State labor federation calls for elected CPUC

The California Constitution should be amended to provide for the election of commissioners to the California Public Utilities Commission, the California Labor Federation declared at its biennial convention in Sacramento last month.

The federation, representing two million union members statewide, also declared its opposition to performance-based ratemaking over concerns that it "would compromise the public's health, safety and environment." The federation's declaration comes in response to a utility restructuring plan put forward by the CPUC in April that would create competitive retail markets in electricity and subject regulated utilities to so-called performance-based ratemaking.

Critics, including Local 1245, have charged that performance-based ratemaking would create incentives for utilities to cut investments in safety and training. CPUC commissioners are currently appointed by the governor. If the federation's position were enacted into law, commissioners would be elected directly by California's citizens.

The federation also declared its opposition to "de-regulation of gas and electric services provided by public utilities that would shift higher costs to residential ratepayers."

Hearings offer members a chance to speak out

Members of Local 1245 will have a chance to voice their concerns about retail wheeling and performance-based ratemaking at a series of public hearings scheduled around the state by the California Public Utilities Commission.

Business Manager Jack McNally called on Local 1245 members to use these hearings to speak up for safe, reliable, high-quality electric service in California.

"Quality electric service depends on a quality workforce," McNally said. "The CPUC proposal for retail wheeling and performance-based ratemaking threatens to tear apart that workforce. It also threatens to undermine the traditional emphasis that utilities have put on safety and training.

"It's time to make our voices heard," McNally said. A detailed analysis of the CPUC proposal can be found in the July Utility Reporter. All of the public hearings begin at 7 pm. Dates and locations are as follows:

- Eureka, Aug. 25: City Hall, 531 "K" St.
- San Diego, Sept. 7: City Administration Bldg., 202 "C" St.
- San Francisco, Sept. 7: PUC Auditorium, 505 Van Ness Ave.
- South Lake Tahoe, Sept. 7: City Council Chambers, 1900 Lake Tahoe Blvd. (one block west of Hwy 50 and Hwy 89 intersection)
- Stockton, Sept. 8: State Office Building, 31 East Channel St.
- Martinez, Sept. 12: County Administrative Bldg., 651 Pine St.
- San Jose, Sept. 20: Santa Clara Cnty. Adm. Bldg., 70 W. Hedding St.
- Fresno, Sept. 26: Hall of Records, Room 301, 2261 Tulare St.
- Pasadena, Sept. 27: Pasadena Public Library, 285 E. Walnut St.

September 5 LABOR DAY

September 6 PRIMARY ELECTION IN NEVADA

October 10 Last Day to Register If You Want to Vote in November Elections in California

November 8 ELECTION DAY: DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!
Workers here and abroad

Rolling the union on...

**Staley Lockout:** Thousands of union members and supporters gathered in Decatur, Ill. in June and marched on the A.E. Staley corn milling plant where 750 members of Paperworkers Local 7837 have been locked out for a year.

**No Banquet:** Hundreds of Washington state trade unionists—chanting "No justice, no banquet!"—occupied a banquet hall that was to be used for a "Free Trader of the Year" awards dinner in Seattle. The banquet was to have capped a two-day trade show where executives paid $300 each to learn how to move factories to Mexico, move profits quickly across international borders, and use Mexican truckers to transport products throughout the US and Canada.

**Filibuster:** Any hope for labor law reform this session of Congress was killed by a Republican-led filibuster of Senate Bill 55, which would have outlawed the practice of permanently replacing striking workers. A majority of Senators support the legislation, but it takes 60% to cut off debate and force a vote. Only 53 Senators voted to end the filibuster.

**Equally Badly:** A federal appeals court refused to reverse the firing of a salesperson by Lord & Taylor of Chicago. The company fired a pregnant salesperson one day before she was to have gone on maternity leave. "Companies can treat a pregnant woman as badly as they treat similarly affected non-pregnant employees," the judges said.

