Local 1245 escalated its battle against PG&E layoffs last month amidst growing signs that workforce reductions are already harming the quality of gas and electric service.

Union widens campaign against PG&E layoffs

The actions attracted wide-spread media coverage and fueled public concern about the safety and reliability of utility service.

That concern grew exponentially during last month’s storms and flooding, which left 1.4 million PG&E customers without power, some for over a week.

At a Jan. 19 news conference in front of PG&E's San Francisco call center, the union needs documentation regarding natural gas leaks that are not being repaired in a timely manner.

PG&E rejects proposal for no layoffs

Despite the continuing confrontation over impending layoffs, Local 1245 and PG&E did reach an agreement to give qualified electrical employees facing layoff an opportunity to fill vacancies in the Clerical bargaining unit.

Expanded Opportunities

Headlines from the Front

INFORMATION

Headlines from the Front

UNION ELECTIONS

Vol. XLIV No. 2

February 1995

PG&E rejects proposal for no layoffs

Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally (left) warns that downsizing will harm service at news conference last month in front of PG&E’s San Francisco call center. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)

FEWER WORKERS = LESS SERVICE

On September 30, 1992, the union presented its proposal, proposed by Business Manager Jack McNally on Feb. 2 to company officials at PG&E's industrial relations office in Walnut Creek, also offered the company the possibility of greater flexibility in structuring the workforce.

But company officials made it clear that PG&E intended to issue Title 206 and 306 notices this month, which would set into motion the displacement, demotion, and layoff procedures spelled out in the labor agreement.

Approximately 1400 employees represented by Local 1245 in physical classifications could be targeted, according to unofficial data supplied by the company. No clerical employees are currently targeted.

"We went the extra mile trying to give the company a way to save money without layoffs," said McNally. "They made it clear they just weren't interested."

As the Utility Reporter went to press it appeared that notices could begin going out as early as Feb. 6. McNally said the union would seek to have the company's actions reversed if PG&E goes through with layoffs.

A union grievance currently in arbitration maintains that PG&E agreed in 1993 to offer at least one job option to a large class of employees targeted in the downsizing.

The union further contends that the 1993 agreement prohibits the layoff of any Title 200 employee at apprentice level or higher in the Customer Energy Services Business Unit. A decision in that case, Arbitration 208, is expected in early March.

In addition, the union is seeking intervention by the California Public Utilities Commission and the state legislature on the grounds that workforce reductions are threatening the reliability and safety of PG&E service.

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expanded opportunities

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Under Letter Agreement 95-05, signed on Jan. 30, Clerical employees will first have a chance to bid to currently-existing vacancies.

Then Physical bargaining

See PAGE SIX
**Utility Reporter**

February 1995  
Volume XLIV  
Number 2  
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**LABOR AT LARGE**

**Workers here and abroad**

**Rolling the union on...**

**New Routine:** “As layoffs became part of the national business routine, the sense of guilt they once inspired in senior management has diminished. Lean and mean employers no longer spend as much to help their dismissed staff members.” (From a story in the Wall Street Journal, explaining how the “outplacement consulting” industry is facing hard times.)

**Gain for Parents:** A provision in the newly negotiated Newspaper Guild contract in San Francisco allows employees (mothers and fathers) to work part time until their child is in kindergarten, according to Labor News for Working Families.

**IMF Blocks Accord:** Last July, the Chadian central labor body (UST) obtained the signing of a social accord following a strike that lasted many months. The accord provided for payment of wage arrears and a 10% pay raise. Ten days later, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) warned the government that it must not honor its commitment to the workers because the agreement constituted “a serious violation of the program concluded with the IMF and could result in the cancellation of outside financial assistance.”

**No Wasted Time:** At least one manager of Nicaragua’s free trade zones is promising manufacturers ease workers in an effort to convince firms to relocate in that country, Label Letter reported. Deaf workers are “highly productive since they don’t waste time talking while they work,” according to the manager’s pitch.

**Eco-Jobs:** The Economic Policy Institute released a report last month which concludes that environmental regulations do not cost people jobs, San Mateo County Labor reported. To the contrary, the report says that if jobs created by the pollution control industry are counted, environmental laws actually create more job than they do away with.

**Labor Party:** Almost 400 unionists and other Californians convened last month to call for creation of a Labor Party to represent the issues of workers in national politics. The group, which believes both major parties have abandoned working people, was addressed by California AFL-CIO head Jack Henning, and former California Gov. Jerry Brown, among others.

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**Pacific Gas & Electric**

1995 Shift Premiums

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
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1995 Nuclear Premiums

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<tr>
<td>Senior Reactor Operator</td>
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<td>License Premium</td>
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<td>Senior Reactor Operator</td>
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<td>License Premium for</td>
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<td>Senior Control Operator</td>
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1995 Remote Reporting Expense Allowance

See Section 202.21(c) of the Physical Contract.

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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>15 miles or more</td>
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**Northern California Airtimes for We Do the Work**

**Discounted Lives**

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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento</td>
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**Not In Our Town**

<table>
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<tr>
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**Prison Labor/Prison Blues**

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sun., April 2</td>
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**Quick Response**

Local 1245 Outside Line foreman Gordy Driver (left) and lineman Greg Krogh were quick to respond when a terminator blew up and injured two fellow workers during an overhead/underground conversion for Vantage Electric in San Diego last year. They helped put out the fire and summoned paramedics for Bob Sandow and Gary Tankersley. Sandow has since returned to work. Tankersley is continuing to undergo therapy, but is reportedly "doing fine."
Local AT LARGE

Union recruits workers for AT&T jobs

Alameda agency honors Local 1245

T he Economic Development Agency of Alameda County presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally last month to honor the union's efforts in promoting jobs on the Information Superhighway.

Since concluding a labor agreement with AT&T last fall to represent workers on the construction of an electronic highway in California, Local 1245 has recruited and referred hundreds of prospective employees. The union's involvement has helped forge a community coalition for jobs that includes Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson and former Supervisor Don Perata, AT&T, and various church and community groups. Although Local 1245's agreement with AT&T was the foundation for the coalition, other job opportunities are now being channeled through the coalition, including employment with the FBI and the Federal Census Office.

"This project shows what can be done through the working together of labor organizations, corporations, community elected officials and the communities in general," said Local 1245 Business Rep. Art Murray, who has played a leading role in referring workers to the AT&T jobs.

