PG&E chops more jobs; union bargains VRI

G&E's latest downsizing, announced just before Labor Day, will reduce the workforce by approximately 2500 people and increase anxiety levels for those who remain.

In negotiations with Local 1245, PG&E has agreed to a Voluntary Retirement Incentive. Patterned on last year's VRI, the new program applies to employees who are 50 years old, and who have 15 years of service, as of Sept. 30, 1994.

In addition, PG&E has indicated it could announce this month a Voluntary Severance plan that would provide additional financial incentives for employees to leave the company voluntarily.

PG&E's decision to slash its workforce raises serious questions about the company's ability to continue providing safe, reliable electric service, according to Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally. "They're losing some of the most highly-skilled workers in the world," said McNally. "PG&E says it has to cut employees to compete, but the public is going to come out the big loser." (See story below).

The reductions will come primarily in Customer Energy Services and Electric Supply, according to PG&E. However, the VRI offer applies to bargaining unit members and opened a new dimension in the current debate over a CPUC proposal to restructure the state's electric industry. Prior to the public hearings, the CPUC had managed to focus the discussion almost entirely on the issue of electric rates. But the testimony of the union workers made clear that a discussion of rates is meaningless without a discussion of the corresponding level of service. "Safety and reliability cost a lot of money. We either pay for it up front or we'll pay for it later," said Local 1245 member John Kent, Napa Unit Chair.

Voting is crucial! Election Day and utility restructuring

Job security and political action are linked more closely than most workers realize. For utility employees, the outcome of the Nov. 8 election will probably be a bigger factor in their future job security than any other event during the next four years.

The reason is simple: if workers fail to elect Kathleen Brown as See PAGE SIX...
Rolling the union on... 

Willie's Solidarity: Country singer Willie Nelson canceled a concert at the Chateau Ste. Michelle winery near Seattle after learning about a seven-year boycott of the company by the United Farm Workers of Washington State, Labor Notes reported. "Willie has a passion for farmers and farm workers and their families and doesn't cross picket lines," said Nelson's publicist.

Trouble to the North: Ballot measures target organized workers in Oregon in this fall's election. One measure seeks to repeal the state's prevailing wage law. Another would erode public employee pensions.

Deaths in China: At least 38 people were killed and 160 injured when a textile factory in China's Quanshan industrial zone collapsed on June 17. Press reports said that it took several days to free people trapped in the rubble. Those trapped in the rubble had been ordered to go into the building to rescue cotton and equipment after the building had been gutted in a fire.

NAFTA Shafta Continues: Remember the labor "side agreement" that was supposed to protect workers from the effects of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)? Well, under the terms of the side agreement, the Labor Department has agreed to hear complaints that workers were fired for trying to organize at Honeywell and General Electric plants in Mexico, Labor Notes reported. But the Labor Department hearings will be in Washington, practically guaranteeing that the fired workers will not be able to attend. The rules limit testimony to 10 minutes and do not allow the complaining unions to ask questions.

Labor Notes reported. But the Labor Department is spending taxpayers' money on a US-Mexico-Canada academic conference on labor-management cooperation. Says Teamsters President Ron Carey: "They're bringing professors to Washington to discuss some fantasy land where management cooperates with workers, but they won't listen to testimony from real live workers who are being fired by US corporations in Mexico for organizing for a living wage." 

Arbitrator issues finding

On Oct.3 Arbitrator Walter Kintz issued a preliminary decision in Arbitration Case No. 201. In this case, Local 1245 challenged on several grounds PG&E's displacement of approximately 395 Physical Division employees in early 1994. In his preliminary decision, Kintz informed the parties that he found a violation of the labor agreement. Specifically, Kintz found that PG&E improperly gave Section 206.6 options to employees with options under Section 206.3. Kintz remanded the case to PG&E and Local 1245 for a 30-day period, during which the parties are instructed to attempt to agree upon an appropriate remedy. Local 1245 and PG&E will jointly contact Kintz for clarification of his finding, and then will meet as directed. If the parties cannot agree on an appropriate remedy the case goes back to Kintz for his decision on a remedy. As more information becomes available about Kintz's decision, the union will post it on the electronic bulletin board. Updates, when available, can also be obtained from the union's toll-free information number: 1-800-227-5607.

Gregg Jacobson dies in accident

Local 1245 member Gregg Jacobson was fatally injured by electrical contact while performing line clearance tree trimming in proximity to a 230-kv transmission line near Anderson, Ca. on Aug. 22. Fellow crew members performed CPR at the site until emergency personnel arrived. Brother Jacobson was 45 years old.
Nov. 21 VRI Deadline

From PAGE ONE

forms must be returned to a designated company representative no later than Nov. 21, 1994.

An eligible employee who elects VRI may revoke his or her decision by properly notifying the company on or before Nov. 28, 1994.

As with last year's downsizing, it will be many months before the impacts of this downsizing are fully known—creating widespread uncertainties for employees. Disputes may arise concerning specific applications of the labor agreement, which would require additional talks between the parties.

Nov. 21 VRI Deadline

To participate in the VRI, eligible employees must complete and sign the VRI enrollment and waiver and release forms provided by the company. The completed forms must be returned to a designated company representative no later than Nov. 21, 1994.

An eligible employee who elects VRI may revoke his or her decision by properly notifying the company on or before Nov. 28, 1994.

As with last year's program, the early retirement penalty will be waived for those who take the new VRI. In addition, VRI participants will receive an additional three years of credited service for purposes of calculating their pension benefits.

The union conducted numerous retirement planning seminars in late September and early October to assist members in gathering the information they need to make a decision regarding VRI. The union encourages members to be fully informed before making a decision to accept VRI or Voluntary Severance.

Since the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) announced its restructuring proposal in April, the California Coalition of Utility Employees (CUE) has been extremely busy filing comments, testifying at full panel hearings and filing reply comments.

CUE is a coalition of local unions who represent utility employees in California. It includes IBEW Locals 18, 47, 465, 659, 1245, UWUA Local 246, ESC-MEBA, and the Engineers and Architects located in Southern California.

There are five investor-owned electric utilities in California directly regulated by the CPUC who would be affected by the CPUC's restructuring proposal: Pacific Power and Lighting, Sierra Pacific Power, Pacific Gas and Electric, Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas and Electric.

Two major schools of thought have emerged in the debate over restructuring: retail wheeling (sometimes called direct access or bilateral contracts) and transmission grid pooling.