**Strike Ends:** A six-week strike and boycott of garment maker Leslie Fay ended in victory in mid-July after the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and management reached agreement on a new three-year contract that maintains 600 of the 1,000 jobs that the company wanted to eliminate in Pennsylvania.

**Mark Kizis**

Mark Kizis, a Local 1245 member in Outside Line Construction since 1969, died July 5 of cancer. Local 1245 offers its condolences to the family and friends of Brother Kizis.

Help needed

Gaye Wren's husband, Tim, recently underwent surgery for the removal of a leg due to diabetes. His other leg was removed previously.

Gaye is a Customer Services employee in PG&E's Antioch office. Tim is a former meter reader. Their home in Pittsburg needs to be retrofitted for wheelchair access. Volunteers are needed who can donate either cash or labor to this project.

If you wish to donate skills, please call Gaye at 510-445-7353. Cash contributions can be sent to Gaye Wren, c/o Lydia Galvan, 800 Second St., Antioch, CA.
workers are women, and organizing the workers, filed many of them are the sole organizers. Four-fifths of the fired employees of a wholly-owned subsidiary just to Spanish-speaking workers of La Conexion Familiar, a San Francisco telemarketing operation, who said Sprint's long-distance service to Spanish-speaking customers throughout the United States. Employees, who were organizing under the banner of the Communications Workers of America, received a base wage of $7 an hour.

"They were so controlling here. They made us sign a piece of paper to go to the bathroom and they told us not to drink too much water so we wouldn't have to go."

"I've had other hard experiences, but this is too much," said Luis Bonilla, a Peruvian immigrant with five children. "We want to be treated like human beings."

A company public relations person kept insisting to reporters that the union organizing campaign had nothing to do with shutting La Conexion Familiar down. At one point the company representative indicated that the company blamed the phone sales workers because the customers they brought in later decided they didn't want Sprint services.

A nationwide organizing drive by the Communications Workers has met with fierce resistance by Sprint. The company trains its managers in union-avoidance techniques and has even published a "Union-Free Management Guide."

The union has targeted Sprint for organizing in part because its low-wage, low-cost operations threaten to take business away from AT&T, a unionized long-distance carrier.
**‘Mutual gains’ at Sierra Pacific Power**

Cornell’s Bernie Flaherty was tasked with conducting a two-day training session for 70 employees, half management and half bargaining unit. Additional employees have been trained since then, and still more training sessions are planned for the future.

The company hopes the newly-acquired skills will improve communications and performance at all levels of the company. But for now, bargaining is the primary testing ground for the mutual gains process.

### Dealing with Facts

The process might not even be recognizable to the people who negotiated labor agreements at Sierra Pacific Power in the past. Labor and management negotiating teams spend far less time meeting as a whole seated on opposite sides of a table. Instead, almost all items up for negotiation—including cash compensation, work rules, job descriptions, the medical plan, and other benefit issues—have been referred to one of several subcommittees.

“It’s much easier for subcommittees to get into detail and issues and leave the emotion behind,” said Tom Robertson, Sierra’s director of Human Resources. The result, Robertson believes, is less posturing and more “dealing with the facts.”

This change in style is welcomed by Marna Browne, a first-time member of the union’s negotiating team. “It’s not hardcore bargaining—‘I want, I want,’” said Browne. Instead, negotiators are expected to seek out “what’s mutually beneficial to employees and the company.”

### Unpleasant Realities

But mutual gains isn’t just for some New Age touchy-feely process intended to make everyone feel good. In fact, candor can often lead to the airing of unpleasant realities.

Union negotiators, for example, may have to endure frank discussions about the relationship between competitiveness and work rule flexibility. Company negotiators, on the other hand, may be confronted with embarrassing evidence of poorly-managed programs.

Rather than forcing one another to the wall, however, these discussions are intended to draw attention to real problem areas and focus the negotiators’ energies on crafting solutions.

