

VOL. 1-No. 37

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, NOVEMBER 12, 1949

### ILRB REPLIES TO AN B BID FOR EARLY ELECTION **DECISION SHORTLY.** Glasson Cites Loss If You Believe Of Worker Gains In Unionism, Get SECY. BECKER SAYS

Last week Local Union No. 1324, IBEW, and Utility Facts addressed a telegram and an open letter to the National Labor Relations Board in Washington, D. C., pointing out that it had been a year since the Bay division employees of PG&E had set up their IBEW union, that the Board had had the IBEW petition for a bargaining representative election in

its hands for ten months, and that the PG&E employees, who seek an effective bargaining representative at present, were entitled to a Board decision.

This week Local 1324 had its answer.

"The case is currently receiving the most active consideration by the Board," Louis R. Becker, associate executive secretary replied, "AND ITS DECISION SHOULD ISSUE VERY SHORTLY IN-DEED."

The reply pointed out that the record is very lengthy (1,379 pages due to the Company effort to exclude 51 classifications of workers from the bargaining unit).

It should spike once and for all the UWUA official whistling in the dark and that there will never be a collective bargaining election on Do You Negotiate? the PG&E.

The NLRB letter follows:

BOARD

October 28, 1949. Local Union No. 1324

International Brotherhood of

**Electrical Workers** 1918 Grove Street

Oakland, California.

RE: PACIFIC GAS & ELEC-TRIC COMPANY. CASE No. 20-RC-443, 444.

Gentlemen:

The Chairman has requested that I reply in his behalf to your telegram received today concerning the above-captioned matter.

This case, as you know, has a great many issues involved in it and the record is unduly lengthycomprising 1379 pages-for a representation case. This case is currently receiving the most active consideration by the Board and its decision should issue very shortly indeed.

You may be sure that we appreciate the forebearance and patience displayed by the parties to the length of time required to make a decision.

Very sincerely yours, LOUIS R. BECKER, Associate Executive Secretary.

# **UWUA, For Whom**

The National Labor Relations NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS Board, in a letter dated Oct. 28, 1949, assured Local 1324, IBEW, that "its decision should issue very shortly indeed." With the knowledge that a decision IS forthcoming very shortly we would like to ask the UWUA and PG&E, what they are going to do? Are we to expect another "quickie" contract.

There has been a dress rehearsal for negotiating another contract, on the part of the UWUA, for the past few weeks. If the UWUA starts negotiating another contract with the company we would like (Continued on Page 2)

## By UWUA ConEd. By L. G. GLASSON

Local 1324 President

By this time it must be clear to all union men in this campaign that there is only one issue, "One union on the system" vs. UWUA type of company unionism.

That since 1947 the UWUA has become a company union, there can be no doubt. Let's look at the picture. The tail that wags the dog in the UWUA is Mr. Fisher's company union of the Consolidated Edison. A notoriously company union group, that emphasized this type of so-called unionism to the highest degree. In 1946 when this group came into the CIO, it had in its contract: (1) preferential hiring of union members; (2) preferential re-employment of union members; (3) maintenance of membership; (4) check-off; (5) preference to union members in layoff, and recognition of seniority in layoff, plans for sharing of work in layoff, agreement with union in planning layoff procedure; (6) presentation and adjustment of grievances and grievance procedure. All of these they surrendered in their 1947 contract.

In 1949, when the Edison Company was ordered to return 20 millions of dollars to the consumers, the company connived with the union to make a strike threat. and thereby used the union's strike threat to have the demand reduced to 11 million, saving the company, roughly 9 million, part of which they used to meet the union's wage demand. In the contract they returned a paltry few of the conditions that were written off in 1946-1947. All of this, it is believed, (Continued on Page 2)

# **Off the Fence**

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Every PG&E employee who believes in unionism, and there are few workers who don't these days, was urged to make up his mind now about who should represent him in collective bargaining.

This plea came this week from every official of Local 1324 and the IBEW, after the NLRB had indicated that a decision on the election would be forthcoming "very shortly indeed."

It was pointed out that there can be no middle position for the individual honestly desiring a good union in the four Bay divisions.