"The goal is to employ people at a living wage with real benefits such as pension and medical insurance and a chance to improve their qualifications for jobs in the future," Murray said.

Business Manager McNally, who bargained the labor agreement with AT&T last year, accepted the award from the Economic Development Agency of Alameda County on Jan. 25.

Unsettling times

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

1994 was a very unsettling year for the members of Local 1245. The utility industry, which is the industry which the vast majority of our membership is connected to in one way or another, is evolving and will be changed forever.

PG&E, as well as the California portion of the Sierra Pacific Power Co., will be directly affected by whatever the California Public Utilities Commission's deregulation activity produces. The threat of competition has caused PG&E to savagely restructure the company and downsize its workforce.

Sierra Pacific Power Co. is in the process of a merger with Washington Water and Power, which is located principally in Spokane, Wash. While Sierra Pacific's downsizing has been minimal, there now is some restructuring activity as a result of the merger plans. This has caused unrest with some of our members as some functions of the company will be transferred to the Spokane area.

SMUD, City of Santa Clara, City of Redding, Modesto Irrigation District, City of Gridley, and other power distribution public agencies we represent are all in some state of unrest, as clearly whatever comes out of the CPUC's deregulation activity will impact them as well. They will be facing the competition threat and are beginning to look at how they can best position themselves.

Our line clearance tree trimming members are under the never-ending threat of changing contractors and random layoffs as PG&E's tree budget is moved around the system. The more frequent bidding of areas places additional undue threat of job loss on our members. And of course PG&E wants the line clearance tree contractor to do more for less.

Citizens Utilities Company, our telephone members who work the Sacramento and North Valley, were the first in our jurisdiction to suffer the pains of deregulation. The telecommunications industry is still scrambling, which keeps our members in constant worry about their security.

In the cable TV industry, the common word is "buy-out." With the introduction of the information superhighway, many entities are looking at local cable companies to buy, to promote, and to enter the emerging super highway business. Every time our members turn around, there is some rumor or proposal about a buyout or a merger.

Outside line work in California is the worst it has ever been. Utilities in the state are not doing the work that they used to. I think their nervousness over what deregulation is going to be has caused them to forego work they normally would have done. With the work picture as it is, many of our outside members have had to go to other states to get work.

On the bright side, the information super highway construction, as well as our telecommunications construction work, is growing.

See PAGE SEVENTEEN
Statement by Johan Klehs, Chair, State Board of Equalization

**PG&E should ‘think twice’ about further job cuts**

I’m Johan Klehs, chair of the Board of Equalization. The Board has the responsibility of assessing the property taxes of all the major utilities in California.

We’re very concerned at this point ... because as PG&E lays off more and more workers, their maintenance and construction workers—the quality of their resources and assets will go down and as a result of that assessment, they are going down for local governments who ... need the basic revenues to survive, especially during these types of emergencies.

I wrote a letter to the chair of the Public Utilities Commission this morning, asking the PUC to look at the service levels that PG&E has been providing and how there has been a decline in those service levels. If you look at the North Coast Division, which is the area that is hardest hit by the storms and these most recent floods, several years ago there were 120 people employed in that division. Today there are 75 people employed in that division. And by next month there will be around 26 people employed in that division.

We can’t predict if California is going to have another fire, or flood or earthquake in this area, but we know what has happened in the past. And we also know that PG&E has had 25% higher employee force levels to deal with those emergencies when we had the earthquake here in ’89 and the fires in Oakland after that.

This is something which is of major concern to the Board of Equalization and the residents of this district and we hope PG&E will take another look at it and think twice, and that the Public Utilities Commission gets involved and reviews the service abilities of PG&E to meet its customers’ needs.

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Statement by Mel Varrelman, Napa County Board of Supervisors

**My constituents expect highest standards**

My brother worked for PG&E for 26 years. My father worked for PG&E for 47 years. My family has been associated with this company and its history of high quality service.

So it is deeply troubling to me that recent “downsizing” at PG&E may be impairing the quality of this company’s service and harming its good name.

As a member of the Board of Supervisors for Napa County, I know that my constituents expect the highest standards of service from their utility.

This area was hit hard by the recent storms and it troubles me to learn that recent workforce reductions may have hampered PG&E’s response.

I call upon the California Public Utilities Commission to formally investigate the effects of downsizing on PG&E’s overall performance, and to take all necessary steps to ensure that the safety, reliability and responsiveness of our electric service is not compromised.

“My father worked for PG&E for 47 years. My family has been associated with this company and its history of high quality service. So it is deeply troubling to me that recent ‘downsizing’ at PG&E may be impairing the quality of this company’s service and harming its good name.”

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Union battles PG&E layoffs

From PAGE ONE

workforce at PG&E totaled 2,980, said McNally, citing data supplied by PG&E.

By January of this year, that number had fallen to right around 2,000, a 34% reduction—more cuts slated for 1995.

“It is not hard to understand why the CPUC received far more complaints during this storm than in previous storms,” McNally told reporters.

The CPUC received 253 complaints about PG&E service between Jan. 9 and 12. As of Jan. 26, the CPUC had received 2,478 postcards urging the CPUC to protect current levels of utility service.

Several public officials joined McNally at the news conference in calling for the CPUC to investigate PG&E’s performance during the storm. (See statements, pages 4 and 5.) In addition, union members Jeff Howard, Leslie Davis and Joe Audelo were on hand to take reporters’ questions about employees’ perceptions of service quality.

Legislature Should Act

McNally also called upon the state legislature to intervene on behalf of ratepayers and “make sure that the CPUC fulfills its obligation to assure safe and reliable service for the citizens of this state, particularly in this era of so-called deregulation.”

McNally noted that residential and small business ratepayers “have the least to gain and the most to lose” from utility deregulation.

“Meanwhile,” he added, “we call upon PG&E to suspend any further downsizing of its workforce until these problems are completely investigated and resolved.”

Members Mobilize

Local actions by Local 1245 business representatives and rank and file members have helped to keep the media focused on the downsizing issue.

In the weeks following the Dec. 14 rally in San Francisco, members have leafletted and picketed malls, PG&E customer service centers and other public places throughout the state.

On several occasions these actions have attracted media attention. In some cases, members and business representatives took additional steps to keep downsizing in the news.