Sierra Pacific Power Vice President Reeve Fagg said both sides have identified inefficiencies that need to be corrected. Union negotiators, he said, “are making suggestions or observations that are undeniable”—like the problem of “being out on a job without materials.”

Union negotiator Rita Wilk said that union employees have opened management’s eyes “to a lot of things that were going on that they did not know about.”

“The frontline employee,” acknowledged Vice President Fagg, “is the best one to make those kinds of observations.”

### Against the Grain

Utilizing the insights of employees to improve productivity isn’t a new concept, of course. Industrial relations experts have advocated more “employee participation” for years. But this goes against the grain of the traditional role separation that divides a company into “workers” and “managers.” If employee participation is to be meaningful, managers sometimes have to share information...
once considered confidential. Employees, on the other hand, may find themselves sharing valuable insights with no guarantee that they will benefit from the resulting increase in productivity.

The industrial landscape is littered with failed experiments in labor-management cooperation. The most common stumbling block—it should come as no big surprise—is money. Managers are often willing to accept employee suggestions for improving efficiency. Offering money in return is an entirely different matter.

"Move with Caution"

This point was made clear in recent joint labor-management efforts at Pacific Gas and Electric to meet the challenges of new technologies. After union and company negotiators had agreed on numerous changes to upgrade skills and improve efficiency, upper management rejected the corresponding wage adjustments that had been proposed.

The take-home lesson for Dale Huntsman, a member of the Local 1245 negotiating team at Sierra Pacific, is that union negotiators should "move with caution on mutual gains."

"PG&E's subcommittee on new technologies fell apart. The union members of that subcommittee felt like they were stabbed in the back," Burnsman observed. "Could we be showing our hand on a daily basis as we go through these meetings...only to have the company go back to traditional bargaining toward the end?"

Saving Jobs

Despite such concerns, union negotiators remain committed to seeing the process through. They hope the result will be a company that is better able to compete, and remain a stable employer for the union's membership.

"Realistically, it's a way to help everybody save their jobs and stay competitive," said negotiator Gino Aramini, a control working foreman who has represented the union in nine previous negotiations. Another union negotiator, Lineman Wayne Paterson, believes mutual gains represent the "best hope" for coping with the changes occurring in the industry.

"We don't want to miss the bus," Paterson declared.

Praise for Union

Vice President Fagg had nothing but praise for the commitment and expertise of the union negotiators.

"I've really been amazed in these discussions how well informed they are and how realistic they are about the need for cost containment, or to meet whatever the competition might throw at us," Fagg said.

"This might sound corny, but it's absolute fact: every single one of those employees have to count. They have to count in terms not only of productivity but the ideas, the feedback, the better way of doing those kinds of things, or the recognition of opportunities for getting into a part of the business that we don't even do today," he said.

Fagg rejected the suggestion that competition might be used simply as an excuse to cut wages.

"Exploiting people or not paying them a fair wage—we're not that interested in that either... We've had some pretty bad experiences with those kinds of [contract] work forces where they're not getting paid much, but they're trained, they don't work safely, and the quality of work isn't there," he said.

"I don't want to balance budgets on the back of the working people," he added. "That's a false economy."

New Appreciation

Whatever the outcome of the current bargaining, there's little denying that it has given each side a new appreciation of the problems and perspectives of the other.

Company negotiator Carol Elmore, director of Customer Contact and Service, praised the union negotiators for their "intelligent, well-founded, very perceptive observations during negotiations.

"I've been 100% impressed with every individual I've met there. It's an incredibly powerful team."

Elmore credited the trainers from Cornell with giving her a new perspective on the role of unions.

"I learned a lot from listening to those people about how wonderful it is we do have unions. Having always been on the management side of things, I had never heard that kind of a perspective," Elmore said.