"Those who sit on the fence and say 'I'll wait and see what the rest of them do' are taking a neutral position regarding the merits of UWUA and IBEW that is under-standable," Local 1324's President Glasson points out, "but they are also taking a neutral position on unionism itself.

"What is going to be needed, if unionism is to survive in the four Bay divisions, is a MAJORITY VOTE OF THE FIVE THOUSAND EMPLOYEES IN THE DIVISIONS FOR IBEW LOCAL 1324.'

Glasson said that PG&E employees who believe in unionism can't afford to sit on the fence any longer in this campaign. They have got to get off onto the IBEW side or the UWUA side. The winning union in the forthcoming election, he pointed out, must poll a majority of ALL the employees in the bargaining unit-not just a majority of all the active union employees in the unit.

"Every neutral minded person is a potential non-voter in the coming election," Glasson continued, "and

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UTILITY FACTS



ED. WHITE, Financial Secy. 1918 Grove Street Oakland, California

### Will You Choose Your Own Union?

#### BY ED WHITE Veteran P. G. & E. Employee

Whether you work for PG&E or any other company, if you were asked whether you would allow your employer to designate who should bargain collectively for you,

you would undoubtedly say "No."

Yet that is precisely what happened last January when the company signed a contract with the UWUA. Our newly chartered IBEW Local 1324, had been in existence at that time and a majority of the employees in the four Bay divisions have signed IBEW pledge cards. We had been seeking for two months to get an NLRB hearing on our petition for a collective bargaining election.

That contract may have been illegal for it certainly did not have the blessing of a majority of the employees in the four Bay divisions.

When the NLRB hearings did begin after the "quickie" contract, both the Company and UWUA fought IBEW's effort to get an election so that the majority employee group in the IBEW could begin to have democratic representation in the UWUA.

Right now a dress rehearsal is going on for a second illegal contract.

Only the unprecedented and incredible delay of the National Labor Relations Board in reaching a decision on the election petition and setting of an election date has made it possible for UWUA to be in a position to talk contract again.

However, the employees should understand that another "quickie" contract, no matter how much window dressing it might contain, or no matter how well timed it might be to influence votes in the impending election, will hardly be worth the paper it is written on in the hands of the UWUA.

PG&E employees are attempting to forestall such a "quickie" contract again by writing the NLRB urging an immediate election. Let's ALL write!! Let the NLRB know that we are capable of picking our own bargaining agent.

### Glasson Cites Loss Of Worker Gains

(Continued from Page One)

smacks of company unionism. Do you want that sort of amby-pamby setup to represent you? Of course not. Again, take a squint at the local setup. They call themselves "the union with a contract," and as far as your concerned they have been sitting on it all year. No grievances settled. No abuses stopped and nothing worth while to a union man. Their accomplishments have been a big zero, the earmarks of a typical company union. Surely you have had enough. So what is your alternative? Bridge the system with IBEW. Eliminate the island on the system. Join a real fighting union to secure your rights, Bid Mr. Fisher and his boys good-bye and then help others get rid of company unionism. It's up to you, a fighting union or a company union, which will it be?

-L. G. GLASSON.

### FINANCIAL ILLS BRING PACHLER

The UWUA national treasurer, William J. Pachler, visited what is left of the Brotherhood of Consolidated Edison Employees' mushy Pacific Coast "island" on the PG&E recently. He was out here because of the financial plight of the remaining UWUA locals.

In reporting his visit the "light" edition of the CIO News stated that Pachler conferred with UWUA Attorney Darwin. The subject of conversation was undoubtedly centered around what the UWUA could do to get its hands on PG&E check-off dues now impounded and held in escrow by an order of San Francisco Superior Court.

Local 1324 IBEW brought suit to have the check-off of its members' dues stopped and much of the dues now in escrow came from IBEW members.

In lieu of dues money to support its program of non-activity the UWUA national treasury has put \$50,000 of their own money into the campaign, also according to the CIO News.

The \$50,000 certainly has not bought the Bay division employees much in the way of service or benefits.

At any rate, that \$50,000 came out of the pockets mostly of Consolidated Edison employees in New York. If the UWUA was honest with those employees as well as with those it claims to represent on the PG&E, it would stop fighting and delaying an NLRB decision and agree to consent election.

The IBEW long ago offered to participate in a consent election. The UWUA refused. The offer still stands. —ED WHITE.

