

# 1245

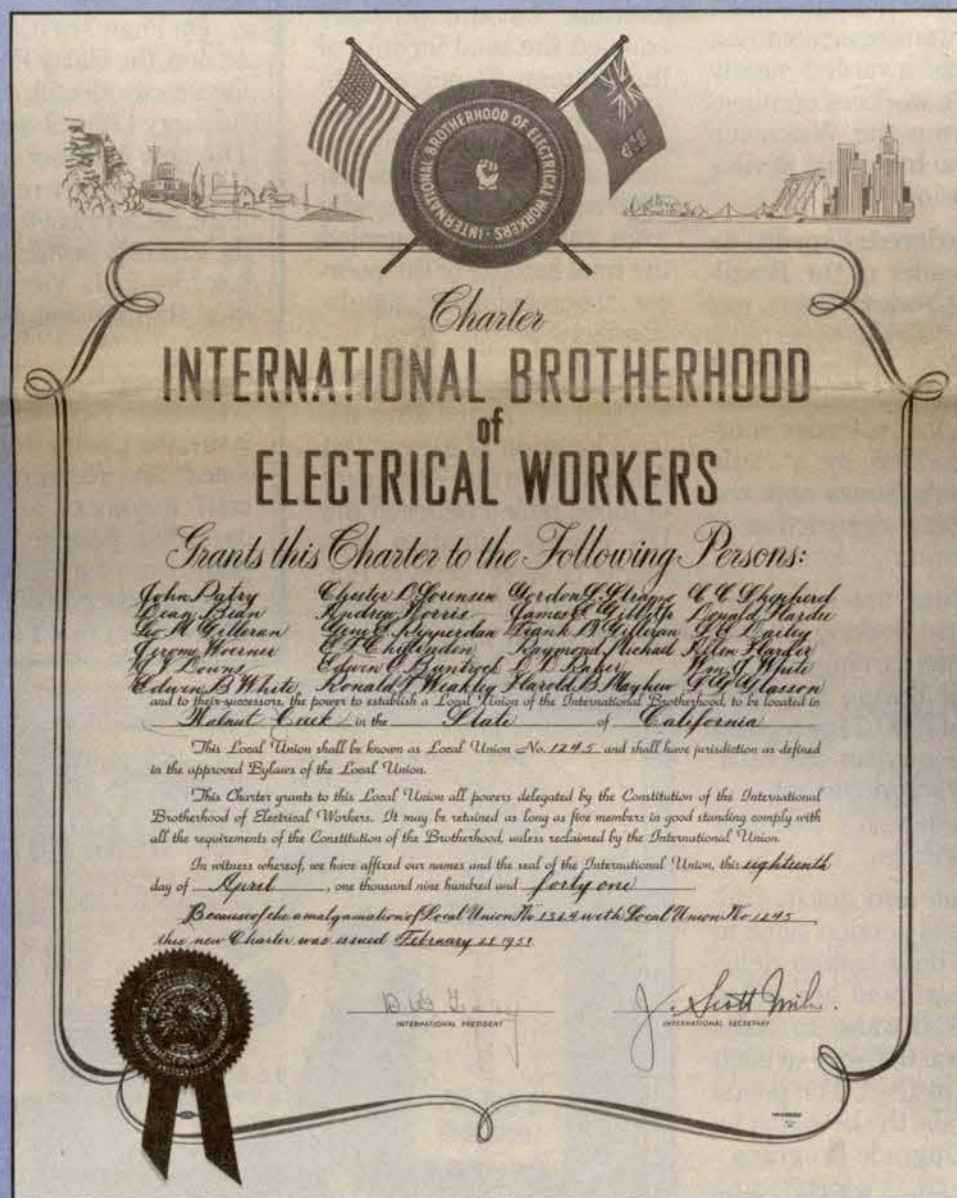
International Brotherhood  
Of Electrical Workers  
Local 1245, AFL-CIO  
April 1991  
Vol. XL No. 4

# UTILITY REPORTER

50th Anniversary!  
See Insert

## Fifty Years Of Union

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Local 1245 union charter after amalgamation with Local 1324 in 1951.

# IBEW Local 1245



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WIPA

**Workers here and abroad****Rolling the union on...**

**Let us explain:** The Manville Trust, set up to compensate asbestos victims as part of the bankruptcy settlement at Manville Corp., is almost out of money, with tens of thousands of victims yet to be paid, according to Labor Notes. It's a potentially embarrassing situation, so the Trust has spent some of what it has left to hire a public relations firm.

**Smoke damage:** A worker who claimed she was permanently disabled by inhaling secondhand smoke at a Milwaukee accounting office was awarded nearly \$30,000 in workers' compensation from the Wisconsin Labor and Industrial Review Commission.

**Murdered:** Expedito de Souza, leader of the Brazilian Farm Workers Union, was murdered Feb. 2 as he left a union office in the town of Rio Maria. Like Chico Mendes, the union leader murdered in 1988 by a cattle rancher, de Souza opposed the ongoing destruction of the Amazon rain forest.

**Inching toward equality:** Women working full time had median earnings of \$342 per week during the third quarter of 1990, 71 percent of the \$480 median for men. Ten years ago the ratio of women's-to-men's earnings was 64 percent.

**Come and get it:** Canada's postal service plans to cut back door-to-door delivery in apartment and office buildings. It wants to make one central delivery to each building instead. The postal service calls the new plan its Service Upgrade Program.

**Whistle while you work:** An ordinance passed by the Seattle City Council protects city employees who decide to "blow the whistle." It specifies that no city employee shall be retaliated against for reporting an improper governmental action, including violations of state, federal or city law; abuses of authority; creation of dangers to public health or safety; or gross waste of public funds.

**Good investment:** Employers who cut back on mental health and substance abuse programs experience "increased absenteeism and higher medical and surgical claims," according to consultant Roger Taylor. Studies show that mental health treatment reduces total health care costs by 20 percent on average, according to the American Psychiatric Association.

**Bite my dust:** As 1990 came to a close, the richest 1 percent of the population's after-tax income virtually equaled the total income of the bottom 40 percent. In These Times reported. The increase in income of the richest 1 percent between 1980 and 1990 alone—mostly from capital gains—equaled the total income of the poorest 20 percent of the population in 1990.

**Lip service only:** A Gallup poll conducted after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait last August found that 73 percent of those polled believed the US energy situation was "fairly" or "very" serious. But only 3 percent said they had turned down their thermo-

stats or reduced use of electric appliances. Only 10 percent had turned off lights at home more often.

**Premature RIP:** Rep. Richard Armey of Texas said in a House hearing that management cannot use "epitaphs" in referring to striking workers. Perhaps he meant "epithet", which is defined as an abusive phrase. "Epitaph" is an inscription on a tomb.

**Meeting change:  
Unit 3717**

Meeting dates for Unit 3717—Fort Bragg/Pt. Arena—have been changed to fall on Thursdays of the third full week of the month. The new dates, through the spring, are: April 18, May 23, and June 20. The meeting place remains The Masonic Hall, 428 N. Main, Fort Bragg. Meetings begin at 5 p.m.

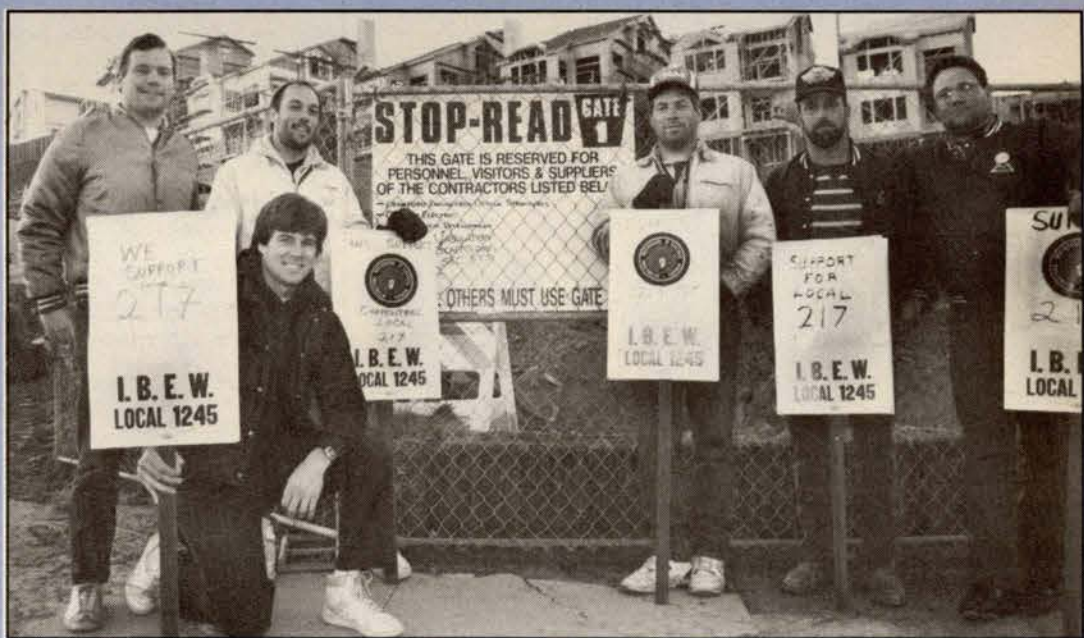
**Corrections**

On Page 3 of its March edition, the Utility Reporter incorrectly identified a new Advisory Council member. The new member, on the left in the picture reprinted here, is Larry Layton from the City of Roseville. Swearing him in is Vice President Jim McCauley.



On Page 7 of the March issue, the Utility Reporter listed two former union staff members as "unidentified persons" in a photo from the 1950s. The staff members were L. L. Mitchell, at that time se-

nior assistant business manager, and Mert Walters, an assistant business manager. The photo is reprinted on Page R of this month's special supplement.

**SHOWING SOLIDARITY**

Turning out recently to support a picket by Carpenters Local 217 near the corner of Apian and Westborough in South San Francisco are Local 1245 members (from left) Mike Franks, Paul Santo, Pat Deignan (kneeling), Kevin Kerrigan, Bruce Boykin and Mike Emerson. All work for PG&E out of Colma. (Photo: Eric Wolfe)





#### BAREHAND COMMITTEE CHAIR HONORED

Local 1245 Business Rep. Rich Hafner (left) presents Russ Rylee with a certificate of appreciation for his service as chairman of the Local 1245 Barehand Committee. Rylee, a PG&E lineman out of the Redding Service Center, was given the award at the Redding Unit Meeting in February. Research by the Barehand Committee helped provide the information needed by the union in reaching an agreement with PG&E on the practices of barehanding and rubber gloving.

### APPOINTMENTS

#### PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

**General Construction Joint Grievance Committee**  
David E. Ore (Alternate)

#### CITY OF LODI

**City of Lodi Negotiating Committee**  
Barry Fisher  
Al Smatsky  
Jess Kerekas

#### CONFERENCES & CONVENTIONS

**A. Philip Randolph Institute 10th Annual Statewide Conference**  
Danny Jackson  
Thelma Dixon  
Norma Ricker  
Shirley Roberts  
Tanya Ferreira

**IBEW Construction & Maintenance Conference**  
Jack McNally  
Art Murray  
Andrew G. Dudley

**1991 Nevada Governor's Safety Conference**  
Douglas Smith  
James (Bud) Gray

**Nevada State AFL-CIO COPE Conference**  
Kathy Tindall  
John Stralla

#### Electromagnetic Fields Conference

Ron Fitzsimmons  
John Delsman  
Jeff Schlocker  
Dan Mayo

**Joint Executive Conference of Northern California Electrical Workers**  
Art Murray

**National Safety Council Labor Division Spring Meeting**  
Ron Fitzsimmons

**California State Association of Electrical Workers**  
Jack McNally  
Art Murray  
Bobby Blair  
Richard Dunkin  
Ron Fitzsimmons

#### 1991 9th District Progress Meeting

Jack McNally  
Howard Stiefer  
Barbara Symons  
Jim McCauley  
Mike Davis  
Ed Mallory  
Ron Blakmore  
Kathy Tindall  
Andrew G. Dudley  
Darrel Mitchell  
Wayne Greer  
Mickey Harrington  
Frank Hutchins  
Larry Pierce



### INSIDE

**SPECIAL SECTION:**  
"One Union on the System: the People Who Organized PG&E"  
Pages A-X

**Workers Memorial Day**  
Page 4

**Member honored by Randolph Institute**  
Page 5

**Local 1245 Union Women**  
Pages 6-7

**Sacramento Municipal Utility District**  
Page 8

**Legislation would protect right to strike**  
Page 9

**Sierra Pacific Power**  
Page 16

### CALENDAR

**April 6**  
Humboldt Division Stewards Conference  
Eureka

**April 13**  
PG&E Regional Steward Training Conference  
Fresno

**April 18**  
Colgate Pin Dinner  
Yuba City

**April 19**  
Drum Pin Dinner  
Weimar

**April 27**  
PG&E Regional Steward Training Conference  
San Jose

**May 4**  
50th Anniversary Reception in Reno

**May 11**  
Sacramento Pin Dinner

**May 18**  
PG&E Regional Steward Training Conference  
Sacramento

**May 18**  
Stockton Division Stewards Conference  
Stockton

## POINT OF VIEW

# Workers' persistence gave rise to our union

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

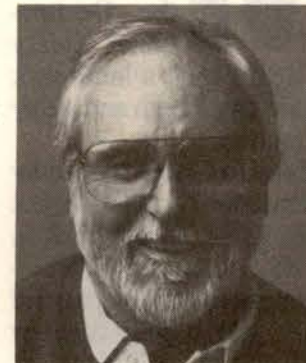
With this commemorative issue of the Utility Reporter, Local 1245 celebrates the 50th anniversary of the chartering of our union on April 18, 1941.

The Utility Reporter was first published in May of 1953 and has been published monthly ever since as Local 1245's official newspaper. The forerunner of the Utility Reporter was a small newsletter-style publication called Utility Facts, produced by IBEW Local 1324. Its main purpose was to organize Bay Area PG&E workers into the IBEW, competing with the Utility Workers Union of America-CIO. Utility Facts was published until the merger of Locals 1245 and 1324, when it was replaced by the Utility Reporter, which was created to be the regular house organ to communicate with the membership.

The story of Local 1245's origins is told in this issue (beginning on Page 9) with the help of some of our retirees and past officers. They lived and worked through the period when this union's framework was established. The structure they helped create enabled Local 1245 to grow and become one of the largest locals in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, serving over 20,000 members.

My hat is off to those retirees and past officers for their persistence and dedication in the development of this organization and their input and help in telling this story. Thank you.

Reflecting on the past, and the beginning of this local union, reminds one that today's wages, benefits and working conditions were not always so. Union activists put their jobs on the line to create the organization that gives us the strength we



have today.

The National Labor Relations Act, passed in 1935, was being challenged at every turn by employers across the United States. Labor law was in its infancy and union activists had few protections.

Many of the early members were tired of abuses on the job and wanted to improve their standard of living. They are the ones who spent countless hours in promoting the union and signing up new members—the basics of organizing. They are the ones who planned the strategy, who took verbal abuse, and who faced the employers across the bargaining table—many times a hostile setting.

They set the course and were persistent in the struggle to improve conditions of work, a principal one being dignity on the job. The benefits and conditions we have today are the direct results of their struggle, not because the employer willingly granted them.

Our 50th anniversary is an opportunity to remember our history. And it is also our way of thanking those union activists of the early days, and all the members who have continued to support the union over the years. The members are the key to the union's continuing progress, which in turn is the key to a better life for all the members.



**Workers Memorial Day observed April 28**

## Unions press for stronger health and safety legislation

**M**ore than 20 years have passed since the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, a landmark in workplace health and safety regulations.

Many lives were saved by this important legislation, but the slaughter of workers on the job continues. To commemorate the anniversary of OSHA, and to push for new health and safety legislation,

organized labor will observe its third annual Workers Memorial Day on April 28.

Since OSHA's enactment more than 245,600 workers have died from traumatic injuries received on the job, according to the National Safety Council (NSC).

More than 100 million have been hurt on the job, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data—despite chronic underreporting by many businesses. And upwards of 2 million more may

have died from occupational diseases, according to figures derived from data compiled by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), OSHA's research arm.

