Competition startup put off to March 31

The long-awaited opening of an electric market in California was delayed by three months when officials announced last month that they could not meet the Jan. 1 deadline set by the state legislature. The delay was attributed to problems with the new computer systems to be utilized by the Power Exchange (PX) and the Independent System Operator (ISO). Tests in December revealed numerous problems with the way the agencies' computers track power sales and settle accounts.

Jeffrey Tranen, chief executive of the ISO, said the system had crashed due to discrepancies in data input by buyers and sellers of power. It is a significant problem because the computers eventually must be able to flawlessly execute the results of thousands of trades each day.

Smooth operation of the PX and ISO are indispensable to the creation of an electric market. The state authorized the expenditure of up to $300 million to create the two new agencies, but the delay makes it likely that additional funds will be needed to get the agencies up and running.

The delay had no apparent impact on Local 1245 members other than to heighten the suspense—and in some cases anxiety—surrounding the transition to a market.

In recent weeks Pacific Gas and Electric has been accelerating the training of Customer Service Representatives to prepare them for an influx of calls from customers curious about their options in a competitive market. The CSRs are required by state regulation and by company policy to maintain an attitude of complete neutrality with respect to energy service providers attempting to compete with PG&E.

Tranen told the San Jose Mercury News that March 31 rather than April 1 was selected as the new target for launching the market because, "We don't want to be the April Fool's Day project."
Workers here and abroad

Rolling the union on...

**17/ I Won't Ride**: When high-school senior Sara Shomber learned that her Columbus, Ohio, school field trip's transportation was on a sub-contracted school bus, she refused to ride. "I will not ride on a school bus that is sub-contracted. Contract buses are not safe, and the drivers are not as qualified," said Shomber, daughter of union members. She marched straight into the administrator's office and reported the same thing. OAPSE/AFSCME Local 336 took up the issue, noting that the collective bargaining agreement with the schools required that the work be assigned to OAPSE members. School authorities agreed, and now all students in the Columbus public schools will be transported by union drivers.

**Tree Trimmers Organize**: Seventy workers at Davey Tree Surgery Co. won card check recognition last month and are now members of IBEW Local 47. Davey has a contract to maintain and clear trees from Southern California Edison's power lines.

**Political Pressure Pays**: The Sheraton Corp. will build a 500-room convention center hotel in downtown Sacramento, CA, and already has signed a card-check agreement with the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees. More than 150 union members, including about 50 HERE members, packed a recent hearing at which City Council members voted 8-0 for Sheraton over a competing bid from Marriott, which had refused a card check agreement.

**Temp Workers**: The National Association of Temporary and Staffing Services, an employer group, is mobilizing against a proposed NLRB rule change that would make it easier for temporary workers to join unions, Labor Notes reported. The Labor Board is considering changing a rule which effectively makes it impossible for workers referred to a job by a temp agency to join a union. Currently, such workers must get permission from both the employer and the temp agency to join an existing bargaining unit where they are working.

**Independence!**: The Korean owners of a Tijuana, Mexico factory have agreed in principle to cut ties to a government-controlled union with which they had signed a secret contract and to recognize an independent union formed by plant workers. The preliminary agreement, if formalized, would be historic. Never before have workers in any of Mexico's 2700 tax-free maquiladora assembly plants succeeded in forming an independent union with no ties to the main government-controlled labor federation.

**Help is Coming**: Canadian Steelworkers have agreed to provide funding to the Frente Autentico del Trabajo (FAT) labor federation in Mexico to support its efforts to organize Mexican workers affected by the North American Free Trade Agreement. During their biennial national policy conference the Canadians committed to funding about $700,000 in 1998 in income support for Mexican workers who are terminated or who lose wages in labor disputes.

**Santa's Bag**: Santa Claus led a parade of about 100 janitors to three downtown Sacramento buildings cleaned by Somers Building Maintenance and delivered bags filled with the janitors' holiday wishes: dignity, respect, decent wages, and family health care. The parade was held to draw attention to the bleak Christmas faced by low-wage workers at Somers who have been trying to unionize with SEIU Local 1877. They have suffered threats, intimidation and firings during the almost three-year drive.