### Write, Wire to NLRB Board

Reports from the field indicate that many members have followed the IBEW lead in writing or wiring the NLRB Board in Washington urging an immediate election.

The UWUA is seeking another "quickie" contract. If it gets one, that means that your bargaining representative has been selected for you arbitrarily. Every employee should realize what that will do to One Organization on the System.

It was not the intent of the IBEW to ask members to write the board for that might be construed as "pressure." But since a few of our members tell they have written voluntarily, it might be well for the Board to have some idea of the broad representation Local 1324 has among the employees in the four Bay divisions. So write or wire now asking for an immediate election.

Address your letters to Paul Herzog, NLRB Board Chairman, Washington, D. C.

#### UWUA, For Whom Do You Negotiate? (Continued from Page 1)

to know for whom do they negotiate? Who do they presume to represent? Pardon us for bringing the matter up again but we understand that a labor dispute exists among the employees that the UWUA may claim to represent and pending a settlement of the dispute the company is supposed to take a neutral stand. Is history to repeat itself in just one short year and employees in the disputed area given another "quickie" contract. If another "quickie" should evolve, under present circumstances, should not even the most ardent UWUA member ponder a couple of questions: (1) Why is the company so anxious to sign another contract with the UWUA? (2) Why does the company, after saying for many years that they favored the idea of one union on the system, now want two?

Speaking as one of those who has waited long to have the labor 'dispute" settled by an election, it seems certain that the UWUA cannot bargain the employees into giving them a majority vote in the election which will undoubtedly take place within a few weeks. The UWUA negotiated a contract with the company a year ago and kept telling us that they had it but the record of unsettled grievances and the loss of many working conditions convinces us more than ever that we do not want the UWUA to represent us in collective bargaining. We the employees will soon have the opportunity to choose our -ED WHITE.

### BIG PG&E JOB WILL INCREASE POWER SUPPLY

Stockton and surrounding communities will get a big new supply of electric power from the Feather River as a result of Pacific Gas and Electric Co. transmission and distribution construction projects costing a total of more than \$4,-000,000.

Work has begun on the key job at the company's Bellota switching station near Linden, Arthur D. Church, PG&E Stockton Division manager, announced recently. Other facilities already have been completed or are under construction.

#### BELLOTA JOB

Bellota now is a main switching station in PG&E's 220,000-volt network, directing the power from numerous mountain powerhouses to Newark and other distant substations. At a cost of \$1,890,000, it will be converted into a substation with a service capacity of 160,000 horsepower to supply power to transmission and distribution lines in the Stockton area.

Big transformers and related equipment will be installed to lower the voltage to 110,000 volts and 13,200 volts as required. Construction crews totaling more than 50 men are laying foundations, erecting buildings and installing the equipment, Church said.

The installation is expected to be in operation by the end of the year.

#### FEATHER RIVER

Two new powerhouses under construction in PG&E's \$62,000,000 Feather River hydroelectric development will be connected to the 220,000-volt transmission network supplying power to Bellota. Cresta Powerhouse, 101,000 horsepower, is scheduled for operation this month. Rock Creek Powerhouse, 169,000 horsepower, is due to follow next February.

In order to bring the power from the Feather River, a new 220,000-volt transmission line is being built 132 miles to Bellota at a cost of \$1,836,000. Sections of the new line already have been completed.

From Bellota Substation, a part of the power will be routed to Lockeford and Stockton "A" Substations to supply sub-transmission lines radiating from these two points. A new 110,000-volt steeltower transmission line 10 miles in length is under construction as part of a \$345,000 project to tie Bellota in with the transmission system linking the two substations. An additional \$205,000 will be expended for increased switching facilities at Lockeford. At Stockton "A" Substation on Hazelton Ave., \$25,000 is being spent for improve-(Continued on Page 3)

# INSURANCE BOYCOTT BY FED. EXPLAINED

Many questions are being asked around the PG&E system about the reasons behind a recent California Federation of Labor (AFL) recommendation that all unions and employees boycott disability insurance plans carried by private insurance companies.

The IBEW is an affiliate of the California Federation of Labor.

At a convention of California Federation AFL unions in Los Angeles in September the recommendation was endorsed.

