANSMISSION CONTRACTS RATIFIED

Both Pacific Gas Transmission contracts were ratified by sizeable margins in a mailed ballot counted Oct. 1. Members of the union negotiating team, some of whom are pictured here during a PGT bargaining session, were Frank Locati, Paul Hathaway, Pam McKenean, Judy Fowler, Paul Weid, Local 1245 President Howard Stiefer, Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell, Business Rep. Sam Tamimi, and Benefits Specialist Wendy Bothell.

Union Business Reps Assigned to PG&E

Your union is more effective when you're an active part of it. Your union Business Representative can help you get involved. Here's how to get in touch:

Area of Assignment	Business Representative	Phone Number
San Francisco Division	FRANK SAXSENMEIER	(415) 898-1141
Peninsula Division (Belmont Area) Potrero & Hunters Point Power Plants		
Mission Division (Hayward Area) Bay Division (Oakland Area)	DEAN GURKE	(510) 521-8913
Diablo Division (Concord Area) Pittsburg & Contra Costa Power Plants	ED CARUSO	(510) 432-6578
General Office/San Francisco	LULA WASHINGTON	(510) 223-7135
San Jose Division	JANE BRUNNER	(510) 653-0651
Central Coast Division (Santa Cruz/Salinas Areas)	GARY HUGHES	(408) 633-2102
North Bay Division (San Rafael Area) North Coast Division (Santa Rosa Area)	LARRY PIERCE	(707) 578-7274
North Coast Division (Ukiah & Eureka Areas) Geysers Power Plant	BOB CHOATE	(707) 462-9231
North Valley Division (Chico & Redding Areas)	MICKEY HARRINGTON	(916) 873-3680
Sierra Division (Auburn Area)	ED FORTIER	(916) 878-0991
Sacramento Division	WAYNE GREER	(916) 921-6664
Stockton Division Yosemite Division - North (Modesto Area)	BOB GIBBS	(209) 223-2207
Yosemite Division - South (Merced Area) Fresno Division - North	FRANK HUTCHINS	(209) 723-8234
Kern Division (Bakersfield Area)	RON VAN DYKE	(209) 896-3514
Diablo Canyon Power Plant Morro Bay Power Plant Los Padres Division (San Luis Obispo Area)	MIKE HAENTJENS	(805) 481-4547
Moss Landing Power Plant	KEN BALL	(408) 424-2800
Clerical Members in Bay/Diablo/San Francisco Divs.	ENID BIDOU	(707) 747-1814

Time to nix NAFTA

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager



The three big issues facing President Clinton and Congress this year are the budget reconciliation, National Health Care and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Budget reconciliation is behind him, he announced his Health Care proposal in September, and soon plans to submit NAFTA for Congressional action.

NAFTA would establish a free trade zone within the United States, Mexico and Canada. The stated objectives are to eliminate trade barriers, promote conditions of fair competition, and increase investment opportunities. NAFTA would phase out over the next ten years existing tariff and non-tariff trade barriers on the trade of goods and services between the three NAFTA nations.

NAFTA was originally negotiated by George Bush, who signed it on Oct. 7, 1992. President Clinton pledged to support ratification of NAFTA provided side agreements could be negotiated to correct the problems with labor and environmental issues.

Congress has 90 session days to accept or reject NAFTA once Clinton submits it.

The United States and Canada have relatively high wages and living standards. The two countries have similar laws that protect collective bargaining rights—with minimum standards for wages and hours—and set health and safety standards. In addition, there are laws and requirements that protect and clean up the environment.

Mexico on the other hand is a less-developed country with relatively low

wages, low living standards and miserable enforcement of labor and environmental laws. In Mexico, wages are deliberately held down by an alliance between government-controlled labor unions and government-influenced business associations, which collaborate to set wages.

The Clinton side agreements to NAFTA fall short in addressing the problems with labor and environment issues. These side agreements would relegate worker rights and the environment to commissions with no real enforcement mechanisms, no power to impose trade sanctions and no effective remedies.

On the other hand, NAFTA contains specific and enforceable trade sanctions to protect investment and intellectual property rights.

One might ask, "How can all this affect the utility industry and its workers?"

The utility industry is most interested in the unfettered sales and transportation of gas and electric energy with Mexico. Mexican power plants are already selling electricity across the border to San Diego, and new plants are being built in Piedras Negras, financed with \$300 million from South-

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SMUD signs agreement limiting contracting out

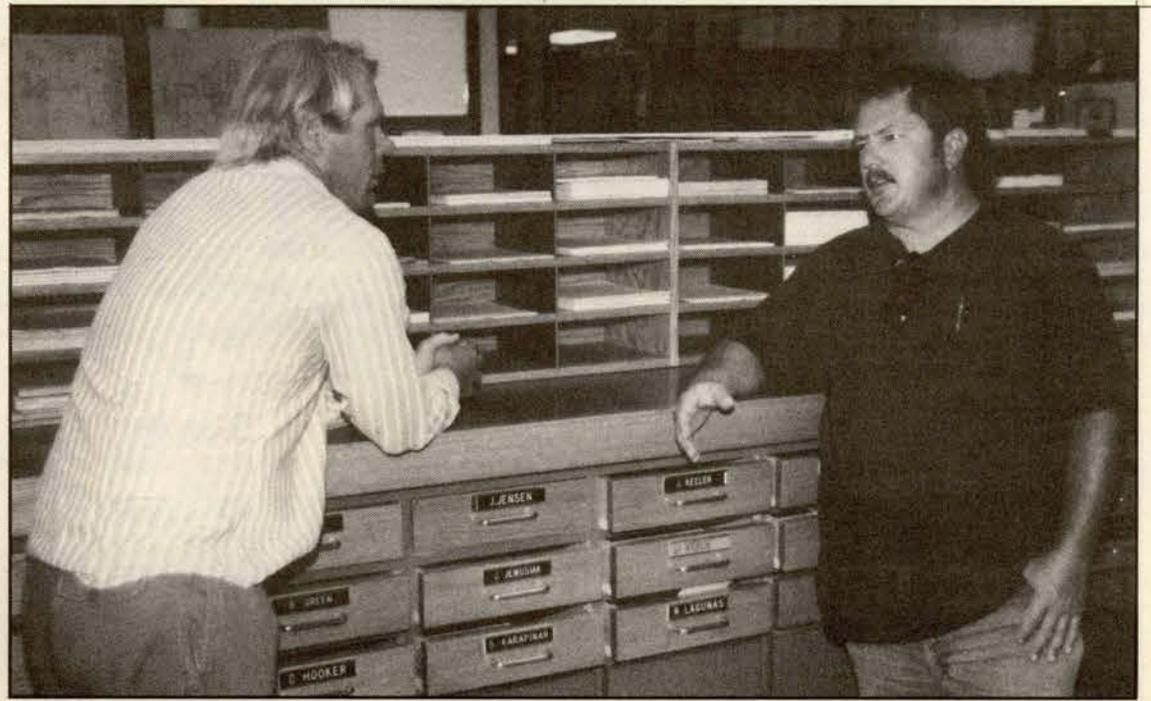
The Sacramento Municipal Utility District has agreed to not contract any work normally performed by the Local 1245 bargaining unit if the contacting is intended to reduce, or has the effect of reducing, the regular workforce by attrition, demotion, displacement, or layoff.

The agreement further stipulates that, prior to any reduction in the IBEW-represented workforce, affected IBEW employees meeting the minimum qualifications

of the job being contracted will be offered any bargaining unit work being performed by contractors. These assignments will be of a temporary nature. All current rules concerning bumping and selection will apply.

The letter agreement, concluded on July 22, defines contracting as occurring when temporary positions are being filled by non-IBEW employees; outside contractors are performing work in the IBEW bargaining unit; and cross-training is in effect.

The District agreed to notify Local 1245 in each instance of its intent to contract Local 1245 bargaining unit work.



CONFERRING WITH THE UNIT CHAIR

Business Rep. Dennis Seyfer (left) and Unit Chair Grant Ritchie (Sacramento Municipal Utility District) recently discussed the problem of SMUD having apprentices perform work outside of the classification. In subsequent talks with SMUD management, the union persuaded the District to stop the practice.

EPA may phase out EMF work

The Environmental Protection Agency may have less to say in the future about possible health effects of electric and magnetic fields (EMF).

According to Microwave News, the EPA's Office of Radiation and Indoor Air (ORIA) is proposing to phase out practically all work on non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation—including both EMFs and radio-frequency and microwave radiation—as part of the President's plan to reduce the budget deficit.

The EPA has said it doesn't intend to revise its 1990 report on possible cancer risks associated with EMFs. Instead, the agency will prepare a summary of the scientific data.

The EPA report has been at the center of the EMF controversy ever since it was released in 1990. A previous draft had classified EMFs as "probable human carcinogens," but that statement was deleted before the draft was circulated for comment.



Murray takes to the skies in 'Union Yes' balloon

They always said Art Murray would rise to great heights. And last month the Local 1245 Business Rep. did just that during the three-day Great Reno Balloon Race held in Reno, Nev.

Murray came up the winner in a drawing to see who would get to ride in the "Union Yes" balloon, one of the more unique methods ever devised to spread the labor movement's message.

The "Union Yes" balloon was piloted by Cindy LaVan, a United Auto Workers member from Sparks, Nev.

Murray captured a photo of the "Union Yes" balloon (above, left) before ascending to the heights for which he was destined. Once aloft, he used his camera to share with Utility Reporter readers this wonderful view of Reno's balloon-filled skyscape.