The approach that is ultimately adopted will have a large impact on all electric utilities—regardless of whether they are public or investor-owned and regardless of whether they are regulated by the CPUC. Obviously this means that most Local 1245 members will feel the effects of restructuring—regardless of whether you are employed by a public or investor-owned utility.

Our coalition, CUE, has been recognized as a major player in the proceedings before the CPUC. We have been invited as a panelist in all full panel hearings to present testimony pointing out shortcomings in the proposed restructuring of electric service.

In addition to the public hearings, which run through November, the CPUC has scheduled another "full panel" hearing for Oct. 24 in San Diego. It is expected that the CPUC will make a decision sometime between the general election (Nov. 8) and the end of January.

No matter what the CPUC decides, the California Legislature will become the next arena for this important debate. I believe most of the 1995 legislative year will be taken up with utility regulation issues. Through CUE, Local 1245 will continue to play an influential role as our state legislators try to figure out what to do with this political hot potato.

Whatever the final outcome of this restructuring, we can be sure it will affect our members and significantly influence the debate in other states as well. Local 1245, as part of CUE, will do everything possible to protect the interests of all of our members.

We are the people who for almost a century have provided excellent service to the public. If intelligent heads prevail we can continue to do so in the century to come.
Union to help build information superhighway

Local 1245 newspaper takes first

The Utility Reporter received a first place award from the International Labor Communications Association (ILCA) for news coverage of the 1993 downsizing at Pacific Gas and Electric.

To Leave or Not to Leave: That is the Question" won first place in the "Unique Performance" category, which is designed to recognize "unusual journalistic effort." The article appeared in the September 1993 issue of the Utility Reporter.

The Utility Reporter also captured the prestigious Saul Miller Journalism Award—in a contest jointly sponsored by the AFL-CIO and the ILCA—for its overall reporting last year on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The ILCA competition featured 1,463 entries in various categories by 166 member publications throughout the nation.

Commenting on the downsizing story, the judges wrote:

"The Utility Reporter tackles a vital question for many senior workers today...to take early retirement or not..."

"The union assembled as much information as it could...interviewed members who were taking VRI and those who were not. It held seminars on financial planning. It warned not to listen to management's layoff rumors. It told where to go for help in planning the future."

"Other unions facing similar management actions," the judges wrote, "would do well to see what Local 1245 has provided for its readers."

Business Manager Jack McNally is executive editor of the Utility Reporter. Communications Director Eric Wolfe serves as managing editor.

INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY AGREEMENT

Local 1245 will provide workers for construction of an information superhighway in California under the terms of an agreement reached with AT&T NETCON, Inc. last month.

Under the terms of the agreement, Local 1245 will dispatch workers to put in duct work and substructures for a state-of-the-art communications network being constructed in several areas of California over the next five to seven years by Pacific Bell. AT&T NETCON, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of AT&T, is under contract with Pacific Bell to perform the construction. The project is expected to employ at least 3,000 union members over the course of the project.

Jobs will range from entry-level positions to heavy equipment operators operating backhoes, trenchers and boring machines. Workers will be dispatched through the union's Walnut Creek headquarters in northern California, and through the southern dispatch office in Riverside.

The agreement, concluded Sept. 12, capped months of bargaining between Local 1245 and AT&T NETCON. Work is expected to begin this month in the San Diego and Los Angeles areas.

In addition to union wages, the agreement provides medical, vision, and dental benefits, with the employer picking up the entire premium. The agreement also provides pension benefits.

Bargaining roundup: new pacts deliver wage gains

Local 1245 members applied their collective strength to achieve wage and benefit improvements at various employers over the last several months.

An agreement with Washington Water and Power covering gas workers in South Lake Tahoe provides a wage hike of 5% effective July 1, 1994, and an additional 5% in the following year.

The pact creates a new classification: utilityman/locator. Bargaining for the union, which represents six employees, were Dave Rust and Business Rep. John Stralla.

A one-year agreement with the City of Fallon provided a 3.2% wage increase for employees in the electric and water departments effective July 1, 1994.

Bargaining for the union were Allen Dodson, Sherry Burns, Edwin McBroom and Business Rep. John Stralla.

A new two-year agreement with Lindmore Irrigation District provided a 2.5% general wage increase. On Sept. 1, with an additional 2.5% increase on Sept. 1, 1995. Bargaining for the union were Roger Unruh and Business Rep. Ron Van Dyke.

A new three-year agreement with the Tri-Dam Project provides 3% general wage increases on March 1 of 1994, 1995, and 1996.

The agreement also included a requirement for Class A Driver's License in the job descriptions of equipment operator, machinist/mechanic and utilityman.

A three-year agreement with CP National Corporation, Needles District, provides 3.5% wage increases on May 1, 1994 and 1995, and a 3% wage increase on May 1, 1996.

The agreement also increases severance pay from 20 weeks to 25 weeks after 25 years and increases per diem payments.

Bargaining for the union were Tony Frazier and Business Rep. Ron Van Dyke.

The same provisions were bargained in a new three-year agreement with Alltel Nevada in Elko. Representing the union in the bargaining were Mary Peterson, Sondra Reynolds, Chuck Staut and Business Rep. John Stralla.

Are you moving? Let your union know!

Are you moving? Let us know your new address!

Restructuring at PG&E has produced many relocation offers. If you are one of the Local 1245 members who has recently moved, the post office will eventually tell us. But you can speed the process—and get your Utility Rep.
Wilson appointees are the problem

**Ergonomics standard in jeopardy**

A proposed Cal-OSHA ergonomics standard intended to protect workers from repetitive motion injuries has been watered down to the point where it is virtually useless.

Union representatives, including representatives of Local 1245, have worked for years to get the Cal-OSHA Standards Board to adopt an ergonomics standard. The process has moved at a snail's pace because Gov. Pete Wilson has stacked the Standards Board with appointees who are hostile to imposing any costs on business—even when the health and safety of California workers are directly threatened.

The standard to be considered by the Standards Board on Nov. 17 in San Diego bears the unmistakable imprint of big business. It includes a provision that allows employers to ignore the standard if they can demonstrate undue financial hardship.

"This is the first time that cost issues have entered the safety arena in such a destructive manner," said Local 1245 Business Rep. Landis Marttila.

The language as proposed would allow different employers in the same industry to follow or disregard repetitive motion injuries based on their claimed profit margin. If an employer claimed that imposing corrective measures would cause undue hardship, including economic hardship, the employer could just choose to ignore the standard.