Ron Garcia, Irwin Thomas, Gregg Burk and other Local 1245 members broadcast the union’s message by carrying picket signs through the streets of Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo on horseback.

Business Rep. Mike Haentjes said the horseback protests generated widespread television and newspaper coverage.

In the Santa Cruz area, Business Rep. Gary Hughes took a reporter on a tour of rotten power poles and other examples of declining maintenance. This excursion resulted in a major feature story in the Santa Cruz Sentinel.

Members in the East Bay, along with Business Rep. Jane Brunner, brought the issue of service reliability and public safety to two meetings of the Oakland City Council in January. The unionists will make a presentation to the city’s public safety committee on Feb. 7.

Steve Amarel, Advisory Council member Keith

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Oakland City Council member Sheila Jordan joined Local 1245 at the Jan. 19 news conference calling for an investigation of PG&E’s performance.
BATTLING LAYOFFS

There When You Need Us.

Yes, it's our job to respond to crises. But never before have our employees done it with more dedication or professionalism. I'm extremely proud of all of them. I salute them every one.

Stanley T. Skinner
President and CEO

This cartoon from the Santa Clara Valley Metro exposed the hypocrisy in PG&E's advertising slogan "There When You Need Us." Because of downsizing and impending layoffs, PG&E has demonstrated it is most definitely not "there" for its customers—nor for its employees.

Burkhardt, and other union members raised enough money in voluntary donations to place a full-page ad in the Placerville Mountain Democrat.

"The safety and reliability of everyone's gas and electric service is in jeopardy, and so are our jobs," the ad proclaimed.

(See Page 13 for a look at recent newspaper headlines concerning downsizing.)

PG&E on Defensive

In contrast, PG&E management has spent much of its time on the defensive in terms of media coverage. After a raft of negative stories about PG&E's performance during the storms, the company took out full-page ads in newspapers throughout northern California attempting to persuade the public that nothing was wrong.

Local 1245, in turn, placed full-page ads in the San Francisco Chronicle and San Francisco Examiner questioning PG&E's claim that downsizing was not affecting service reliability, safety and responsiveness.

The Local 1245 ad featured photos of union members working to restore power during the storms, and informed the public that PG&E employees would continue trying to provide the best service possible.

But the ad warned that downsizing had drastically reduced the number of employees available to respond to emergencies. It also graphically illustrated the connection between downsizing and public safety by reprinting a photograph of a Pleasanton home that burned to the ground last November in a natural gas explosion linked to downsizing.

The ad warned consumers that utility restructuring proposals under consideration by the CPUC might benefit large energy consumers, but most likely at the expense of residential and small business ratepayers.

Despite the public uproar over service problems during the storm, PG&E continued to insist that further job cuts were necessary.

"They're going to put them on the back and give them an 'Atta boy' with one hand, and then give them a pink slip with the other," Business Rep. Gary Hughes told one Santa Cruz-area reporter.

As PG&E continues its preparations for layoffs, efforts to make the utility accountable for its actions continued. On Jan. 20, the CPUC acceded to Local 1245's call for an investigation of PG&E's performance.

On Jan. 30, Business Manager McNally and the heads of other California utility unions brought their concerns about service reliability to State Senator Steve Peace, chairman of the Senate Energy Committee.

Statement by Mike Nevin
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors

We don't need downsizing of our workforce at PG&E

(Nevin began by explaining that he lost a home in the Russian River flood and expressing thanks to PG&E workers and other emergency workers.)

What we're not grateful for and what we're worried about is the report you just heard from Jack (McNally). For four and five days—some cases for a total of a week—people were without power on the Russian River. This isn't acceptable because power is a right. Power isn't a luxury. To leave those victims, those people who are already stranded in those homes, to leave them without power is not acceptable.

We keep hearing about downsizing: Here we're asking the nation, from the President on down, to help us in a horrible tragedy and a difficult situation, and the utility company is downsizing.

I urge the California Public Utilities Commission to investigate the downsizing of PG&E and its workers, especially during these most difficult times. I thank all of those at PG&E, the workers who worked so hard to make our lives easier on the Russian River. There's nothing that can be done about my home...but at the same time we can do something about future disasters, and don't need to be downsizing our power workers or our workforce at Pacific Gas & Electric.

"Power is an absolute human need. Power isn't a luxury. To leave those victims, those people who are already stranded in those homes, to leave them without power is not acceptable."

Statement by Fred Keeley
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors

PG&E cuts are 'alarming'

As a member of the Board of Supervisors of Santa Cruz County, I am committed to maintaining high quality electric service for my constituents. It troubles me to learn of recent and planned reductions in the PG&E workforce.

In Santa Cruz County, we are especially sensitive to the devastation that natural disasters can bring, because we suffered greatly during the Loma Prieta earthquake and the recently presidentially-declared disaster in our area.

While we appreciate PG&E's quick response to each disaster which has struck our community, it is alarming to think that this vital public service and the needs of the PG&E workforce may be compromised due to staff reductions.

February 1995
The union has worked to build public support for its no layoffs campaign by drawing the connection between deregulation, downsizing, and deteriorating service. The union's December rally at the CPUC mobilized support from environmental, rank and file, and senior citizen constituencies, and attracted widespread media coverage. Rank and file demonstrations throughout December and January have succeeded in making PG&E downsizing a frequent subject of radio, television, and newspaper reports. And a January news conference served notice of the union's intention to make deregulation and downsizing a major issue this year in the state legislature.

The Company will fill all clerical vacancies as quickly as possible. A control date of no earlier than February 15, 1995, will be established for authorized vacancies. The provisions of Subsections 18.4(d) and 18.5(c) will be modified by requiring bids and transfers to be submitted within five days instead of the contractually agreed to eight days before the established control dates for all clerical vacancies through July 1, 1995. Pro-Bargaining unit employees who are subject to being displaced will be encouraged to submit bids and transfers to available clerical vacancies. Employees must be qualified or have submitted a request to take a qualification test by the established control date. The Company will be prepared to administer clerical position qualifications tests to physical employees in a timely manner.

The Company will continue to offer unfilled clerical vacancies to physical bargaining unit employees who are assigned layoff under Sections 206.7 or 306.7. The provisions of Subsections 18.5(c) and 18.5(d) will be modified by requiring employees to be given a list of clerical positions that are available within five days instead of the contractually agreed to eight days before the established control date. The Company will be prepared to administer a second transfer list to identify new timely bidders, are also waived.