Alas, our black and white printing process cannot capture the spectacular colors on display that cloudless Nevada day.



No layoffs in CES

From PAGE ONE

tary layoffs in Gas and Electric T&D," McNally said.

What PG&E gets in return is flexibility in carrying forward its restructuring program, which calls for shifting some work from Division to General Construction. The agreement permits the company to utilize a one-time procedure to fill jobs coming open in GC.

Job Protection Measures

The union consented to the procedure only after securing a variety of job protection measures for Division employees. In addition to the ban on Division layoffs, and the ban on demoting any Division employee currently working in apprentice-level classifications or higher, the agreement opens up several options for employees in the lower classifications.

Options for employees in classifications below the apprentice level include the regular provisions of Title 206 of the contract, plus:

- They can opt for available positions in the expanded GC workforce, filling positions left vacant after current GC employees have an opportunity to bid up.

- When Division employees successfully elect a position into GC, they will have preferential consideration for coming back into Division as positions become available, and they do not surrender their right to the severance package. In the event they are bumped in future downsizing activity, they remain eligible for full severance benefits.

- They will have an opportunity to move into Clerical jobs, such as meter reader, after current Clerical employees have exercised their rights to bid to these positions.

- Finally, if the employee prefers severance to any of the above options, that employee can elect to take voluntary severance benefits immediately.

"Unfortunately we cannot tell our members, 'When this is all over you're going to be

exactly where you want to be,'" said Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell, who conducted much of the bargaining for the union. "But we can say this: if you want to keep working for PG&E, there's a job available to you."

Fierce Resistance

The union's fierce resistance to layoffs is not hard to understand, given the current state of the California economy. For people out of work, looking at the current job market is like peering down the barrel of a gun.

The official seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate in California in August was 9.0%, far above the national average. The actual job picture is even worse because official figures do not include underemployed workers nor workers who have given up looking for jobs.

"Losing your job at PG&E is one of the worst things that can happen as far as our members are concerned," said Local 1245 President Howard Stiefer. "What kind of future can you look forward to without a decent job?"

Preventing forced layoffs required the union to mount an aggressive defense of the labor agreement. Specifically, the union directly challenged company efforts to unilaterally transfer work from Division to GC.

The labor agreement draws a clear distinction between Division and GC. That distinction remains a legal fact, no matter how PG&E chooses to reorganize, redraw or rename its internal corporate boundary lines.

When evidence began to accumulate that PG&E management was moving unilaterally to transfer Division work into GC, the union seized the moment.

Unfair Labor Practice

After securing written documentation of the PG&E maneuver, the union filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board. The union ac-

See NEXT PAGE

The union secured a variety of job protection measures for Division employees. In addition to the ban on Division layoffs, and the ban on demoting any Division employee currently working in apprentice-level classifications or higher, the agreement opens up several options for employees in the lower classifications.

Provisions of the Tentative Agreement

1. Employees impacted through Titles 206 or 19 will have at least one employment option, if qualified, in addition to the option to elect layoff.
2. There will be no demotions of Physical employees in apprentice or journeyman classifications in CES. However, employees in these classifications may be impacted through Section 206.4.
3. An initial voluntary severance will be offered to CES employees in Gas and Electric T&D classifications, including Troubleman. Company reserves the right to cap the number of employees granted the voluntary severance. In addition, employees in the Santa Rosa Gas Load Center will be offered the voluntary severance.
4. Concurrent with the voluntary severance, Company will begin filling vacancies. Company will begin filling Serviceman vacancies immediately. In order to give employees as much choice as possible in this process, a list of other classifications and locations that Company anticipates filling will be posted in each headquarters. If they have not already done so, employees will be encouraged to submit their prebids to those headquarters and classifications. The filling of other positions will begin on October 18, 1993.
5. Employees covered by the Physical agreement in classifications other than apprentice or journeyman will have increased options under Title 206. In addition to current options, employees will be able to elect to fill a vacancy in Distribution Construction, and have rights to fill vacant entry level Clerical positions, including part-time Service Representative positions in the consolidated phone centers, that have not been filled pursuant to Titles 18 or 19. The rights to these Clerical positions will be effective for 12 months following the execution of this agreement.
6. Employees who elect to fill positions in Distribution Construction or Clerical positions will have Section 206.9(a) rights to return to Title 200 classifications. In addition, such employees will retain rights to Application II of Letter Agreement 93-42 (involuntary severance payment) in the event they are laid off from Distribution Construction.
7. Prior to filling positions in Distribution Construction, through paragraph 5 above, employees with recall rights pursuant to Section 306.14 into the Line and Gas Construction Departments will be offered re-employment. In addition, employees' Section 306.9 rights to classifications in those departments will be honored and vacancies in Distribution Construction will be filled through Title 305 on a voluntary basis by employees currently in Distribution Construction.
8. The parties will continue negotiations on the distinctions between the Title 200 and Title 300 work forces.
9. A committee to resolve issues arising out of this agreement will be established with two members appointed by Company's Manager of Industrial Relations and two members appointed by Union's Business Manager.

Note: For a copy of the executed language, contact your union Business Rep.

CES restructuring: how things stand

Division: Division Gas & Electric T&D employees are assured of continued employment at PG&E. No employee in an apprentice-level or higher classification will be demoted. Those in lower classifications will have displacement options, plus they can move into vacant GC positions, will have preferential consideration for returning to Division, and will retain their right to utilize the severance package at a later date. They can also move into Clerical positions after Clerical members have exercised their available rights. Or they can exercise severance now.

GC: General Construction: GC employees will have the opportunity to bid up and fill jobs in higher classifications in accordance with Title 205 before any Division employees transfer in. Division employees will fill in the jobs left vacant as GC employees move up. Prior to offering employment in GC to Division employees, company will first recall laid off GC employees according to Title 306 provisions.

Clerical: Clerical employees will have the opportunity to fill available positions--such as meter reader, utility clerk, or parttime service representative--before any Division Physical employees transfer in.

Nuclear, Gas Supply, Electric Supply:

Some beginning-level positions could be affected by application of Title 206 in CES. In that event, the affected employees would be given the same additional options that are being made available to CES employees.

Telecommunications:

Union has proposed additional discussions to address impact of restructuring on the Telecommunications Department. Company and union will meet in early October.



No layoffs in CES

From PAGE FIVE

cused the company of attempting to transfer work without first bargaining over the impacts: a violation of the contract.

The union was preparing to file a second Unfair Labor Practice charge when PG&E agreed to talk. The company's primary interest in terms of Gas and Electric T&D was immediately clear: it wanted to restructure, and it wanted to restructure quickly.

Going into these talks, the company's timetable called for Gas and Electric T&D restructuring to be completed by Nov. 12. The union believed this timetable could not be kept while observing the conditions of the labor agreement.

The reason is simple:

In order to restructure, the company is required to follow the layoff and demotion procedures spelled out in Title 206 of the contract. These procedures--which are designed to protect seniority rights--can be extremely time-consuming.

In addition, the union pointed out, the contract negotiated and ratified last spring requires the company to offer a voluntary severance program *prior to* initiating layoffs and demotions under Title 206. Voluntary severance itself takes 52 days to implement due to certain requirements of the federal Age Discrimination and Employment Act.

Put simply, the company might have been able to implement severance and Title 206 provisions by Nov. 12--but it wouldn't be Nov. 12 of 1993.

Turning Point

"The turning point came when the company finally realized that it had to follow Title 206 if it wanted to proceed with this downsizing and restructuring of T&D work," said Senior Assistant Business Manager Mitchell. "We made it clear we would take whatever action was necessary to enforce all relevant provisions of the contract."

A compromise then began

to take shape.

The company acceded to union requests that no Division Gas and Electric T&D employees be laid off during the current restructuring, that no Division employee in an apprentice or higher classification would be demoted, and that Division employees in classifications below the apprentice level would have a variety of employment options within the company and preferential rights for returning to Division.

In exchange, the union agreed to a one-time modified transfer procedure that will allow the company to shift some employees from Division to GC, though not as quickly as the company had wanted. (See box below: Tentative Timeline for Changes.)

Respect Employee Rights

"It was never our intention to just block the company from doing what it felt like it had to do," said Business Manager McNally.

"We want this company to be productive and to be competitive. We want them to prosper. But we also want them to respect the rights of their employees," McNally said. "We're pleased that we've reached an agreement that accommodates the interests of both sides."

Even with the new agreement, restructuring will be a bumpy road for many union members.

"There are going to be some people hit by this restructuring who end up in classifications or locations that are not their first choice," McNally said. "But at least they will have a job available to them at PG&E, with the possibility of future advancement."

McNally stressed that union members cannot afford to become complacent just because layoffs have been averted for now.

"The entire utility industry is going through a major transformation," said McNally. "Competition could mean more reductions at PG&E in the years ahead, and some of our other employers may cut jobs, too."

But competition also means there will be new companies entering the energy market and creating jobs, he noted.

"What kind and how many, we don't know," said McNally. "But this union has to get actively involved in organizing those jobs, so that energy workers at those companies will have the opportunity to pursue decent wages and benefits."

In the long run, he said, "that's the only way we can defend the level of wages and benefits we have at our current employers."

Tentative Timeline for Changes in Gas and Electric T&D

- Oct. 5:** Company posts positions currently vacant in Gas & Electric T&D.
- Oct. 8:** Company begins voluntary severance program, which runs for 45 days.
- Oct. 10:** Frozen date for jobs to be filled on Oct. 18.
- Oct. 18:** Company starts filling positions.
- Nov. 21:** Last day for employees to elect voluntary severance.
- Nov. 28:** Last day for employees to revoke their voluntary severance election.
- Nov. 29:** Company could begin giving Title 206 (Layoff and Demotion) notices at locations and positions the company has decided to reduce. Everyone receiving such notices will be given an opportunity to continue employment with PG&E in some capacity.