**Pacific Rim Solidarity**: UC Berkeley's Center for Labor Research and Education on Jan. 29-30 will host its second annual global conference: "Human rights and Labor Solidarity—Working in the Pacific Rim." The conference will bring together labor leaders, human rights activists and academics from the US, Thailand, Burma, South Korea, Indonesia, South Africa, Russia and elsewhere to discuss the causes of and solutions for worker repression in the Pacific Rim.

**So Long, 'Wimpy'**: Former Machinists President William Winpisinger died of cancer last month. Winpisinger, who retired in 1989, was a blunt-spoken advocate of progressive ideals and one of the labor movement's most colorful figures.

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**1998 Shift Premiums**

Pacific Gas & Electric

See Section 110.2 and 110.7 of the Physical Contract and Sections 11.2 and 11.7 of the Clerical Contract. Premiums are based on a 1997 weighted average straight-time hourly rate of $23.28.

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**POSTMASTER**: Please send Form 3579, Change of Address, and all correspondence to Utility Reporter, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

Single copies 10 cents, subscription $1.20 annually.

Have you moved lately? If so, please send your complete new address and your social security number to the Utility Reporter, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.
January 1st marks end of 8-hour day

Jay's official, California workers will no longer be entitled by law to time-and-a-half pay for working more than eight hours in a single day.

The loss of this important and historic labor protection is a sad day for working people, and can be blamed directly on California's Industrial Welfare Commission, acting at the behest of Gov. Pete Wilson. Employers are no longer required to pay premium pay unless a worker puts in more than 10 hours.

Meanwhile, Republicans in the US Congress are still trying to abolish the 40-hour protection. If they succeed, American workers will no longer have any federally-mandated overtime protection, leaving union contracts as virtually the only way to hang on to overtime protections.

As a result of the new rules in California, employers will be able to order longer workdays for millions of workers in the state. Previously employers had to have the consent of a large majority of employees at a worksite before it could institute schedules with longer workdays, such as four 10-hour days.

Now employers will be able to unilaterally force employees to work 10-hour days, 12-hour days, or even longer, without paying overtime.

Rules Spell Trouble

The new rules spell trouble for employees on several fronts:

- Some employees will undoubtedly find it more difficult to locate childcare providers who can accommodate the extra hours.
- Workplace stress and fatigue can be expected to rise as employees put in longer hours.
- Safety problems could increase as more and more employers "work tired."
- Employees who relied on overtime compensation to pay their bills, or buy a little "something extra" will find they now get straight pay for those extra hours rather than time-and-a-half.
- Union members who enjoy time-and-a-half and double-time provisions in their labor agreements may find themselves under increasing pressure from employers to make concessions in overtime rules.

New Year's Surprise

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

January 1, 1998 was the Big Day that didn't happen.

The New Year was supposed to bring a new electricity market to most of California. Newspapers and trade journals were chock full of stories about the Big Day.

For large users of electricity it was to be the fulfillment of a dream: they would finally be allowed to cut deals directly with generators of their choice or purchase electricity through the Power Exchange at market prices. The large users, independent generators, power brokers, and others were chomping at the bit, waiting for the gun to fire on Jan. 1 so they could take off and make their killing in the new electric marketplace.

But it wasn't to be. On Dec. 22, the Power Exchange (PX) and the Independent System Operator (ISO) informed the public that they were not ready to fire up the new customized computer and communications systems that is needed for the market to function. A week later they announced that they would be ready not later than March 31st.

In all fairness to these agencies, it was a tall order. To build a customized system from scratch, in less than a year for the seventh largest economy in the world, was asking a little much.

The objective remains: to establish two organizations—the PX and ISO—each with its own main office and backup office, with all four locations to be linked by computer. The computer and communications hardware and software are to do the scheduling of hourly pricing of electricity, scheduling of transmission access for all customers, and the billing and settling of charges.

This is no easy task. Criticism has been voiced by some—with little or no experience in this field—who thought it should be a piece of cake to put this market in place. But it wasn't. The large users, commissioners, legislators, and the market- ers are certainly concerned to get this job finished, and concerned that it be done right. I don't blame them.