In 1989, the NSC calculates, more than 11,000 workers died from traumatic injuries received on the job. BLS statistics collected only from businesses with more than 10 employees show that 6.5 million workers were injured in 1989. As many as another

100,000 are estimated to have died from occupational illnesses, according to government estimates.

Despite OSHA's efforts to make workplaces safer, these statistics have remained nearly static over the years. Through four Republican and one Democratic administration, OSHA's list of achievements has been outstripped by its shortcomings, according to Margaret Seminario, a health specialist with the AFL-CIO. The agency takes years to issue even moderate standards.

### Few standards issued

Despite pressure from unions and the courts, OSHA has issued only a handful of comprehensive standards. Once issued, many of the rules are subjected to court review. The result is more delay, with workers' lives on the line in the meantime.

Enforcement of OSHA has been hamstrung by inadequate staffing, weak penalties, and lack of unhampered access to job sites, Seminario said. Legislation proposed by the AFL-CIO would bring OSHA penalties and enforcement into line with other federal environmental and safety and health laws, she said.

Criminal sanctions against employers should be increased, she said, and OSHA should have the right to shut down jobs where there is imminent danger to workers. Special inspection programs should be mandated for high hazard industries and employers should be required to correct hazards that pose serious risks to workers, even though they have contested the citations.

Workers and their representatives should have the right to contest all aspects of OSHA citations, including the failure to issue a citation, Seminario said. The unions also should have equal rights with management in OSHA settlement conferences.

Despite OSHA's woeful record, OSHA Administrator Gerard F. Scannell recently

told a House labor appropriations panel that the budget requested by the Bush administration is "adequate for our needs."

Seminario said the act should be expanded to cover all workers. Millions of workers, including many state and local public employees and workers in transportation, agriculture and federal nuclear facilities, have little or no legal protections under the OSHA law.

Likewise, the law should direct OSHA to act quickly on serious job hazards and should limit political interference in the standard-setting process by the White House Office of Management and Budget, Seminario said. OMB reviews OSHA standards and regulations under the authority of the Paperwork Reduction Act.

### Better data needed

The continuing lack of complete and accurate statistics on occupational injuries, illnesses and deaths also must be addressed, Seminario said. New systems of reporting must be established so this data can be used in standard setting, inspection targeting and program evaluation. Further, employers should be required to immediately report fatalities, serious injuries and catastrophes to OSHA.

The AFL-CIO also is seeking improved monitoring of state OSHA programs and improved status and funding for NIOSH. Workers at high risk of disease should be notified and a National Surveillance Program for Occupational Diseases should be established, in the AFL-CIO's opinion.

Workers Memorial Day will be commemorated on April 28 with a variety of public events around the nation. In San Francisco, a program of theater, video, music and speeches will be held at Local 34 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union at 4 Berry St. on the Embarcadero.

(The AFL-CIO News contributed to this report)



**WORKERS  
MEMORIAL  
DAY**

**April 28, 1991**

## Safe Jobs. It's Our Right.

### Workers have a right to a safe job.

Federal law says they do.

But each day toxic substances, explosions and other hazards injure more than 20,000 workers. Each year, more than 100,000 Americans die from job related injuries and diseases.

Twenty years after the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the right to a safe job is still a promise, not a reality.

On April 28, the unions of the AFL-CIO observe Workers Memorial Day to remember those who have suffered and died and to renew the fight for a safe workplace. This year on Workers Memorial Day the fight for a safe workplace means a fight for a stronger OSHA law.

We've won the "right to know" about hazards in the workplace. Now we need the "right to act" and strong safety committees to give workers a real voice in safety and health. We want the "right to refuse" dangerous work that threatens our lives.

### Safe Jobs. It's our right. Observe Workers Memorial Day.



**AFL-CIO**



## Seminars offer assistance in retirement planning

Financial Planning Seminars are being offered free of charge to Local 1245 members and their spouses. The seminars will cover all aspects of pre-retirement preparations, including financial and tax planning which will be explained by financial advisors employed by Merrill Lynch.

The topics of discussion will be:

- \* An Economic Forecast of 1991 - 1992 And How It Effects You

- \* Where Will Interest Rates Go?

- \* What You Should Be Doing With Your 401K Plan

- \* Credit Management - Reducing My Debt

- \* How To Self Direct Your Retirement Accounts

- \* How To Save On Income Tax

- \* Saving For My Children's Education Tax Free

- \* What's Hot In The 90's, And What's Not

- \* How To Properly Handle Retirement, And At What Age

The Merrill Lynch presentation will be given by Robert Gallo, vice-president, consumer markets, Nancy Caselli, associate producer, and David Brantley, director of investments, who have agreed to discount their services to Local 1245 members.

After attending the presentation, you may arrange an individual conference with the Merrill Lynch financial planning specialist to analyze your particular situation. Of course, the seminars and conferences are free of charge and involve no obligation.

Reservations are required in order to facilitate planning. For further information, call (415) 933-6060. The dates and locations of each Seminar are as follows:

### DATE/TIME

Tuesday  
**APRIL 30, 1991**  
7:30 p.m.

### LOCATION

Plum Tree Plaza Hotel  
111 E. March Lane  
**Stockton, CA 95207**  
(209) 474-3301

Tuesday  
**MAY 7, 1991**  
7:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn  
245 South Airport Blvd.  
**So. San Francisco, CA 94080**  
(415) 589-7200

Saturday  
**MAY 11, 1991**  
9:30 a.m.

Sacramento Holiday Inn  
300 "J" Street  
**Sacramento, CA 95814**  
(916) 446-0100

Tuesday  
**MAY 14, 1991**  
7:30 p.m.

IBEW Local Union Hall  
3063 Citrus Circle  
**Walnut Creek, CA 94596**  
(415) 933-6060

Wednesday  
**MAY 15, 1991**  
7:30 p.m.

San Jose Holiday Inn  
282 Almaden Blvd.  
**San Jose, CA 95113**  
(408) 998-0400

Saturday  
**MAY 18, 1991**  
9:30 a.m.

Flamingo Hotel  
4th and Farmers Lane  
**Santa Rosa, CA 95405**  
(707) 545-8530

Tuesday  
**MAY 21, 1991**  
7:30 p.m.

Hegenberger Holiday Inn  
500 Hegenberger Road  
**Oakland, CA 94621**  
(415) 562-5311

## Shirley Roberts wins honor from Randolph Institute



Shirley Roberts



Joining Shirley Roberts at the awards ceremony are (from left) Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, Business Manager Jack McNally, Shirley Roberts, Business Rep. Kathy Maas, Thelma Dixon and Norma Ricker.

Local 1245 Advisory Council member Shirley Roberts was honored for her years of dedicated service to the labor movement at an awards dinner sponsored by the Contra Costa County Chapter of the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

Roberts, who works in Pacific Gas and Electric's general office in San Francisco, serves on the Labor-Management Committee and the Walk Around Safety Committee. She has been a member of the union's

Advisory Council for three years and in 1988 represented General Office membership on the PG&E General Negotiating Committee.

She also served on the original Production Standards Committee.

By any measure, Roberts is a committed, active unionists. She has participated in the Western Regional Summer Institute for Union Women, the California State Federation Trade Union School, and the Women in the Workforce conference, in addition to various functions of the A. Philip Ran-

dolph Institute. She has been a shop steward for the last seven years.

At the awards dinner, Roberts was described as someone who is "quietly and effectively doing a good job representing her member co-workers."

She is mother of two children and grandmother of three.

A. Philip Randolph, for whom the institute is named, was founder of the sleeping car porters union, a vice president of the AFL-CIO, and a leader of the civil rights movement.

## Court denies appeal on pipeline drug tests

The US Court of Appeals in the Ninth Circuit recently denied an appeal by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to reconsider its position on drug testing for pipeline workers.

In an amended opinion affirming an order of the Department of Transportation, the court of appeals held that a rule requiring extensive drug testing of employ-

ees engaged in natural gas and pipeline operations was not arbitrary and capricious, nor did it unreasonably intrude on the employee's fourth amendment privacy interest to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures.

The IBEW had appealed to the court to reconsider an opinion issued Nov. 20, 1990, in which the court upheld

the Department of Transportation's drug testing program for pipeline workers. The court's amended opinion did not substantially change the opinion issued last November.

**Boycott  
California  
table grapes!**





Business Manager Jack McNally, sitting here with Norma Ricker and Thelma Dixon, spoke on organizing the organized. (Photo: Kathy Maas)



Kathy Tindall and Dora Carone. (Photo: Kathy Maas)



Business Rep. Enid Bidou, who spoke on health and safety issues, and Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, conference organizer. (Photo: Kathy Maas)



Gloria Furnish and Susan Torres. (Photo: Frank Hutchins)

## Conference provides resources, inspiration for Local 1245 women

**N**early 100 women workers gathered in Concord, Ca., on Feb. 23 and 24 for the IBEW Local 1245 Conference for Union Women.

The diverse group came from many different employers, but with a common purpose: to explore the special strengths and the special problems associated with being a woman in the workforce.

Jack McNally, in a business manager's report to the conference, spoke of the role that women can play in "organizing the already organized," also known as internal organizing. He stressed the importance of educating union members about the important role the union plays in maintaining their wages, benefits and working conditions. Too many members, he noted, take these things for granted.

Marian Johnston, deputy attorney general in the Civil Rights Enforcement Unit, addressed the conference on "Employment Rights for Women."



Conference participants. (Photo: Kathy Maas)



## LOCAL 1245 CONFERENCE FOR UNION WOMEN



**Paula Ramsey.** (Photo: Kathy Tindall)



**Millie Phillips.** (Photo: Kathy Tindall)



**Olivia Mercado.** (Photo: Kathy Tindall)



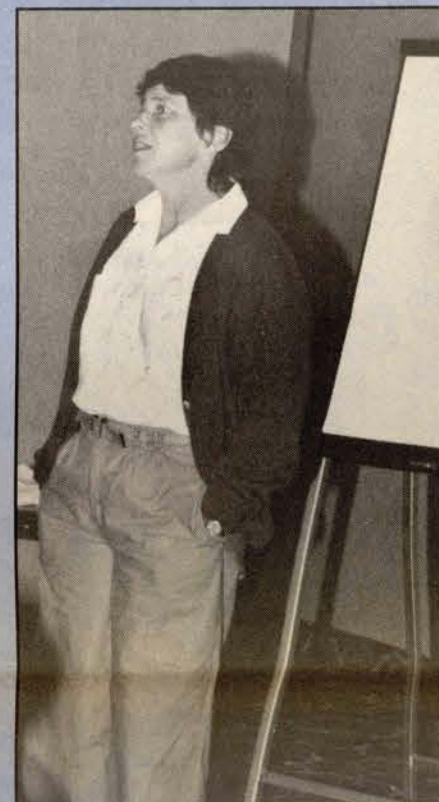
**Patricia "Gypsy" Tucker.** (Photo: Kathy Tindall)



**Conference participants.** (Photo: Kathy Maas)



**Linda Jurado and Chris Habecker.** (Photo: Kathy Maas)



**Shop steward Ocean speaks on communicating effectively.** (Photo: Kathy Maas)

US Rep. Barbara Boxer spoke on political action. A wide range of workshops focused on some of the problems women face in the workplace and resources available for dealing with them.

Robin Baker, director of the Labor and Occupational Health Program at UC Berkeley and Business Rep. Enid Bidou addressed health and safety issues facing union women.

Mary Davis, a Local 1245 shop steward, and Art Pulaski of the San Mateo County Central Labor Council, spoke on family issues, including child care and elder care.

Millie Phillips, Local 1245 shop steward at PG&E's Hunters Point Power Plant, joined Business Reps. Landis Martilla and Kathy Maas in addressing the issue of women in male-dominated jobs.

Bob Gallo of Merrill-Lynch and Wendy Bothell, a benefits specialist on the Local 1245 staff, spoke on financial planning for women. IBEW Interna-

tional Rep. Charles Silvernale and Local 1245 Executive Board member Barbara Symons provided an overview of the union's history and structure.

Learning to be more assertive and communicate more effectively was the topic of a workshop led by Jane Brunner, a staff attorney for Local 1245, and Ocean, a shop steward at Geysers Power Plant.

Marty Letsinger, an International representative from the IBEW Education Department, spoke on controlling stress in the workplace.

Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, who organized the conference, said she believed it had provided women members some valuable tools to carry on the work of internal organizing.

"If you were there, you just really felt a great sense of power and pride listening to the various women who were in all these classifications talking about their concerns and their problems," Fortier said.

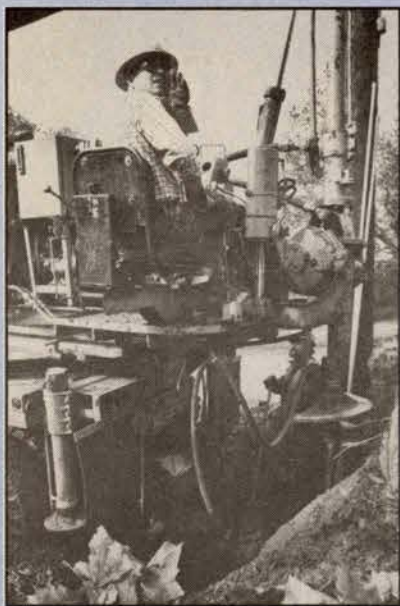


**Conference participants.** (Photo: Kathy Maas)



**International Rep. Marty Letsinger addresses issue of stress.** (Photo: Kathy Maas)





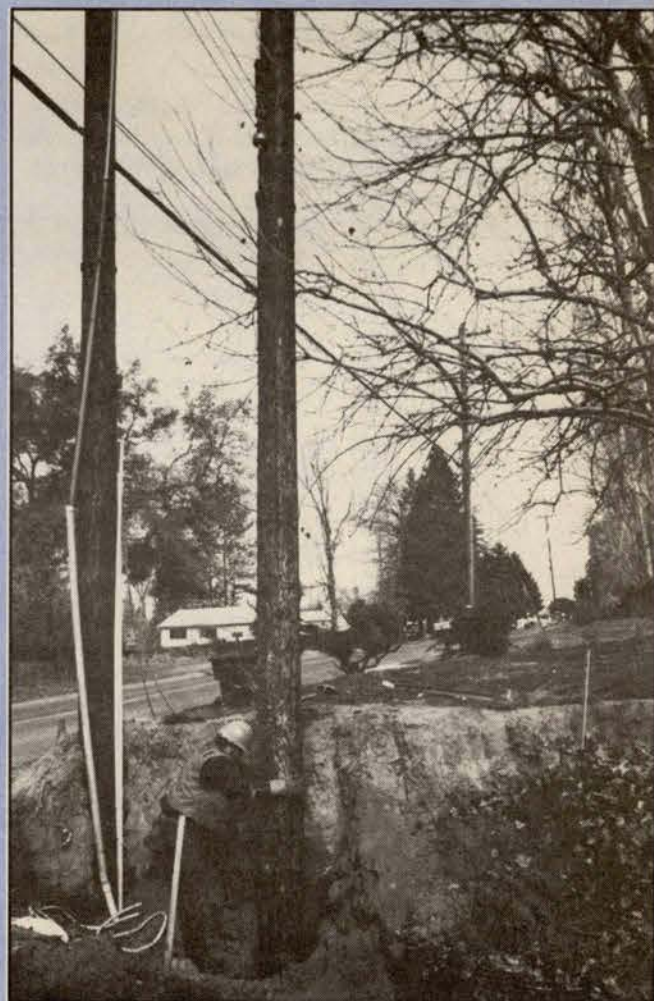
At left, Bob Corkett, pole digger, and Jerry Elder, lineman, dig a hole for a new pole on Walnut Street in Sacramento. At right (on truck), Foreman Les Hulett lifts the pole while Elder helps position it. (Photos: Eric Wolfe)



## Pole changeout all in a day's work for SMUD crew



At left, Hulett and Elder bring the pole into position. Below, Elder makes final adjustments. Not pictured: Rich Philbrook, lineman.