**For updated information:
Attend your unit meetings!**

Telephone consolidation discussions accelerate

From PAGE ONE

job at that local center is no longer there. That's a lack of work situation and the company is absolutely obligated to utilize Title 19 procedures."

The heart of the matter, in the union's view, are the rights of the employees themselves during a very traumatic time.

Hit Like an Earthquake

Telephone consolidation is going to hit Clerical members like an earthquake: uprooting entire families, trashing careers, imposing mind-boggling commutes. And shaking employees' trust in their employer.

Imposing these burdens on Clerical members makes it especially important, in the union's view, to safeguard their contractual rights.

The company's preference for Title 18 is grounded in a different priority: expediency. Bidding the jobs would greatly simplify the consolidation process for company managers.

But a reliance on bidding would seriously distort the rights of the affected employees. In fact, the mere act of consolidating telephone service into four regional centers *automatically and arbitrarily* diminishes the bidding rights of customer service representatives who happen to be currently employed outside of those four areas: San Jose, San Francisco, Fresno and Sacramento.

Tinkering with Bidding

In August, the company attempted to tinker with the bidding process by proposing a Letter Agreement that would have improved the bidding rights of some of those employees currently working outside the four areas. But that proposal, it turns out, would automatically diminish the bidding rights of some employees currently working *within* those areas.

Either way, some Clerical members with legitimate claims to jobs at the regional centers would get something less than they deserve.

In mid-September the union convened a meeting of 28 rank and file Clerical members from throughout the PG&E system to help evaluate the union's options.

The members saw winners and losers, no matter how the bidding process was structured. After day-long deliberations, there was no consensus to change the contract if it was merely going to improve the lot of some members at the expense of others. (See story, page 8: "Clericals contemplate consolidation conundrum".)

Seeing no practical way to make bidding work in an equitable manner, the union redoubled its efforts to block any effort by the company to utilize Title 18 in the initial staffing of the telephone centers.

Determined Opposition

Going into October, the union's determined opposition finally seemed to be having an impact on management's calculations.

"It's in their own best interests to avoid a big confrontation over bidding these jobs," said Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, who has conducted much of the union's bargaining over impacts of telephone consolidation. "We assume the company wants to move ahead rather than get bogged down in a lengthy confrontation."

A confrontation could prove lengthy indeed, according to Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell.

"We notified the company that if they go ahead with their Title 18 plan, we will grieve it, we'll carry that through to arbitration, and we'll take this thing into the

courts," said Mitchell.

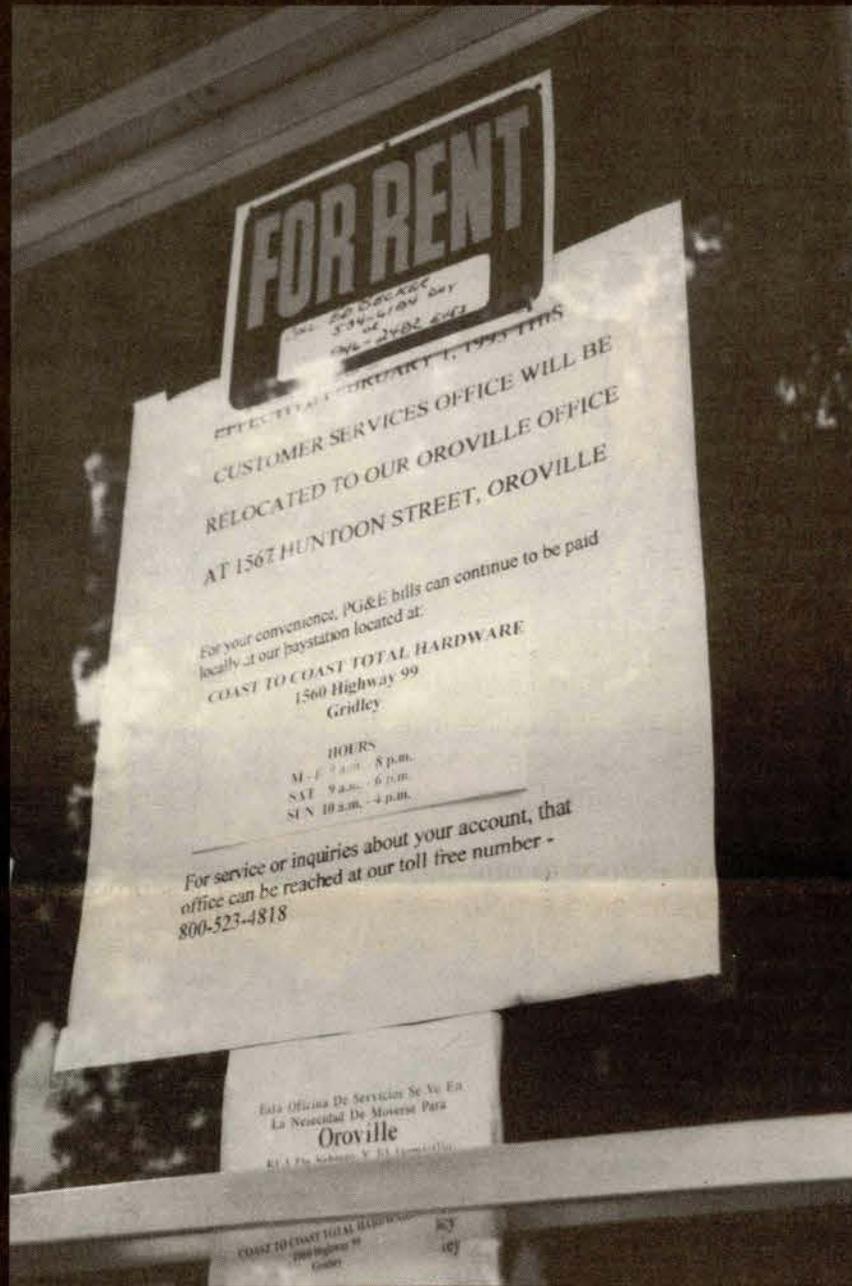
"And in the end," he added, "there's a chance they might have to undo the whole process—reassigning people,

making inequity payments, the whole mess. It's a safer bet for them to go with Title 19."

Application of Title 19, in

addition to triggering regular displacement options, would give "A" rights to vacant positions for a period of time to all employees displaced by the closing of local service centers. Although employees lives will still be disrupted by consolidation, the application of this Title will enable some members, based on seniority, to remain closer to home than they might otherwise have been able to.

Sign of the times



FOR RENT

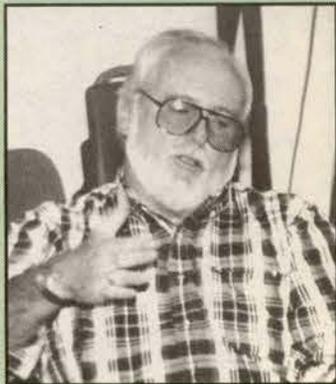
This sign hanging in the door of a former PG&E customer service office in Gridley is a portent of things to come as PG&E increasingly consolidates functions...at the expense of localized service.

Committee of Clerical members ponders PG&E telephone consolidation issues.

See Report on Next Page

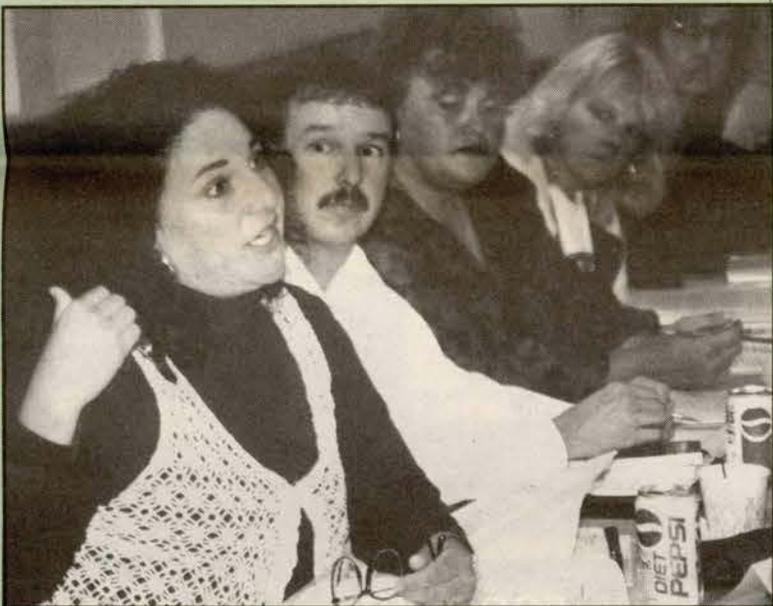


John Martinez



'What is the right and fair thing to do?'

*Business Manager
Jack McNally*



From left: Olivia Mercado, Greg Spoonhour, Cathy Barber, Barbara Fain, and Cathy Wood.



'The company created a situation that would not treat all employees equally.'

Carole Pacheco

Clerical members contempla

The Clerical bargaining unit representatives who met Sept. 17 at Local 1245 headquarters in Walnut Creek faced a genuine conundrum: PG&E had presented the union a problem that had no solution.

At least no solution that offered equitable treatment for Clerical members whose jobs are being shut down to make way for PG&E's four regional telephone centers.