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LOCAL 1245 ELECTION NOTICE

Nominations Open in March

The election process will begin in March of this year for officers and Advisory Council, with balloting in June for new three-year terms.

Complete information on nominations, elections, duties, and qualifications of officers are found in the Local Union Bylaws and the International Union Constitution. If you do not have copies of these documents, they may be obtained by writing to IBEW Local Union No. 1245, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

Offices

The following officers shall be elected in accordance with Article XVIII of the IBEW Constitution and Article III of the Local 1245 Bylaws: President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Business Manager-Financial Secretary; Southern Area Executive Board Member, Central Area Executive Board Member, Northern Area Executive Board Member, and At-Large Executive Board Member. The composition of the areas and at-large group represented on the Board are specified in Article III, Section 4 of the Local Union Bylaws.

The designated Advisory Council seats are listed in Article V of the Local Union Bylaws.

Qualifications

Business Manager-Financial Secretary: The offices are combined per Article III of the Local Union Bylaws and must be filled by a member holding an “A” membership (EWBA) as required by Article XVIII of the IBEW Constitution.

Members elected to office in the Local Union must be able and available to attend all regular and special meetings and to conduct the affairs of their office without compensation or other expenses other than paid for in Article X of the Local Union Bylaws (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 5).

Assistant Business Manager(s) and/or Business Representatives shall not be eligible to hold any elective Unit or Local Union office (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 5).

To qualify as a candidate for Local Union office or Advisory Council Member, a member must have at least two years' continuous good standing in the Local Union immediately prior to March 1, 1995, and must have tendered his or her dues for January 1995 (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 11).

Nominations

Nomination of officers and Advisory Council members shall be made under “New Business” at the first meeting of the Units in March 1995 (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Sections 6a and 6b).

In order to be a candidate for any Local Union office, an Advisory Council Member, a member must be present at the Unit meeting where he or she is nominated, or notify the Local Union Recording Secretary, Ed Mallory, in writing on or before March 1, 1995, that he or she will run for a specific Local Union office if nominated (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 12).

A member shall not accept nomination for more than one office of the Local Union (unless combined under the Bylaws). If a member is nominated for more than one office, he or she must notify the Judge of the Election promptly in writing, no later than April 15, 1995, for which office he or she will be a candidate and declare all other nominations for Local Union office (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 13).

Campaign Financing

Article XVIII, Section 21 of the IBEW Constitution provides in part that "No candidate (including a prospective candidate) for Local Union office and no supporter of a candidate for Local Union office may solicit or accept financial support or any other direct or indirect support of any kind (except an individual's own volunteered personal time) from any nonmember of the Local Union or any foundation, corporation, or other entity whose funds are derived in whole or in part from any person not a member of the Local Union...."

The International Executive Council of IBEW has adopted regulations to enforce the above section. You may obtain a complete copy of these regulations from Local 1245 or by writing to the IBEW Ninth District office, 150 N. Wiget Ln., Suite 100, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

The regulations define a "candidate" in part as a member who takes action directed toward seeking elections to the following positions in the Local Union: President, Vice President, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Business Manager, or Member of the Executive Board. The IEC regulations also provide for an Independent Campaign Contribution Administrator who investigates possible violations, and in turn requires candidates as defined above to file, on designated dates, campaign finance reports.

Voting

As provided in Local Union Bylaws Article III, Section 15, the May issue of the Utility Reporter will contain "a list of all candidates for Local Union office, together with a factual record of their activities within the Local Union, committee assignments performed, offices held, and experience gained for and in behalf of the Local Union...."

Ballots will be mailed before June 1, 1992 and must be returned by June 22. To be eligible to vote, you must have paid your dues for March 1995 on or before May 31, 1996, per Bylaws Article III, Section 14.

Further Information

In addition to the Local 1245 Bylaws and the IBEW Constitution, the conduct of labor union elections is also covered by Title IV of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA).

The U.S. Department of Labor publishes two relevant booklets: Rights and Responsibilities Under the LMRDA and CSRA and Electing Union Officers.

These booklets are available by writing the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Elections, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room No. North 5619, Washington, DC 20210.
Local action

Following the Dec. 14 rally in San Francisco, Local 1245 members took their protest of PG&E cutbacks to shopping malls, PG&E customer service offices, and other public locations throughout PG&E's service area, including those featured here.

Morning protest at Oakport Service center in Oakland. (Photo: Landis Marttila)

Members picket PG&E Customer Service Office in Vacaville. (Photo: Wayne Greer)

No LAYOFFS!

Morning protest at Oakport Service center in Oakland. (Photo: Landis Marttila)

Horseback protest at Diablo Canyon Power Plant. (Photo: Mike Haentjens)

Members picket PG&E Customer Service Office in Sacramento. (Photo: Wayne Greer)
PG&E’s disaster

Two disasters struck California last month. Mother Nature was responsible for one. PG&E was responsible for the other.

When January storms cut off electric service to 1.4 million customers, PG&E employees represented by Local 1245 responded as they always have. They gave their all. After a full day of battling power outages on Friday, Jan. 6, electric crew foreman Steve Manfre took two hours off, then returned to work two more shifts of 30 and "20-something" hours.

When the rampaging Russian River crested on Jan. 11—sweeping away cars, homes, and power poles—troubleman Grant Woodruff was putting in his third straight 20-hour day with no end in sight. And so it went throughout northern California: utility workers battling wind, rain and flood to keep the power on. Just as they have safeguarded the public's power supply against the ravages of earthquakes, mudslides and fires.

Only this time it was different. During last month's storms and floods, PG&E employees were up against not just the furies of Mother Nature. They were up against the shortsightedness of PG&E management.

The storm laid bare the facts that PG&E still tries to keep from public view: A downsized workforce cannot respond to natural disasters as effectively as a fully-staffed workforce. And a downsized program of routine maintenance virtually guarantees that outages will be longer and more severe when the inevitable natural disasters strike.

Counting the Days

While PG&E was counting the dollars it has saved from downsizing, hundreds of thousands of customers last month were counting the days it took to get their service restored. "We have to go to motels to [shower] and these guys tell us everything is fine! Baloney!" said John Roddy of Scotts Valley, who told the San Jose Mercury News that he was without power from Jan. 8 to Jan. 13.