"The boycott on private plans," a subcommittee on Convention policy had reported to the delegates, "is essential because the continued adherence to such types of plans will ultimately destroy the structure of the original state disability law."

That law was enacted in 1946 through the efforts of organized labor in California. The private insurance companies put up terrific opposition to it.

#### PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

The AFL has always recognized private enterprise's essential place in our economy. A provision was written into the proposed disability insurance law to permit private insurance companies to participate on an equal basis with the state administered fund.

The disability plan was enacted into law. It is financed out of the one percent deduction from workers' pay checks for unemployment insurance. The disability provision, in effect, makes it possible for a worker to collect unemployment insurance while he is sick or hospitalized. Only a doctor's certificate is needed to bring a check after one week.

The one percent deduction has been piling up a surplus in the state fund of more than \$16 million annually. There is a present surplus of more than \$107 million in the fund, all paid in by contributions from workers' pay checks.

Where that contribution has been going to private insurance companies from privately financed plans, there is no record as to the huge sums the insurance companies have been also piling up with the worker contributions.

#### TOKEN BENEFITS

The companies have used their huge profits to give piddling benefits not available through the state fund whose benefits are fixed rigidly by law—a maximum of \$25 per week.

The insurance companies have also rebated some of their huge profits to large companies to get their insurance accounts. These rebates are really funds produced through worker contribution.

At the last session of the state legislature the State Federation of Labor attempted to have the \$25 weekly unemployment and disability benefit payments upped to \$40 a week. The \$16 million annual surplus would have more than paid for that raise in benefits.

#### LOBBY

The insurance companies lobbied vigorously against the raise in benefits because it would have cut their own huge profits. They threw their considerable lobbying support to every other lobbyist at the capital who was interested in defeating labor sponsored measures, in return for help against the increase in unemployment and disability payments.

They defeated any increase in the weekly payments.

They then proceeded to lobby through a bill which would have cut employer contributions to the unemployment fund by \$16 million a year at the expense of the disability profits. The bill would also have increased their own huge profits. This fund they were playing around with came from worker contributions. The bill was killed only through the most strenuous labor objections.

In the closing hours of the legislative session, the State Federation of Labor's Secretary Haggerty, in a move which took the powerful insurance lobby completely by surprise, was able to get a bill introduced and passed which will give those hospitalized, in addition to the regular \$25 per week, \$10 a day for ten days for hospital expenses.

#### DROP-IN-BUCKET

Though this was an accomplishment at which labor can well be gratified, it is a mere drop in the bucket to what could be paid to the worker from the huge funds the workers' one percent contribution has built up.

Because of the greed and opposition of the insurance companies' lobby, the boycott of their private disability plans was approved by AFL delegates to the State Federation convention.

It is optional with the employee whether his one percent goes to the private carriers or into the state fund. The State Federation of Labor has mailed out hundreds of thousands of withdrawal forms by which any individual employee may withdraw from the plans carried by private companies.

The employee, after he withdraws, still gets substantially the same benefits through the state, when he is entitled to them.

The boycott will continue until such time as benefits under unem- of vital information.

### BIG PG&E JOB WILL INCREASE POWER SUPPLY

ments to handle the added power.

Lockeford Substation was built by PG&E last year at a cost of \$770,000 to reinforce 110,000-volt transmission in the area north and east of Stockton and to make available in the area a part of the new power being developed by the company in its postwar construction program. The available power also was increased by another substation built at Riverbank at a cost of \$411,000.

The work now being done will bring to more than \$6,000,000 the amount PG&E has invested during 1949 in major electric facilities directly serving the Stockton region, Church said. Among large projects completed this year are the following:

Installation of a new substation now in service at Copperopolis and Alpine Roads, Stockton, at a cost of \$108,000. Beneficial effects of the substation extend to the areas served by the Stockton Station "A" and Linden substations.

Tripling the capacity of Manteca Substation. The enlarged substation went into operation July 1, improving service to the West Side from Newman to Tracy. This project cost \$712,000.

Doubling the capacity of Patterson Substation at a cost of \$84,000, with beneficial effects extending to the territory served by the Newman and Westley substations. The new facilities went into service April 1.

Doubling the capacity of the Lodi Substation at a cost of \$120,-000. This job was completed in January.