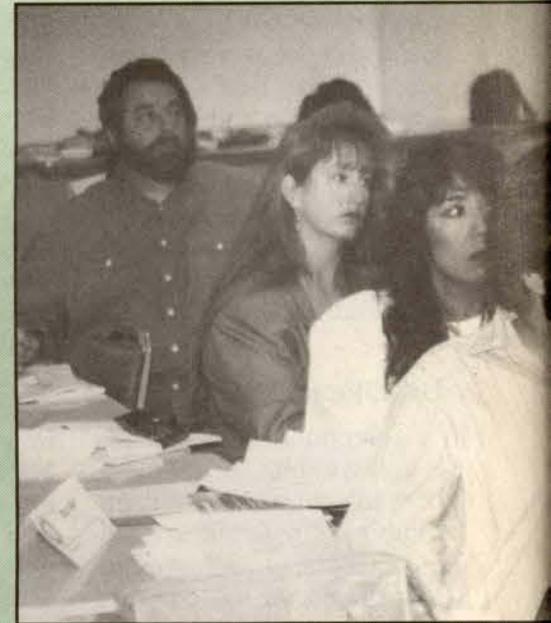
PG&E's original telephone consolidation plan called for the new regional centers to be filled through bidding. (See story, "Phone Consolidation talks accelerate," on page one.) This method would arbitrarily diminish the bidding rights of customer service representatives who do not happen to currently work in the bidding areas where these regional telephone centers are to be located.

In August, PG&E offered the union a choice that really amounted to no choice: sign a Letter Agreement that would improve the rights of those employees, while simultaneously diminishing the rights of employees elsewhere.

The union was already on record in favor of using Title 19 instead. But PG&E was offering something else. The union had a decision to make.

What is Right?

Business Manager Jack McNally asked the 28 Clerical members for their



Telephone consolidation issues are pondered and Clerical members Terri Ferguson, Dolly Gray, and Cathy Barber.

thoughts, posing the question in its most basic form: "What is the right and fair thing to do?"

Throughout the day, the Clerical members pondered this question. Despite their own personal—and mutually conflicting—stakes in the outcome, they attempted to examine the issue dispassionately and think about the impact on the bargaining unit as a whole.

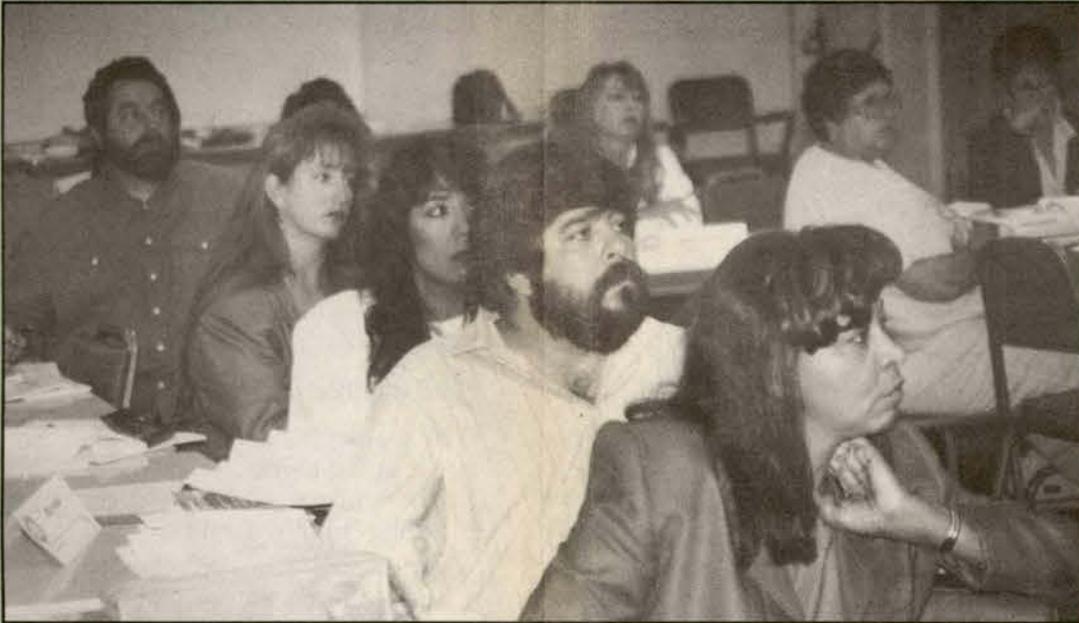
Accept the Letter Agreement? Or reject it. With members being hurt either way, no consensus was possible.

Several members pointed out that the

Special Advisory Committee: Telephone Center Staffing

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Donna Ambeau | Howard Danielson |
| Pam Caballero | Thelma Dowell |
| Carole Pacheco | John Martinez |
| Maryann Navarros | Greg Spoonhour |
| Leslie Davis | Olivia Mercado |
| Elaine Vargas | Art Garza |
| Therese Kennett | Mary Davis |
| Barbara Fain | Helen Munoz |
| Norma Ricker | Chris Habecker |
| Bob Castillo | Joy O'Hagan |
| Cathy E. Wood | Del Rodriguez |
| Charles E. Warren | Dada Rao |
| Terri Ferguson | Linda Bostic |
| Dolly Gray | Cathy Barber |

ers contemplate consolidation conundrum



Telephone consolidation issues are pondered by (from left) Business Rep. Wayne Greer and Clerical members Terri Ferguson, Dolly Gray, Art Garza and Norma Ricker.

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company had put the union in a no-win situation.

"We are faced with a decision that the company made, and that is to downsize and consolidate functions," said Carole Pacheco, a service representative in the Records Department in Livermore. "The company created a situation that would not treat all employees equally."

Pacheco noted that the company had studied the business end of consolidation very carefully. She asked: "Why wasn't a lot of study done in regards to the contract and how [consolida-



Thelma Dowell

tion] will impact employees?"

"If the company really cared about its employees, they would have thought of this in General Bargaining, or before they even created the phone centers," said Mary Davis-Lauth, a Cupertino service representative. "They know full well how much it's going to impact people...."

During general bargaining the union did, in fact, make numerous proposals for softening the blow of telephone consolidation. The proposals were rejected by the company.

Rocky Ride

Some members warned that Clerical employees needed to brace themselves for big changes, not just today but for many years to come.

Union members "are going to be on a rocky [ride] for the next five to ten years," warned Olivia Mercado, a customer service representative in Stockton. "Some people are going to be hurt."

"I think all of our members have got to open their eyes," said Therese Kennett, a meter reader in San Francisco.

"They really have to see that change is coming. Whether it be through telephone consolidation, in their workplace, in day-to-day operations—it's coming. And you

need to prepare yourself to deal with that. Educate yourself on it as much as you possibly can.

"Then when the change hits, it's not so daunting. You can take it in stride and run with it," said Kennett.

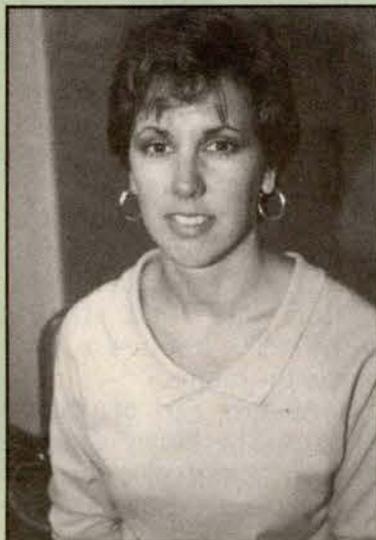


From left: Mary Davis-Lauth, Donna Ambeau, Maryan Caballero.



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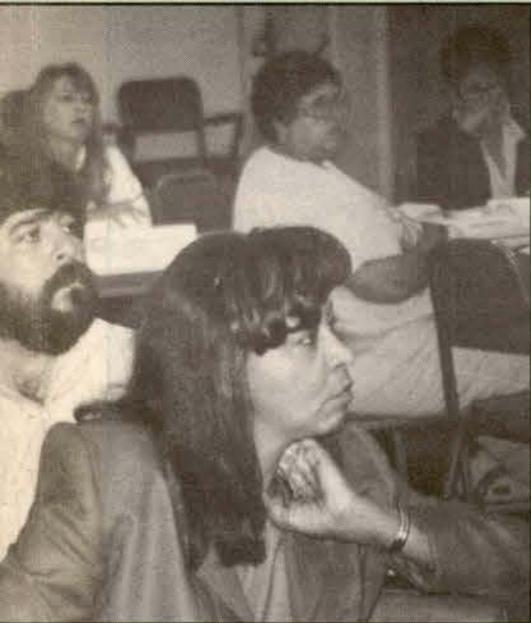


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Mary Davis-Lauth

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From left: Mary Davis-Lauth, Business Rep. Lula Washington, Donna Ambeau, Maryann Navarros (foreground), and Pam Caballero.

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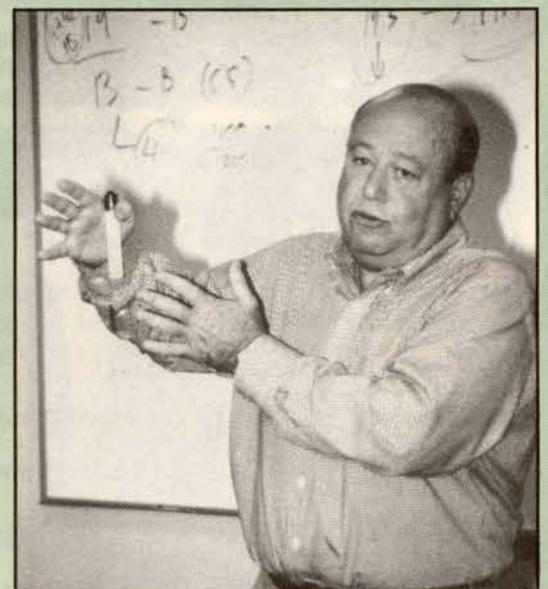
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Mary Davis-Lauth



'Our members have got to open their eyes [and] see that change is coming. And you need to prepare yourself to deal with that.'