PG&E blamed the severity of the storm for the length of the outages, at one point referring to the January rains as a "500-year storm"—meaning a storm of that size could be expected only once every five centuries. But customers were skeptical of such claims.

See NEXT PAGE

Lineman Don Meyer (above, left) grounds wire before starting work on a fallen line in Sonoma County during the January storm. At left, a Local 1245 crew for Davey Tree removes fallen trees, also in Sonoma County. (Photos: Eric Wolfe)
From PAGE NINE

"I've been through the storm of '82 and I've been through the storm of '86 and I've not seen [outages] quite like this. And personally, I don't think the force of the [current] storm is anywhere near what we experienced in those two storms," Brent Zerull of San Rafael told the Marin Independent Journal after four days without power. "I don't have power and I'm pissed."

Between Jan. 9 and Jan. 12, the California Public Utilities Commission logged 253 complaints about PG&E service, or lack of it. In contrast, the February 1986 storms, which caused $319 million in damage and killed 20 people, brought only 61 complaints to the CPUC about PG&E response time.

Failure to Trim Trees

For the most part, the public directed their anger at company management rather than the tired, overworked employees who showed up to repair their powerlines.

Residents on Mill Station School Road in rural Sonoma County reported a powerline down in the middle of the road, then waited over 24 hours for PG&E to respond. Nonetheless, when Steve Manfre's line crew arrived on the afternoon of Jan. 10 in the pouring rain, the grateful residents greeted them with a thermos of hot coffee.

It didn't take Manfre's crew long to spot the problem. Eucalyptus trees had grown up through the powerline. Local 1245 Business Rep. Larry Pierce, who was on the scene with Manfre's crew, said this particular outage was a direct result of PG&E's failure to perform the necessary line clearance tree trimming.

"In a case like this, clearly no trees blew over onto the wires," said Pierce. Instead, branches from trees growing up through the wires had broken off. When they fell, they brought the wire down, too.

"If PG&E had trimmed these trees as required by law and provided the proper line clearance, that wire wouldn't have come down," said Pierce. "And most likely these people would never have lost power."

PG&E has saved hundreds of thousands of dollars in recent years by reducing its budget for tree trimming. Tree trimmers say the budget cuts have left them shorthanded.

"You figure we cover Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, half of Guerneville, Rohnert Park and Petaluma and we've only got eight crews. That's not enough for this whole area. This is a huge area," said a Local 1245 tree trimmer employed by Davey Tree, the contractor used by PG&E to keep..."
PG&E lineman Steve Kenney prepares to work on downed lines in Sonoma County.

Retired PG&E troubleman Hollis Hadley warns kids to stay away from fallen line. It took PG&E over 24 hours to respond to Hadley's call that a line was in the road.

Lineman Bob Thompson accepts cup of coffee from grateful residents.

Davey Tree Apprentice Climber Turan Jones trims branches that have fallen into powerlines.

Flood victim keeps his head above water and dry.

I, on way to Guerneville, takes a quick break along the flooded Russian River.
Lineman Hollis Hadley warns kids to stay away from downed lines in Sonoma County.

Davey Tree Apprentice Climber Turan Jones trims branches that have fallen into powerlines.

Flood victim keeps his head above water at the Guerneville Wash and Dry.

Foreman Steve Manfre (in bucket), lineman Bob Thompson (on ground) and lineman Don Meyer (on truck) repair powerline that was apparently brought down by trees PG&E failed to trim.

Lineman Bob Thompson accepts cup of coffee from grateful residents.

Faulty Connectors

Maintenance problems are not limited to overgrown trees.

Local 1245 members at PG&E have documented numerous cases where the company has deferred maintenance on the basic infrastructure of electric service.

"The wires fall down from having faulty connectors that we know are not the right connectors," reported a PG&E lineman from the East Bay last month.

"We have defective underground elbows that every year fail. We had an elbow replacement program that ran out of money about two years ago. That is directly affecting service reliability to businesses as well as residential customers," the lineman said.

He also noted that regular patrols of overhead and underground systems are no longer being performed as before "because we don't have the numbers of people we need to do the work."

"Duty to the Public"

In a letter to PG&E President Stan Skinner, former Larkspur Mayor Ronald Arlas praised the efforts of the PG&E line crew who restored power to his home during the storm.

But he blasted the performance of management and strongly protested the company's plan to further downsize.

After describing his numerous attempts to report the outage in his neighborhood to PG&E, Arlas told Skinner:

"I have been reading about other people's complaints as to how your company reacted during this recent crisis. I have also been told that your company is planning to downsize in order to become more efficient and lower utility rates. Though I am sure all of us would like to pay lower utility rates, I do not think that anyone would rather have lower utility rates traded off against poorer and less responsive service.

"Mr. Skinner, when you next go to the PUC, please remember that you are a public utility and not just a privately owned corporation. You owe a duty to the public to provide the best possible service in exchange for the monopoly you have on providing the service. I would ask that you strongly consider not downsizing your rank and file people because they are the ones who can clearly get the job done. If you have to cut, cut at your managerial level where their competence is greatly in question."

From PAGE TEN

lines clear in large parts of the North Bay.
PG&E workers protest layoffs

Service in storm brings criticism
By Marisa Cigarroa
Independent Journal reporter

Deregulation sparks protest
PG&E workers, consumer groups share concerns

PG&E Layoffs
Rankle

PG&E responses leave customers in the cold

PG&E hard to reach in storm; local emergency office urged

Powerless residents take it out on PG&E
By Gary Richards
Mercury News Staff Writer

Utility workers picket
Workers say cutbacks will short PG&E

Protest layoffs planned in Y-S worksfor
By Scott Andrews
Staff Writer

PG&E employees protest expected layoffs

PG&E employees say cuts hurt response during floods
By Imran Ghori
Staff writer

PG&E denies complaints of going slow to save money
By Tom Chorneau
Staff Writer

Union chief says PG&E cutbacks leave it ill-prepared

Utility Reporter
February 1995
**DOWNSIZING: MEDIA COVERAGE**

**PG&E swamped by outages**

Employees worry planned staff cuts will cause burnout and hurt service in future disasters