## First anniversary of strike observed

# Unionists demonstrate solidarity with Greyhound workers

**G**reyhound workers backed by supporters from the labor movement marked the anniversary of the Amalgamated Transit Union strike against the only nationwide bus line last month with rallies and vigils throughout California and the nation.

In San Francisco, Jesse Jackson ignited a rally with a speech calling upon George Bush to include workers in his new world order.

There were also major demonstrations at Los Angeles, San Diego, Fresno, Sacramento, and Redding, where an ATU member was run over and killed by a scab last year on the strike's second day.

While workers demonstrated in support of the strikers, Greyhound was facing unfair labor practice charges that could deliver the corporation into the hands of the strikers, according to a story in the March 8 issue of the California AFL-CIO News. In

a trial slated to begin this month, Administrative Law Judge Robert Giannasi must determine if Greyhound is guilty as charged by the general counsel of the National Labor Relations Board.

The NLRB general counsel accused Greyhound boss Fred Curry, a corporate raider in the mold of Frank Lorenzo, of provoking the strike and of acting illegally when the company gave union members' jobs to scabs. The general counsel ordered Greyhound to rehire the strikers and reimburse them for lost pay. ATU members then offered to come back on the company's terms, but Greyhound turned them down.

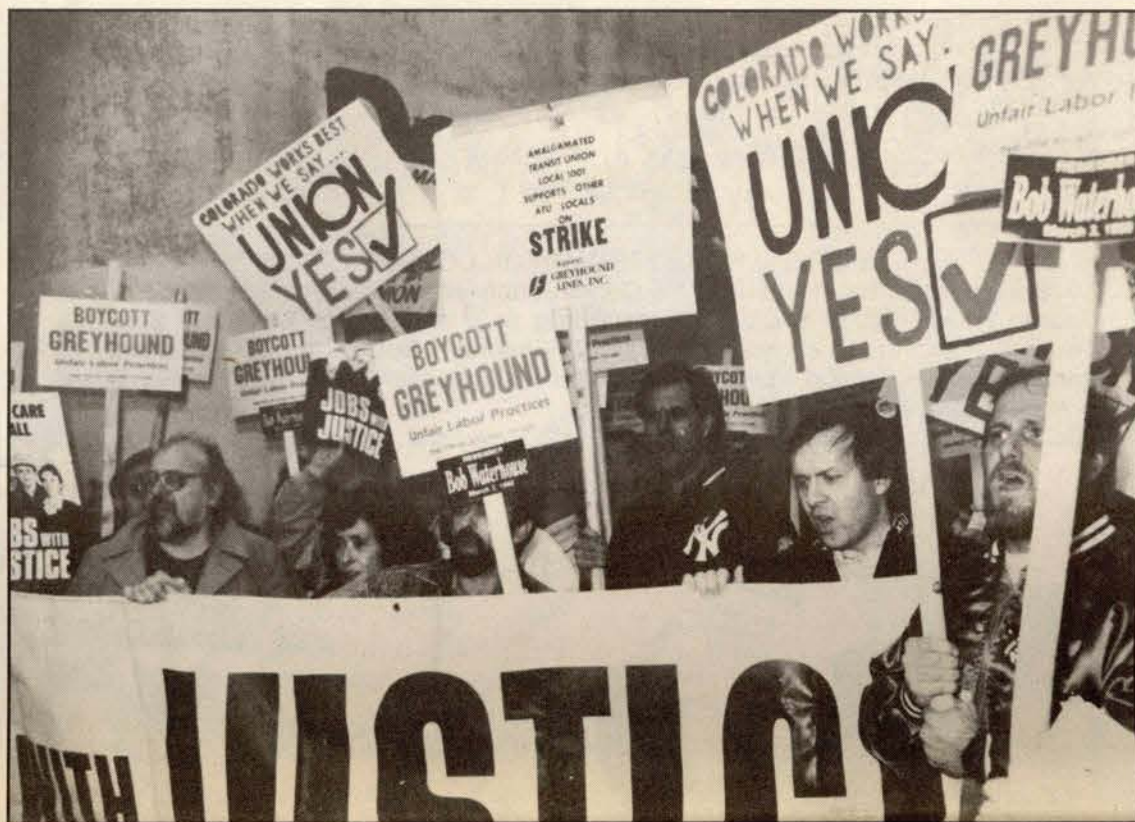
The Greyhound case is similar to the Colt Firearms strike, where workers were replaced with scabs. When management was unable to pay tens of millions of dollars worth of back wages, strikers were eventually awarded shares in the company.

Greyhound strikers are al-

ready owed more than \$120 million in back pay as of February, with the amount

climbing daily. If the court sides with the strikers, Greyhound may find it has no

choice but to offer the strikers a piece of the company as compensation.



Colorado unionists mark the first anniversary of the Greyhound strike. Signs commemorate the death of Amalgamated Transit Union member Bob Waterhouse, killed by a scab driver.

## Catfish workers victory on TV

The courageous struggle of Mississippi Delta catfish processing workers who emerged victorious from their strike last September will be featured in April on "We Do the Work," the public television series about the lives of working people.

The catfish workers' story, "This Far By Faith," is hosted by actress Alfre Woodard and features the music of B. B. King. The workers recent victory has been hailed as one of the most significant labor and civil rights victories of the last decade.

Airtimes are:

**San Francisco KQED**  
April 11, 7:30 p.m.

**San Mateo KCSM**  
April 2, 9:30 p.m.

**Santa Rosa KRCB**  
April 25, 6:30 p.m.

**Los Angeles KCET**  
April 28, 12:30 a.m.

## Labor gears up to ban 'permanent replacements'

**A** study conducted recently by the federal government's General Accounting Office revealed that permanent replacements were hired to replace striking workers in about one-third of the cases.

The study, which looked at the years 1985 and 1989, illustrates the sorry state of labor protections for today's working men and women. It's not just striking workers who are at risk: if a union can't mount a credible strike threat, its position is weakened at the bargaining table. A union's ability to withhold labor is, in the final analysis, the workers' fundamental strength, even if the threat of a strike is never carried out.

Restoring the right to strike is a top priority of the AFL-CIO in the current session of Congress. H.R. 5, sponsored by Rep. Bill Clay

(D-MO), would bar employers from hiring "permanent replacements" during a strike.

Clay pointed to the New York Daily News strike as "the latest example of how employers have tried to use strikes to get rid of their obligation to bargain. Provoking strikes undermines not only basic worker rights, but also the stability of labor-management relations."

"Workers deserve a fair shake in the workplace," said Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-ME). "Workers must be able to deal with their employers at a level negotiating table, not under the threat of job loss at the first sign of disagreement."

The AFL-CIO believes the campaign to pass H.R. 5 and S. 55, the Senate's version of the bill, will be extremely difficult.

"The business community has already committed vast

resources to its campaign opposing this legislation," said AFL-CIO Legislative Director Robert M. McGlotten.

In a statement issued at its annual winter meeting in Bal Harbour, Fla., the AFL-CIO Executive Council said, "A democracy that fully respects freedom of association, the right to form unions and the right of working people to withhold their labor, should state that respect in its law, free of qualifications, equivocations and ambiguities."

To promote passage of the legislation, the AFL-CIO is organizing a grass-roots effort to win support for the bills. Voting could come as early as this spring, lending a special urgency to labor's campaign.

The Senate bill currently has 31 co-sponsors, including California Democrat Alan Cranston. The House bill has

202 co-sponsors, including the following US Representatives from California: Berman, Boxer, Brown, Condit, Delums, Dixon, Dymally, Edwards, Fazio, Lantos, Lehman, Levine, Martinez, Matsui, Miller, Mineta, Pelosi, Roybal, Stark and Torres.

Union members who want to help ban the use of permanent replacements should immediately contact their representatives in Washington and urge them to co-sponsor the "Anti-Strikebreaker" bills. House members can be contacted by writing:

(Name of your representative)  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

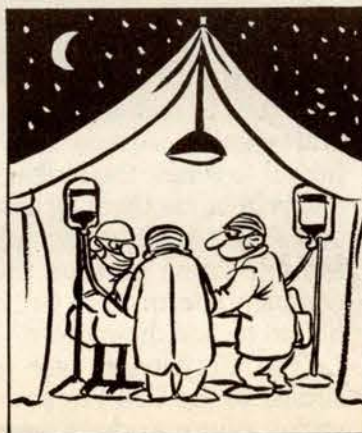
(Name of your senator)  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510





#### MEMBERS PICKET NON-UNION CONSTRUCTION

Local 1245 members in Outside Line Construction (above) picket Southern California Edison substation to protest the awarding of a contract to Electrical Systems Testing, a non-union company. Local 1245 member Robert Conoyner (below) is joined by his wife and kids, showing that walking picket can be a family affair. (Photos: Bobby Blair)



## Private industry contracts show improvement in 1990

Major collective bargaining settlements reached in private industry in 1990 provided larger wage rate adjustments than those specified in the contracts they replaced, the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported.

Major collective bargaining settlements in 1990, covering about 2 million workers, provided wage rate adjustments averaging 4.0 percent in the first contract year and 3.2 percent annually over the life of the contract. (Lump-sum payments and cost-of-living adjustments are not

included in these measures.)

The last time parties to these settlements negotiated, usually in 1987 or 1988, wage rate adjustments were smaller, averaging 2.3 percent in the first contract year and 2.0 percent annually over the contract term.

Contracts for 39 percent of the workers under 1990 settlements had cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) clauses. COLA clauses were dropped from contracts covering about 2 percent of the workers under settlements and added to contracts covering only one-fifth of one percent of the workers.



Government Coordinating Council (GCC-1) members at the Jan. 24-25 meeting in Reno, Nev., are: Mark Harens, recording secretary and delegate, IBEW Local 1959; Mike Rumbaugh, delegate, IBEW Local 2159; Brian Pieper, business manager, IBEW Local 1959; B. B. Boatman, WAPA; Carl Nyquist, first vice-chairman, IBEW Local 1759; Barry Mortimeyer, WAPA; Richard Perry, alternate for Jack McNally, IBEW Local 1245; Mike Groves, WAPA; Stanley Spencer, delegate, IBEW Local 640; Steve Burr, second vice-chairman, IBEW Local 2159; Dennis Shurman, WAPA; Vern Hartwick, WAPA; Bob Harris; Jerry Sandvig, guest, IBEW Local 1245; Jerry Bisterfeldt, WAPA; William Ross, delegate, IBEW Local 1759; Steve Pacetti, WAPA; Jim Simmons. (Photo: Rich Hafner, chairman)

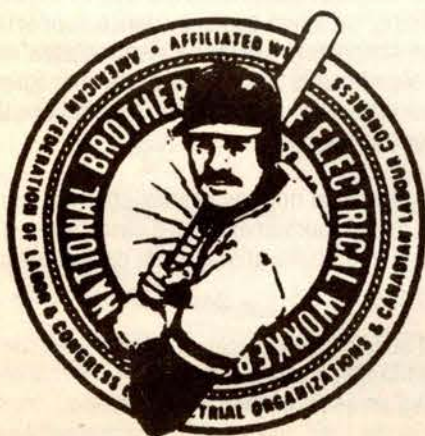


Hear Ye! Year Ye!

# FOURTEENTH ANNUAL SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

IBEW LOCAL UNION 1245

Saturday, May 18 & Sunday, May 19, 1991  
Willow Pass Park, Concord, California



**4 Divisions**  
**Men's "C"**  
**Men's "D"**  
**35 & Older**  
**Women's**

**Individual Trophies**  
**for the**  
**1st Place Teams**

**Team Trophies for 1st,**  
**2nd, & 3rd**  
**in all Divisions**

**Family Members Eligible!**

**Winner of**  
**"C" & "D" Divisions**  
**to Advance**  
**to State Industrial**  
**Championship**

**\$150 Entry Fee**  
**Due No Later**  
**Than May 3**

**For More**  
**Information,**  
**Contact:**  
**Ed Caruso**  
**(415) 933-6060**

**USSA Umpires Provided**

## Local Union 1245's 14th Annual Slow Pitch Softball Tournament May 18 and May 19, 1991

Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1990 Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 11. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ 12. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 13. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_ 14. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_ 15. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

**Men's C**  
**Men's D**  
**35 and Older**  
**Women's**  
(Circle One)

**Entry Fee: \$150**

**Final Deadline: May 3, 1991, 10 a.m. at Local 1245 Headquarters in Walnut Creek**

**Make Checks Payable to: Ed Caruso**

**P.O. Box 4790**

**Walnut Creek, CA 94596**



# IBEW LOCAL 1245

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

for the year ended  
December 31, 1990

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

February 20, 1991

To the Officers and Members of the  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers,  
Local Union 1245, Walnut Creek, California

We have audited the accompanying statement of Assets, Liabilities and Equity arising from cash transactions as of December 31, 1990 and the related Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 1245 for the year ended December 31, 1990. These financial statements are the responsibility of the union's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

Generally accepted accounting principles have not been established for labor organizations. The Local records receipts and disbursements on a cash basis. The basis for its statement of assets, liabilities and equity arising from cash transaction, is described in the note to the statement.

The savings account and stock fund account which make up the Supplemental Retirement-Severance Fund are included in these statements as they are carried in the name of the Local and are considered an asset of the Local. However, as of December 31, 1990, the entire amount in the fund was a liability to present and former employees and the Local had no equity in the fund.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the cash transactions of Local Union 1245 for the year ended December 31, 1990, and its assets, liabilities and equity at December 31, 1990 in accordance with the basis of accounting described in the note to the Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Equity arising from cash transactions.

Dalmus & Lu  
Certified Public Accountants

## EXHIBIT A

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS  
LOCAL UNION 1245  
STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND EQUITY ARISING FROM CASH TRANSACTIONS  
December 31, 1990

## ASSETS

Cash Accounts and Stock Fund at cost:		
General Fund:		
Wells Fargo Bank &		
Bank of America - Checking accounts	\$225,543.82	
Wells Fargo Bank - Market rate account	442,769.80	
Wells Fargo Bank - Savings account	44,444.11	
U.S. Treasury bills	1,961,734.85	
Variable Rate Government Fund	803,386.04	
Cash funds	<u>5,800.00</u>	
Total General Fund		\$3,483,678.62
Savings Accounts and Stock Fund at cost -		
Supplemental Retirement-Severance Fund		45,867.83
Checking Account - Political Donation Fund		<u>146.83</u>
Total cash and Stock Fund at cost		3,529,693.28
200 shares PG&E common stock - at cost		3,388.17
Air transportation deposit		425.00
Loans receivable from Energy Workers Center, Inc. (Note 2, 4)		155,145.89
Fixed assets: (Note 1):		
Automobiles (51) at cost	696,459.35	
Less: allowance for depreciation	<u>398,807.35</u>	297,652.00
Furniture and office equipment - at cost	760,075.28	
Less: allowance for depreciation	<u>363,726.14</u>	396,349.14
Total assets		<u>\$4,382,653.48</u>



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

Liabilities:		
IBEW per capita portion of December receipts to forward	\$129,524.10	
For supplemental Retirement-Severance	<u>45,867.83</u>	\$175,391.93
Equity:		
General Fund	4,207,114.72	
Political Donation Fund	<u>146.83</u>	<u>4,207,261.55</u>
Total liabilities and equity		<u>\$4,382,653.48</u>

The accompanying Report and Notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

## EXHIBIT B

### INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1245 STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS For the Year Ended December 31, 1990

#### SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT-SEVERANCE FUND

Balance, December 31, 1989	\$76,033.15
Receipts:	
Interest	3,520.17
Dividends	736.29
Total receipts and balance	80,289.61
Disbursements:	
Direct payment made to former employees	<u>34,421.78</u>
Balance, December 31, 1990	<u>\$45,867.83</u>

Details of Balance:	
Four American Savings & Loan Accounts	\$38,995.03
One Dodge & Cox Fund Account - at cost	<u>6,872.80</u>
Total as above	<u>\$45,867.83</u>

## EXHIBIT C

### POLITICAL DONATION FUND

Cash balance, December 31, 1989	\$9,700.83
Receipts:	
Portion of local union dues deposited directly to this fund	<u>20,246.00</u>
Total receipts and balance	29,946.83