Therese Kennett



Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell describes the problem facing the union.

Another downside to downsizing

Does PG&E restructuring threaten equal opportunity?

By Eric Wolfe

When Tom Johnson landed a job at PG&E he thought he had a job for life. That's what everybody told him, anyway.

Then came restructuring and downsizing.

Johnson, with less than three years of service, knew his "job for life" could be in jeopardy. He checked out the job market. But even with his college degree in Business Administration, Johnson saw nothing that paid "at the rate I'm being paid now and [with] the benefits I receive."

Calary Blue, like Johnson, hired on at PG&E thinking she would be working there "quite a while." Downsizing, she says, put everything in question. With less than two years service, she had to ask herself: Will I have a job or not have a job? Should I look for a different job? Maybe find a place with cheaper rent?

The just-completed agreement between Local 1245 and PG&E regarding Gas and Electric T&D downsizing has spared Johnson and Blue the trauma of unemployment—for now. But their short time with the company still leaves them

vulnerable in any future downsizing.

That's because the same union that secured them a solid package of wages and benefits is based on the principle that seniority should count for something.

It's the workers themselves who made seniority a top concern in the early days of union organizing. A seniority system protects a worker's investment of time and toil, making it harder to toss workers out after they have given decades of their lives to a company.

Johnson has no quarrel with seniority in principle. He knows that someday, if he can hang on long enough, seniority will work to his advantage.

But Johnson and Blue think there is another principle at stake in downsizing: the principle of equal opportunity.

Equal Opportunity

Blue, a groundman, is one of the few women in a Physical classification. Johnson, a utility worker, is African-American. Both are examples of new kinds of people trying to break into an employment area long dominated by white men. Both are examples of

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Tom Johnson

PG&E's commitment to help that process along.

And both are leading candidates to be out the door if PG&E begins laying people off. That's not an idea they can easily accept.

"This is 1993. This is California. You won't come here and see only white males. You come here and see a wide

variety of people," said Johnson. "Why then can we not work together? Why should it be a predominantly white male workforce?"

Diversity is Important

"Diversity is important," said Blue, "because that's the way this world really is. The world is not white men. And this trade has been limited to white men for a long time... There are skilled people of all persuasions and everyone should have an equal opportunity."

Despite their strong feelings about diversity in the workplace, neither Blue nor Johnson expressed any personal animosity toward white men. They clearly don't want to pick a fight. They just want a chance to work.

Aside from her own personal interest in hanging onto her job, Blue worried that corporate downsizing could affect the company's ability to do the work.

Concern Over Contractors

"Right now we're mobilized. We know the system. We can respond quickly," said Blue. "A lot of the people I work with have worked in this yard their whole time.

They have accumulated a lot of knowledge and a lot of skill" that is specific to the San Francisco system.

After downsizing, Blue speculated, the company may have to rely on contractors who lack that accumulated knowledge. She said service to the customer could suffer as a result.

Johnson agreed.

With its own employees, he said, PG&E knows "the job will be done and will be done right. With a contractor, who knows?"

They are not alone in their concern. State regulators have also expressed concern about maintaining quality of service as market forces are brought to bear on electric utilities, which until recently have enjoyed the status of regulated monopolies.

These concerns will continue to be part of the debate as PG&E considers what kind, and what size, of workforce it wants to carry into the future.

Another part of that debate will be the fate of women and people of color who have just recently entered this industry, and now wonder if there is a place for them here after all.

'Diversity is important because that's the way this world really is,' said Calary Blue. 'There are skilled people of all persuasions and everyone should have an equal opportunity.'



Calary Blue

Hustons say 'Thank you'

(Editor's note: This letter comes from the family of Kevin Huston, a Local 1245 member injured earlier this year.)

This old world can be harsh and cold, but loving acts of kindness warm it up considerably and make it well worth living in.

Deepest thanks to all those unforgettable people who gave of themselves in so many ways, little and big. Thank you very much indeed for your kindness and generosity, love and support.

To Mike Scardina, Mike Olaeta, Rod Fort, Gordy, Jack Forcier, Jack Fisher, Eric Kropp, Phyllis (with love) Kate, Teddy Bear, Mo, Curly, and Larry, Gary Donat, Gary Hughes, Guy, Cass, Chubaca, Tyrone and to all the wonderful people and their families, too many to list here, who came through for us.

Sincerely, *The Hustons: Kevin, Marilyn and Grayson*

A note from Cross family

(Editor's note: This letter comes from the family of Bobby Cross, who died in an accident earlier this year.)

Dear Local 1245,

We want to say thank you to all the Local 1245 members and staff for everything they have done.

So many line hands took a day off work and flew in for the funeral. We really appreciated that. And we appreciated the union staff who were able to come.

We are grateful for all the donations that came in for Chris and Stephanie, Bobby's children.

Bob and I really, really appreciate what everybody has done.

-Bob and Donna, Toni and Kim, Chris and Stephanie

Andrews helped union grow

The death of former Business Rep. Lee Andrews earlier this year prompted a letter from former Local 1245 Business Manager Ron Weakley, who praised Andrews' "years of support to the development and growth of 1245."

"Lee was one tough line-man and was known as being

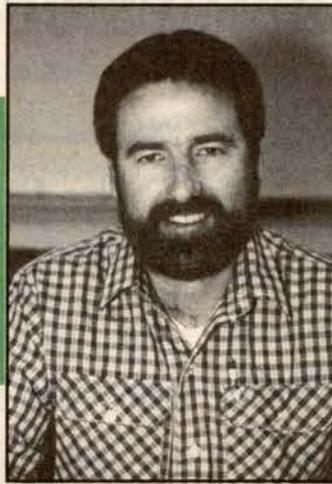
able to clean out a bar or a workyard where any anti-union bums or scabs might crawl out of their holes and mouth off," Weakley wrote.

He described Andrews as "a smiling, soft-spoken gentleman most all of the time," but noted that Andrews was not afraid to make a stand when pushed too far.



HONORING VALENTINO

PG&E volunteers assisting in construction of a Memorial Wall at union headquarters to honor the late Business Rep. Joe Valentino and other members are (from left): Fieldmen Jim Rorie and Steve Lopez; Mike Longo, foreman; and Bernie Ostrom, equipment operator.



Steward's Story

Dan Mayo
Pacific Gas & Electric
Yosemite Div. Electric T&D

Steward's role ranges from 'willing ear' to 'private eye'

Sometimes the most effective thing a Local 1245 shop steward can do is simply listen, says Dan Mayo, a PG&E line-man in Yosemite Division.

"A lot of times people just want to have a willing ear, somebody to talk to, to bounce their problems off of," says Mayo.

But sometimes members' problems require investigation and action. No longer just a "willing ear," the steward may have to adopt the role of, well, private eye.

Mayo recalls one case where an employee was accused by a member of the public of following school kids in a company truck and making obscene gestures.

"All this was without any evidence whatsoever," said Mayo. In reality, the accused employee had observed a car driving past him several times, giving him the feeling he was being watched. Finally he jumped in his company truck and followed the car, but lost track of it in a residential area. Later a mother complained to the company that he had followed her child.

Mayo said it was a mistake for the employee to follow the car, but when the employee was given a Decision Making Leave, Mayo filed a grievance.

Then he began his own investigation.

"I requested copies of all the pertinent documents, including written statements of witnesses," said Mayo. "By doing a comparison between the statements, I was able to point out inconsistencies.

"Also by doing a little bit of outside work, looking through yearbooks and stuff like that, I was able to establish that one of the witnesses—the main

witness—actually lied about their story."

In all, Mayo figures he spent about three days of his own time researching the case. But there was a payoff: the DML was reduced to coaching and counseling, "which is what it should have been in the first place," said Mayo.

Mayo has found that stewards are sometimes called upon to deal with health and safety matters.

"A lot of times the first person a concerned worker will go to is the shop steward, thinking that the union can help out in a situation. Many times it can. Sometimes just the threat of going to the union is enough to make management work to make a safer environment for workers," Mayo noted.

Health and safety is an area where Mayo has developed particular expertise. He served on the committee that examined the rubber gloving issue in 1990 and developed an interest in the potential problems associated with electric and magnetic fields. Now a member of the union's EMF committee, Mayo has participated in the committee's educational efforts. He has also offered testimony on EMF to state agencies.

But being a steward can mean learning as well as instructing. Sometimes, for example, an employee will come to Mayo with a complaint that seems to have no foundation in the contract.

"A lot of times just talking one on with the employee you can point out where maybe they are mistaken," said Mayo. "Sometimes it's kind of an educational process for the steward to go back to the contract and look up the actual language and find out what it says."

*Union assists member at Truckee-Donner PUD***Woman wins major settlement in sexual harassment case**

By Eric Wolfe

Love and justice were at the center of an unusual dispute involving a Local 1245 member at the Truckee-Donner Public Utility District.

It all began with the most basic of human encounters: two people fell in love. She was an employee of the Truckee-Donner PUD. He was the District's manager.