The big question, of course, is this: Will the warm words of summer translate into a workable, mutually satisfactory labor agreement in the fall? Negotiators hope to have a table agreement concluded by Nov. 1, with ratification completed before Jan. 1—the beginning of the new contract period. Company and union negotiators hope that it will also mark the beginning of a new era in labor-management relations at Sierra Pacific Power.

In the new approach to bargaining, negotiators are expected to seek out "what's mutually beneficial to employees and the company."

Marna Browne, union negotiator

Employees have opened management's eyes "to a lot of things that were going on that they did not know about."

Rita Weisshaar, union negotiator
Ben Byington of SMUD Business Manager Jack Mc
years.

Designing their own jump rope contest are children of SMUD's Larry Gonzales (from left): Phillip, Josephine and Crystal.

Jim Clamp, Jim Baird and Greg "Snake" Smelser of SMUD show winning form during cross-arm changeout.

Bill Buckner and Don Campbell of SMUD

David Scott and Jerry Wilder of PG&E

Ben Byington of SMUD

Business Manager Jack Mc
years.

PG&E IBEW Lineman's June 1994 Livermore
Lineman’s Rodeo
June 11, 1994
Livermore, Ca.

Bill Buckner and Don Campbell of SMUD
Mike Swanson of PG&E performs speed climb.

Jerry Wilder of PG&E
John Prior of PG&E in line truck competition.

Dave Dillon and Greg Hart of PG&E

Business Manager Jack McNelly: still climbin’ after all these years.
The Teams

1. Scott Rose, Rob Hardy, Evan Slaydon (PG&E)
2. Curtis Dory, Dan Ramirez, Mike Swanson (PG&E)
3. Bruc Thompson, Dale Lorr, Rich Jimenez (SCE)
4. Greg Hart, Al White, David Dillon (PG&E)
5. Joe Solorzano, Emmett Hart, Don Smith (PG&E)
6. Steve Armstrong, Troy Castanon, Gary Uratsu (PG&E)
7. Rick Binson, George McNeill, Tom Jones (PG&E)
8. Jim Baird, Greg Smelser, Jim Clamp (SMUD)
9. George Soares, Rick Lee, Jimmy Patterson (PG&E)
10. David Scott, Jerry Wilder, Tim Riblett (PG&E)
11. Max Fuentes, Gerald Mankins, Jerry Tittle (SMUD)
12. Mike Moss, Robert Hylander, Blair Zimmerman (PG&E)
13. Mark Thompson, Ruben Romero, Mike Gayhart (PG&E)
14. Larry King, Richard Tyler, Peter Henderson (SMUD)
15. Mark Bryant, Gary Eckmann, Ted Warner (SMUD)
16. Jim Witt, Raoul Carillo, Paul Miller (SCE)
17. Rick Smith, Paul Grunewald, Bruce Warnuth, Brett Howard (Sierra Pacific Power)
18. Mike Bungenstock, Arthur Cordova, Phil Miller (SCE)
19. Donald Gay, Willie Zanadu, Steve Roberts (SMUD)
20. Michael Sowders, Steven Simkins, Bradley Kiel (PG&E)
21. Paul Devine, Bob Sholler, Eric Dau (PG&E)
22. Simon Cassidy, Greg Shulz, Jeff Rubbo (PG&E)
23. Bill Buckner, Don Campbell, Ben Bytragon (SMUD)

Note: Team numbers are not consecutive because some registered teams did not participate.

Mike Swanson of PG&E performs speed climb.

John Prior of PG&E knocks down bowling pins in line truck competition.