So the Big Day didn't bring "The Market." However, it did bring a little ironic twist in this on-going saga. January 1st was to be the day that the big users would begin reaping the benefits of deregulation, while prospects for residential and small business ratepayers in the market were less bright.

But with the delayed opening of the market, the "big guys" didn't get anything on January 1, while residential and small business ratepayers—the "little guys"—got the 10% rate cut mandated by the legislature. They didn't have to call, sign up, or agree with anybody on anything—just enjoy the 10% cut.

And so passed the Big Day. Now we wait for the next one.
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Plus, if they also use a program real estate agent to buy their home, they'll save $350 on closing costs. And if they sell through the program, too, they'll save one-half of one percent on the real estate commission.** So if you want to help your parents and children save, tell them about our great family of benefits.

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**The real estate seller's commission discount benefit is not available in AL, KS, MO, NE and WV.
Unionists map strategy for global solidarity

Nearly 400 unionists and activists from 20 countries convened in San Francisco in November to denounce global corporations for their role in the erosion of workers' rights, public services, and living standards throughout the western hemisphere.

“In the name of ‘free trade’ our freedoms and rights are being systematically subverted,” the activists noted in the final declaration from the Western Hemisphere Workers' Conference Against NAFTA & Privatizations. They called for a common “day of action” in April to oppose the extension of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and destruction of public services.

The conference, held Nov. 14-16, featured workers and union activists from Central and South America, Mexico, Canada and the United States. The meeting coincided with a recent victory for labor on trade issues: the blocking of “fast track” authority for President Clinton to negotiate new trade agreements. This “fast track” authority would have made it impossible for Congress to add labor or environmental protections to future treaties negotiated by the President.

One country the US hopes to gain a “free trade” agreement with is Chile. Chilean unionist Luis Mesina, general secretary of the Bankworkers Union of Chile, warned conference participants that free trade agreements make it harder to combat the abuse of workers.

The AFL-CIO, which worked hard to defeat “fast track,” was represented at the conference by Stan Gacek, International Relations Director for the Western Hemisphere. Gacek stressed the importance of including enforceable labor rights provisions in all trade agreements.

Local 1245 Members

Several Local 1245 members assisted with the conference. Millie Phillips provided logistical support while San Francisco Unit Chair David Walters participated in drafting the final declaration. Robin David was convenor for the utility workers' workshop. Also representing Local 1245 were Cesar Custodio, Advisory Council member Bernard Smallwood, Belmont Unit Chair Bob Quinn, and Business Rep. Hunter Stern.

The conference grew out of a resolution by the 21st convention of the California Labor Federation, and the on-going efforts of the Federation's Executive Secretary-Treasurer (retired) John Henning to focus attention on the need for a global labor movement to respond to the increasingly global nature of capital.

The “conference call” issued by the San Francisco Labor Council laid out the rationale for calling unionists together:

“We were told by so-called experts that the North American Free Trade Agreement would bring new jobs and new prosperity to millions. The real record is much different. The tri-national Commission for Labor Cooperation established by NAFTA admitted in June 1996 that real wages had dropped in Mexico, Canada, and the US. In all three countries, the gap between the rich and poor has widened significantly.

“A global union response is desperately needed,” the conference call continued. “Capital has no boundaries or borders. Exploitation has no borders and workers should accept no borders in uniting to defend our interests and our gains.”

Another IBEW member participating in the conference was Frank Mannie, a Navaho Indian who serves as president of the AFL-CIO organization representing indigenous nations. Mannie, who addressed the conference's opening session, utilized a Navaho proverb to illustrate that an association of like-minded unionists can grow into something of strength and power.

“Capital has no boundaries or borders. Exploitation has no borders and workers should accept no borders in uniting to defend our interests and our gains.”

January 1998 Utility Reporter 5
At PG&E's San Francisco Call Center

Shop Stewards Maggie Wang (above), Marty Finnerty (right) and Ed Abriam (below).
At PG&E’s San Francisco Call Center

Shop Stewards Aaron Reaven (above) and Gina Pongasi (below).
Working the Help Desk in San Francisco are Shop Steward Fran Andraikin-Baker (above), Jamie del Rosario (left) and Susan Tso (below).
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 13 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 provided for in Article X of the Local Union Bylaws (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 7).