Shortly thereafter, the manager advised the Board of Directors of this relationship. The Board decided to redesign its nepotism policy to disallow romantic relationships between employees.

Consulting Webster's, we find "nepotism" defined as favoritism shown to a relative. The boss hires his nephew, for example. President John Kennedy appoints Robert Kennedy to be attorney general, for example.

As a society we are squeamish about nepotism. Our values tell us that people should advance based on effort, not connections. Hiring relatives creates the appearance of a conflict of interest, regardless of the relative's qualifications for the job.

After the Kennedy appointment, Congress passed legislation prohibiting relatives of the President from serving in the cabinet. Which is why Hillary Rodham Clinton is an informal advisor on health care rather than attorney general.

But that's another story. The Truckee-Donner PUD Board of Directors apparently believed the relationship between employee and manager posed a threat to the smooth functioning of the workplace, even though the relationship did not fall within the classic definition of nepotism. The Board ordered that employees be interviewed about the relationship.

The Board claimed to be acting in the best interests of the District. But the Board's conduct quickly took on the appearance of a witch-hunt.

The Board asked for the employee's resignation, without success. The Board advised the manager that he would receive a substantial raise and other benefits if he could persuade the employee to resign. No luck there, either.

The Board suggested the manager get the employee pregnant in order to get her off the job. That didn't happen either.

Two More Surveys

The Board undertook other actions to coerce her into resigning. Two additional employee surveys were conducted, with questions designed to elicit remarks critical of the relationship between the manager and the employee.

According to the union, all of this Board activity had the effect of poisoning the work environment for the

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employee. There was certainly evidence for reaching this conclusion.

An especially offensive act of harassment occurred after the employee, in a good-faith effort to reduce her contact with the manager, applied for a different position within the District. Some of her fellow employees became angry, apparently suspecting she would be the beneficiary of favoritism. A sexually-harassing poster was hung on a bulletin board in the District office in response to her bid.

But it appeared that, if anything, reverse favoritism was being shown with respect to her bid. She received information that the test for the position would be rigged so that she would fail. She also received information that some of the employees intended to make it impossible

for her to pass the probationary period.

The union attempted to resolve this conflict informally. At first.

But when the Board attempted to rewrite its nepotism policy, the union actively opposed it. The union also formally opposed the repeated employee surveys, viewing these as a form of harassment.

Grievance Filed

Finally the employee went out on disability, claiming emotional problems stemming from the treatment she was receiving at work. The Board seized upon this opportunity to terminate her, without any determination being made regarding whether her disability was temporary or permanent.

The union filed a grievance.

"We made a presentation to the Board asking that they reinstate her with back pay," said Jane Brunner, the union's staff attorney handling the case.

"Their position was that she was terminated because she was out on Workers Comp. Our position was that she was out on Workers Comp because she had been subjected to sexual harassment and that Workers Comp was merely a pretext the Board used to fire her," said Brunner.

Brunner noted that if the Board was truly concerned about this personal relation-

ship at the workplace, it could just as easily have targeted the man for removal.

"They didn't force him to resign," Brunner said. "They went after her."

The case went to arbitration, with the union representing the employee. About the same time, the employee and her private attorney began to prepare a discrimination lawsuit against the District. Ultimately, the Board agreed to give the employee a sizeable financial settlement to resolve the dispute.

Brunner said the case sends an important message to women:

"If you are being harassed, take some action. Go to a supervisor," said Brunner.

If management doesn't take care of it, the union will file a grievance against the manager, regardless of whether the harasser is in management or in the bargaining unit.

"We believe it is management's responsibility to maintain a workplace atmosphere that is free of sexual harassment," said Brunner.

The Moral

This story has a moral: victims of sexual harassment have substantial legal rights, and they should not be afraid to exercise them.

It also has a happy ending. At last report, the relationship between the manager and the employee had survived the ordeal.

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Are pension plans being put in harm's way?

By Orv Owen

It has been reported in various publications that, after years of big profits on pension investments, low interest rates reduced many pension funds' investment earnings last year to levels far below the expectations of pension plan managers.

It has also been reported that many pension managers

are hunting for higher-yielding investments, but in seeking higher returns they could be putting current retirees' nest eggs in harm's way.

Some big companies have been holding down the amount of money they set aside for retirees by betting that they can reap higher rates of return on their pension investments. As a result, some pension funds could

create a gap between their pension promises and their pension funds' financial security and funding. It might be prudent to ask the managers of all our retirees pension plans as to the security and funding of any pension plan in which Local 1245 members and retirees have an interest.

In next month's article I will report on the activities

and happenings of our retiree chapters around the system. All Local 1245 retirees are welcome at any of our current chapter meetings. If you need a ride or assistance to the meetings, please let the union Business Representative in your area know.

And remember: we need each other just as much now as we did on the job. Keep the faith!

IBEW
Local
1245



Retirees Corner

Social Security caps earnings

After you reach 70, you can earn any amount and still draw your full Social Security benefit. If under age 70 there is a limit on how much you can earn.

For 1993, if you're 65 or over, \$1 in benefits will be withheld for each \$3 you earn above \$10,560. However, if 1993 is your first retirement year, you'll get your full monthly check for each month in which you neither work as an employee for more than \$880 nor perform "substantial services in self-employment," regardless of your total earnings for the year. After 1999, the age at which this withholding rate applies will increase as the retirement age increases.

The earnings test takes account only of income earned from a job. It does not affect your entitlement to Medicare benefits.

Check out groups before making a contribution

The average senior citizen today is deluged with "invitations" to join a wide variety of organizations claiming to represent the elderly. How is an older person to determine which are legitimate organizations genuinely committed to working on behalf of the elderly—and which ones are only out for money?

Senior Citizens News devised the following checklist for seniors to use when they are considering joining or contributing to an organization:

- Have you ever heard of this organization?
- Do you know anyone who is a member? If so, what do they say about it?
- If you are a union retiree, what does your union say about this group?
- Does the group's printed material frighten you by threatening that you will lose your Social Security benefits?
- Do you get repeated direct-mail solicitations from the group, especially after you have just given money?

Some mailings come in expensive packages filled with glossy multi-colored materials. Others are designed to look like an official government publication, arriving in a manila envelope with red and black printing. On the front of these envelopes, usually in large red letters, are words indicating that "Extremely Important Social Security Information" is enclosed. The message inside is usually written in a manner geared to frighten the recipient into sending money to protect benefits such as Social Security and Medicare.

You should be aware of such groups. In many instances they are merely "shell operations" trying to get money from vulnerable older people. "In many cases, they are experts in fund-raising, not in the problems of the elderly," warned National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSC) Executive Director Lawrence Smedley.

Several of these groups have been the subject of unflattering investigative reports by the national media. Groups that the media has investigated include: The Seniors Coalition, United Seniors Coalition and National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare. These groups have also been the subject of Congressional investigations to determine if they are misusing their tax-exempt postal



Calm, 1993 ucs

status. Smedley reminded seniors that "there are several reputable organizations that have worked on behalf of the elderly for years and most of them, including NCSC, are members of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO)."

LCAO is a coalition of 33 groups that represent millions of senior citizens, families, children and individuals with disabilities from all parts of the country.

According to Smedley, the Seniors Coalition, United Seniors Coalition and National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare have never been part of the LCAO.

Seniors beware!

Foundation wants to mobilize seniors

By the year 2030, Americans may spend a third of their lives in retirement because of the sharp increase in life expectancy.

The Emeritus Foundation, a non-profit organization based in Washington DC, says it's time to take another look at what we call the "golden years."

"Our older citizens are well positioned to be an important resource in solving our national problems," says Emeritus Foundation President Lawrence Mirel. They are "healthier, wealthier and possessed of more skills, time and civic commitment than popular opinion recognizes. In any calculation of national resources it would be a grave error to omit the talents of

our older population," he says.

The Emeritus Foundation proposes a national program for mobilizing the time and talents of our older citizens. It calls for a new stage in the life cycle between active career and retirement, one that would allow people to continue their productive pursuits on "a schedule suited to their ages and objectives," says Mirel.

"The foundation notes that many senior citizens seem to lose their identity following retirement. Most people are defined by what they do in their lives, by their occupation.

"Perhaps the greatest loss that comes with retirement is the loss of that identification," says Mirel. "We be-

come lumped together with others similarly situated under the headings 'retired,' 'senior citizens,' or 'elders'—terms that provide no clue to the identity of the person so labeled."

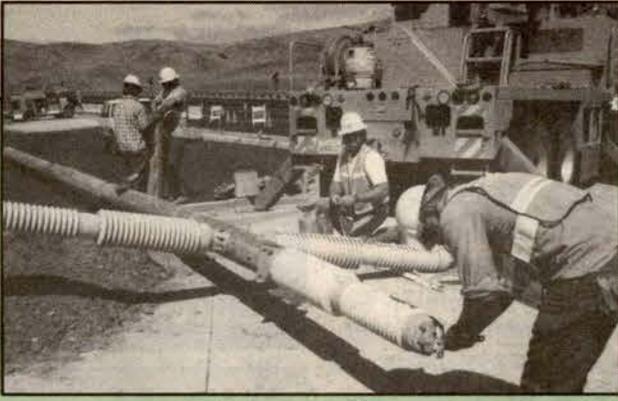
The Emeritus Foundation is designing and carrying out experimental projects which demonstrate how the professional talents and experience of retired Americans can be placed at the service of their communities. Several organizations are funding the foundation's work, including a grant from the National Science Foundation.