Disbursements:	
McCorquodale Campaign	300.00
Kathleen Brown State Treasurer	6,000.00
Feinstein for Governor	6,000.00
Len Nevin, Candidate St. of Nevada	200.00
Vivian Freeman, Candidate St. of Nevada	200.00
Paul Prengaman, Candidate St. of Nevada	100.00
Kim Haller, Candidate St. of Nevada	200.00
Jan Evans, Candidate St. of Nevada	300.00
Mike Thompson, for Senate Dist. #4	1,850.00
Joe Buonaiuto for Assembly	750.00
Norm Waters, Calif Assembly	1,200.00
Sal Cannella for Calif Assembly	500.00
Senator Keene Re-Election-Calif Senate	1,000.00
Arlo Smith for Attorney General	2,000.00
Gray Davis, Calif State Controller	1,000.00
Smeloff for SMUD	500.00
Jack Jeffrey, Nevada Assembly	300.00
Danny Thompson, Nevada Assembly	300.00
Bob Price, Nevada Assembly	300.00
Citizens for Souza, Mayor Santa Clara	500.00
Wendy Reid Energy Ex., SMUD	500.00
Friends of Brad Sherman, Bd of Equilization	100.00
I.B.E.W. Cope	2,000.00
Senator Garamendi for Insurance Commission	500.00
Van de Kamp Committee	2,000.00

Californians for Bill Press, Ins. Comm.	500.00
Committee on Political Education	600.00
Nevada State AFL-CIO	<u>100.00</u>

Cash balance, December 31, 1990- Wells Fargo checking account	<u>\$146.83</u>
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## EXHIBIT D

### GENERAL FUND

Cash balance, beginning December 31, 1989	<u>\$3,787,603.63</u>
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Receipts:	
Local Union portion of receipts:	
"A" members' dues	90,266.93
"BA" members' dues	5,973,358.71
Initiation fees	16,373.18
Reinstatement fees	680.50
Agency fees	40,985.96
Working dues - Outside Line	501,440.05
Difference in dues	6,569.15
Difference in fees	2,234.85
Retirement Club dues	<u>9,693.00</u>
	6,641,602.33

Reimbursements to General Fund:	
Interest	315,270.98
Dividends	472.64
Refunds and reimbursements:	
Loan payments - Energy Workers Center:	
Interest	13,435.29
Principal	34,670.95
Sale of used autos	34,450.00
Union Shopper	15,601.14
Other receipts	13,696.53
Lord Electric Settlement	<u>53,902.22</u>
	481,499.75

International portion of receipts:	
"A" members' per capita	237,022.27
"BA" members' per capita	1,344,108.00
Initiation fees	13,373.10
D.B.A.F. fees	128.00
Reinstatement fees	2,025.50
Agency fees	17,767.54
Difference in per capita	<u>4,316.00</u>
	<u>1,618,740.41</u>

Total receipts	<u>8,741,842.49</u>
----------------	---------------------

Total balance and receipts	12,529,446.12
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Disbursements, per Page 12 of Schedule of Disbursements	<u>9,045,767.50</u>
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Cash balance, December 31, 1990, Details of Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Equity	<u>\$3,483,678.62</u>
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### SCHEDULE OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS For the Year Ended December 31, 1990

Page 1

### GENERAL FUND

Affiliation fees:	
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	\$1,620,707.59
San Francisco C.L.C.	4,320.00
Santa Clara C.L.C.	5,460.00
Alameda C.L.C.	7,680.00
Northern Nevada C.L.C.	1,650.00
Nevada State AFL-CIO	3,360.00
Nevada State Electrical Association	420.00
Sacramento C.L.C.	8,400.00
Contra Costa C.L.C.	5,850.00
California Federation of Labor	57,750.00
California State Association of Electrical Workers	27,300.00
Marin County C.L.C.	819.00
San Joaquin and Calaveras C.L.C.	2,100.00
Butte-Glenn C.L.C.	780.00
Napa-Solano C.L.C.	1,765.50
Kern-Inyo-Mono C.L.C.	1,350.00
Fresno-Medara C.L.C.	3,350.00
Sonoma, Mendocino, Lake C.L.C.	1,932.00
Merced-Mariposa C.L.C.	1,237.50
Stanislaus-Tuolumne C.L.C.	<u>1,116.00</u>



## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

# IBEW LOCAL 1245 FINANCIAL STATEMENT (Continued)

Marysville C.L.C.	240.00
Humboldt-Del Norte C.L.C.	603.00
Five Counties C.L.C.	852.00
Monterey County C.L.C.	576.00
Government Coordinating Council	2,600.00
San Mateo C.L.C.	2,100.00
Idaho State AFL-CIO	130.62
Coalition California Utility Workers	3,600.00
Joint Executive Conference-S.C. Electrical Workers	75.00
Joint Executive Conference-N.C. Electrical Workers	100.00
California Labor Federal-Retiree Dues	5,262.00
Forum-C.C., Napa, Solano	20.00
Congress of California Seniors	24.00
9th District Manufacturing	120.00
Forum-Alameda Retired Members	5.00
Maritime Trades Post Co.	420.00
Public Employees Council	50.00
TCC-6	136.00

1,774,261.21

Staff expenses:	
Salaries	2,722,278.11
Expenses	223,111.11
Automobile expenses	100,728.46
Automobile purchases	151,273.10
Administrative expenses	7,648.28

3,205,039.06

### SCHEDULE OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS For the Year Ended December 31, 1990 Page 2

#### GENERAL FUND

Research and Education:	
Subscriptions and publications	\$16,199.14
Scholarship fund	1,527.75

17,726.89

Office salaries:	
Administration office salaries	271,198.35
Bargaining unit salaries	368,792.23

639,990.58

Office expenses:	
Rent	149,569.76
Telephone	172,327.94
Postage mail service and meter expense	59,565.98
Print room/printing	81,052.88
Supplies	37,974.26
Equipment maintenance	18,481.50
Data processing	79,014.47
Equipment rental	8,425.48
Utility reporter	100,890.89
Miscellaneous	13,717.74
Bank charges	1,772.43
Furniture & equipment	218,550.05
Utilities & janitorial	8,125.59
Storage	2,589.00

952,057.97

### SCHEDULE OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS For the Year Ended December 31, 1990 Page 3

#### GENERAL FUND

	Salaries Paid Or Reimbursed	Expenses	Total
Committee salaries and expenses:			
Executive Board meetings	\$18,121.14	\$17,127.43	\$35,248.57
Executive Board Ways & Means		84.05	84.05
Executive Board Trial Board		1,413.08	1,413.08
Central Labor Council		260.39	260.39
Advisory Council	11,204.16	63,482.72	74,686.88
Trustee Committee	10,467.90	1,491.92	11,959.82
Review Committee	4,047.75	3,654.67	7,702.42
Safety Committee	13,419.89	7,545.78	20,965.67
Outside Line Conference		2,770.12	2,770.12
Shop Stewards	25,404.75	43,092.73	68,497.18
Other Conferences	11,045.77	69,184.78	80,230.55
Labor Management	328.60	11,860.40	12,189.00
J.T. Grievance	1,832.70	10,518.38	12,351.08
Grievance/FF/LIC		3,805.36	3,805.36
Retirees		249.92	249.92
	<u>95,872.36</u>	<u>236,541.73</u>	<u>332,414.09</u>

Various other Committees:			
Citizen Utility	29,006.45	7,568.11	36,574.56
Sierra Pacific Power	10,296.22	636.50	10,932.72
U.S.B.R. - General Negotiations	4,145.94	8,731.06	12,877.00
Outside Line Const.	47,462.35	19,019.54	66,481.89
SMUD	35,049.55	9,069.23	44,118.78
Regional Transit	15,257.88	7,558.22	22,816.10
AC Transit	5,197.17	2,263.22	7,460.39
Regional S/S Conference		18,195.92	18,195.92
Leadership	<u>1,343.43</u>	<u>441.75</u>	<u>1,785.18</u>
Totals carried forward	<u>147,758.99</u>	<u>73,483.55</u>	<u>221,242.54</u>

### SCHEDULE OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS For the Year Ended December 31, 1990 Page 4

#### GENERAL FUND

Balance brought forward	\$147,758.99	\$73,483.55	\$221,242.54
Pacific Gas Transmission	8,474.85	13,607.87	22,082.72
Organizing Expenses	17,783.19	10,056.48	27,839.67
City of Berkeley	185.76	2,038.32	2,224.08
WAPA	326.08	830.94	1,157.02
Pacific Tree	7,871.92	9,599.17	17,471.09
C.P. National-Elko	2,274.95	2,344.85	4,619.80
Multi-Vision Cable	674.08	1,006.58	1,680.66
City of Redding		659.26	659.26
Modesto Irrigation District	14,892.61	3,922.70	18,815.31
Merced I.D.	1,669.14	880.52	2,549.66
CP National Benefits	660.40	2,626.17	3,286.57
Shasta Dam PUD		435.80	435.80
Concord TV Cable	2,018.02	77.98	2,096.00
City of Santa Clara	1,780.95	501.85	2,282.80
City of Oakland	157.34	64.74	222.08
CP National-Tahoe		501.35	501.35
Bureau of Alameda	878.72	264.69	1,143.41
Bella Vista		16.38	16.38
Sonic TV Cable	1,887.38	5,311.93	7,199.31
Chambers TV Cable	1,360.51	397.46	1,757.97
Western TV Cable		310.43	310.43
ARP/TCI Santa Cruz	1,585.44	17.37	1,602.81
Nevada I.D.	48.88	40.04	118.92
So. San Joaquin	1,096.46	435.24	1,531.70
Oroville-Wyandotte I.D.	92.40	3.12	95.52
Davey Tree	1,590.52	2,699.83	4,290.35
Arbor Tree	1,670.58	947.34	2,617.92
City of Healdsburg	154.00	87.66	241.66
CP National-Needles	264.16	123.30	387.46
Mt. Wheeler		16.58	16.58
Wells Rural Electric	197.52	271.84	469.36
Truckee Donner		67.32	67.32
Plumas-Sierra Rural		50.32	50.32



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	Salaries Paid Or Reimbursed	Expenses	Total
Lassen MUD	275.68	53.37	329.05
Capco	416.00		416.00
Monterey Pen. TV Cable	218.72	360.50	579.22
City of Roseville		128.24	128.24
City of Lodi		6.80	6.80
	<u>218,265.25</u>	<u>134,277.89</u>	<u>352,543.14</u>

## SCHEDULE OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS For the Year Ended December 31, 1990 Page 5

### GENERAL FUND

#### PG&E Negotiating Committees:

Departmental:			
Arbitration	158.96	21,682.06	21,841.02
Interim Negotiations	6,032.10	5,217.24	11,249.34
G.C. Neg. Committee	158.96	518.26	677.22
Diablo Canyon	17,080.32	3,801.82	20,882.14
Geyser		88.92	88.92
Gas Servicemen		285.75	285.75
Lineman Advisor	5,525.53	15,891.27	21,416.80
Drug Testing	297.10	5,312.77	5,609.87
Negotiations		48,886.59	48,886.59
Commercial drivers license		733.65	733.65
Transmission		18.73	18.73
G.C. Negotiations		6,511.75	6,511.75
Re-Rate		39.60	39.60
Clerical Job	3,408.73	280.21	3,688.94
Meter Reader	119.07	51.07	170.14
PLO		477.40	477.40
Ad Hoc		596.48	596.48
General Office 19.17	2,564.15	151.65	2,715.80
Misc. general office		174.17	174.17
	<u>35,344.92</u>	<u>110,719.39</u>	<u>146,064.31</u>

## SCHEDULE OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS For the Year Ended December 31, 1990 Page 6

### GENERAL FUND

#### Membership expenses:

Supplies-Local	\$13,340.82
Supplies-Intl.	10,831.75
Union shopper purchases	23,137.09
Miscellaneous fees	5,346.00
Public Relations	528.95
50th Anniversary supplies	7,310.00
	<u>60,494.61</u>

#### Membership benefits:

Group life insurance	102,824.82
Individual drawing award	700.00
Unit winner	550.00
Service award dinners	27,793.78
Social fund	10,500.00
Flowers & donations	586.35
	<u>142,954.95</u>

#### Payroll taxes:

Employee portion:	
U.S. income tax withheld	\$(539,504.54)
California income tax withheld	(137,609.63)
FICA withheld	(225,704.25)
SDI withheld	(15,239.65)
U.S. income tax forwarded	539,504.54
California income tax forwarded	137,609.63
FICA forwarded	225,704.25
SDI forwarded	15,239.65
Local Union portion:	
FICA	226,127.61
California Unemployment	4,561.21
U.S. Unemployment	4,620.71
	<u>235,309.53</u>

#### Employee benefits:

Health and Welfare plans	331,971.28
Group life insurance	54,935.68
Pension plan	382,409.09
Administration trustee pension plan	375.00
Other costs, pension plans	11,459.30
Administration fees, pension plan	1,400.00
	<u>782,550.35</u>

## SCHEDULE OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS For the Year Ended December 31, 1990 Page 7

### GENERAL FUND

#### Other disbursements:

Legal fees	\$58,586.76
Hall rentals	56,651.76
Worker's Compensation Insurance	81,761.45
Refunds	6,254.24
Audit fees	9,650.00
PRD fees	5,596.74
Charitable donations	96,900.00
Payroll deductions - 401(k), savings, credit union dues	(4.69)
Miscellaneous taxes	107.93
Insurance-professional liability	45,848.04
Insurance-auto	34,230.99
Insurance-bond	2,200.00
Insurance-property	3,715.78
Insurance-travel	705.00
Christmas Card	315.32
Baseball tournament	767.62
Fair Give-away	1,073.87
	<u>\$404,360.81</u>

#### Total General Fund Disbursements

\$9,045,767.50

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
Local No. 1245  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 1990

## NOTE 1: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNT PRINCIPLES

### Principles of Accounting

The accompanying statement of assets, liabilities and equities is prepared on the cash method of accounting with the exception of provision for depreciation and other payables. Prepaid and delinquent dues and assessments are not recorded. Prepayments, such as taxes and insurance, are recorded as expenses when disbursements are made.

The accompanying statements of recorded cash receipts and disbursements are prepared on the cash basis of accounting; consequently, certain revenues are recognized when received rather than when earned and certain expenses and purchase of assets are recognized when cash is disbursed rather than when the obligation is incurred.

### Property and Equipment

Depreciation has been computed on depreciable assets at 30% per year on automobiles and 10% per year on furniture and equipment.

## NOTE 2: RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Energy Workers Center, Inc. is a California non-profit corporation who owns and operates the office facilities rented by the Local in walnut Creek, California. Both the Corporation and the Local have common officers and directors that serve on their respective Boards.

## NOTE 3: INCOME TAXES

The Local is exempt from Federal and California taxes on income under current provisions of the Internal Revenue Code and the Revenue and Taxation Code, respectively.

## NOTE 4: LOANS RECEIVABLES

The Local has provided two unsecured building improvement loans to Energy Workers Center, Inc. The original amount of the first loan, issued January 1, 1977 was for \$336,365.34 and bears interest at the rate of 8% per annum. Monthly payments of interest and principal in the amount of \$2,600 are made until the entire principle has been paid. The balance outstanding at December 31, 1990 is \$55,586.33

The original amount of the second loan, issued April 1, 1989 was for \$140,000.00 and bears interest at the rate of 7% per annum. Monthly payments of interest and principal in the amount of \$1,625.52 are made until the entire principal has been paid. The balance outstanding at December 31, 1990 is \$99,559.56.