Assistant Business Manager(s) and/or Business Representatives shall not be eligible to hold any elective Unit or Local Union office, including 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, 1998 (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 7).

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, 1998. (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 9).

Nominations

Nomination of officers and Advisory Council members shall be made under "New Business" at the first meeting of the Units in March 1998 (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 8).

In order to be a candidate for any Local Union office, including 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, 1998, that he or she will run for a specific Local Union office if nominated (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 4).

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 immediately declare for which office he or she will be a candidate and decline all other nominations for Local Union office (L.U. Bylaws Article III, Section 9).

Voting

As provided in Local Union Bylaws Article III, Section 11, 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..."

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.
Road rage: surviving the commute

According to a study sponsored by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, reports of traffic incidents involving violence have been increasing at a rate of 7% per year since 1990. Rage is a factor in 66% of fatal traffic accidents.

"This is only the small tip of a very large iceberg," says David K. Willis, AAA president. "For every aggressive driving incident serious enough to result in a police report or newspaper article, there are hundreds or thousands more that never got reported to the authorities." Ricardo Martinez, federal administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), has declared road rage "the Number One traffic problem." And the New York Times has reported poll results from Washington, DC showing residents considered aggressive drivers more of a safety hazard than drunk drivers.

Over 10,000 traffic reports indicate most hostile, aggressive drivers are males between 18 and 26 years old. However, in 413 of the reported incidents (4%) the perpetrators were women; in 86 cases, the driver was between 50 and 75 years old. In addition to using a gun, knife, club or tire iron, aggressive drivers have used a car as a weapon. In more than 200 cases, drivers used vehicles to attack law enforcement personnel, leading to the deaths of 45 police officers and 38 drivers and passengers.

To keep safe, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety advises:

1. Learn CPR. "I had a fast lesson in CPR when I was just seven years old," recalls Edith O. "When my baby sister turned blue, she almost died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. My mother, who knew CPR, coached me so I could breathe life back into her as she drove to the hospital." The number of lives saved by CPR annually is in the thousands.

2. Strap on your seatbelt 12 times. Actually, you should buckle up every time you drive, but a huge number of folks are still careless: 3 in 10 don’t. Studies show that you can develop simple habits by performing a task as few as 12 consecutive times. That’s why it’s important to fasten your safety belt every time you’re in a car. Before you know it, the habit becomes automatic—it feels weird to not wear the belt. Lives saved in collisions: about 20,000. Number of people uninjured despite a crash: up to 1,500,000.

3. Love your back. When you get out of bed, ease out by rolling on your side, then pushing up. When exercising, include health-back moves. Before lifting something heavy, ask a buddy to lend a hand. When you’ve shoveled snow for 40 minutes and there’s still a driveway to clear, go ahead—hire the neighborhood kid to finish the job. Americans would save $17 billion a year, with 93 million fewer lost workdays, if we took care of our backs.

4. Use PPE both on and off the job. Wear personal protection equipment (PPE) — gloves, face masks, whatever the situation calls for. Whether you handle chemicals at work or spray roses at home, use PPE. About 80% of all eye injuries can be prevented with PPE.

5. Hold a hammer with 100% care. Americans spend far too much time in the Emergency Room with injuries from nails, screws, tacks and bolts. The number of preventable injuries in this category is 200,000.

Safety Matters

Space heaters need space

Keep portable and other space heaters at least three feet from furniture, bedding, walls, clothing and other things that can burn. Always use proper fuel in portable kerosene heaters, and make sure they are legal in your community before using them. Ensure proper ventilation for any fueled heater to avoid a build-up of deadly carbon monoxide. Be sure the heater is approved by an independent testing laboratory.

Keep the pathway clear

Safety experts say you can walk onto any job site and tell how safe it is simply by checking out the "state of the aisles." Wearing thousands of dollars' worth of personal protection equipment won't help if one drill bit left on the floor sidelines you for months. Here are some pointers offered by Rodale Press's Safety Check:

Just do it. Housekeeping moves are part of everyone's job. If something's in the way, move it.