"Triggers" Weakened

The proposed standard also weakens the "triggers" that would force the employer to adopt corrective measures. In earlier versions of the proposed standard, a report by a worker of a perceived risk required an examination of the worksite. The latest version of the standard, however, requires a worker to be injured in some form to trigger a worksite analysis.

The current activity to establish an ergonomics standard is mandated by Assembly Bill 100. That bill states that the Standards Board must take appropriate action "to minimize the instance of injury from repetitive motion."

However, it now appears that the Standards Board will be adopting a standard designed to minimize any inconvenience to the employer rather than minimizing injury to workers.

Local 1245, Asplundh Tree resolve 'portability' issue

Asplundh Tree Expert Co. and Local 1245 have tentatively agreed to the resolution of the issue of "portability" of seniority.

"Portability" is an issue whenever one union contractor replaces another union contractor on a PG&E tree trimming contract. Typically, the new contractor will hire the union tree trimmers formerly employed by the previous contractor.

However, in going to work for the new contractor, the union tree trimmers are stripped of their seniority. Local 1245 has made correcting this situation a high priority in bargaining with union tree contractors.

On Aug. 30 Business Manager Jack McNally and Brent Asplundh, president of Asplundh Tree Expert Co., came to a tentative agreement in San Francisco on portability of seniority for purposes of determining vacation. Asplundh is the first of the union tree contractors to take this step.

Bargaining with Asplundh on other issues is still in progress, according to Business Rep. Landis Marttila.

Local 1245 has about 250 members working for Asplundh in various counties in northern California.

ATTENTION

**INDIVIDUALS EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS OR ASBESTOS-CONTAINING PRODUCTS AND INDIVIDUALS OR ENTITIES WHICH MAY BE SUED BY THOSE EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS-CONTAINING PRODUCTS**

A class action lawsuit, *Ahearn v. Fibreboard Corp.*, C.A. No. 6:93cv1269 (E.D. Tex.) and a Global Settlement Agreement, have been filed in U.S. District Court in Tyler, Texas. If approved, this class action and settlement will resolve all future asbestos-related personal injury claims against Fibreboard and its predecessors, including PABCO, as well as third-party claims arising out of such claims.

A class action, *Continental Casualty Co. v. Rudd*, C.A. No. 6:94cv458 (E.D. Tex.) was also filed against two defendant classes seeking approval of a settlement entered into between Fibreboard and certain of its insurers to settle all liabilities and obligations of the insurers under insurance policies they issued to Fibreboard.

- If you, a member of your family, or someone for whom you have legal responsibility was exposed, directly or indirectly, to asbestos or asbestos-containing products; or
- If you are a person or entity which may be sued by individuals exposed to asbestos or asbestos-containing products;

Call: 1-800-792-2000 for more information about these class actions and your rights—even if you are not suffering from any symptoms of injury.

Local 1245 members may contact the union hall at 1-510-933-6060. Ask for Landis Marttila or Tom Dalzell.

Local 1245 tree trimmers in the San Mateo yard of Asplundh Tree Co. (Photo: Landis Marttila).
Mission Possible: Get Out the Vote on Nov. 8

Many people understand that working people get the short end of the stick from elected officials. But many of these same people don’t bother to vote. They think their vote doesn’t make a difference. But it does make a difference. Sometimes changing just one vote per precinct can change the result of an election.

Central Labor Councils in California and Nevada are conducting get-out-the-vote campaigns and they need volunteers to sign up right now! Your efforts today can alter the shape of legislation enacted in 1995 and 1996.

Contact your AFL-CIO Central Labor Council (CLC) and offer to help with phone canvassing and get-out-the vote efforts. Call up and volunteer today.

Alameda County CLC
7992 Capwell Drive
Oakland, CA 94621
510/632-4242

Butte-Glenn Counties CLC
210 W. 6th St.
Chico, CA 95926
916/343-9474

Contra Costa County CLC
525 Green Street
Martinez, CA 94553
510/228-0151

Five Counties CLC
900 Locust Street, Rm. 7
Redding, CA 96001
916/241-0319

Fresno & Madera Counties CLC
1645 “E” Street #102
Fresno, CA 93706
209/228-8597

Humboldt & Del Norte Counties CLC
1707 “K” Street
Eureka, CA 95501
707/445-1245

Kern, Inyo & Mono Counties CLC
200 West Jeffrey Street
Bakersfield, CA 93305
805/324-6451

Los Angeles County Federation of Labor
2130 W. 9th St.
Los Angeles, CA 90006
(213) 361-5611

Marin County CLC
819 A street, #27
San Rafael, CA 94901
415/454-2593

Marysville CLC
1010 "I" Street
Marysville, CA 95901
916/743-7321

Merced-Mariposa Counties CLC
557 West Main St. #206
Merced, CA 95340
209/722-3636

Monterey County CLC
1145 North Main Street
Salinas, CA 93906
778 Hawthorne Street
Monterey, CA 93940
408/757-3094

Napa & Solano Counties CLC
404 Nebraska St.
Vallejo, CA 94590
707/557-5036

Northern Nevada CLC
1150 Terminal Way
Reno, NV 89502
702/323-0390

Northeastern Nevada CLC
P.O. Box 2936
Elko, NV 89801
702/738-5743

Sacramento CLC
2840 El Centro Road #111
Sacramento, CA 95833
916/527-9772

San Bernardino & Riverside Counties CLC
1074 La Cadena Dr., Suite 1
Riverside, CA 92501
909/825-7871

San Diego-Imperial Counties CLC
4265 Fairmount Ave.
San Diego, CA 92105
619/263-5411

San Francisco CLC
660 Howard St., 3rd floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
415/543-2699

San Joaquin & Calaveras Counties CLC
121 East Vine Street
Stockton, CA 95202
209/948-5526

San Mateo County CLC
1153 Chess Drive #200
Foster City, CA 94404
415/572-8848

Santa Cruz County CLC
517 Mission St. #B
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
408/459-0415

South Bay CLC
2101 Almaden Road #101
San Jose, CA 95125
408/266-3790

Sonoma, Mendocino, & Lake Counties CLC
1700 Corby Ave., Suite C
Santa Rosa, CA 95407
707/576-1677

Stanislaus & Tuolumne Counties CLC
1340 Lone Palm Avenue
Modesto, CA 95351
209/523-8079

Tri Counties CLC
21 South Des Caminos Ave.
Ventura, CA 93003
805/641-3712

Tulare-Kings Counties CLC
319 North Church
Visalia, CA 93279
209/732-8963

California's next governor, we will have four more years of Pete Wilson's anti-labor policies and appointments. What does this mean for utility employees? Think about the recent downsizing at PG&E. These downsizings didn't happen by accident. They are a direct response to recent efforts by the California Public Utilities Commission to create "competitive markets" in electricity.