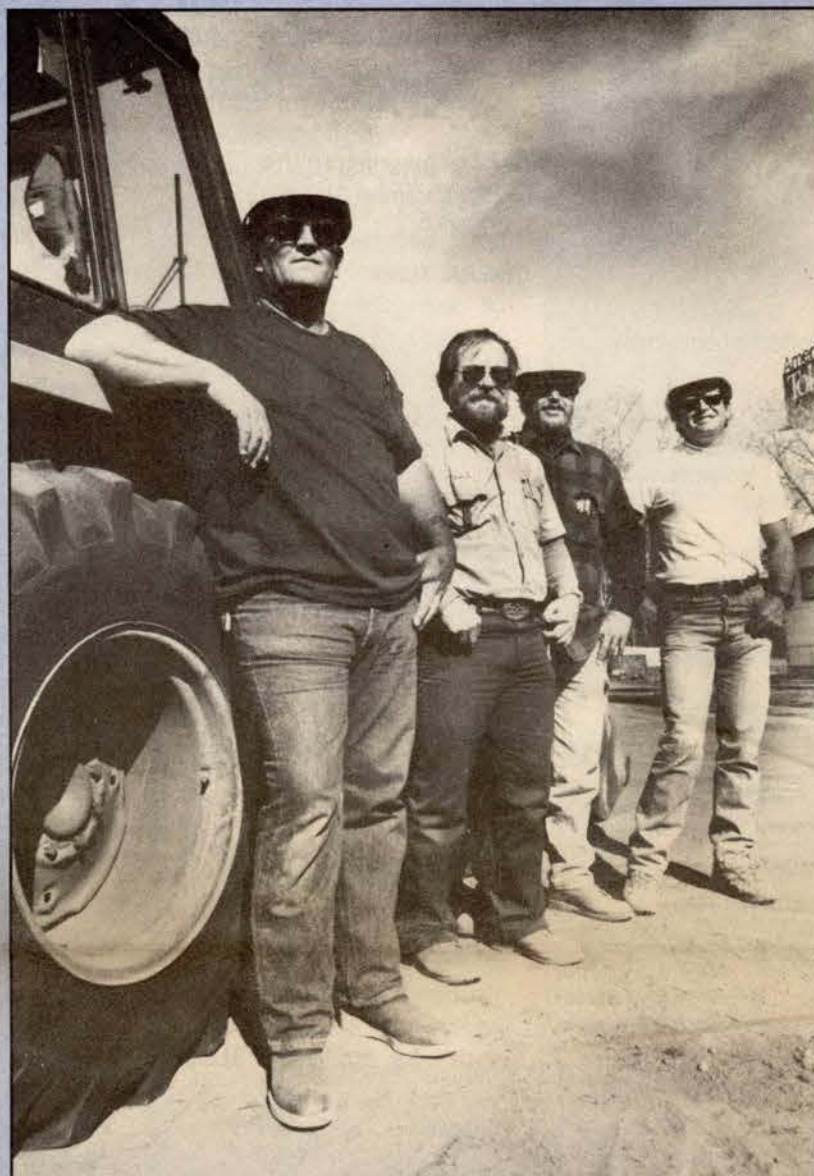
## Installing gas service in Reno, Nevada



Foreman Dave Barker and Equipment Operator Walt Brown



Dave Barker, foreman (left), and Michael Desmond, fitter.



From left: Michael Desmond, fitter; Paul Lommori, water serviceman, Dave Barker, foreman; and Walt Brown, equipment operator.



**UNION ASSISTS UNITED WAY AT SIERRA PACIFIC**  
Local 1245 member Richard LeVee (third from left) displays an appreciation award for outstanding union participation in the United Way drive at Sierra Pacific Power Co. The union recognition award was presented to LeVee during the United Way Victory Event held at John Ascuaga's Nugget last December. Also pictured are, from left, Curt Risley, campaign co-chairman, William Keepers, Sierra Pacific president, and Steve Blume, campaign chairman.



# **“One Union on the System”**

## **The people who organized PG&E**

**O**n June 14, 1939, the National Labor Relations Board ordered the Pacific Gas & Electric Co. to stop interfering with its employees' efforts to organize a union.

Ten days later PG&E announced it would not comply. This private utility, responding to a lawful order by a federal agency, in effect told the US government to shove it.

That confrontation 52 years ago said a lot about the company's attitude toward its workers. PG&E had been lord and master over its workforce since the beginning of the century. It clearly had no intention of giving up any of its authority to some upstart federal agency.

But history was catching up with PG&E. For decades its employees had endured low pay, few benefits, dangerous working conditions, and the arbitrary exercise of authority. Workers had no say because they had no voice. In short, they had no union.

On this 50th anniversary of the founding of Local 1245, the Utility Reporter pays tribute to a small group of PG&E employees who braved the odds and stood up to one of the world's largest corporations. Through their courage, self-sacrifice and perseverance, they took a weak and divided labor movement at PG&E and transformed it into “one union on the system.”

This is their story.

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**Special 50th Anniversary Section**  
**Pages A - X**

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# 1. Divide and conquer

Story by Eric Wolfe

**W**orkers were organizing on Pacific Gas and Electric Co. from the day the company came into existence.

In fact, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers had already organized seven separate locals on California Gas and Electric when that company merged with San Francisco Gas and Electric to form PG&E in 1905. It was an era when almost anything seemed possible for San Francisco's workers and their unions.

In 1901, San Francisco voters elected Eugene Schmitz of the Union Labor Party as mayor, primarily because Schmitz promised to halt the use of police to break strikes. Another Union Labor Party candidate became mayor in 1909: P. H. McCarthy, president of the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council.

But these impressive victories at the ballot box did

not insure justice for working people in turn-of-the-century San Francisco. In 1907, Patrick Calhoun, head of United Railroads, imported strikebreakers and armed them with pistols to break a strike by the Street Carmen's Union. That conflict resulted in the deaths of at least 25 people and another 2000 injured.

Business escalated its attack on organized labor in the second decade of the century when the Chamber of Commerce (with PG&E as one of its principal members) launched an open shop drive. The IBEW was a chief victim of this anti-labor campaign. The IBEW had become seriously divided in 1908 when a group of members seceded and formed a separate union. In 1910 the Reid faction, operating as the Pacific District Council, renewed the union contract with PG&E. It included wage increases, a closed shop and an expense allowance for keep of a horse and wagon.

In 1912, the merger of numerous unions, including the Reid faction of the IBEW, produced the Light and Power Council of California. But by this time PG&E was more interested in the open shop drive than in renewing union contracts. On May 7, 1913, the Reid faction struck PG&E. The International office of the IBEW sided with the other IBEW faction, known as the McNulty faction.

The strike was less than three weeks old when the McNulty faction and PG&E signed an agreement that contained less favorable terms than the previous contract. The new contract also specifically barred the hiring of members of the Reid faction.

However, the Reid faction continued its strike, drawing support from a number of local labor councils, members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and a militant union organizer named Tom Mooney who had also assisted the street carmen's strike. But the American Federation of La-

## Solidarity Forever

(Tune: John Brown's Body)

When the Union's inspiration through the workers' blood shall run,  
There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun.  
Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one?  
But the Union makes us strong.

*Solidarity forever!  
Solidarity forever!  
Solidarity forever!  
For the Union makes us strong.*

Is there aught we hold in common with the greedy parasite  
Who would lash us into serfdom and would crush us with his might?  
Is there anything left to us but to organize and fight?  
For the Union makes us strong. (chorus)

It is we who plowed the prairies; built the cities where they trade;  
Dug the mines and built the workshops; endless miles of railroads laid.  
Now we stand outcast and starving, 'midst the wonders we have made;  
But the Union makes us strong. (chorus)

All the world that's owned by idle drones is ours and ours alone.  
We have laid the wide foundations; built it skyward stone by stone.  
It is ours, not to slave in, but to master and to own,  
While the Union makes us strong. (chorus)

They have taken untold millions that they never toiled to earn,  
But without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn.  
We can break their haughty power; gain our freedom when we learn  
That the Union makes us strong. (chorus)

In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold;  
Greater than the might of armies, magnified a thousand-fold.  
We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old.  
For the Union makes us strong. (chorus)

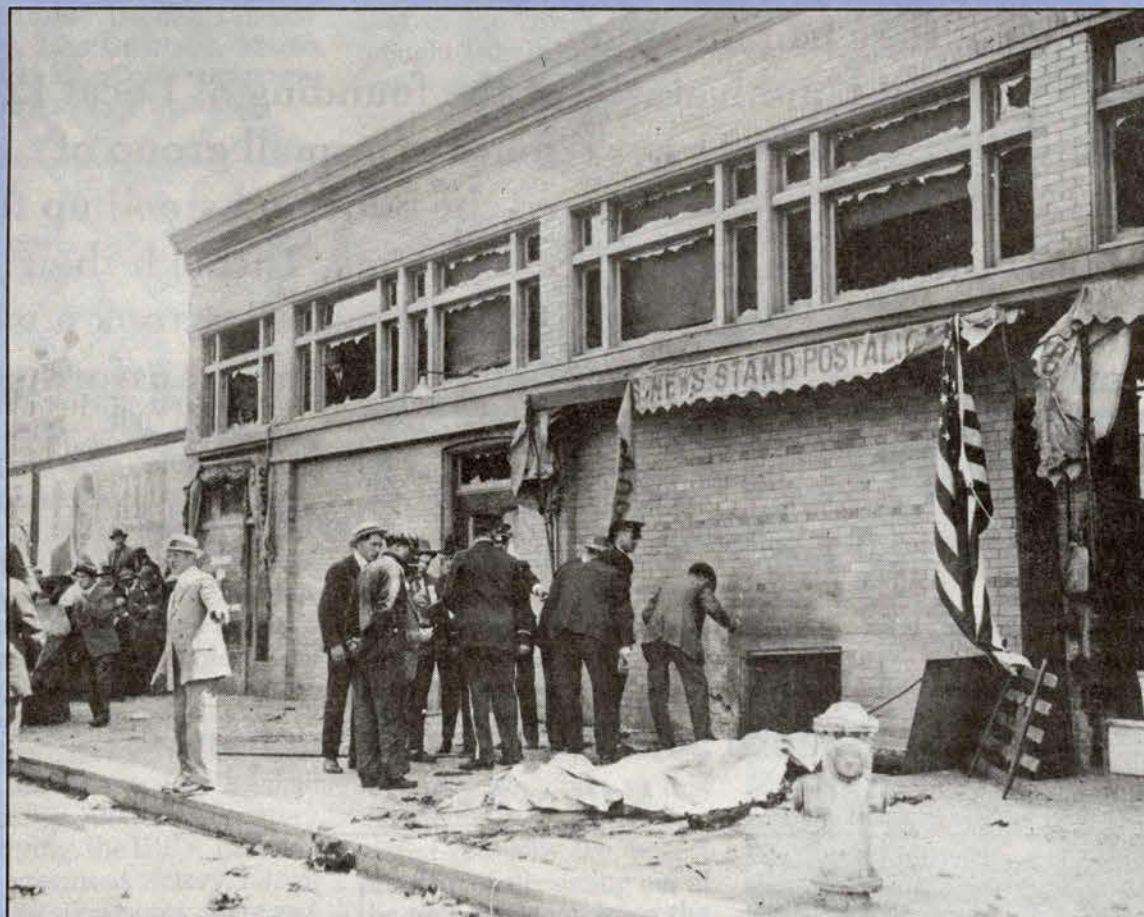
By Ralph Chaplin  
From the IWW's "Songs of the Workers", 9th edition, 1916

## Order based on Brothers' 'broad beams'

The General Order dealing with minimum clearance between the center of an electric utility pole and the wires was established because of the "broad beams" of two IBEW linemen.

Upon measuring them across the widest portions of their anatomies, it was discovered that 36 inches was the minimum size hole through which old "Bottle Bottom" O'Keefe could climb.

Accordingly, 18 inches from the center of the pole, either way, was and still is the closest that the first pin may be located.



(Photo: courtesy of the Bancroft Library)

As a contingent of marchers passed by PG&E headquarters on Market Street, during the 1916 Preparedness Day Parade, a bomb exploded nearby, killing 10 people. Perjured testimony was used to convict union activists Tom Mooney and Warren Billings of murder, despite the fact that photographic evidence positively placed them far from the scene of the crime at the time of the bombing.



bor convention in November of 1913 failed to support the Reid faction's strike and on January 14, 1914, the strike collapsed.

Already PG&E was becoming well-practiced in the art of divide and conquer.

The start of World War I in Europe in 1914 had serious consequences for the US labor movement. America's workers in the beginning generally opposed the war, viewing it as a capitalist war over markets in which innocent workers on both sides were the victims. Business leaders, however, tended to favor US intervention and in 1916 they sponsored numerous "Preparedness Day" parades around the country.

In San Francisco, the Preparedness Day Parade was organized by Thornwell Mulally, former counsel for the United Railroads and the man who had helped put down the 1907 street carmen strike. Business leaders hoped to whip up pro-war sentiment and use it to bolster their open shop ambitions.

#### Bomb explosion

Workers, not surprisingly, stayed away from the San Francisco Preparedness Day Parade, held on July 22, 1916. As a contingent of marchers passed by PG&E headquarters on Market Street, a bomb exploded nearby, killing 10 people. Perjured testimony was used to convict union activists Tom Mooney and Warren Billings of murder, despite the fact that photographic evidence positively placed them far from the scene of the crime at the time of the bombing. To this day some unionists believe that PG&E itself was probably behind the bombing, while others believe that anarchists were more likely responsible.

Whoever was responsible, Tom Mooney, the union organizer who had assisted PG&E strikers, and Warren Billings were the ones unjustly railroaded to prison.

The year after World War I, 1919, brought with it an explosion of labor activism. American workers staged 3,630 strikes involving more than 4 million workers. Industry and government reacted swiftly and violently to

this unprecedented series of labor uprisings. Industrial leaders organized the "American Plan", an effort to identify the open shop with Americanism while identifying unions with the recent Bolshevik revolution in Russia. The Industrial Association of San Francisco, which led the open shop drive on the Pacific Coast, had a secret agreement that required employers to cease doing business with any businessmen who signed union agree-

ments.

The US government jumped feet first into the anti-labor crusade. It had already wiped out the leadership structure of the IWW in massive raids conducted in September of 1917. In 1919, US Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer organized a "General Intelligence Division" and put a young FBI agent named J. Edgar Hoover in charge.

On January 2, 1920, Hoover launched massive

raids on labor and political groups across the nation. Over 10,000 people were arrested, mailing lists were seized, membership records destroyed. A significant part of the labor movement, which had shown so much vitality in the wake of World War I, was destroyed virtually overnight. The part that survived was subjected to relentless corporate harassment under the so-called American Plan.

PG&E in 1921 seized this opportunity to cancel its

agreement with the IBEW. For the next 12 years, unionism made no headway on the property, a fact that was reflected in the living standards of workers. In the middle of the "roaring 20's", when American business elites were making millions, much of it in wasteful speculation, wages for linemen at PG&E were frozen in 1927 at \$170 per month.

And they stayed at that level for several years.

See NEXT PAGE



(Photo: courtesy of the Bancroft Library)

#### MOONEY AND BILLINGS

At the time of the Preparedness Day Parade bombing, Tom Mooney and Warren Billings were viewing the parade from atop a Market Street building. A series of photographs, including this one, show Mooney and Billings watching the parade. A clock across the street (middle of photograph, circled in white) proved they were at this location immediately prior to, at the time of, and after the bombing. However, the photographs were not permitted to be entered as evidence in their trial and both men were convicted—based on perjured testimony.



## 2. One Big Union: the Industrial Workers of the World

**E**ven with their leadership structure smashed by government raids, the Industrial Workers of the World (known as "Wobblies") continued to press for industrial unionism under the banner of "One Big Union of All the Workers." One Wobbly stronghold was the lumber industry of the Pacific Northwest. In 1931 the IWW picked up a new recruit—a lad from Modesto, California named L. L. "Mitch" Mitchell:

"I was only about fifteen years old at the time. I went to work in the woods up above Fresno at Shaver Lake, Sugar Pine Lumber Company, and that's where I got indoctrinated into the union. They had the IWW there. That's where I really learned what union power was. This old guy I used to work with—he was funny—he would say, 'You know, Mitch, there's no way in the world that those bosses are going to hear you with that mill running. We've got to shut it down.' And that was what they'd do. If that didn't work, then they'd burn it down."

"The IWW wouldn't have a contract; that meant you were bound to something. So they wouldn't sign a contract. Their way of getting things was job action. You asked for something. If you

didn't get it, you quit work. It was just that simple. When they got enough of what they wanted, they'd go back to work again. It happened almost daily. If the grub was no good, you don't work the next day. If the beds are no good, you don't work the next day. You know, just until they get new beds."