Look out for the other guy. Leaving tools, boxes or equipment scattered on floors invites trouble. Even though you know where they are, you can't assume others do. Best move: Make it a policy to put everything away after each work period. If you're not finished yet and go for a break, either block off the area appropriately with workhorses or move the equipment aside.

Park heavy equipment out of traffic's way. It's too easy to lose toes when you walk into a forklift that wasn't there two hours ago.

Always close drawers. File cabinet drawers frequently have a mechanism that pulls them back to their original position—for good reason. Walking into an open file drawer—at any level—can level you.

I suggest you stop skipping your workplace fitness program!
LABOR STUDIES CLASSES

City College of San Francisco Labor Studies Program

Spring Semester, 1998

Classes begin January 20, 1998

(415) 267-6550

All classes are at Downtown Campus, 800 Mission St. (at 4th St.), in San Francisco unless otherwise noted. Fees are $13/unit for all students, plus a $10 per student fee. Some tuition assistance is available.

Labor 05: Bay Area Labor History (2 units)

Tuesdays, Jan. 29-April 7, 7-10 pm

Zoom in on a close-up on working class history here at home. Includes labor priest Fr. Yorke, longshoreman Harry Bridges, farmer worker leader Dolores Huerta and... you.

Instructor: Sue Engleander

Labor 94B: Child Care Workers' Rights (1 unit)

Wednesdays, Feb. 4 - Mar. 11 6-9 pm

John Adams Campus, 1860 Hayes

Developed with the Worthy Wage Campaign and the college's Child Development Department. For every child care worker who ever yearned for good pay, decent benefits and a voice on the job.

Instructors: Kathleen White & Bill Shields

Labor 96A: Labor Relations in Hospitality (3 units)

Mondays, 6:30-9:30 pm

Developed in cooperation with Hotel and Restaurant Department, HERE Local 2 and SEIU Local 14. It's San Francisco's biggest industry. We'll look at who owns it, who organized it, what labor relations are like today and how changes in overtime and welfare laws will impact it.

Instructor: Albert Lannon

Labor 96C: Labor Relations in the Modern American Workplace (3 units)

Tuesdays, 5:30-8:30 pm

Phelan Campus, Cloud Hall, Room 307B

This class covers it all. It will provide an introduction to today's labor movement. We'll look at labor history, labor economics, new organizing strategies and your rights on the job.

Instructor: Bill Shields

Labor 100: Race & Ethnicity in Labor (3 units)

Wednesdays, 7-10 pm

Historically, life has been hard for people of color who wanted equality on the job, but who were often shunned by the organized labor movement. Learn about the roots of conflicts, stories of solidarity between working people of all nationalities, and positive steps that the labor movement has taken historically and today to deal with these issues.

Instructors: Debbie Moy and Carmelita Tursi

LS 248GI: Teams or Schemes? (1 unit)

By arrangement. Mandatory Saturday, Feb. 28 5:30 p.m.

Practical "hands-on" training.

Instructor: Ron Lind

California AFL-CIO college scholarships

The California AFL-CIO is offering 37 college scholarships worth $1000 each. Awards will be made based on an essay contest. Applications must be received before March 31, 1998. For information on details and rules of the essay competition, students should contact with local union high principal.

San Jose City Coll. Labor Studies

Spring Semester, 1998

(408) 289-3705

Classes begin Feb. 5, 1998

Learn how to sustain a process of continual organizing in a local union context.

LS 136: Labor Studies Work Experience (1-4 units)

Earn credit for your work in labor studies related activities. You must sign up for a minimum of 7 units including Work Experience to qualify.

By arrangement. Mandatory Work Experience Orientation Sessions: Thursday, Feb. 12, 5:30 p.m.

LS 98: Directed Study (1-3 units)

Explore topics in the field of labor studies under the direction of a faculty member. An individualized learning contract is utilized to map out specific learning objectives and activities. Examples of topics include readings in labor history, collective bargaining, labor law and current issues.