The CPUC is doing everything in its power to cut electric rates for big business. Even if this means higher rates for residential consumers, layoffs for utility employees, and the deterioration of electric service.

It's no big secret why the CPUC is taking this course of action: all the current members of the CPUC were appointed by Gov. Pete Wilson and his predecessor, George Deukmejian. They intentionally picked people who would side with big business—no matter what the consequences for the rest of us.

The terms of some of these CPUC commissioners will expire during the next four years. If Pete Wilson is re-elected as governor, these commissioners will be replaced by others just as bad—or worse. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Democratic candidate Kathleen Brown has expressed deep concerns about the CPUC's restructuring proposal and its impact on consumers, utility employees, and the future quality and reliability of electric service. Kathleen Brown would make very different appointments to the CPUC than Pete Wilson, which would result in different policies coming out of the CPUC.

For utility employees, it could mean the difference between job security and layoffs, the difference between wage stability and wage degradation. Don't let the TV ads fool you. Pete Wilson has nothing but contempt for working people. In 1992 alone he vetoed 35 bills sponsored by the California AFL-CIO. It's time we made a change in Sacramento. Vote for Kathleen Brown to be our next governor.
Dear Local 1245 Member,

Change is all around us: downsizings, competition, restructuring...and the list goes on. We face very real threats. These problems will affect Local 1245 members at all of our employers. The outcome of the Nov. 8 elections will determine how many allies we have in the state legislature as we try to protect our livelihoods.

More than anything else, we need a new governor. The current governor is in the hip pocket of big business. His appointments to state agencies and courts, including the California Public Utilities Commission, have hurt us badly. We need someone whose loyalty is to the average citizen. That is why your vote really means something this year.

Our union by-laws require the Local 1245 Executive Board to evaluate candidates for elected office and to recommend the ones who are most likely to be our allies on important workplace issues. Please give these endorsements your careful consideration when casting your vote on Nov. 8.

Also please volunteer to help your county's Central Labor Council get out the vote. Your council's phone number is listed on page 6.

In Unity,

Jack McNally,
Business Manager

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United States Senator
Dianne Feinstein (D)

Lieutenant Governor
Gray Davis (D)

Secretary of State
Tony Miller (D)

State Insurance Commissioner
Art Torres (D)

State Controller
Kathleen Connell (D)

Governor
Kathleen Brown (D)

State Attorney General
Tom Umberg (D)

Superintendent of Public Instruction
(non-partisan office)
Delaine Eastin

State Treasurer
Phil Angelides (D)

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You Can Make the Difference.

Vote Nov. 8th!
Dianne Feinstein for US Senate

Dianne Feinstein has served in the Senate less than two years, but already she has proven to be an effective advocate for working people.

Feinstein bucked the political tide and sided with labor in voting against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Feinstein took the position that NAFTA did not contain adequate protections for workers in Mexico and would lead to the loss of US jobs.

Feinstein also supported the Harassment Free Workplace Act, a bill to expand laws against sexual harassment in the workplace. The bill seeks to expand Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include companies and businesses with fewer than 15 employees. The law currently applies only to companies and businesses with more than 15 workers.

Feinstein cosponsored the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, which provides workers up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for family or temporary medical emergencies. This bill, strongly backed by labor, was signed into law last year.

Feinstein showed her support for education reform by backing the recently-passed Goals 2000 act, a measure to write into law six national education goals and establish tests and standards for elementary and secondary students.

Feinstein showed leadership on the jobs issue by introducing a measure to target defense conversion funds to communities most hurt by military spending cutbacks. She also introduced a measure to authorize funds for small business defense conversion, which will create or maintain 400,000 jobs.

In a very short period of time Feinstein has established herself as a respected voice in the US Senate. Let's keep her there.

Kathleen Brown for Governor

Kathleen Brown has built her economic strategy around the goal of creating one million jobs in California.

On the first day of her administration, Brown declares, she will issue an executive order to appoint a Jobs General and require all state agencies to refocus their activities on job creation and economic expansion.

Browns proposes the creation of a Growth Program to provide loans to small businesses, seed capital for emerging technology, and minority and women-owned businesses; loan guarantees for environmental companies and entrepreneurs; and funds for community reinvestment in depressed or economically disadvantaged areas.

Brown pledges to issue, with voter approval, a $1 billion general obligation bond dedicated to re-building California infrastructure.

Brown declares that California must compete in the global market for environmental goods and services, now estimated to be over $200 billion.

She calls for the creation of an advanced transportation manufacturing and labor training network in California so the state can be a global leader in transportation manufacturing. Brown calls for the creation of a "Job Ready" program to provide children with the skills to compete in the 21st Century. In partnership with businesses and community colleges, high schools would develop job training programs and arrange after-school apprenticeships. She proposes to fund the Job Ready program with savings from cuts in school administrative spending.

Brown calls for a New Jobs Tax Credit to provide tax incentives for businesses that create full-time jobs paying between $17,600 and $60,000 annually.

Brown says the key to implementing these and other economic development programs is not new taxes but "new leadership." And as State Treasurer, she has already proven her considerable skills in the area of economic leadership.

The president of the National Association of State Treasurers called Brown "an innovative fiscal manager" and City and State newspaper named Brown as "the most valuable public official" in America at the state level.

California needs the leadership of Kathleen Brown.
Gray Davis for Lt. Governor

At the 1993 State Economic Summit in Los Angeles, Controller Gray Davis unveiled a seven-point economic revitalization plan for California. The blueprint included a proposal to require businesses to guarantee the creation of new jobs in exchange for tax breaks. The proposal says a lot about how Davis would perform as Lt. Governor. He would make economic development a top priority, but would seek to ensure that economic development does not come at the expense of workers. His record as Controller demonstrates that Davis is a man of action. As a member of the CalPERS Board of Directors, Controller Davis spearheaded an innovative program to invest state employee pension funds in building affordable housing for first-time home buyers. This effort, begun in 1992, has put more than 8,000 construction workers back to work and will ultimately build 5,000 new homes throughout the state. The project is also proving to be a profitable investment for the pension fund, with returns of 20%.