### A real fraternity

"Their own strength was the thing," Mitchell continues. "You can one guy, the whole job walked off. They were united. And of course you've got to remember that loggers may log in Washington, they may log here, they may log in Canada. They were a real fraternity. They knew each other and they all had names like 'Three-fingered Jack' and 'Broken-toed John'. There was a camaraderie that you don't have now."

The IWW believed that since workers were the ones who produced the nation's wealth, they ought to be the ones to run the show. Unlike the American Federation of Labor, which believed that union membership should be restricted to skilled craftsmen, the Wobblies sought to organize all workers—skilled and unskilled alike.

The IWW was launched in 1905 by some of the nation's most famous labor activists: Mary "Mother"

Jones, Eugene Debs, William "Big Bill" Haywood, and Lucy Parsons, widow of one of the Haymarket martyrs. But much of the working class wasn't yet ready for the IWW message of radical industrial democracy. That, coupled with the violent crackdown by federal agents, state militia and company goon squads, doomed the Wobbly dream of "One Big Union" of all the workers.

As a result, unions during the 1920s continued to be organized largely along craft lines, while workers in the industrial sector were left to fend for themselves. But even as the Wobblies disappeared from the national scene in the 1930s, their message of industrial unionism took on fresh appeal to American workers as the nation sank deep into the Great Depression.



Ralph Henderson, a long-time Local 1245 member, stands on a steel beam above Boulder Dam (now Hoover Dam), probably some time in the 1930s. Henderson worked at Grand Coulee and Bonneville before entering military service in 1942. Before returning to the US he built telephone lines through Burma to China. After the war he worked at Shasta Dam Power Plant until he retired in 1968. (Photo: courtesy of Mary B. Henderson)

## 3. The New Deal and the CIO

**I**n 1933, the Utility Gas & Electric Employees, an independent union, began organizing on PG&E property. It was the same year that Franklin D. Roosevelt took office as president, promising Americans a "New Deal." And a new deal was certainly

needed. Four years of economic depression following the 1929 stock market crash left America's working class in a wretched state. Unemployment in the first few months of the crash increased almost ten-fold, from 492,000 to over 4.5 million in March of 1930. By March of 1933, unemployment had reached 15 million, approximately *one-third* of the workforce.

The National Industrial Recovery Act, passed shortly after Roosevelt took office in 1933, was a beacon in the darkness for the nation's dispirited working class. Section 7a of the NIRA provided, for the first time, a legal basis for union organizing. However, the craft-oriented American Federation of Labor continued to resist calls that it begin organizing workers on an industrial basis.

Nonetheless, local unions of industrial workers in 1933 began to spring up seemingly out of nowhere. Among them: the Utility Gas & Electric

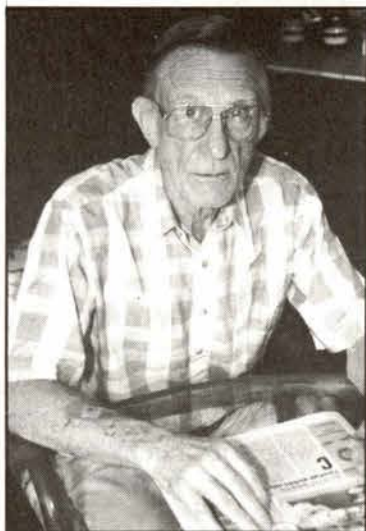
Employees at PG&E, the first union activity on PG&E property since 1921.

Anger over the catastrophic depression—and hope that workers themselves could do something about it—proved to be a combustible mix. Labor activity escalated in 1934. Massive strikes hit Toledo, Ohio, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. A Longshoremen's strike in San Francisco during the spring turned into a General Strike in July after two workers were killed by police in a day of fierce rioting remembered still as Bloody Thursday.

In 1935, Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act (the "Wagner Act"), which provided for union representation elections and created the National Labor Relations Board to administer labor laws. But still the AFL offered no plan for organizing industrial workers.

Finally, in late 1935, industrial labor agitation found

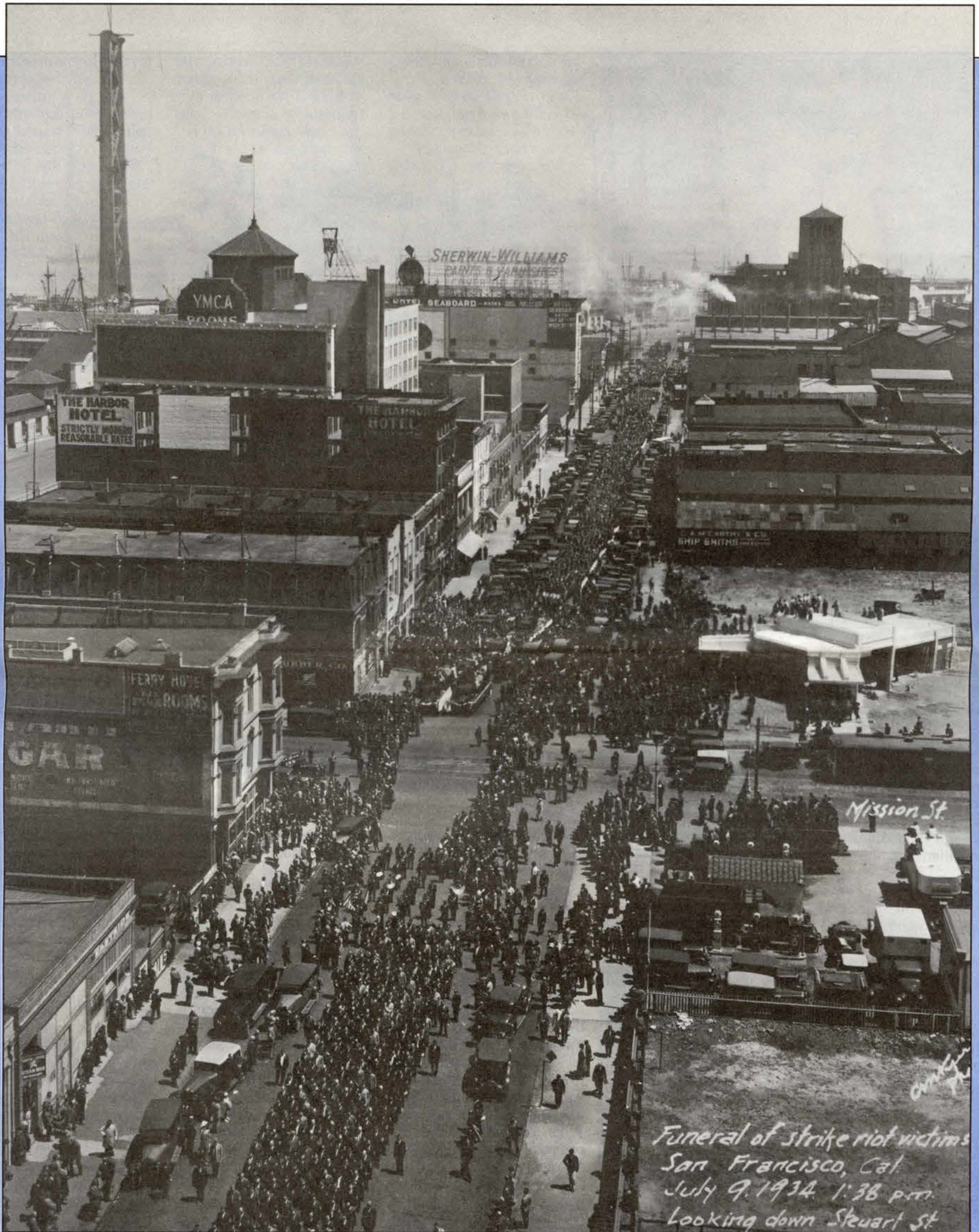
See PAGE F



"This old guy I used to work with would say, 'You know, Mitch, there's no way in the world that those bosses are going to hear you with that mill running. We've got to shut it down.' And that was what they'd do. If that didn't work, then they'd burn it down."

L. L. Mitchell





(Photo: courtesy of the Bancroft Library)

#### FUNERAL PROCESSION

A Longshoreman's strike in San Francisco in 1934 turned into a General Strike in July after two workers were killed by police in a day of fierce battles between scabs, unionists and police. Remembered still as "Bloody Thursday", the riot inspired a massive funeral procession for the two fallen workers down Market Street (above). Note in background a pillar of the Bay Bridge, then under construction.





#### READY FOR WORK

PG&E line crew ready for work in Modesto, California, before PG&E sold out to Modesto Irrigation District. Crew members are: Bruce Hoque, Norbert Scharanbeck, L. L. Mitchell, Harcourt "Haircut" Smith, Bob Turk, Ed Elhardt and George Rawls. (Photo: Local 1245 archives)

#### From PAGE D

a national leader when John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers called together like-minded labor leaders to form the Congress of Industrial Organizations. By the end of 1936, the CIO was pitted against the citadel of corporate capitalism, General Motors. Thousands of Michigan autoworkers staged sitdown strikes for union recognition. Lewis played a pivotal role in bringing General Motors to the bargaining table in February 1937. Less than a month later, another corporate giant, US Steel, came to the table to sign a contract with the CIO's Steel Workers Organizing Committee. These well-publicized victories fired the imagination of

America's working class, prompting a wave of sitdown strikes.

It was in this highly-charged atmosphere that the Utility Gas & Electric Employees union at PG&E proceeded to affiliate with the United Electrical and Radio Workers (UE)—a militant national industrial union—and petitioned the National Labor Relations Board in April for a union representation election on the PG&E system. Assigned to assist their effort was the West Coast representative for the CIO: Harry Bridges, leader of the 1934 Longshoremen strike. For many PG&E workers it must have seemed that a union—at long last—was at hand.

## 4. The UE election of 1937

**W**hen Mitch Mitchell left the woods in 1935 to go to work for PG&E, he brought with him a lesson he learned from the IWW: unity was strength. To succeed, workers had to stick together.

But Mitchell did not share the Wobblies' scorn for contracts. He believed some sort of structure was necessary to build stable labor relations with employers and produce long-term gains for workers. When the UE launched its organizing drive in 1937, Mitchell chose to back the IBEW, which at that time was still primarily an old-style craft union. Mitchell would later make his peace with CIO activists in the utility industry, but the UE organizers in 1937 were too militant for his tastes:

"I think that was one of

the reasons I was AFL; I'd seen too much of that militancy in the old Wobbly organization. [Militancy] was a good thing, but there was just no rationalizing anything. You just walked off the job and you got what you wanted: no compromise, no negotiations, no nothing. It was either black or white. I felt in order for stability to occur you had to have some kind of an agreement, a contract..."

The IBEW briefly joined the 1937 union election campaign on the PG&E system, but dropped out before the vote. However, another union entered the contest in May of 1937 and won a place on the ballot: the California Gas and Electric Employees. It didn't take real unionists long to figure out that the CG&EE was nothing but a front for PG&E, a company-sponsored union. By promoting the CG&EE, PG&E hoped

to divert support away from legitimate unions.

PG&E's action coincided with a nationwide counter-offensive by corporate America against the rising tide of industrial unionism. The CIO's initial victories in the auto and steel industries had been due in part to the political influence of CIO President John L. Lewis. Both Gov. Frank Murphy of Michigan and President Roosevelt were indebted to Lewis for past political support, debts that Lewis called in during the auto strike. In Pennsylvania, the center of steel organizing, Lewis had a well-situated ally: the lieutenant governor was also the secretary-treasurer of Lewis's union, the UMW!

By the late spring of 1937, however, the CIO found itself losing its second campaign in the steel industry—the so-called "Little Steel"

**Coming soon in the Utility Reporter...**

**Historical retrospectives on the Sacramento Municipal Utility District and Sierra Pacific Power Co.**



strike against the smaller steel companies. By the end of 1937 the nation was suffering another economic downturn, unemployment soared once again, and the CIO lost momentum across the nation.

The UE finally got its system-wide election in December of that year, but the historical moment had already passed. The fledgling union was no match for PG&E's organizational clout. The company made clear to its employees that they were expected to vote for the CG&EE, the company union. Mitchell, who was on vacation at the time of the election, remembers being instructed by PG&E to come back and vote for the CG&EE. Faced with such blatant corporate subversion of the election process, the UE drive went down to defeat.

Shortly after the results were in, the UE filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board, charging PG&E with illegally promoting a company union.

Two months after the election, on February 16, 1938, the NLRB refused to certify CG&EE. On August 12, the NLRB issued a complaint against PG&E, charging the company with promoting a company union. It was a serious charge. The National Labor Relations Act, after all, was passed in 1935 for the purpose of giving employees the right to democratically choose a bargaining representative. For the company to interfere in that process by promoting a phony union secretly controlled by the company would be to make a mockery of the most important labor law ever passed in the United States.

The following year, 1939, was a turning point in the long struggle to organize PG&E. Tom Mooney—the man who had assisted IBEW members during the 1913 strike at PG&E and who was framed by open shop forces for the 1916 Preparedness Day Parade bombing—was granted a full pardon by the governor of California after spending 23 years in prison. Gaining freedom for Mooney had been a cause for two decades among trade unionists around the world, including the UE organizers at PG&E. His vindication closed an important chapter in the history of labor organizing at PG&E. At the same time, the National Labor Relations Board was opening a new one.

On June 14, 1939, acting on its earlier finding that PG&E was promoting a company union, the NLRB ordered PG&E to cease and desist discouraging unionism and to post notices announcing it was doing so.

It was the beginning of the end of the open shop at PG&E. But PG&E clearly was not yet ready to wake up and smell the coffee. Instead, the company preferred to sleepwalk into the next decade, clinging to the phony patriotism of the open shop and scorning the National Labor Relations Act.

PG&E's belligerent attitude was best revealed in a statement made by its vice president and general manager, P. M. Downing. After waiting the full 10 days allowed for a response to the NLRB order, Downing replied as follows: "We advise you that the Company does not intend to post any notices of cease and desist, pursuant to your order."

Downing's defiant words made a lasting impression on the trade unionists struggling to organize PG&E. He became the embodiment of PG&E's open contempt for the workers and for the law. Mitch Mitchell remembers Downing this way:

"He was really anti-union. He said as long as he was head of PG&E there would never be a union on the property. And there never was. He finally croaked. He kept his word."



"My feelings always were in favor of the union because I'm a very honest person and when I could see the dishonesty in a lot of things that went on around me I knew something had to be done. Supervisors would do things that weren't right. People were passed over as far as promotions were concerned."

*Ray Michael*

## 5. Contra Costa connection: a new generation of activists

It took the US federal court two years to rule on the NLRB's "cease and desist" order to PG&E. During those two years, as the nation slowly began to pull itself out of the Great Depression and war clouds again gathered over Europe, PG&E moved to keep up with the area's demand for power. Among its new projects were the River Plants in Contra Costa County in the East Bay.

One of the workers who responded to PG&E's recruitment drive was Ray Michael, who had been attending Cal-Poly. With some previous experience as an electrician's helper, Michael thought PG&E might be the place for him:

"They brought a carload of us up to be interviewed at Station A in San Francisco, the steam generating department. My first job was in the boiler gang. I worked in that boiler gang for maybe a month, and then they put me on a four-to-twelve shift as a janitor. I came pretty close to quitting right then because they had a lot of spittoons around that I had to clean. This was new to me."

But Michael stuck it out, soon becoming a helper at four dollars a day. During the summer, Michael was one of several employees transferred to Station C in Oakland to be trained as operators. In the fall, the company sent Michael to the River Plants then under construction at Avon, Martinez and Oleum.

"I came up to Avon about September of 1940, before the plant was in operation. They were just in the process of starting up some of the pumps to test them, starting to what they call "boil out" a boiler to get it ready for operation. There was quite a group of us up there at that time that were learning the plant. We would go around and learn what the equipment was, how it operated, and what its purpose was."

At Station A in San Francisco, "union" was considered a nasty word, according to Michael, something a person didn't dare say out loud. PG&E, after all, had decisively beaten the UE's union drive only three years earlier and was still riding high on its anti-union horse.