Instructor: Beth Winters & Stephen Stamm

Laney College Labor Studies

Spring Semester, 1998

Classes begin January 12, 1998

(510) 464-3210

This class looks at the changing job market, free trade and capital formation, new approaches to building worker power through the process of organizing around workplace and political issues.

Instructor: Ron Lind

SHORT TERM SAT. CLASSES

LS 201: Stewards' Training (1 unit)

Saturday, Feb. 28 9-5 pm

How to plan and build meetings that do what needs to be done. The rules that provide for majority rule while protecting the minority.

Instructors: Joanne Jung

LS 248GI: Effective Meetings & Parliamentary Procedure (1 unit)

Saturday, Mar. 14, 21 9-4 pm

Intensive workshop for union stewards and other workplace leaders; grievance handling, internal organizing.

Instructor: Ron Lind

LS 248GM: Surviving Downsizing (3 units)

Sunday, Mar. 22 9-5 pm

Employee involvement as union-busting or union-building.

Instructors: Debbie Mey and Michael Haberberger

Union Privilege Scholarships

The AFL-CIO Union Privilege Program offers scholarship assistance to graduating high school seniors. Application deadline is Jan. 31, 1998, so hurry! To obtain an application, write:

Union Plus Credit Card Scholarship
PO Box 9389
Minneapolis, MN 55440-9389
How ‘big wink’ politics works in Washington

By Orv Owen

Money is corrupting our democratic process and making it more and more difficult for average citizens to make their voices heard. When the corporations with the bucks want something done, their voices are heard loud and clear. The following article by Steve Protulis shows how the system works for the big guy and against the little guy. It should serve as a reminder of why it is so important that unions have the right to participate in the political process and promote the candidates who remember that the real America is made up of “little guys” like you and me. Keep the faith!

By Steve Protulis

Every day a Member of Congress—even in a “safe” district—has to raise $1000 a day just to hold onto his or her office. That’s a thousand dollars a day—seven days a week.

The result of this mad dash for money is that there is a lot of winking going on in Washington. Here’s how “big wink” politics work:

A politician delivers a firebrand speech about the high cost of health care...and then votes to bail out the tobacco lobby which costs the Going public and eliminate waste and fraud: Wink, wink.

Clinton proposes lower eligibility age for Medicare

Last month President Clinton proposed that people as young as 55 should be allowed to buy into Medicare, the Federal health insurance program now limited to those 65 or older.

For those 65 to 64, the proposal calls for a monthly premium of about $300. When they become eligible for full Medicare benefits at 65, they would then have to pay $10 to $20 a month more than the premium for physician services. For those 65 and over, under the current program, that monthly charge is $43.80.

Under the Clinton plan, people 55 or older who have lost their jobs and their health benefits, for example, in a corporate downsizing, could also get Medicare coverage for about $400 a month.

Another group of early retirees, those whose employers reneged on promises to provide retiree health benefits, would have the right to buy into a company-sponsored group plan. Only about 40% of large employers offered health benefits to retirees younger than 65 in 1996, down from 64% in 1969, according to William M. Mercer, a benefits consulting firm.

The Ad-
SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Local 1245
Trade and Vocational School Grant

The purpose of these grants is to provide aid to the children of members to attain a trade or technical education.

1. The grants will be as follows: $500 per year, for up to two years for two candidates, as long as a passing grade is maintained, and a parent maintains membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.

2. In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a daughter or son, natural, legally adopted or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in 1997. A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in 1997 must be attached to your application. Additionally, a letter of recommendation from your vocational teacher, department head, or school principal must accompany the application.

3. Applications may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245, by calling the Union office, or by using the form printed in the Utility Reporter.

4. The grant will be made only to a candidate who intends to enroll full time in any industrial, technical or trade school, other than correspondence schools, which are accredited by the national Association of Trade and Technical Schools or the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools.

5. Applications must be mailed to IBEW, Local Union 1245, PO Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, by registered mail or certified mail only, and be postmarked no later than the first Monday of April each year (April 6, 1998).

6. Two names will be drawn by the Judge of the Competitive Scholarship Contest from those submitting applications. These two will be recipients of the grants.