Dave Dillon and Greg Hart of PG&E

More Photos, Pages 8-9

Rick Smith, Sierra Pacific Power Co., performs hurt man rescue.
LINEMAN'S RODEO

Chow Time!
Local 1245 Feeds the Crowd

Ray Horlacher, PG&E
1st Place, Line Truck
3rd Place, Comm. Driver

Ron Ruse, PG&E
1st Place, Backhoe

Terry Lawson, PG&E
1st Place, Comm. Driver
2nd Place, Line Truck

Ken Lynch, SMUD
2nd Place, Comm. Driver

Bruce Thompson, SCE
2nd Place, Backhoe
3rd Place, Line Truck

John Prior, PG&E
3rd Place, Backhoe

Administrative Assistant
Lita Martin

Business Rep. Ed Caruso (left) and Assistant Business Manager Roger Stalcup

From left: Business Reps. Bob Choate and Dennis Seyfer,
and Assistant Business Manager Perry Zimmerman

From right: Business Reps. Mike Haentjens and Phil Carter,
and Assistant Business Manager Roger Stalcup

Coming back for seconds and thirds.

Chowing down. (Photos: Eric Wolfe)

Business Reps. Jane Brunner and Gary Mai
2nd Place Overall
SMUD: Mark Bryant, Gary Eickmann, Ted Warner

3rd Place Overall
SMUD: Max Fuentes, Gerald Mankins, Jerry Tittle

1st Place Overall
SMUD: Jim Baird, Greg “Snake” Smelser, Jim Clamp

2nd Place PG&E (Div.)
Rick Bimson, George McNell, Tom Jones

1st Place PG&E (Division)
Curtis Dory, Dan Ramirez, Mike Swanson

3rd Place PG&E (Division)
Simon Cassidy, Greg Shulz, Jeff Rubbo

3rd Place PG&E (GC)
Mike Moss, Robert Nylander, Blair Zimmerman

1st Place PG&E (GC)
Eric Dau, Paul Devine, Bob Sholler

2nd Place PG&E (GC)
George Soares, Rick Lee, Jimmy Patterson

The Winning Teams
Labor targets Wilson for defeat

California unionists gear up for crucial battles

California trade unionists called for the ouster of Gov. Pete Wilson and endorsed pro-worker candidates for state and national office during the 20th convention of the California Labor Federation last month.

Delegates representing two million union members in California cheered when Kathleen Brown invited them to help her unseat Wilson and restore California's economic vitality.

"You and I are going to hold Pete Wilson accountable in November. We are going to take California from worst to first," Brown declared.

Labor-backed candidates took turns at the microphone assailing the impact of Republican policies on working people.

State Controller candidate Kathleen Connell warned that Wilson's economic policies have California headed "toward a financial catastrophe of historic proportions."

Attorney General candidate Tom Umberg sharply criticized his opponent's record on labor law violations, charging that the Republican incumbent has "never seen a labor law violation he thinks is egregious enough to go after."

Art Torres, the Democratic nominee for Insurance Commissioner, painted a vivid picture of the corrupting influence that corporate wealth is having on statewide races. He noted that his Republican opponent has received over $297,000 in contributions from insurance companies.

"Anyone who has that much dough from the insurance companies I don't think is going to be a regulator for the consumers," Torres observed.

An important battle is brewing over control of the California Legislature. Bill Lockyer, president pro tempore of the state Senate, warned that a group of "right wing fanatics" had formed the Allied Business PAC to defeat pro-labor candidates.

The extremists who finance this PAC, Lockyer said, claim they want "to integrate Biblical law into our everyday lives," but in fact they merely use the Bible to disguise their anti-labor agenda.

"The Bible somehow tells them that we should outlaw agency shop agreements. The Bible tells them that we should get rid of... collective bargaining for public employees," Lockyer told the delegates.

Both Lockyer and Assembly Speaker Willie Brown said that grassroots efforts by union members would be critical factors in turning back the Allied Business PAC's scheme to take over the California Legislature.

Labor Law Reform

Keynote speaker Tom Donahue, international secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, reminded delegates that pro-labor candidates must be elected to Congress if there is to be any hope of federal labor law reform in 1995. Donahue, who was officially escorted to the speakers' platform by Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally, noted that 25% of all employers faced with an organizing drive "illegally fire one or more workers because of the worker's support of the union."