As Controller, Davis defended education. During the 1990-91 fiscal year, Davis joined the Superintendent of Public Instruction to challenge then-Gov. George Deukmejian's attempt to reduce state funding to public education. Davis continued to pay the full Proposition 98 funding amount to public schools in defiance of the Governor’s veto of a portion of the Proposition 98 funds approved by the Legislature.

And when a state budget was not passed for a month after it was due in 1990, Davis refused to issue paychecks to legislators and state constitutional officers—including himself—until the budget was enacted.

Davis has also championed efforts to crack down on Medi-Cal fraud, expose misuse of public funds, and aggressively pursue parents who are delinquent in making child support payments.

Davis has the strength of character to make a great Lt. Governor. His record of public service proves it.

Tony Miller: Secretary of State

Tony Miller has the experience needed to make the Secretary of State's office an "honest broker" of democracy. The Secretary of State is responsible for insuring that elections in California are conducted in a fair and efficient manner. Miller has demonstrated through years of service that he has the experience and commitment needed to run fair and honest elections.

Before assuming his current position of Acting Secretary of State, Miller served as Chief Deputy Secretary of State from 1981 to 1994. He served as Chief Legal Counsel to the Secretary of State from 1976 to 1981 and was one of the original members of the Fair Political Practices Commission in 1975. Miller has proposed making the Secretary of State office non-partisan to insure that its tradition of fairness and impartiality is backed up by law.

Miller believes democracy can be improved through campaign finance reform. He supports a proposal that would take lobbyists out of the business of making and arranging campaign contributions. Miller also understands that accurate information is another important element in any democracy. That's why he supports the passage of a "truth in advertising" law. Such a law would require those who run ads for or against ballot initiatives to declare up-front the names of the industries and organizations that are actually paying for the ads. As the current Acting Secretary of State, Miller has worked hard to find new ways to increase voter participation. He helped pioneer registration-by-mail and vote-by-mail, and is now working to implement the Federal "Motor Voter" Act in California, which can help bring many more people into the democratic process.

Miller believes that streamlining government and slashing red tape can help create new jobs in California. He has proposed the elimination of the $800 small business start-up tax as one step toward encouraging job creation.

Miller, a native of Plumas County, has already demonstrated the capacity, the commitment and the experience to do the job. He deserves our support.
## United States Senate
- Dianne Feinstein (D)

## Governor
- Kathleen Brown (D)

## Lieutenant Governor
- Gray Davis (D)

## Secretary of State
- Tony Miller (D)

## Treasurer
- Phil Angelides (D)

## Controller
- Kathleen Connell (D)

## Attorney General
- Tom Umberg (D)

## Supt. of Public Instruction
- Delaine Eastin (NP)

## Insurance Commissioner
- Art Torres (D)

## Board of Equalization
- Dist. 1: Johan Klehs (D)
- Dist. 2: Robert Presley (D)
- Dist. 3: Ernest Dronenburg, Jr. (R)
- Dist. 4: Brad Sherman (D)

## United States House of Representatives


## California State Senate


## California State Assembly


## Utility Reporter
- October 1994
VOTER GUIDE

NTS BY IBEW LOCAL 1245

4. Tom Bates (D)
5. Open
6. Barbara Lee (D)
7. Michael Machado (D)
8. Michael Sweeney (D)
9. Jackie Speier (D)
10. Liz Figueroa (D)
11. Byron D. Sher (D)
12. John Vasconcellos (D)
13. Dominic L. Cortese (D)
14. Ed Foglia (D)
15. Margaret E. Snyder (D)
16. Sal Cannella (D)
17. Bill Monning (D)
18. Lily Cervantes (D)
19. Michael E. O’Hare (D)
20. Bryn Allison Bartrich (D)
21. Cruz M. Bustamante (D)
22. Jack Keally (D)
23. John B. Ashbaugh (D)
24. Timothy G. Hauk (D)
25. Mindy Lorenz (D)
26. James L. Hutchins (D)
27. Dorothy S. Maron (D)
28. Josh A. Arce (D)
29. Richard Katz (D)
30. Barbara Friedman (D)
31. Sheila James Kuehl (D)
32. Wally Knox (D)
33. Adam Schiff (D)
34. Bruce Philpott (D)
35. Antonio Villaraigosa (D)
36. Louis Caldera (D)
37. Kevin Murray (D)
38. Marguerite Archie-Hudson (D)
39. Diane Martinez (D)
40. Martha M. Escutia (D)
41. Curtis R. Tucker, Jr. (D)
42. Willard H. Murray, Jr. (D)
43. Debra Bowen (D)
44. Betty Karnette (D)
45. Juanita M. McDonald (D)
46. Bob Epple (D)
47. Martin Gallegos (D)
48. Grace F. Napolitano (D)
49. Margalo Ashley-Farrand (D)
50. Open
51. No Endorsement
52. Joe Baca (D)
53. Richard Edwards (D)
54. Roberta (Bobbi) Meyer (D)
55. Richard Sondoval (D)
56. David Hendrick (D)
57. Jonathan Woolf-Willis (D)
58. Irv Pickler (D)
59. Mike Metzler (D)
60. Jim Toledano (D)
61. Jeanne Costales (D)
62. Open
63. Allan L. Dollison (D)
64. Lee Walker (D)
65. Poppy DeMarco Dennis (D)
66. Katherine Wodehouse (D)
67. Susan A. Davis (D)
68. Tom Connolly (D)
69. Deirdre (Dede) Alpert (D)
70. Denise Moreno Ducheny (D)
71. Julie Bornstein (D)

CALIFORNIA BALLOT PROPOSITIONS

Proposition 181: the $1 billion Passenger and Clean Air Bond Act of 1994
Proposition 182: the California Housing and Jobs Bond Investment Act
Proposition 183: combines some recall elections with regular elections
Proposition 184: the so-called “three strikes” initiative
Proposition 185: imposes an additional 4% sales tax on gasoline for transit and highway construction
Proposition 186: the single-payer health plan initiative
Proposition 187: the so-called “save our state” initiative
Proposition 188: the initiative sponsored by the tobacco industry to pre-empt existing regulations against smoking

MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK!

VOTE ON Nov. 8

October 1994
Utility Reporter 11
Art Torres: Insurance Commissioner

As chair of the Senate Insurance Committee, Art Torres refused contributions from insurance industry and the trial lawyers. He cleaned up the corruption left by former chairman, Alan Robbins.