7. Checks will be paid directly to the college upon presentation of tuition bills to the Local Union.

8. Presentation of awards will be made to recipients at the unit meeting nearest his/her residence following the drawing.

Application for the Local 1245 Trade & Vocational School Grant for Members' Children Enrolling in Technical, Industrial, or Trade Schools

Sponsored by Local Union 1245
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO

PO Box 4790
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
(510) 933-6060

Candidate Information

Candidate's Name ____________________________ Birthdate ____________________________

Address ____________________________ City ____________________________

State ____________________________ Zip ____________________________ Phone ____________________________

High School ____________________________ Graduation Date ____________________________

Address of High School ____________________________

What school do you expect to attend? ____________________________

Where is it located? ____________________________

What trade or craft will you be studying? ____________________________

Why this particular skill? ____________________________

Candidate's signature ____________________________ Date ____________________________

Statement of Member/Parent

Name of Member/Parent ____________________________

Employer ____________________________ Location ____________________________

I certify that I am a member in good standing of IBEW Local Union 1245, that the Candidate named above, ____________________________, is my ____________________________, and that the Candidate will graduate from high school during the term ending ____________________________, 1998.

Signature of Member/Parent ____________________________

Union Card No. ____________________________

This is to certify that the above named Candidate is currently enrolled as a student at ____________________________ and has or will be graduating in ____________________________, 1998.

Official's Signature and Position ____________________________

Local 1245
Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship

The purpose of this contest is to provide a grant in aid for scholarships to college and junior college students by making financial assistance toward the attainment of a higher education.

1. The grant will be as follows: $500 per year, up to four (4) years, as long as a "C" (2.0) average is maintained, and a parent maintains membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.

2. In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a son or daughter, natural, legally adopted, or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must also be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in 1997. A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in 1997 must be attached to your scholarship application.

3. The scholarship grant will be made only to that candidate who intends to enroll full time in any college certified by their State Department of Education and accredited by the local accrediting association.

4. Application may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245, by calling the Union office, or by using the form printed in the Utility Reporter.

5. Checks will be paid directly to the college upon presentation of tuition bills to the Local Union.

6. Application and essays must be mailed to IBEW, Local Union 1245, PO Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, by registered or certified mail only, and be postmarked no later than the first Monday in March each year (March 2, 1998).

7. Essays should be submitted on 8-1/2" by 11" paper, on one side, preferably typed and double spaced, with applicant's written signature at the conclusion of the essay.

8. Applications and essays must be mailed to IBEW, Local Union 1245, PO Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, by registered or certified mail only, and be postmarked no later than the first Monday in March each year (March 2, 1998).

9. Each year the scholarship shall be presented at the Advisory Council meeting in May; the judge and a guest and the recipient and parents shall be invited, at Local Union expense, to present and receive the scholarship award.

10. A suitable trophy or plaque shall be purchased by the Local Union, at a cost not to exceed $75, to be presented to the scholarship recipient.

The topic for the 1998 Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship Essay is:
"IS UTILITY Deregulation GOOD FOR THE CUSTOMER?"

Application for the Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship

Sponsored by Local Union 1245
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO

PO Box 4790
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
(510) 933-6060

Candidate's Name ____________________________ Birthdate ____________________________

Address ____________________________ City ____________________________

State ____________________________ Zip ____________________________ Phone ____________________________

High School ____________________________ Graduation Date ____________________________

Address of High School ____________________________

What college or school do you expect to attend? ____________________________

Where is it located? ____________________________

What college or school do you expect to attend? ____________________________

Why this particular school? ____________________________

Candidate's signature ____________________________ Date ____________________________

Statement of Member/Parent

Name of Member/Parent ____________________________

Employer ____________________________ Location ____________________________

I certify that I am a member in good standing of IBEW Local Union 1245, that the Candidate named above, ____________________________, is my ____________________________, and that the Candidate will graduate from high school during the term ending ____________________________, 1998.

Signature of Member/Parent ____________________________

Union Card No. ____________________________

This is to certify that the above named Candidate is currently enrolled as a student at ____________________________ and has or will be graduating in ____________________________, 1998.

Official's Signature and Position ____________________________