Increasing the capacity of Colony and Banta substations and improving voltage regulation at Newman, Westley and Tuolumne substations.

Installing equipment at Martell Substation to provide automatic rerouting of power in event of trouble on the transmission line.

Constructing 14 miles of transmission lines and 165 miles of distribution lines completed to date, at a cost of \$510,000.

"These facilities are part of the carefully planned system through which the Stockton area shares in the large amounts of new power being developed in PG&E's postwar expansion," Church declared.

ployment and disability laws are liberalized.

Local 1324 takes no position on the matter of the boycott, and will take none until such time as its members have had opportunity to discuss it. The foregoing is passed on to PG&E workers as a matter of vital information.

### IBEW's Pension Plan Is Sound

#### By J. SCOTT MILNE Intl. Sec. of the IBEW

Three years ago the United Mine Workers set up their Welfare Fund, financed entirely by employer contributions of 20 cents for each ton of coal mined. Recently there have been some startling developments affecting the Miners and their Welfare Fund.

On June 30, Mr. Lewis ordered the Miners to work only three days a week—his aim being to cut the nation's coal reserves and thereby strengthen the Miners' bargaining position. Next, Southern operators stopped making their payments to the Welfare Fund.

Then on September 16, John L. Lewis, finding his Welfare Fund at a dangerously low ebb, stopped all welfare payments.

This action and the subsequent stories which have appeared in the daily press concerning the hardships visited on miner pensioners when they suddenly found their pensions cut off have made us stop and think.

We have measured our own pension plan in the balance and come through feeling pretty good about it. The Electrical Workers were pioneers in this pension field. Looking back, we find very few unions with death benefits as early as 1922 when ours went into effect, and we were practically alone in the field of pension pioneering in 1927 when we instituted our pension plan.

And it seems to us that a pension plan is more sound, more practical, when the employe contributes a share into the pension benefit fund. Employers' contributions we should certainly have also. Employers have a definite obligation to the older workers in their ranks who have given the best years of their lives to work for their respective companies and have grown old in service. But it seems to us that the best plans as far as organized labor is concerned are those paid jointly and administered by the unions.

Then the union is never faced with the problem which now confronts John L. Lewis when he must say: "There are no funds. We can no longer meet our pension payments."

No, in a system like ours, where our members contribute as well as the employers, there is always a sizable backlog and a continued income, and were our employer contributions to stop tomorrow, we would still be able to meet our obligations.

There is another phase to this problem. Employers can hold pension payments as a club over the heads of union members to force (Continued on Page 4) UTILITY FACTS

# A 'PHONY' PITCH Reports From the Field ON PHONY ISSU

Although representatives of the UWUA were still telling their captive members that no election would be held on the PG&E they were acting last week like they expected an election.

For the first time in the year since a majority of Bay division employees voted to set up their own autonomous local under the IBEW, UWUA local officials had taken action to stop the clamor on the system for ACTION.

They were circulating a letter (it was not posted), which they say was addressed to PG&E President Black threatening to wash out the business of company layoffs in the public press if such layoffs are not discontinued.

When it comes to layoffs, the only weapon a union official has is:

(a) His ability to negotiate plans which will spread out existing and projected work in a manner which will aid those scheduled for such lavoffs, and

(b) Strict enforcement of seniority provisions in any working agreement covering layoffs.

Any other approach to the problem can only jeopardize the interest of the regular working force, whose fortunes are after all tied to the prosperity of the company they work for.

The present contract which PG&E employees themselves wrote over a period of years, and which UWUA now enforces because they negotiated it after a wholesale exodus of those employees into IBEW, contains a seniority clause governing layoffs.

#### GRIEVANCES

It also contains a paragraph providing for the settlement of grievances Every layoff is a potential grievance. Because some UWUA officials insinuated that they would use those provisions for UWUA members and not for IBEW members, who nevertheless are entitled to the protection of the contract as part of the collective bargaining unit. Utility Facts has criticized UWUA repeatedly for inaction on grievances, Such inaction has been evident not only where layoffs violated seniority, but on a multitude of other grievances of the Bay Division employees.

Local 1324 IBEW has a complete record of the UWUA grievance committee. On presentation of such grievances to management, on representations to management and on all other counts the score of that committee has been zero during the last year.