For information, contact:

Emeritus Foundation
1614-20th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009



"I don't know. I keep losing socks in it."



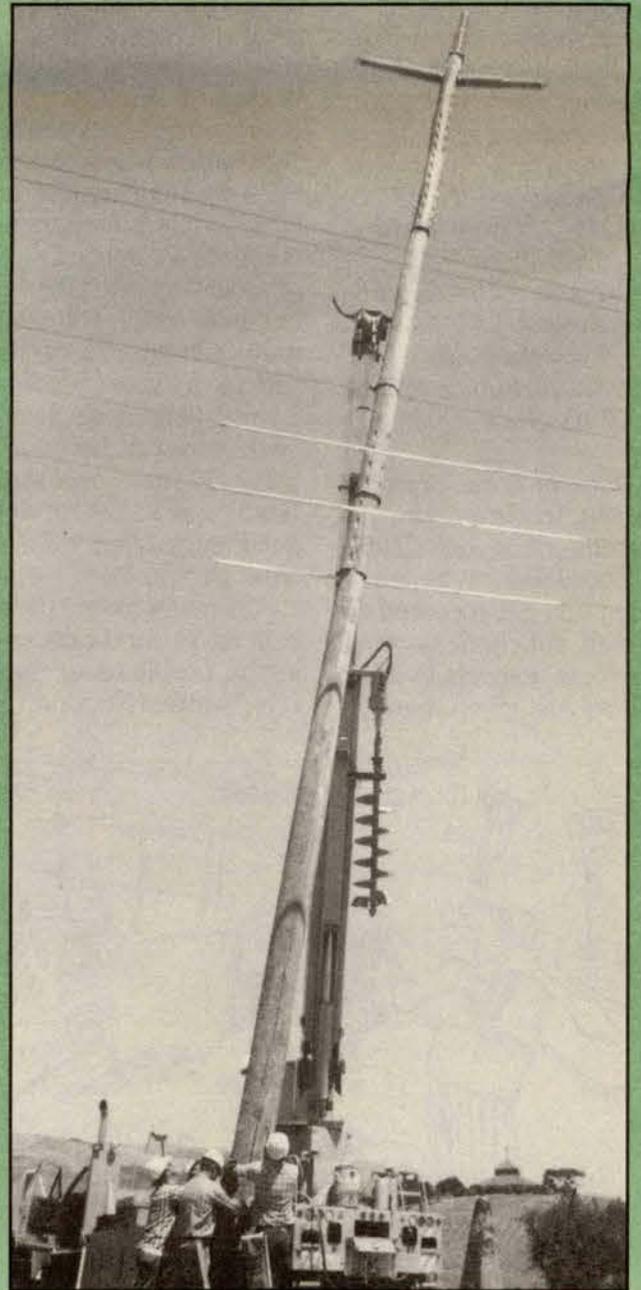
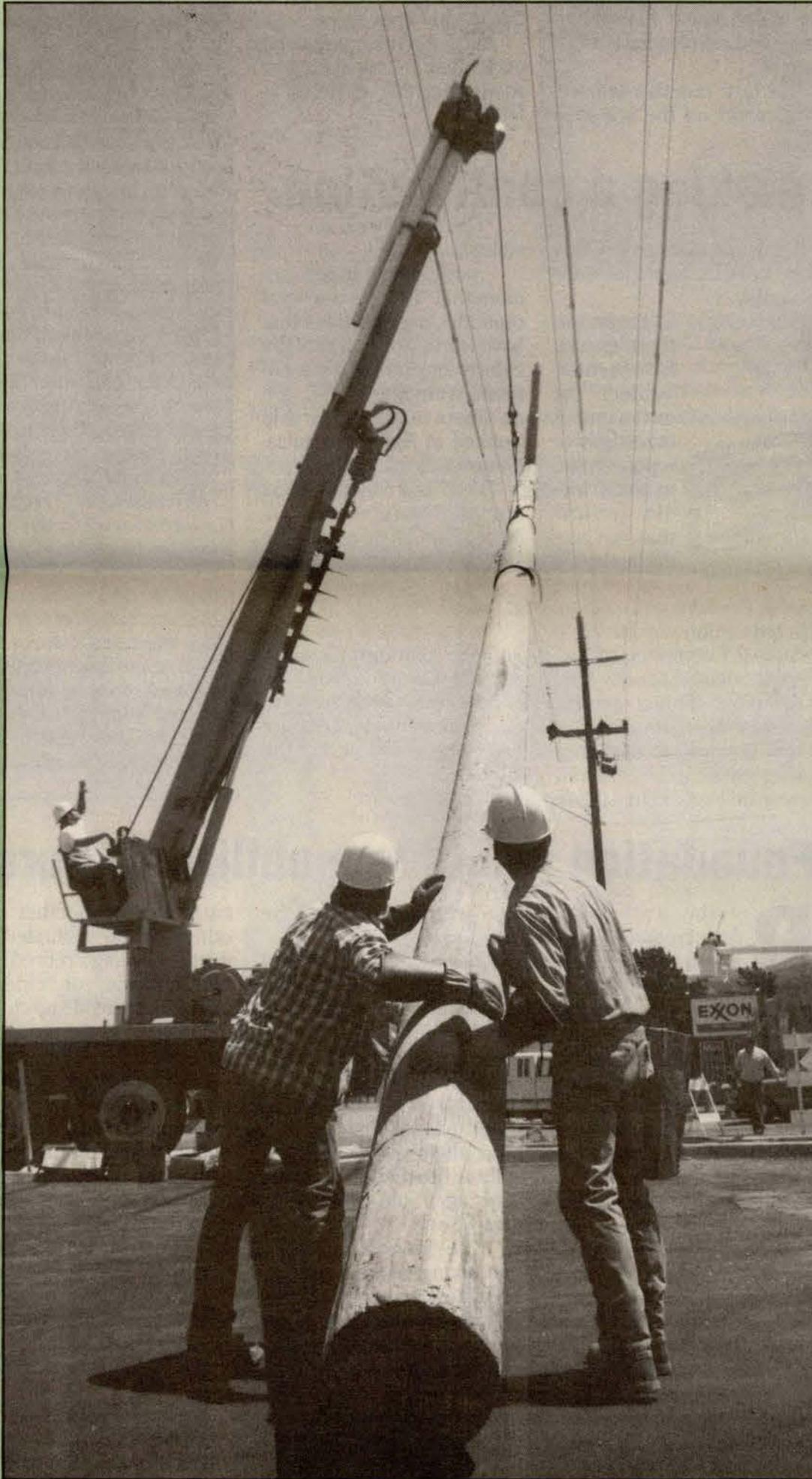
Going Up!