By Lisa Akley Klug
Special to The Examiner

**PG&E’s response to storm havoc called disaster**

Workers say downsizing at PG&E will affect readiness in an emergency

By David Bacon

**Power Shortage**

Repair workers’ union rips PG&E over flood

By Jay Camel
Arroyo Courier Staff

**PG&E workers say service is at stake**

Outages darken county

PG&E denies staffing cuts cause delays

By Tom Chorba
and Tobias Young
Staff Writers

**PG&E Staff Cuts Under Fire**

New PG&E cutbacks protested

Informational pickets hit street in Modesto

By Dave Ranklin

**PG&E layoffs protested**

Marin residents enraged by long power outages

By Janet Kornblum
Independent Journal

PG&E layoffs may lengthen blackouts in West Marin

By David Rolland

Union wants PUC probe of slow PG&E response

By Jonathan Marshall
Chronicle Economics Editor

PUC Probing PG&E’s Response to Storm Outages

By Jonathan Marshall
Chronicle Economics Editor

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Electricians protest next 3,000 layoffs with march down Spring Street

By Greg Haas
## IBEW LOCAL 1245 UNION SHOPPER

### Coffee Mug
- **IBEW (Ceramic)**
  - Black or Blue
  - "Proud To Be Union" (Plastic)
  - White
  - $5.00
  - +$3.00 shipping

### Stadium Jacket
- **Silver, Red**
  - (Specify front or back logo)
  - S/M/L/XL/2X
  - $35.00
  - +$3.00 shipping

### Sweat Shirt/Hooded
- **Blue, Gray, Black**
  - M/L/XL/2X
  - $17.00
  - +$3.00 shipping
  - (Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery)

### Jacket
- Black with IBEW Logo
  - S/M/L/XL/2X
  - $26.00
  - +$3.00 shipping

### Club Shirt
- **Black, Mint, Blue, Peach, Jade**
  - Logo on chest
  - M/L/XL/2X
  - $19.50
  - Now only $15!
  - +$2.50 shipping

### Bucket Bags
- Lineman Logo in Center
  - $5.00
  - +$1.50 shipping

### T-Shirt
- Ringer with IBEW Logo
  - S/M/L/XL/2X/3X, 4X
  - $8.00
  - +$1.50 shipping

### Sweat Shirt/Crew
- **Blue, Gray, Black**
  - M/L/XL/2X
  - $15.00
  - +$3.00 shipping
  - (Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery)

### Golf Shirt
- **(With Pocket)**
  - Navy, Red, Royal, White, Maize
  - Logo on sleeve
  - M/L/XL/2X
  - $22.60
  - Now only $15!
  - +$2.50 shipping

### Suspenders
- Red, Yellow
  - Regular, Long, XL
  - $10.00
  - +$1.50 shipping

### Suspenders
- **Red, Yellow**
  - Regular, Long, XL
  - $10.00
  - +$1.50 shipping

### Club Shirt
- **Black, Mint, Blue, Peach, Jade**
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  - Navy, Red, Royal, White, Maize
  - Logo on sleeve
  - M/L/XL/2X
  - $22.60
  - Now only $15!
  - +$2.50 shipping

### Suspenders
- Red, Yellow
  - Regular, Long, XL
  - $10.00
  - +$1.50 shipping

### Clubs
- **14K Goldplated**
  - $60
  - Now only $5!
  - +$5.50 shipping

### Hats
- **Proud To Be Union Logo**
  - Navy, Red, Royal, White, Maize
  - Logo on sleeve
  - M/L/XL/2X
  - $12.24
  - Now only $15!
  - +$2.50 shipping

### Suspenders
- Red, Yellow
  - Regular, Long, XL
  - $10.00
  - +$1.50 shipping

### IBEWomen Charm
- **14K Goldplated**
  - $13.14
  - Now only $5!
  - +$5.50 shipping

### Hats
- **Proud To Be Union Logo**
  - Navy, Red, Royal, White, Maize
  - Logo on sleeve
  - M/L/XL/2X
  - $12.24
  - Now only $15!
  - +$2.50 shipping

### Suspenders
- Red, Yellow
  - Regular, Long, XL
  - $10.00
  - +$1.50 shipping

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### Order Form

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14 Utility Reporter February 1995
Union's rally at CPUC seemed just like old times

It was like old times at the local union's rally in San Francisco at the CPUC headquarters in December. Many Local 1245 retirees joined with active members, other members of the labor movement, and other citizens to protest utility deregulation and the dismantling of utility union workers' service to utility customers.

Although it was cold and raining, the warmth and energy and unity of those protesting certainly brought tears of pride to my eyes, as well as many retirees participating.

Although as a result of the large crowd I was not able to see all the retirees participating, I did see retirees: Jack Hill, Watie Anthney, Bob Watts, Bob Martin, Dick Bidnolst, Leland Thomas, Al Knudson, Ed Fortier and Dan Gibbs. We were all extremely impressed with the program and turnout organized by Business Manager Jack McNally and his staff. Outstanding job!

Local 1245 retirees stand together with our brothers and sisters in their protest of the rape of utility service. It is our service many of us devoted our working lives to providing, and now it is threatened by corporate greed and CPUC ignorance. Keep the faith and vigil!

Key lawmakers on senior issues in new Congress

Seniors need to familiarize themselves with the lawmakers in the new Congress who will play key roles in deciding major issues affecting older Americans, advises the National Council of Senior Citizens. Following is the likely lineup of committee chairmen and chairwomen:

Robert Packwood (R-Ore.) will chair the Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over Social Security, Medicare, Supplemental Security Income, and pension and health care legislation. Under Packwood, the most that seniors can expect in the way of health reform is a stripped-down health care bill that emphasizes insurance reforms.

Sen. Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kan.), who takes over as chair of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, is expected to push for program oversight and consolidation, rather than new programs. Her support is vital to senior employment programs.

Mark O. Hatfield (R-Ore.), the new chair of the Appropriations Committee, will most likely concentrate on finding more money for defense and less for social programs.

The Budget Committee, under Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.), is expected to make passage of a Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution its first act of business. Domenici admits that deep cuts will be necessary in Medicare, Medicaid and other domestic programs in order to balance the budget under the proposed amendment.

Alfonse D’Amato (R-N.Y.) will chair the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, with jurisdiction over senior housing programs.