#### FREE ADVICE

After Utility Facts had in effect built a fire under UWUA officials for their inactivity those officials concocted a triple play whereby, after the grievance committee had IBEW Organization on the System.

been struck out and eliminated from the picture entirely, a committee of UWUA leaders "talked" to management about seniority lavoffs, went back to the membership for their advice about what to do, and then made a grandstand play with a pitch to management about how it should play the game, i.e., how it should run its business.

Threats to carry their case to the general public through the daily press will never win the UWUA its campaign to keep their Pacific Coast island in the four Bay divisions. That campaign will be won or lost among the employees themselves who can easily figure the score when they know the facts of the game.

The UWUA officials have also written to Mr. R. J. Tilson, supervisor of PG&E Industrial Relations, threatening to invoke unfair labor practice charges against the company for its interpretation of the seniority clause governing layoffs. STRATEGY

Filing of unfair labor charges would automatically delay an NLRB election while they were being heard. This UWUA strategy is in reality a UWUA Shedlock inspired plan to steal home with a 1950 contract while the PG&E employees founder without effective collective bargaining.

Utility Facts would like to be able to boast that its articles on UWUA inactivity had inspired some UWUA action on traditional union lines, through bona fide negotiating committees.

Instead we have to report that the UWUA continues its conduct of union affairs in the unenlightened manner of a stranger to basic union principles and practices.

#### Get Off the Fence (Continued from Page One)

every abstaining vote is a vote for no union."

That is why, he said, that everyone who believes in unionism must take sides in this campaign and Now! The IBEW is confident, he added, that when that decision is made on the basis of what the two unions have to offer, the IBEW will be favored. But the IBEW needs every union-minded man in its ranks that it can get.

Make up your mind now on unionism-it's either UWUA and a continuation of lethargy and domination of union affairs by that notorious parent of the UWUA, the Brotherhood of Consolidated Edison Employees company union; or the IBEW and membership service, progressive economic gains, democratic representation, and One

# San Francisco Unit No. 3

June, July, August, September, October? How long is it going to take the NLRB in Washington to grant PG&E workers a democratic choice of a union by election under the terms of the T-H law? Asking this question and outlining the numerous delays of action, a 600-word telegram was sent Mr. Herzog, chairman of NLRB in Washington, D.C., by the IBEW. This telegram was read to the membership as part of the report of International Representative Snyder which included also the reading of newspaper clippings of three local daily papers, summaries of this case. Representative Snyder also stated that all labor newspapers in this area were carrying articles calling for action on the part of the Labo Relations Board. All workers, unio members and interested parties ar earnestly requested to write Mn Herzog expressing their opinions.

Gist of the long telegram sen the Board was that "In our opinion failure to grant this election, a this late date, constituted a breac of the spirit in which the NLRI was supposedly set up. That, there fore, this local issue becomes one of larger scope involving issues right down to the grass root survival of the labor movement in this country.

That IBEW meetings are open meetings, as has been stated often, was put to a test when the hall door latch stuck. With Brother Snyder reminding the members of the obligation to keep the meetings open it was moved and seconded to take the door off the hinges to admit Bro. Glasson to the hall.

Bro. Peoples is reported home from the hospital recovering from an injured hip.

Publicity Committee, Unit 3.

### **IBEW's Pension** Plan Is Sound

(Continued from Page 3) them to stay on jobs which they would prefer to leave.

With our pension plan, when a man reaches retirement age he receives his pension no matter where he is working or how many employers he has had. His pension remains HIS pension, regardless.

The facts are there, brothers, and the more we study and the more we learn, the more convinced we become that "we have chosen the better part."

### **MOVED LATELY? FILL THIS OUT**

With an election expected shortly as a result of word received from the Washington office of the NLRB, it is important that all PG&E Bay Division employees keep in touch with developments in the IBEW campaign,

Utility Facts will attempt to be helpful in publicizing such developments. If you have moved lately, we would like to have your new address so we can continue sending you Utility Facts.

If you have moved, or plan to move, fill out the following and mail it to Local 1324, IBEW, 1918 Grove St., Oakland, Calif. (Please print.)

Name Old	 	
Address	 	
City or		
Town	 	
New		
Address	 	
City or		
Town		



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