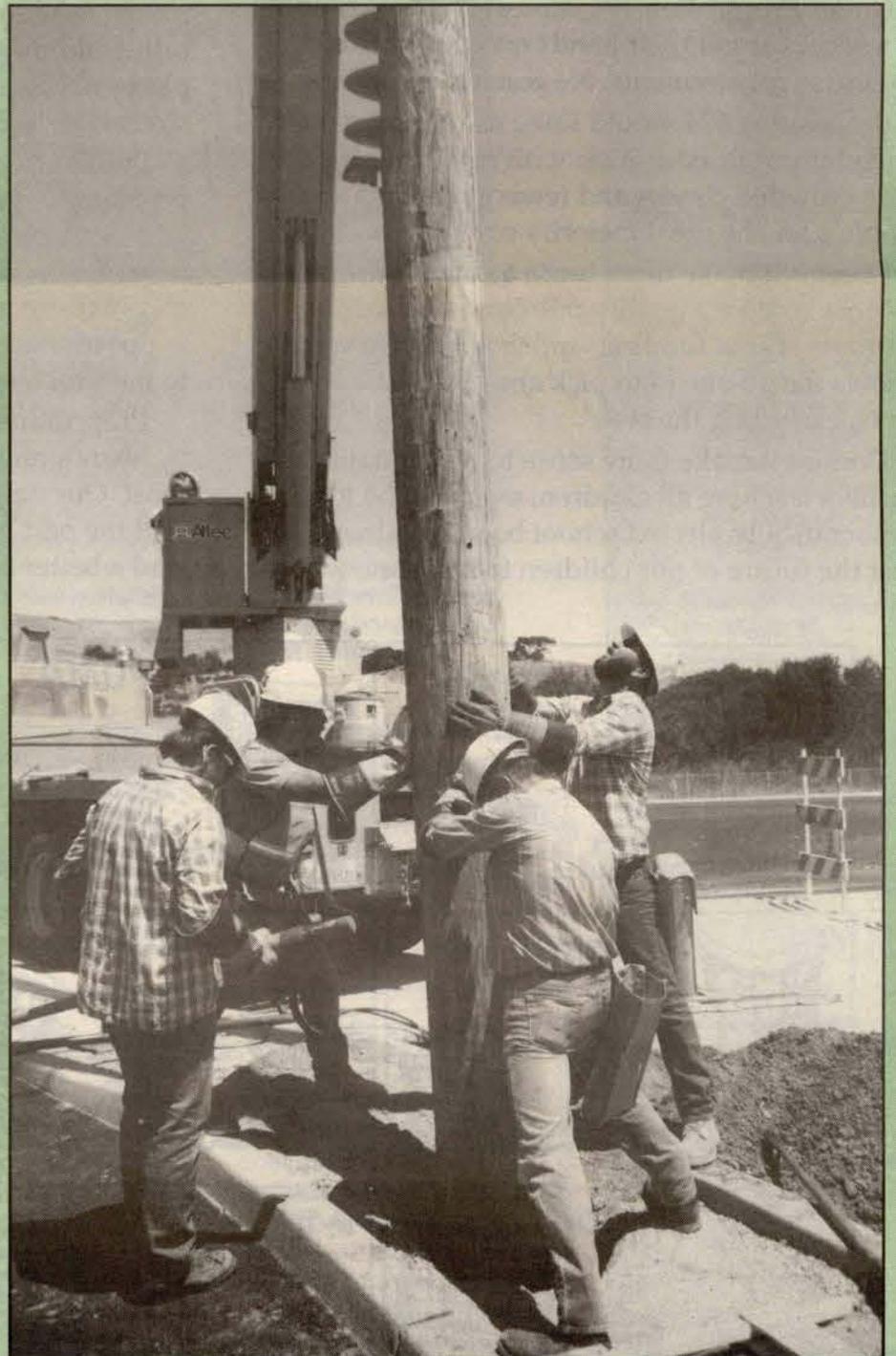
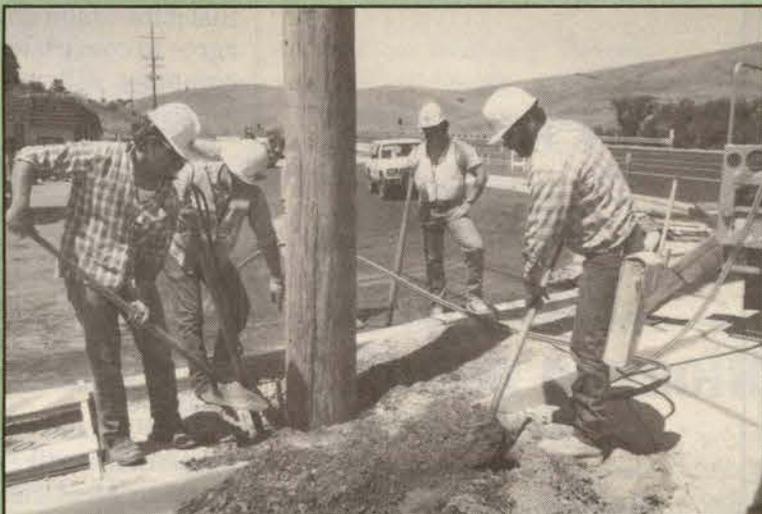
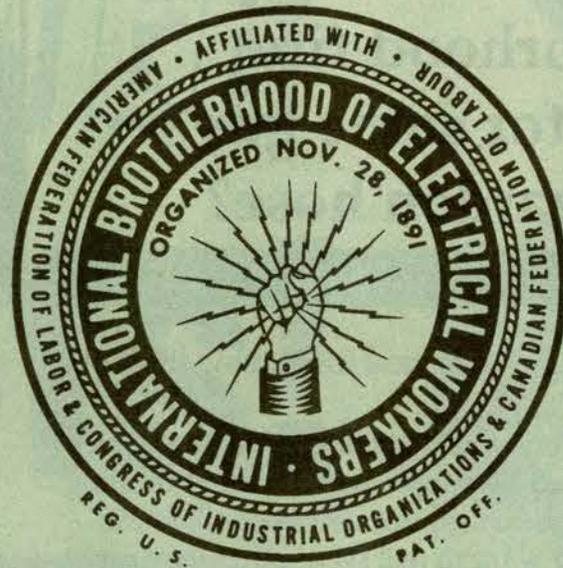
Combined PG&E transmission and Electric T&D crews worked together on installing poles and moving a 60KV line to make room for a widening of the road in the Monterey/Salinas area last summer.

The 70-foot pole pictured here and on the next page went up at the intersection of Correl DeTierra and Highway 68.

Working on the Electric T&D crew were Ron Tomasini, subforeman and 25-year union member; Jeff Rhed, lineman, 10 years; Mark Menetee, lineman, 14 years; and Steve Borges, lineman, 17 years.

Working on the Transmission crew were Pat French, a 14-year union member; Ray Rademacher, 21 years; Bob Minetti, 21 years; and Jim McKell.





Photos by Eric Wolfe

Would you trade your neighborhood fire station for some guy with a garden hose?



...in order to improve local firefighting through "competition"?

Not likely. You would want to know that your home is protected by people with certified training, working with the best equipment tax dollars can buy. You would want to feel secure that they care about fire prevention--not that they might go out and set a fire to create "business" for themselves.

Under Proposition 174, almost anyone could set up a school to get their hands on your tax dollars. No course requirements. No teacher certification.

Proposition 174 would force us to replace lost funds for public education with new taxes, or accept more crowded classes and fewer textbooks and supplies for the great majority of children.

Doesn't it make more sense to make sure all our children receive a quality public education through adequate school funding--rather than give voucher schools the go-ahead to pick and choose their students, excluding the rest.

Doesn't it make more sense to have qualified teachers teaching all children, overseen by local, democratically-elected school boards--rather than trust the future of our children to someone who

may have no qualifications at all and is accountable to no one?

Vouchers Reform Nothing

Nobody disputes that public schools face serious problems. State funding for California's schools has slipped to 42nd in the country at a time when almost 200,000 new students begin school each year.

Students and teachers face overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teaching supplies, and deteriorating buildings and safety conditions. In some places drugs and gang violence spill over from the streets into schools.

Public education didn't cause these problems; the problems come from society to the schools. Decent jobs available to everyone who wants to work, and responsible, progressive tax policies requiring corporations and the rich to pay their fair share to support vital public services: these are the solutions to the problems of public education.

Proposition 174 would make the problems worse by abandoning the very children who need help the most. Our neighborhood public schools still represent the best hope for all our children to learn to lead a better life.

POINT OF VIEW

No to NAFTA

(From PAGE THREE)

ern California Edison. These plants are not subject to the strict clean air requirements that apply in California. That translates into cheaper construction costs.

And with the average Mexican wage of 60 cents to \$1 per hour to build, operate and maintain these plants, it becomes clear how jobs can be eliminated in the utility industry in the United States, and particularly in California.

The supporters of NAFTA argue that the agreement would generate demand for US products in Mexico while creating more jobs in the US.

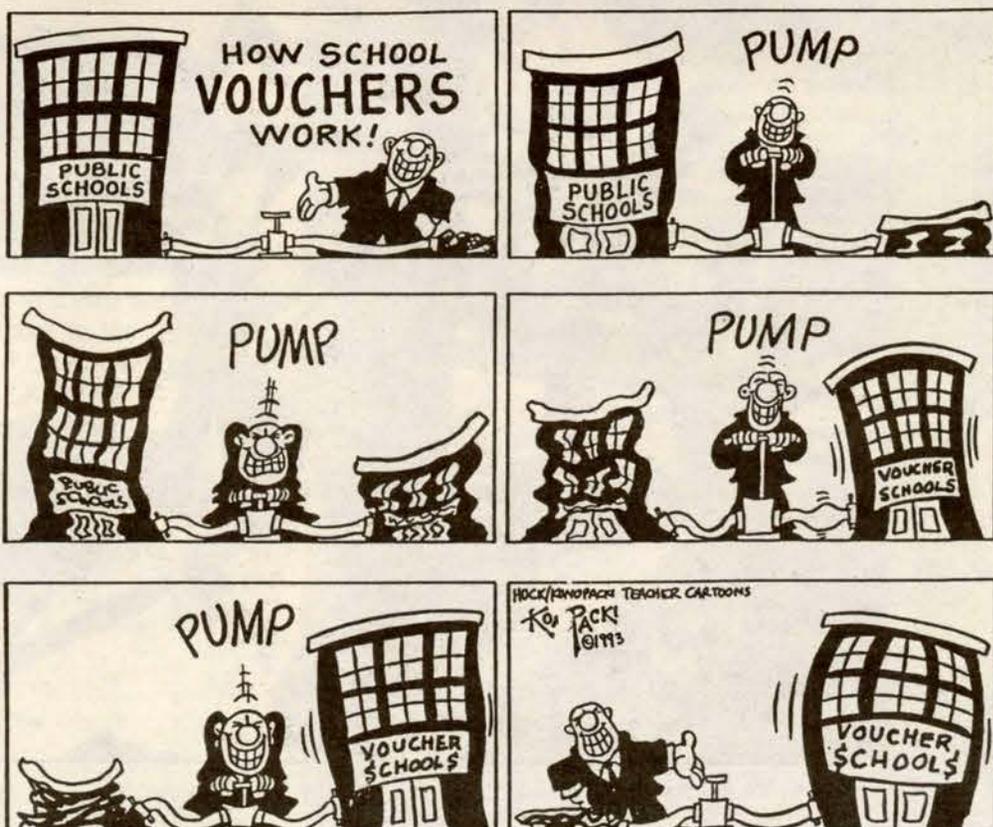
The fact is, most of the current trade with Mexico involves US-owned multinational corporations shipping plant equipment to Mexico and shipping finished products back to the US.

With the Mexican policy of low wages, and with the increasingly high skills of Mexican workers, jobs will gravitate from the US to Mexico. In addition, the attitude at the bargaining table will be the threat that if the union does not agree to concessions the company will move to Mexico.

The United States needs fair trade agreements in an era of global economy. However, this agreement goes to great lengths to protect investors while leaving working people to fend for themselves.

NAFTA and the side agreements will reduce working Americans to a lower standard of living while doing virtually nothing to help Mexican workers lift themselves out of poverty.

Congress needs to be told: "No. Not this NAFTA."



Preserve
Public
Education
Vote No
on
Prop. 174