Rumors are rampant that the Senate Special Committee on Aging has been targeted for elimination. If the committee survives, its new chair, William S. Cohen (R-Maine)—a moderate on social issues—is expected to continue to emphasize Medicare and Medicaid reforms, pensions, other benefits and crime’s impact on older Americans.

Ron Weakley on ‘Then’ and ‘Now’

Former Business Manager Ron Weakley, one of Local 1245’s founders, offers his perspective on the state of political and union affairs in America today in a special letter to the Utility Reporter. See back page.

Remember When...

TROLLEY BARN
An early 20th-century trolley barn offers a rare glimpse into the past of Regional Transit, Sacramento’s public transportation system. This photo, taken around 1915, shows the system when it was still operated by Pacific Gas and Electric. Today the system is publicly-operated by Regional Transit, whose maintenance employees are represented by IBEW Local 1245. (Photo courtesy of Regional Transit.)

Travel time

The IBEW Local 595 Retired Members Travel Club welcomes Local 1245 retirees to join in any of the following excursions. Please call Jeanne Morris at 510-357-1038 for details and to make reservations.

March 31: Daffodil Hill, Volcano, Sutter Creek and Indian Reservation Gambling Casino in Jackson.

April 20/21: Reno! The Pioneer, El Dorado and Boomtown.

May 18: Golden Gate Fields at the Turf Club; Our Day at the Races.

June 23: Woin Train of Napa Valley-Yountville.

Scenes from Rally at the CPUC

December 14, 1994
Unsettling times

From PAGE THREE

AT&T NetCon is the contractor who is installing super highway facilities for Pac Bell, and Local 1245 is supplying the workforce to do this work. In this last month, we have put many members to work.

As we move through 1995, our challenges will be great. Large energy users and the regulators are doing their best to carve up the utility industry. Where Local 1245 can control or influence, we will do the best that can be done to protect our membership's best interest.

This upheaval we are experiencing is distressing and painful for our members. It is frustrating and stressful for the business representatives and shop stewards in dealing with rumors, misinformation, or in some cases, no information, by the company. This makes it difficult for everyone involved.

With understanding, patience, and unity, I am confident that we can work our way through this crisis and do the best possible for our membership.
### SAN JOAQUIN

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<td>Bakersfield</td>
<td>Labor Hall 300 W. Jeffrey St.</td>
<td>C. Davis</td>
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<td>1317</td>
<td>Mandera Valley Inn 317 N. &quot;G&quot; St.</td>
<td>M. Mitchell</td>
<td>Thursday 5:15 p.m.</td>
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<td>1314</td>
<td>Ridgecrest El Charro’s 1327 N. China Lake Blvd.</td>
<td>R. Franklin</td>
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<td>B. Grady</td>
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<td>1318</td>
<td>CRANE VALLEY The Kettle 40251 Hwy 41</td>
<td>R. Nix</td>
<td>Wednesday 7:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>1320</td>
<td>SELMA Ramona’s 1506 N. Fourth St.</td>
<td>P. Sandoval</td>
<td>Wednesday 4:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>MERCED 499 E. G St.</td>
<td>A. Faith</td>
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<td>B. Howard</td>
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<td>TAFT’s 1319 D St.</td>
<td>H. Hargrave</td>
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<td>LEROQUE 798 D. St.</td>
<td>M. Lemieux</td>
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<td>AUBERRY Tony’s 2431 Auberry Rd.</td>
<td>T. Moore</td>
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<td>Salinas</td>
<td>Amer. Legion Hall 14 W. Laurel St.</td>
<td>G. Hernandez</td>
<td>Tuesday 6:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>1212</td>
<td>MONTEREY La Fontana 2300 N. Fremont</td>
<td>M. Ghita</td>
<td>Wednesday 5:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>1213</td>
<td>KING CITY Veterans Bldg. 560 Bitterwater Rd.</td>
<td>J. Sportsman</td>
<td>Thursday 4:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>1215</td>
<td>S. LUIS OBSIP Margie’s Friar 1573 Cañada Deja 4218 E. G St.</td>
<td>N. Marlin</td>
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<td>SANTA MARIA Coconino Bowling Grieff 602 S. H Street</td>
<td>S. Bell</td>
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<td>J. Vossler</td>
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<td>D. Lockwood</td>
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<td>J. L several</td>
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<td>1222</td>
<td>DIABLO CANYON Community Center 2580 &amp; Bank St.</td>
<td>W. Oakley</td>
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### PIPELINE

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<td>G. Valdez</td>
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### SANTA CLARA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Chairman</th>
<th>Meeting Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1411</td>
<td>CITY OF SANTA CLARA Vasona Park 3844 E. California</td>
<td>J. Hammers</td>
<td>Thursday 5:30 p.m.</td>
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### CITY OF OAKLAND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2211</td>
<td>EAST BAY CERCLICAL White Knight 3000 Pierce St.</td>
<td>L. Peterson</td>
<td>Thursday 9:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2311</td>
<td>OAKLAND Mitchell’s 1025 Mission Fremont</td>
<td>R. Chen</td>
<td>Tuesday 5:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2314</td>
<td>CONCORD New Local 1240 Walnut Creek</td>
<td>B. Bates</td>
<td>Thursday 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2317</td>
<td>ANTIQUE Humprey’s 1411 Fruit Stand</td>
<td>J. Brown</td>
<td>Thursday 7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2318</td>
<td>RICHMOND White Knight 3105 Pierce St.</td>
<td>C. Jackson</td>
<td>Thursday 4:45 p.m.</td>
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### SAN FRANCISCO