But remnants of the UE lingered on the property. In early 1938, some UE supporters at PG&E aligned themselves with the newly-created Utility Workers Organizing Committee (UWOC), which was established nationally by the CIO on February 1, 1938. "Utility News", the UE newsletter during the 1937 election drive, simply added "UWOC" to the publication's banner after the election and continued publishing in 1938 as the UWOC newsletter.

The UWOC failed, however, to establish itself as a bargaining representative on any PG&E properties during the remainder of the 1930s, let alone negotiate any contracts for

*See NEXT PAGE*

SPEED TOM MOONEY'S  
CASE TO THE  
U. S. SUPREME COURT

**HEAR  
ELMER BENSON**

GOVERNOR  
of MINNESOTA

Nationally Famous Champion  
of Civil Rights.

**Sheriff Dan Murphy  
Jack Shelley  
Harry Bridges  
George F. Irvine  
Rev. Ben Wilson**

**SUNDAY**  
2:00 P. M.

**December 5**

**S. F. Civic Auditorium**

**PROTEST**

CALIFORNIA'S CONTINUED  
INJUSTICE TO MOONEY  
AND BILLINGS

—AUSPICES—  
S. F. Bay Area A. F. of L. Com.  
for Freedom of Mooney and  
Billings, and Railroad Em-  
ployes Committee For the Re-  
lease of Thomas J. Mooney.

This notice, published in the UE newsletter just prior to the 1937 election, shows that PG&E employees had not forgotten Tom Mooney, unjustly imprisoned since 1916.



**As the Great Depression dragged on and a second world war approached, worker discontent smouldered at PG&E. All that was needed was a spark to start the fire and individuals who would--in the old Wobbly phrase--"fan the flames of discontent."**

#### From PAGE 6

PG&E workers.

But by 1940, as Michael was beginning work at the Avon plant, the idea of union was beginning to pick up momentum once again. As Michael remembers it:

"My feelings always were in favor of the union because I'm a very honest person and when I could see the dishonesty in a lot of things that went on around me I knew something had to be done. Supervisors would do things that weren't right. People were passed over as far as promotions were concerned."

Another of the new recruits for the Avon plant brought power plant experience with him. Don Hardie had worked as a power plant operator for seven years in Trona, California for American Potash & Chemical Co. when PG&E hired him on at what is now called the Potrero Plant in San Francisco. Like Michael, Hardie was soon transferred to Avon. PG&E probably viewed Hardie's previous experience as a power plant operator as an asset. But Hardie brought another kind of experience that the company wasn't likely to appreciate quite as much: he was a union man.

A native of Edinburgh, Scotland, Hardie learned unionism from his father, a woodcarver and stone cutter engaged in reconstruction work in Scotland. After coming to the United States, Hardie's father joined the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) while working in Hollywood. Hardie joined the Operating Engineers and became active in trying to organize the plant in Trona where he worked.

PG&E had let a fox into its henhouse at Avon. And Hardie wasn't the only one.

On February 11, 1941, two months after Hardie came to work for the company, a 30-year-old radio operator stepped off a steam schooner and into a job at PG&E. Tom Riley, an Oakland native who had been at sea for over 10 years, was ready to plant his feet on the ground:

"I went to sea as a radio operator. An individual named Mervin Rathbone, who also was a radio operator, started a little monthly letter and I signed up to join him on it. This was in 1931. It eventually became the American Radio Telegraphers Association.

"I got off a steam schooner on February 11, 1941, and went to work for Pacific Gas and Electric Company down at Station C at the foot of Jefferson Street in Oakland. I was a laborer at four dollars and forty cents a day. The progression at that time was laborer, oiler, fireman, pumpman, control operator, and watch engineer. About three weeks later they shipped me up to Avon. They called me in and told me they'd give me an oiler's job. Percentage-wise that was the biggest raise I ever got--from laborer to oiler. I went from \$4.40 to \$5.08 a day."

**"I got off a steam schooner on February 11, 1941, and went to work for Pacific Gas and Electric Company down at Station C at the foot of Jefferson Street in Oakland. I was a laborer at four dollars and forty cents a day. About three weeks later they shipped me up to Avon."**

*Tom Riley*

Like Hardie, Riley's background made him receptive to the union message. Like many other employees, Riley believed workers could do something about unfair treatment. The anti-union heyday of the 1920s and 1930s was over. The labor movement had made enormous strides in industrial organizing: workers could no longer be counted on to simply do as they were told and take whatever pay they were offered. Despite frequent setbacks, many workers now believed they had a fundamental right to organize to protect their interests on the job. Some even believed that unions could remake the world, change it into a place where individual workers were treated with respect, where democracy would reign in the workplace as well as in the political sphere.

#### Akin to treason

To PG&E, of course, such thinking was akin to treason. In its arrogance, PG&E continued to threaten union-minded workers and thumbed its nose at the NLRB's order to cease and desist promoting company unionism. The company's attitude angered many of its workers. But wanting a union, believing in a union, even speaking out for a union, was not the same thing as having one. The IBEW, at the dawn of the 1940s, had only a handful of members scattered among seven different locals in the PG&E system. The UWOC had yet to materialize as a real force on the property.

Still, as the Great Depression dragged on and a second world war approached,

worker discontent smouldered at PG&E. All that was needed was a spark to start the fire and individuals who would--in the old Wobbly phrase--"fan the flames of discontent."

On March 25, 1941, the US Ninth District Circuit Court of Appeals provided the spark when it upheld the NLRB order that PG&E must cease and desist promoting company unionism. Mindful that PG&E had scorned the NLRB order during the two years since it was issued in 1939, the Court stated in its decision:

"In the future the Company must live under an injunction and must be tried not by the NLRB but by this court, for violating the injunc-

tion, and that it is restrained from committing any acts whether like or unlike the acts referred to in the record."

The spark had been struck. The following month, two events separated by only a day signaled the beginning of the fire.

On April 17, the CIO chartered Local 169 of the Utility Workers Organizing Committee to organize PG&E workers in Contra Costa County, site of PG&E's new River Plants. On April 18, the IBEW brought several locals together to form one new union for the purpose of organizing system-wide on PG&E: Local 1245.

One of the charter members was Mitch Mitchell.

## 6. Steward in the sticks: organizing up north

**T**here was no such thing as an apprenticeship when Mitch Mitchell began work for PG&E as a grunt in Modesto, California in 1935. New workers, he says, started climbing almost from the beginning:

"I had done some climbing in the woods and so I had some experience. I didn't know anything about line work, but everybody on the crew climbed: the truck driver, the groundman, everybody climbed. It just depended on what was needed. For example, if we were doing

a line construction job, the grunt would always dig the hole, the lineman framed the poles, and so on, but once the poles were set and you were stringing wire, the grunts would climb and lay up wire. So they were the menial people. They did what anybody else didn't want to do. I went up for fifty cents an hour."

But his ability to climb wasn't what landed Mitchell a job at PG&E. It was his ability in handling the bat and ball. Mitchell's skills as an infielder were needed by the company baseball team.

In the early 1920s, when unionism was still a threat in the immediate post-war period, many companies organized "employee associations" to siphon energy away from legitimate unions. This anti-union strategy was at the heart of the open shop "American Plan". At PG&E, this phony union took the form of the Pacific Service Employees Association (PSEA).

Just as Pinkerton thugs provided the stick for anti-union employers to scare workers away from unionism, "employee associations" provided the carrot. Through these associations, which





were in fact organized and dominated by the company, workers could obtain a number of benefits, such as health and life insurance. Of course the company didn't pay any of the premiums; workers had to pay their own. But employee associations like PSEA sometimes made it possible for workers to obtain group rates.

The PSEA also sponsored sporting events, like baseball teams and bowling leagues, presumably in the hope that if a worker is having a good time bowling or playing baseball for the company team, he'll be too busy to think about a union. During the 1920s and early 1930s, this tactic enjoyed some success. But as time went on, many employees *were* thinking union. The only trouble was, not all workers were thinking about the same union.

#### Fistfights on the docks

As the 1940s approached, competition between IBEW and CIO unionists sometimes grew fierce. When Mitchell was transferred from Modesto to Stockton in the late 1930s, he discovered that the workforce was evenly split between the IBEW and the CIO:

"You'd have fistfights on the docks over it. In those days, if you were a CIO member you were [considered a] commie. It was just that simple. This would lead to all sorts of trouble on the docks. The crews in the morning would all come in and of course they all left from a single place. And in those days the crews were much larger than they are now. We had eight, 10, 12, 15 people on a crew, large crews. . . And you'd have one crew that would be solid CIO. One crew would be solid AFL. And in some cases you'd have a split crew, and that would really create problems. It was just not pleasant at all."

About the time that IBEW was chartering Local 1245 in 1941, Mitchell got an opportunity to become a lineman by transferring to Humboldt. The IBEW existed in Humboldt but it wasn't very strong. The UWOC was non-existent. The lack of a strong union presence in Humboldt made itself felt very quickly to

Mitchell when he arrived from Stockton. It became an opportunity for him to grow into his role as a union man:

"That was an isolated place when I moved up there. You could shoot a cannon down the street and never hit anybody. Grass growing, boardwalks, and the whole bit. There were very few linemen.

"In Stockton, we didn't work when it rained; we came in and played cards. When I went to Humboldt, hell, that was just another day. We went out and worked in the rain.

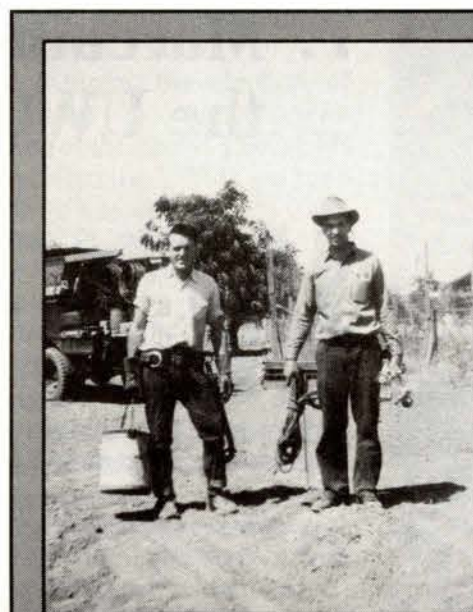
"The first time was when we were going out to what they called the 'high line.' It was the line between Eureka and Junction City, which is on the other side of the mountain, over by Redding. We were going out there and it started to rain. Everybody jumped out of the truck and started getting tools and stuff. You had to walk in there because that was across rough country. You couldn't get within a mile or so of the pole line, so you'd have to pack all your stuff in on your back and do your work. I just refused to get out from under the canvas. So the foreman told me if I didn't get out he was going to can me. 'Well, to can me you've got to take me back to the hall then.' So it just went from bad to worse and finally when they saw I could get away with it, it was just follow-the-leader.

"As punishment, they tried to force me to clean the toilets. I refused again. 'I'm not a janitor. I'm a lineman; I just don't do that. If you want that done you hire a janitor.'"

#### Mule trains

During the summers, line crews working on a high line used mule trains to pack in everything they needed, including equipment for raising poles. Out in the middle of nowhere, the crews worked seven days a week straight through the summer. No Saturdays or Sundays off. No holidays off. And no overtime pay, although they got compensatory time off once they got back to town.

Although they worked under a union contract, clearly it afforded the workers only limited protections. In fact, sometimes the best protection was simply to have a steward who wasn't afraid to



Bob Tracey, apprentice lineman, and Marvin Hassler, light crew foreman, in Sunnyvale, California. 1946. (Photo: courtesy R. F. Tracey)



From left: Marvin Hassler, "Queenie" Swinden, and Bob Tracey. San Jose, California. 1946. (Photo: courtesy R. F. Tracey)

speaking up for what he thought was right. Under such conditions the steward pretty much *was* the union. In Humboldt, Mitchell was that steward:

"When we were in town, they had this mule barn where they kept the mules. There was one fellow I remember in particular who had been working for a big lumber outfit. He came to work for PG&E, came into Eureka. Not having six months they could lay him off because he wasn't a permanent employee. He didn't get the benefit of the rainy-day clause. So when it rained [the foreman] would hide him out in the mule barn, make him stay out in the mule barn. That way he still got

paid.

"Well, it was colder than a welldigger's nose out there. I didn't know what was going on, but I discovered it one day. I told the foreman, 'Look, if the guy's going to get paid, bring him in here. What the hell difference does it make whether he's here or out in the barn? It's just insane to keep him out there in the cold.' We had a big round of that until finally they let him come in."

#### 'Savings clause'

Sometimes Mitchell was able to protect workers' interests by invoking the contract's "savings clause." Even if a specific condition-like

company-provided gloves—wasn't spelled out in the contract, if the company had traditionally provided the item then the company had to continue providing it. Sometimes Mitchell was able to get unfavorable decisions by the local boss overturned by appealing to the division manager, with whom he made it a point to become acquainted.

In this way, employing five parts tenacity and five parts common sense, men like Mitchell in the early 1940s established the union in rural areas of California—from Humboldt to Sacramento, from Drum to DeSabra, and in General Construction.

See NEXT PAGE



## Local 1245 founder profile: Ray Michael



**R**aised during the Great Depression amidst vast unemployment, Ray Michael wanted a job that could bring security for him and his family. He wanted a job that paid a decent wage and provided safe working conditions. Michael's own efforts in building the union at PG&E—he participated in negotiations and served on the grievance committee at various times—helped create those conditions. As he relates here, on one occasion as a shop steward he helped correct a safety hazard:

"We had problems at Avon and Martinez with a fuel that we used, called a sludge fuel, which was extremely acid. It would have to be heated, would give off these terrible acidic fumes.

"We finally managed to get covers put onto the tanks and vents put onto them, but it took a lot of needling to get it done. I almost got fired over it because I would call the state inspectors to come in. The state inspectors, of course, would call up the company and say they want to come in on a certain date at a certain time to check on something.

"Well, the company would have everything shut down and cool; there's no problem. Finally I got ahold of the inspector guy and said, 'Hey, you come in without notice and check on this.' Well, when he did, he could see what we were up against. And so he made them put these covers on the tanks and vent them."

## 7. Marching to a different drummer: the UWOC and mass organizing

**W**hile the IBEW was gathering strength in the countryside, PG&E workers in the Bay Area were marching to a different drummer.

In early 1941, a small group of men—probably fewer than a dozen—gathered in the Plaza Hotel at the corner of Salvio and Grant in Concord, California. It was hardly the setting for an historic event: a small bar in a two-story hotel described by one PG&E employee of that era as little more than a glorified rooming house. The Plaza Hotel has long since vanished from the city landscape, but the meeting in the bar that day turned out to be a landmark in local labor history.

The men in attendance were from PG&E's three River Plants at Martinez, Avon and Oleum. They included Bert Mudgett, Bill Tod and John Hanson, all watch engineers. They included Don Hardie and Ray Michael, and Jim Cuthill, a fireman at Martinez. Also present was 25-year-old Ron Weakley.

Like Hardie and Riley, Weakley brought a union background with him to PG&E. His stepfather was a committed union man, a

member of the IBEW since 1905. While Mitch Mitchell was in the north woods in the early 1930s learning unionism from the IWW, Weakley was dipped in the waters of labor activism during the 1934 Longshoremen strike in San Francisco. Only 19 years old at the time, Weakley pitched in and did what he could to aid the strikers. He was among the thousands of strikers and sympathizers who staged a dramatic silent march up Market Street to protest the killing of two union supporters on Bloody Thursday.

After spending four years in the Navy, Weakley worked briefly for the old Key system, now called AC Transit, and in 1940 hired on at PG&E for 50-cents an hour in the steam generation department in San Francisco. Like Hardie, Riley and Michael, Weakley was soon transferred to the River Plants in Contra Costa County where he became a watch engineer.

Those who attended the meeting at the Plaza Hotel credit Weakley with driving the group forward. Michael remembers Weakley this way:

"He acted like he had the experience and the background to know what to do and what to expect. And we

just followed."

And, indeed, there was little doubt in Weakley's mind where the group was headed: the industrial unionism of the CIO.