That tells you something about the character of Art Torres, the labor-endorsed candidate for Insurance Commissioner. When it comes to insurance issues, Torres knows the territory as well as anybody in the state. Torres investigated delays in Proposition 103 insurance rebates. He authored legislation to crack down on bogus insurance companies who bilk policy holders out of their premiums and then refuse to pay claims when they are sick or injured. He stood up for riot damaged small businesses when their insurers wouldn't pay claims. He authored a tough new law to stop insurance companies from dropping dying patients from coverage.

As co-chair of the Legislative Committee charged with implementing health care in California, Torres is fighting to ensure that any national plan meets the long-ignored health care needs of seniors, women, and children. He pledges to make health care his top priority as Insurance Commissioner.

Torres, who began his career working alongside the late Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers, is no stranger to labor issues. He sparked an investigation of Cal-OSHA’s lax enforcement of health and safety laws in California factories. He fought Republican efforts to gut Cal-OSHA and he pushed for greater protection from toxics in the workplace.

Torres also led a successful drive to raise the minimum wage.

If elected Insurance Commissioner, Torres has pledged an “all out war" against high auto insurance rates, insurance fraud, and insurance redlining. He is currently working with District Attorneys and law enforcement officials on a legislative package to increase fraud prosecutions.

Torres will be an Insurance Commissioner who makes a difference.

Delaine Eastin: School Superintendent

It took Delaine Eastin six years and six bills—overcoming three vetoes—to establish a state fund to improve school libraries. But she never gave up and the measure was finally signed into law last year.

It is that sort of persistence that has won Eastin a reputation not only for high principles but for fierce determination in pursuing what she believes in.

What she believes in is educating California’s young people.

One of Eastin’s primary goals as Superintendent will be to establish “Partnership Academies,” where labor unions work closely with public schools to create programs that give non-college bound young people the skills for good union jobs.

This program will provide much-needed attention to the many California high school graduates who do not attend college. Eastin, herself the daughter of a union machinist, believes union apprenticeship programs should be an integral part of high school career development programs.

“There should be a clean, straight shot from the classroom to the workforce,” Eastin says. Her reform proposals include putting at least six computers in every California classroom by the turn of the century and giving local schools more autonomy. She wants to allow an unlimited number of charter schools, which are permitted to adopt their own innovations.

Assembly Member Eastin’s legislative accomplishments include the 1992 School Facilities Bond Act (the largest school bond measure in history), an Educational Technology bill that ensures that all new schools are built or modernized with appropriate wiring to accommodate educational technology, and legislation to promote district financial responsibility. She has encouraged parental involvement in education by authoring legislation that requires large employers to allow employees time off for school-related obligations.

Eastin has built a reputation as one of the most dynamic and effective members of the Assembly. She has the talent and the drive to transform education in California.

Californians have a lot to gain by giving her the chance to do it.
Phil Angelides for Treasurer

Phil Angelides warns that there are no "political quick fixes" for the California economy.

"Our turnaround will come through investing in the energy and talent of California entrepreneurs and workers," says Angelides, Democratic candidate for Treasurer.

"As the state's chief investment officer, I believe in California and will invest to get a good return on our money and to put people back to work."

Angelides cites his skills and experience in the private and public sectors as making him "uniquely suited to create jobs and to restore faith in the ability of government to produce good results."

Angelides said it is time "for those of us who have been successful in the business world and in our communities and who care for our families to step into the public arena to make a difference."

Angelides has set a goal of creating 100,000 new jobs in California and expresses confidence in California's long-term future. Despite the loss of over 600,000 jobs since 1990, Angelides notes that there is new growth and dynamism in many sectors of the California economy, such as entertainment, biotech, high technology, foreign trade, financial services and environmental technology.

Angelides has won national recognition for planning and building Laguna West. His communities have changed the standard of development in the Sacramento region, with the planting of more than 40,000 trees, the dedication of more than 700 acres of parklands and open space, the provision of a range of housing from low-income to custom homes, the adoption of strict architectural guidelines, the building and showcasing of energy-efficient homes with PG&E and SMUD, the design of state-of-the-art natural treatment of drainage waters, and the creation of jobs within walking distance of homes.

Angelides has demonstrated that California can grow while being respectful of the environment. It's an attitude that will serve us well when Angelides is elected Treasurer.

Tom Umberg for Attny. General

When the Utility Reporter requested information from Tom Umberg's campaign office, the candidate himself responded with a personal letter to the union.

Umberg, an Assembly member who seeks the office of attorney general, has previously served as an Assistant US Attorney. Assigned to the newly-created Federal Court in Orange County, he maintained a 100% conviction rate prosecuting large-scale drug dealers, gang members, white collar criminals, and civil rights cases.

In his letter to Local 1245, Umberg wrote:

"As indicated by the enclosed personal biography, the focus of my professional life has been within our criminal justice system. My decision to seek the office of Attorney General is a reflection of my experience and interest in improving this system, as well as my deep and abiding commitment to reducing violence on our streets, in our homes, and at our schools.

"Having worked with labor representatives over the last few years, I am familiar with the issues and objectives of the IBEW," Umberg wrote. "As labor's strongest supporter from Orange County in the State Legislature, I have consistently worked hard during my tenure in the Assembly to represent you and your membership. I have not hesitated to tackle the tough issues and attempt to improve the lives of working men and women in California.

"I am sure it is no surprise to you," Umberg continued, "that my Republican opponent, Dan Lungren, has used his position as Attorney General to advocate for his private sector supporters, leading the State Department of Justice to turn its back on California's workers. Prior to serving as Attorney General, Lungren consistently voted in the US Congress to weaken prevailing wage laws, weaken health and safety laws, cut federal funding for OSHA, and oppose job creation and job retention legislation."

Umberg has vowed to focus on juvenile crime to help keep first-time offenders from becoming revolving-door felons. As Attorney General, Tom Umberg will make a valuable contribution to the citizens of California.
Connell for State Controller

You don't have to be a political science professor to see the difference between Kathleen Connell, who is endorsed by labor, and her Republican opponent. Connell's opponent is a right-wing extremist who has proposed abolishing public employee pensions to balance the budget and has called Social Security a "morally bankrupt" tax.

Connell has a different view of what California needs. She wants to use the power of public pension funds to invest in California's future. "We must adopt a California-first policy to create jobs and prosperity," says Connell, noting that the Controller helps oversee $130 billion in pension fund assets.

Connell says she wants to target emerging industries to create high-wage jobs in California. She advocates tax incentives for small companies that create jobs in California.