"That's a stunning record of illegal activity," declared Donahue.

Delegates endorsed Senator Dianne Feinstein for re-election, but not all federal candidates fared so well. Five of the 14 Democratic members of Congress from California who voted for the North American Free Trade Agreement last year were denied endorsement for the November election.

Delegates endorsed Proposition 186, the single-payer health plan initiative, and urged defeat of Proposition 187, the so-called "save our state" initiative.

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"Anyone who has that much dough from the insurance companies I don't think is going to be a regulator for the consumers," Torres observed.
Candidates Endorsed by Local 1245 and by the Nevada State AFL-CIO for the September 6, 1994 Primary Election

U.S. SENATE
Richard Bryan (D)

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT #1
James Bilbray (D)

GOVERNOR
Bob Miller (D)

LT. GOVERNOR
NO ENDORSEMENT

ATTORNEY GENERAL
Frankie Sue Del Papa (D)

TEACHERS

SECRETARY OF STATE
Tom Hickey (D)

STATE SENATE
Ernie Adler (D)
Nowell A. Yeee (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #1, CLARK
John Wiles (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #2, CLARK
Cher Lowe (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #3, CLARK
Steve Sisolak (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #4, CLARK
No endorsement

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #5, CLARK
Lori Lipman Brown (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #6, CLARK
Wendell Williams (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #7, CLARK
Morse Arberry (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #8, CLARK
Fernando Seifert (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #9, WASHOE
Richie Mathews (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #10, WASHOE
Len Nolin (D)

STATE SENATE DISTRICT #11, WASHOE
Emma Sepulveda (D)

STATE SENATE WESTERN NEV. DIST.
Ame Helman (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #1
Tom Collins (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #2
John Ponticello (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #3
John Bonaventura (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #4
No endorsement

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #5
Pam Mortensen (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #6
Wendell Williams (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #7
Morse Arberry (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #8
Chris Giunchigliani (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #9
Barbara Buckley (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #10
Robert Arberry (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #11
Doug Bache (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #12
Genie Charness-Chall (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #13
No endorsement

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #14
No endorsement

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #15
Lou Toomin (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #16
Rick Bennett (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #17
Bob Price (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #18
Bill Petrak (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #19
Sandi Krenzer (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #20
Stephanie Smith (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #21
Kathleen Harney (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #22
Gene Segerblom (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #23
Richard Perkins (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #24
Roy Neighbors (D)

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT #25
Tom Collins (D)

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD: VOTE!
City College of San Francisco Labor Studies Program

Fall Semester, 1994

Classes begin August 22, 1994

(415) 267-6550

San Francisco State Labor Studies Program

Spring Semester 1994 (415) 338-2885

Labor 250: Introduction to Labor Studies (3 units)

Wednesdays, 7-9:45 pm

Overview of history, economics, politics of labor in the US. Focus on women and minorities in the labor market and current issues such as health care.

Instructor: Brenda Cochrane

Labor 400: Union Structure and Administration (3 units)

Thursdays, 7-9:45 pm

Internal union functions, structures and administration. Overview of legislation relevant to bargaining and benefits, use of computers in the union office for communication and research.

Instructor: Brenda Cochrane

Labor 500: Labor and Government (4 units)

Thursdays, 6:10-9:50 pm

Labor-government relations at local, state and national levels. Labor's political action and government responses as they protect or restrict labor's interest.

Instructor: Wayne Bradley

Labor 510: Labor Economics (3 units)

Wednesdays, 7-8:45 pm

Problems of labor: unemployment, hours, wages, industrial disputes.

Instructor: Daniel Vencill

Labor 600: OSHA and Work (3 units)

Mondays, 6:45-8:45 pm

Overview of OSHA legislation and enforcement. Current legal cases dealing with workplace health and safety.

Instructor: Fran Schreiber

Labor 659: Special Study (1-3 units)

Topics determined through discussion with instructor.

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