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2411</td>
<td>STOCKTON 3110 Main St.</td>
<td>M. Wescott</td>
<td>Thursday 7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2512</td>
<td>ANGEL'S CAMP 2010 San Francisco</td>
<td>W. Fippen</td>
<td>Tuesday 5:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2513</td>
<td>JACKSON Cold Country Pizza 525 S. Hwy 49</td>
<td>D. Solnit</td>
<td>Tuesday 4:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2519</td>
<td>MODesto Sundae Lounge 500 McKinley</td>
<td>T. Fortune</td>
<td>Wednesday 5:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2521</td>
<td>LODI Angelino’s 1420 W. Main</td>
<td>B. Fisher</td>
<td>Tuesday 4:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2527</td>
<td>SONORA Shatt Pizza 1505 S. Holy</td>
<td>A. Delzio</td>
<td>Tuesday 4:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2528</td>
<td>MODesto Rv. Dist. Sundae Lounge 605 McKinley</td>
<td>D. Pittman</td>
<td>Wednesday 4:30 p.m.</td>
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### PACIFIC GAS TRANSMISSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3023</td>
<td>SHASTA Klammath Falls PTT Station</td>
<td>D. Peck</td>
<td>Monday 7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3033</td>
<td>WALLA WALLA Joe’s and Western Book No. 1221 Main St.</td>
<td>F. Locati</td>
<td>Wednesday 7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3034</td>
<td>REDMOND Pete’s Pizza 413 W. Roosevelt</td>
<td>M. Latta</td>
<td>Thursday 7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3025</td>
<td>SPokane Chapter 19 Room 2530 W. 4th Ave.</td>
<td>J. Jelliff</td>
<td>Thursday 7:30 p.m.</td>
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### HUMBOLDT

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3111</td>
<td>LURELA Labor Temple 9th and E St.</td>
<td>J. Russell</td>
<td>Tuesday 7:30 p.m.</td>
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### SHASTA

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3212</td>
<td>HDRING Upper Lake 3505 Meadowview</td>
<td>A. Streetman</td>
<td>Tuesday 5:15 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3213</td>
<td>BURNELL San’s Pizza Jackson Pk</td>
<td>T. Morrison</td>
<td>Tuesday 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3214 RED BLUFF
The Green Barn
95 Chestnut
Chairman: H. Hess
Thursday: 5:30 p.m.

3217 CITY OF REDDING
Best Western
2366 Hilltop
Chairman: J. Krogkoller

3211 NEVADA
RENF NEW Hall
Chairman: D. Meier
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

3212 CARSON CITY
Cheers
Chairman: P. Lantis
Monday: 5:30 p.m.

3214 SOUTH LAKE TAHOE
Morse Lodge
Chairman: R. Millier
Thursday: 4:30 p.m.

3215 MT. WHEELER/RELY
Mt. Wheeler Fire
Dept. Mgr. Hall
Chairman: R. Miller
Wednesday: 18 15 15 19 17 21

3311 RENO

3312 CARSON CITY

3318 ELKO

3314 SOUTH LAKE TAHOE
Carpenters Hall
King Beach
Chairman: H. Barthlam
Wednesday: 18 15 15 19 17 14

3320 N. LAKE TAHOE
WELLS R.E.C.
Chairman: C. Swett
Wednesday: 19 16 19 20 18 22

3411 CHICO

3412 OUINCY

3417 PARADISE

3511 AUBURN

3512 ROSEVILLE

3513 GRASS VALLEY

3513 PARISVILLE

3611 MARTINEZ

3613 GROVELLE

3613 NORTH BAY

3711 MARIN COUNTY

3712 SANTA ROSA

3713 E. GEYSERS

3714 UCN

3715 LAKEPORT

3716 NAPA/VALLLEJO

3717 FORT BRAGG/FT. ARENA

3718 W. GEYSERS

3811 SACRAMENTO

3812 VACAVILLE

3814 WOODLAND

3815 SMIO

3816 FRESH POND (SMUD)

3841 CITY OF SACRAMENTO

3814 SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT
Almost 80, I look back over the years and think about how things were many years ago and how they are now. So I decided to offer some comments in our union newspaper about THEN and NOW.

Over 50 years ago, people THEN were emerging from the Great Depression, as well as from World War II. Life was beginning to change for the better, aided by the efforts of union organizers, some favorable labor laws, and workers who responded to this opportunity.

Millions joined unions and for some 30 years life became better at the workplace and in the household. That was THEN.

NOW began some 20 years ago, as the political and the economic scenes began to change. Also, working people, who enjoyed good wages, benefits, pensions, etc., began to change their views, culminating in the presidential election and the decade of the 1980s.

Working people had become more self-centered and began to see themselves as somehow "better" than those who had been left behind and who now represented an economic and social liability as the "underclass," which spelled "taxes."

At the same time, the US industrial base was eroding rapidly through job exports and new technologies, etc.

Recognizing the situation, many in top US leadership positions began a program designed to divide people and turn them against themselves, as it were.

The leaders of organized labor, who had not been attuned to the notion that they should emulate the "captains of industry," became alarmed and sought to revitalize the US labor movement.

However, they now found that working people were generally not inclined toward mass action, having been turned toward individual interest and personal goals—attitudes which were put forth by Reagan and his coterie of media propagandists.

Wages were reduced, unions lost members, benefits were reduced, layoffs became massive and those who had become sort of "upper middle class" NOW found themselves dropping down to the "lower class," which of course infuriated many of them.

The rise of the "right wing" elements saw this reaction among many working people as an opportunity and they have taken full advantage of it. November 8, 1994 is a good illustration of this.

References to "moral degeneration," "anti-religious elements," "loss of family values," "sexual promiscuity," "welfare cheats," and "greedy geezers" became the buzz words of those who sought to feed the bias, bigotry and fears of those who find their own welfare being threatened or wrecked.

Yet, those who actually caused our massive economic mess have done so over a period of some 15 years of looting the treasury, blowing hundreds of billions on phony "defense" boondoggles, banking and finance thievery, export of millions of US jobs, engaging in massive political corruption and worse.

My years are being reduced to a few if I continue to survive but they won't be mis-spent in agreement with what has happened and is happening to my country and its citizens.

Those with years ahead of them are well-advised to start attacking the real enemies in our midst—not each other.

Not voting or voting to hurt others in economic trouble simply helps divide our people It plays into the hands of those who understand and use the theory of "divide and conquer," while those being "conquered" fall into the propaganda trap set by those who use our taxes and our purchase of their goods, as a means to subjugate us.

(Former Business Manager Ron Weakley became involved in the effort to organize employeees at PG&E in 1941, back in the hey-day of the CIO industrial union organizing drives. In the late 1940s Weakley led union supporters at PG&E into an affiliation with IBEW, which in the early 1950s went on to successfully complete the job of organizing virtually all PG&E employees into a single, powerful union under the IBEW banner: Local 1245. Weakley spent the next two decades serving as Local 1245's first business manager. Weakley now resides in Hawaii, where he maintains an active interest in issues of social justice and the rights of workers.)