Future prosperity, she says, depends on rebuilding California's infrastructure. "With limited bonding capacity and enormous infrastructure needs for transportation, schools, sewers, communications and waste facilities," says Connell, "California can no longer afford to sell bonds in a random fashion." Connell favors a coordinated plan for state capital investment, with a priority to bonds that favor job creation.

Connell hopes to apply her business experience to the task of reducing waste in government. She plans to conduct an immediate statewide "performance audit" to assist the Legislature and the Governor in efforts to cut the deficit and confront the looming fiscal emergency.

Performance audits, used with great success in other states, look for ways that government can "work smarter and cheaper" by tightening management, eliminating duplication, slimming down administrative overhead, and maximizing assets and revenues, says Connell.

Kathleen Connell has the experience and the drive to make a positive contribution to California. She deserves our support.

The Top Ten Reasons Union Members Volunteer in Election Campaigns

10. The food is delicious.
9. It's fun to tell others what they should do...for a change.
8. You meet new people.
7. The election parties are much more fun when your candidate wins.
6. It's cheap entertainment.
5. You learn new skills and tell strangers where to go.
4. You don't have to fret over the election pamphlet the night before because you'll already know all the answers.
3. There are prizes and gifts for people who volunteer. (Well, maybe.)
2. You meet and get to know the candidates.

1. Union members actually make a difference in who gets elected and what policies get made. We all benefit!
When workers are united, anything is possible

By Orv Owen

I t is not in numbers but in unity that our greatest strength lies. The whole, when united, is able to do anything. The need for unity is basic to the continued success and growth of our union, and it is just as necessary now as it was in our beginning.

As I see it, your support of our union does not stop upon retirement, just as the benefits we receive from our union do not stop upon retirement. Active members and retired members must maintain the unity of strength that protects the gains and benefits won by our union across the bargaining table.

Local 1245 retirees believe that the need for unity is so basic that it remains the same for both active and retired members. And we still believe that unity, which is our truest need, is the key to protecting all the many other things that we need—whether it be food, shelter, health care or the other necessities of life. Protecting our access to these things has been the historic function and goal of our union.

Persistence Pays

I believe that one of the most effective techniques in organizing is persistence. The tree trimming employers can attest to Local 1245’s persistence in organizing tree trimmers. Although we have been successful in organizing these employees, that struggle still goes on.

Organizing our retiree clubs is a struggle that also still goes on. We retirees will continue to be persistent in our goal of organizing all of our retirees. We, like our not-yet-retired brothers and sisters, also believe in a union shop.

Please remember, a local union should never consider itself an island unto itself. Keep the faith!

Law provides no penalty for ‘Medigap’ profiteers

Medigap insurance companies—those that insure medical costs not covered by Medicare—are earning unwarranted profits because the laws designed to regulate them have no teeth.

In the mid-1980s, in response to evidence of widespread profiteering by Medigap insurers, the federal government issued national minimum “loss ratio” standards for Medigap policies. The loss ratio is defined as the percentage of premiums returned to policyholders as benefits.

The standard loss ratio on policies sold to individuals was initially set at 60%, and later raised to 65%. That is, out of every $100 collected as premiums, the companies should pay out at least $65. (For group policies, the minimum loss ratio is 75%.)

In 1990, Congress required the federal General Accounting Office (GAO) to audit compliance with these ratios.

Last February the GAO reported that more than 70 companies were involved in profiteering practices in 1991 (the year studied), collecting about $320 million in premiums, with excess profits of about $40 million that they would not have made had they complied with the minimum loss ratio standards.

But the federal loss ratio standards are a bark without a bite. There are no penalties for not meeting them.

Not surprisingly, these are companies that have spent millions of dollars spreading propaganda against premium controls in health care reform legislation.

In light of the collapse of health care reform in Congress this fall, it remains to be seen whether any corrective measures will be taken with regard to this Medigap insurance profiteering. Such profiteering adds to health care costs in the US, which already accounts for about a trillion dollars a year, about one-seventh of the entire US gross domestic product.

If this is what happens where there are standards, surely profiteering on the health of the American public is no less where standards are completely absent.

One solution would be to adopt a single payer plan for the American health care system. Supporters of a single payer plan could not muster enough strength in Congress to pass such legislation this year. But Californians have a chance to enact a single payer plan on Nov. 8 when they vote on Proposition 186.

Until voters take action, they should expect profiteering by insurance companies to continue.
"You don't go to the unemployment office to hire someone to take care of a ruptured gas main or arcing wires in the street."

Jim Findley, Local 1245

"The maintenance of the system has been decreased to reduce costs."

Rich Cowart, Local 1245

"Will utility companies, as they come under competitive pressure to cut costs, focus on short-term considerations, and cut operations and maintenance, to the detriment of reliability?"

Gil Friend
Business for Social Responsibility

Local 1245 members weren't the only citizens concerned about the impact of the CPUC proposal—sometimes called deregulation—on service reliability.

Harold Fink, a small business owner testifying at the Sept. 26 public hearing in Fresno, said telephone deregulation had increased his bill but harmed the service he received.

Service will suffer if electricity is deregulated, Fink predicted. It will
be "just like when you call the phone company and say, 'My line is out' and they say, 'Call somebody else.' "

Service quality was also on the mind of Tom Ferrito, former mayor of Los Gatos.

"I saw first-hand how PG&E responded to the needs of my community during the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake," Ferrito testified at the San Jose public hearing. He said he didn't believe that kind of response would be possible if electric service is deregulated.

Competition is supposed to bring lower prices but "often brings substandard services or products," Ferrito told CPUC Commissioner Gregory Conlon, who presided at the San Jose hearing. "Are you going to require so-called competitors to provide...back-up service?" Ferrito asked.

Los Banos City Councilman Gerald O'Brien, testifying at the Fresno hearing, stated the concern over service this way: "When my light goes out," said O'Brien, "I want to make sure there's somebody to come out and fix it that night."

Service providers will be easy to find when everything is running smoothly, predicted Hipolito Tavarez, testifying in Fresno. But maybe not so easy to find when things go wrong.

If the CPUC plan is implemented, he asked, "Where do you have any guarantees the lights will be on dur-

"As PG&E employees, we are skilled workers...I take pride in my work. Contractors come in and do a job and then they're gone."

Gerald Pittore, Local 1245

"By cutting corners, PG&E is sacrificing the long-term integrity of the system. We will live with the legacy of that."

Mark Newman, Local 1245

"PG&E is changing the way it does business--not to raise its standards but to lower itself to [competitors] with lower standards."

Robin David, Local 1245

Greenpeace trumpeted a "Power for the People" theme at a rally preceding the Sept. 12 public hearing in Martinez.
"I have the responsibility and the duty of providing safe, reliable electricity to the public...I have lived up to my obligation for over 30 years, through snow storms, landslides, floods, forest fires and earthquakes."

Tom Hutchinson, Local 1245

"Who's going to be responsible for the safety of the people?"

Clifton Jackson, Local 1245

"I saw first-hand how PG&E responded to the needs of my community during the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake...Are you going to require so-called competitors to provide...back-up service?"

Tom Ferrito, Former mayor, Los Gatos

"With this deregulation [PG&E] seems to have panicked. They're laying off people...Pretty soon you won't see reliable power."

Bryant Bolan, Local 1245

**Concern About Reliability**

A few people, mostly business representatives, spoke in favor of the CPUC proposal at the public hearings. For the most part they echoed the CPUC argument that lower electric rates would help retain and expand California businesses.

"A decision to expand manufacturing is easy right now—we go out of state," said Mark Beck, representing a semi-conductor manufacturer.

But other business representatives expressed deep concern about the possible effects that deregulation would have on reliability.

"Many companies in Silicon Valley—especially manufacturers of electronic equipment—are very sensitive to the reliability and quality of electric power," said Gil Friend, an environmental management consultant and spokesman for Business for Social Responsibility.

Testifying in San Jose, Friend asked the CPUC:

"Will utility companies, as they come under competitive pressure to cut costs, focus on short-term considerations, and cut operations and maintenance, to the detriment of reliability? How concerned will non-utility power providers be about reliability? Who will be responsible for reliability in the new system?"

Ronald McPherson, representing the Santa Clara County Black Chamber of Commerce, praised the quality of service historically provided by PG&E.

"Many speak of lowering costs. That must be coupled with quality service and quality programs," said McPherson.

Gerald Cook, representing Sun Microsystems Computer Corp. at the San Jose hearing, tempered his support for the CPUC proposal by cautioning that reliability and quality of service is important.

"I would certainly not encourage anything that would make the system any less safe," Cook testified.

**Ducking the Issue**

At the Fresno hearing, CPUC President Daniel Fessler attempted to divert attention from the issue of service reliability.

In introductory remarks at the start of the hearing, Fessler said no evidence existed that reliability is a problem.

"Reliability is not the issue," he declared.

But Fessler was ducking the real issue: will reliability become a problem if the CPUC proposal is implemented? Utility workers—the people...
in the best position to know—believe that it will.
“Reliable electric service is made possible by skilled workers who know how the system works and know how to maintain it,” said Susan Stipp, a customer service representative testifying in Eureka. Competition, she said, “will erode service, compromise safety, degrade labor standards and lower public service values in the electric utility industry.”
Local 1245 member Robin David, testifying in Martinez, said the corrosive effects of competition are already being felt. “PG&E is changing the way it does business—not to raise its standards but to lower itself to [competitors] with lower standards,” David said.
Local 1245 member Rich Cowart, a PG&E lineman also testifying in Martinez, told the CPUC: “The maintenance of the system has been decreased to reduce costs.”
Local 1245 member Gerald Pittore, an electric crew foreman, warned that competition would lead to increased use of out-of-state contractors who would be less accountable to the public. Testifying in Martinez, Pittore said: “As PG&E employees, we are skilled workers...I take pride in my work. Contractors come in and do a job and then they’re gone.”

No One in Charge

Feeding these concerns about service reliability is the growing suspicion that, in a deregulated environment, no one will be in charge.
Under current law, utilities like PG&E hold a monopoly for a particular service territory. As the monopoly provider, the utility is legally obligated to serve the public with reliable, high quality power. The CPUC is responsible for monitoring and enforcing the utility’s obligation to serve.
But in a competitive market, where energy generators can strike up separate deals with individual consumers, the task of monitoring service becomes enormously complex. The CPUC insists that safety, quality and reliability of service will be unaffected by its proposal. But the CPUC proposal offers nothing—not a single word—about how the safety, quality and reliability of service will be assured.
Joe Fradin, a PG&E utility worker and union member, reminded the CPUC of the impact of deregulation on the trucking industry. That industry, Fradin noted, had been regulated many decades ago “to help insure safety on our highways.”
But deregulation changed that situa-

“Why haven’t we learned from all of these deregulation fiascos and put back in place those regulations that have protected the public so ably in the past? Is the answer stupidity? Or is it greed and power wielded by special interests?”
Joe Fradin, Local 1245

“What programs for safety and skill training are you requiring for new companies to protect the public interest and safety?”
Bill Brill, Local 1245

“Many speak of lowering costs. That must be coupled with quality service and quality programs.”
Ronald McPherson Black Chamber of Commerce

“The residential ratepayers are not going to save a dime.”
Anthony Araya, Local 1245

“I want to know how you’re going to provide training to people who will provide service in the future—because the experienced people are leaving.”
Barbara Saunders Local 1245

See PAGE TWENTY
From PAGE NINETEEN

ation dramatically, said Fradin, testi-
fy ing in San Jose.

"Now it's simply who can get the
goods there the fastest and the cheap-
est. The result: drivers with little or
no sleep driving poorly-maintained
unsafe rigs, putting all of us who use
the highways in grave and constant
danger," he said.

Also testifying in San Jose, Local
1245 member Bill Brill asked CPUC
Commissioner Conlon: "What pro-
grams for safety and skill training are
you requiring for new companies to
protect the public interest and safety?"

Barbara Saunders, speaking shortly
after Brill, also addressed the issue
of skill training.

"I'm the lady you see off the road
with a shovel," said Saunders, a PG&E
fieldman in Hollister, near the epicen-
ter of the 1989 Loma Prieta earth-
quake. "I'm the lady who didn't come
home for days and days during the
earthquake...I want to know how
you're going to provide training to
people who will provide service in
the future, because the experienced
people are leaving."

Following her testimony, Saunders
told the Utility Reporter that downsiz-
ing, in her opinion, has re-
duced staffing in her area to the point
where PG&E could not respond ef-
fectively to another major earthquake in
the area.

"Who's going to be responsible for
the safety of the people?" asked Local
1245 member Clifton Jackson, testi-
 fy ing in Martinez.

"Preferential Treatment"

People also used the public hear-
ings to voice their skepticism about
the CPUC's claim that all consumers,
big and small, would benefit from
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did not address the problem of preferen-
tial treatment.

Helen Lie of the Greenlining Coali-
tion, testifying at the Fresno hearing
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