The IBEW at that time was still primarily a union of linemen. It had barely a toe-hold among linemen at PG&E and showed little interest in other classifications. Clearly the steam plant workers meeting at the Plaza Hotel had to look elsewhere for a union banner under which to rally. That banner was the Utility Workers Organizing Committee.

It was almost a laughable undertaking: fewer than a dozen people believing they could take on one of the largest corporations in America, a company that had spit in the eye of the National Labor Relations Board and ripped apart every organizing drive ever conducted on its property. If the company had shown any interest in addressing some of the workers' concerns, the union movement might never have left the starting gate. But workers saw little evidence that the company would ever change voluntarily: it just wasn't in the nature of the beast.

Ron Weakley remembers:

*See PAGE 0*



"PG&E didn't like ever losing anything. They had things like area differentials where they paid people less out in the boondocks. They had sex differentials. It was pretty Neanderthal. The CIO principles were equality for everybody. The basis of mass organization was that you shouldn't discriminate against anybody, for political beliefs, sex, race, or anything else."

*Ron Weakley*



# Fresno reception kicks off Local 1245's 50th Anniversary celebration

Photos on pages K - N

**O**ver 300 members, retired members and their families packed a large banquet hall at the Sheraton Smuggler Inn in Fresno, Ca., on Feb. 2 to kick off a year-long celebration of IBEW Local 1245's 50th Anniversary.

Participants enjoyed hot hors d'oeuvres, cold drinks and the company of old friends in an atmosphere rich with union memories. Displayed around the banquet hall was a PG&E contract from 80 years ago, the local's original charter and a narrative history of the local, illustrated with dozens of historical photos, many dating back to the 1940s.

Next stop for the traveling 50th Anniversary celebration: Reno, Nevada, on May 4. (Photos: Eric Wolfe)



The hall buzzed with good memories and just plain good fun.



Business Manager Jack McNally (left) receives a 40-year old Local 1245 shop steward newsletter (still in good shape!) from Jerry Vercoe, PG&E Communications, Fresno. Vercoe's wife, Betty, (right) is a former shop steward with CSEA (school employees).



Retired members Bob Brisendine, Louie Finks and Glenn Newton.

"The union did a lot of good for us," says Louie Finks, who began as a meter reader for PG&E in 1943. "When you were out there all by yourself you didn't get much. That's why we worked so hard for the union."



Sharing a good time at the 50th Anniversary reception are (from left) Dick Hornbeck, PG&E Davis Service Center; Elaine Hornbeck; Mary Neufeld; and Harry Neufeld, PG&E, Selma.

## Schedule of upcoming 50th Anniversary receptions

**Reno, Nevada: May 4, Holiday Inn**

**Stockton, California: (June -- to be announced)**

**Chico, California: Aug. 3, Holiday Inn**

**Concord, California: Nov. 2, Sheraton Inn**

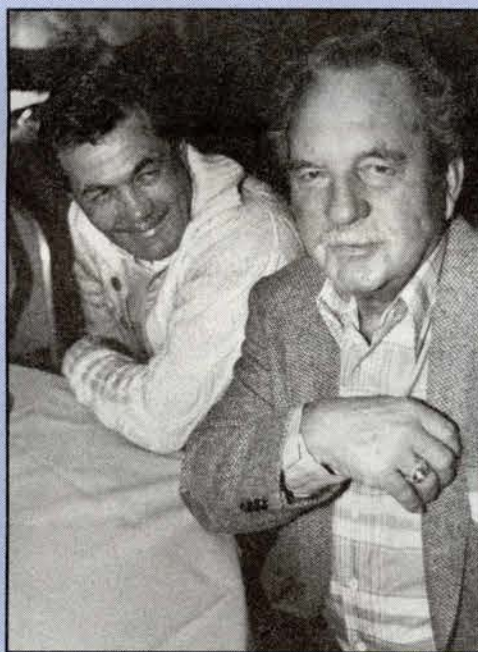




Local 1245 Recording Secretary Barbara Simons (left) joins Farras Richardson and Marlene Richardson in examining an 80-year-old PG&E contract, one of the first negotiated by the IBEW with PG&E.

Farras Richardson started work in Madera for PG&E in 1941, the year Local 1245 was chartered. He remembers his first union dues receipt: \$2.50/month. Richardson, who retired in 1972, thinks it was a good investment because of the wages and benefits that came from bargaining. "It's done good all the way around," Richardson says.

"If it wasn't for the union we wouldn't be doing near as well as we're doing today," says Jack Morrill. "A lot of people say the union doesn't do this and it doesn't do that, but we'd sure be in worse shape without it. Without the union who would you have to represent you?"

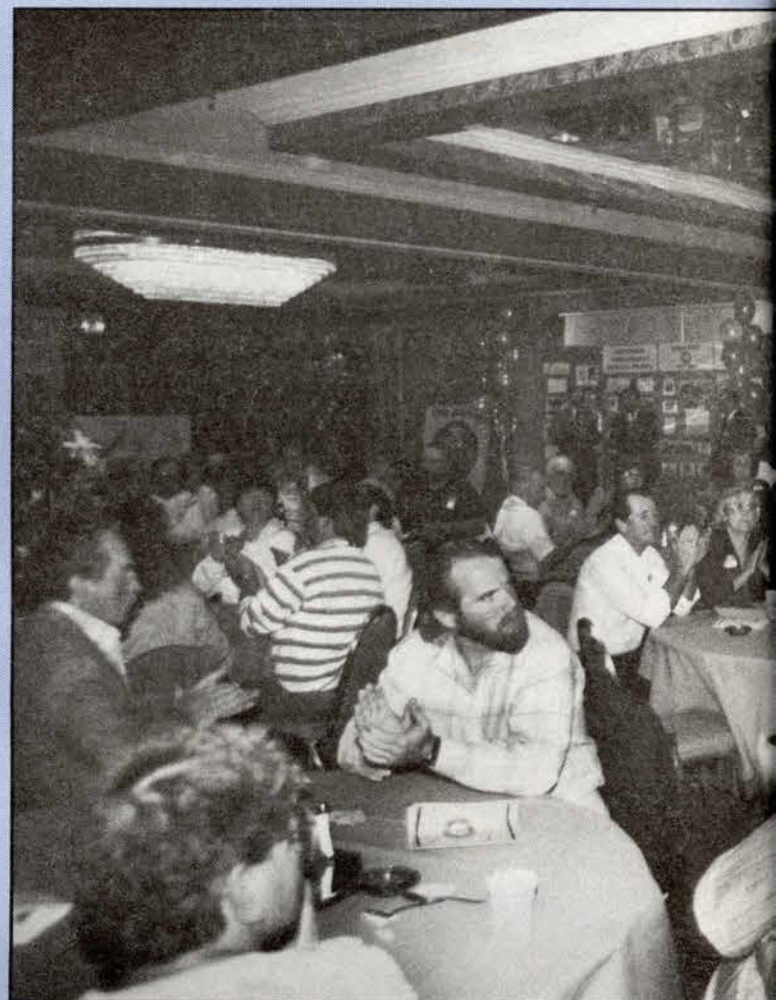


Jack Morrill, Fresno Line Department, a union member since 1947.

Larry O'Neil: "If they would've had a company union we'd be working for sub-standard wages and wouldn't have anywhere near the benefits we have today."



Larry O'Neil, PG&E lineman in Clovis, Ca., with wife Tammy.



Business Manager Jack McNally greets union members, retirees.



From left: Glen E. Hamilton, PLO, Kettleman; George H. Hancock, Overhead Line Construction; Betty Jones, Jack Jones, PG&E GC, began work.

In the early days, says George Hancock, "I went three days without any hot meals. Just out coffee and it was lukewarm." But now we have hot meals when we had it coming, overtime when we had it coming. What these are, these are the benefits. Today, everything's been so good for them."



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Business Manager Jack McNally greets union members, retirees and families at the 50th Anniversary Celebration in Fresno.



From left: Glen E. Hamilton, PLO, Kettleman Compressor Station, joined union in 1955; George H. Hancock, Overhead Line Construction, Madera, 1952; Liz Hancock, Dona Hamilton, Betty Jones, Jack Jones, PG&E GC, began work for PG&E and joined union in 1972.

In the early days, says George Hancock, "there were times we'd work three days without any hot meals. Just cold sandwiches. They'd bring out coffee and it was lukewarm." But with the union, "We got benefits: meals when we had it coming, overtime when we had it coming, callouts when we had it coming. What these young guys don't realize is the benefits. Today, everything's been so easy. Old timers got it set out for them."

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Veodis Stamps, business repres



Donna Yoakum and Johnny Big  
Clovis, Ca.





Walter Knight and families at the 50th Anniversary Celebration in Fresno.

On Walter Knight's first day at PG&E (Semi-Tropic) in 1928 he climbed on a truck with his "3-phase outfit"--a shovel, pick and a spoon--and figured he'd be digging holes for a power line. Knight recalls the moment: "George Osburn said: 'Hey you, get off the truck!' I said 'Me?' 'Yes, you!' That was the only time I ever got taken off a job before I started." Knight became a swamper (helper) on a Bull Dog Mac, hauling steel from Wasco to a tower site. Knight, who retired in 1971, says he believes that "the union got us better working conditions and better pay in the long run."



Walter Knight



Compressor Station, joined union in 1955; Madera, 1952; Liz Hancock, Dona Hamilton, joined union in 1972.

lock, "there were times we'd work with cold sandwiches. They'd bring with the union, "We got benefits: when we had it coming, callouts young guys don't realize is the easy. Old timers got it set out for



Veodis Stamps, Local 1245's first black business representative.

"The union provided a forum for the workers to determine working conditions, compensation, benefits--some voice in determining their destiny. You can sit and talk about it all night but that's basically what it did. If you're looking at security, a voice in what's going to happen to them: that's immeasurable."



Donna Yoakum and Johnny Bigham, PG&E lineman, Clovis, Ca.



Jerry Bayless and George Van Wyke.





Advisory Council member Duane Bartlow talks about the history of the Merced Irrigation District with Farras Richardson and Marlene Richardson.



Local 1245 Advisory Council members Russ Rylee (left) and Jim Travis.



Betty Vercoe, former member of CSEA (school employees) and wife of Local 1245 member Jerry Vercoe, says she "cut her eye teeth" on unionism.

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"Youngsters have to see that the only protection they have today is to stick together," says Betty Vercoe. "Don't you think management would take these benefits away from you if they could? We're going to lose those things if we don't fight for them."

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One reception, a thousand conversations.

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Joe Jura, a union member since 1941, worked in the Gas Department for PG&E in Fresno until he retired in 1973. For Jura, the union meant security: "After we got our union then we had seniority. They couldn't bump you."

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Business Representative Rich Dunkin visits with Joe Jura, a union member since 1941.



*From PAGE J*

"PG&E didn't like ever losing anything. They had things like area differentials where they paid people less out in the boondocks. They had sex differentials. It was pretty Neanderthal. We had to attack all these things. The CIO principles were equality for everybody. The basis of mass organization was that you shouldn't discriminate against anybody, for political beliefs, sex, race, or anything else."

Workers also had serious health and safety concerns, Weakley recalls:

"One of them was inclement weather, linemen working in the rain—which is very very dangerous. Dirty water is a conductor. Another was adequate retrieval of injured persons from the underground: caving in of ditches, no shoring. We lost people from that. Another problem was in steam plants: protection from steam burns. Protective things around ladders—they had these great big tall things you had to climb—that was one of them. And one of the problems for the clerical workers was their working spaces and conditions. They didn't have coffee breaks and things like that."

Throughout the Bay Area workers were frustrated with conditions at PG&E and looking for some way to organize. And the men meeting in the bar of the Plaza Hotel in Contra Costa County, though not the first to gain a UWOC charter, were among the first to take action. Chartered on

April 17, 1941, as UWOC Local 169, they began the job of dragging PG&E—kicking and screaming—into a union representation election.

#### Election petition

In April of 1942 the UWOC petitioned the NLRB to represent PG&E physical employees in the East Bay. PG&E, remembering its success against the UE in the system-wide election in 1937, wanted to repeat the system-wide format in order to overwhelm this small pack of East Bay trouble-makers. The NLRB, siding with the UWOC, approved an election limited to the East Bay. However, the NLRB noted that the entire PG&E system would be the "optimum unit" for a union, leaving the door open for the unionists to organize on a system-wide basis when they felt strong enough to do so.

By this time, of course, the IBEW had decided that it, too, would attempt to organize PG&E workers in all Divisions, including the Bay Area. The IBEW chartered Local 1245 in April of 1941 in large part to compete with the UWOC. Local 1245 held its first organizational meeting on May 10, 1941, in the Labor Temple in Sacramento. But, as the IBEW was soon to learn, the train had already left the station: the Bay Area was going with the CIO.

On June 2-4, 1942, PG&E physical employees in the East Bay voted. Fifty-four employees voted for "no union." The IBEW received 201 votes. The UWOC received 809

votes, an overwhelming majority.

Winning the election, of course, was only the beginning of the battle. The NLRB certified the UWOC on June 20. In keeping with its tradition, PG&E adamantly refused to bargain with the union.

But even if PG&E hadn't changed, something in the world had. America was now at war with Germany and Japan. And the federal government was concerned to make sure that labor unrest did not disrupt the war effort.

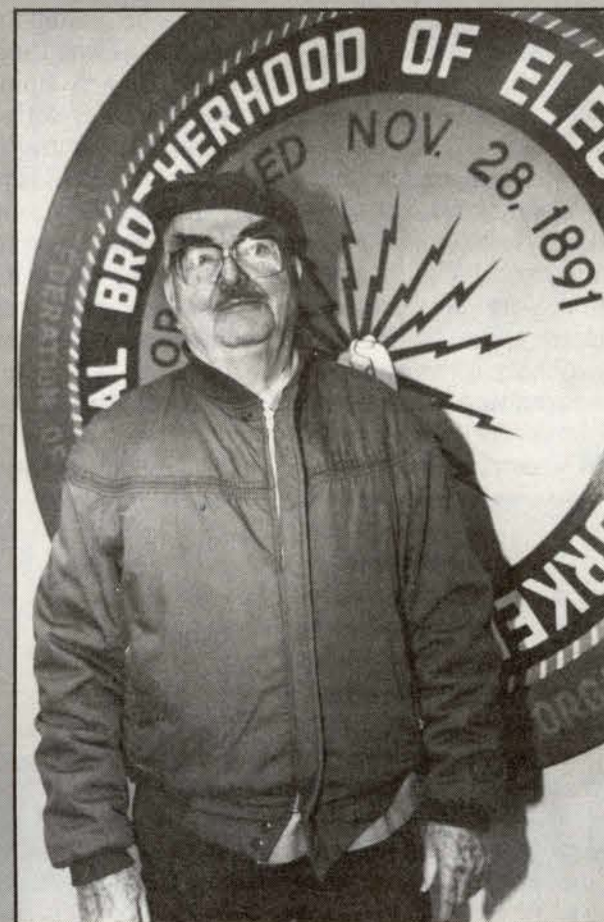
#### War Labor Board

After the war began, the National War Labor Board was empowered to mediate labor-management disputes and regulate employers' labor policies. On October 16, 1942, the National War Labor Board ordered PG&E to bargain, under the threat of imposing a mediation panel.

By Christmas, there was still no movement at the bargaining table and a mediation panel imposed a settlement. Two years after a handful of union-minded men met over drinks at the bar of the Plaza Hotel, the UWOC had its foot in the door of one of the leading utilities in the world.

During 1943 and 1944 virtually the entire PG&E system was organized by divisions, with various locals of the UWOC reigning in the Bay Area and IBEW Local 1245 winning in the outlying areas. Certifications were issued during those years at the following PG&E divisions:

### Local 1245 founder profile: Tom Riley



**T**om Riley learned unionism on the high seas in the 1930s when he joined the American Radio Telegraphers Association. In the 1940s he threw himself into the organizing campaign on PG&E, first as a member of UWOC Local 169, where he served briefly as treasurer, and then as a member of Local 1245, where he served for a time on the grievance committee. His commitment to the union hasn't diminished with retirement: he now serves as president of the Local 1245 Retirees Club.

"There are two things that I don't compromise on. One of them is intolerance and the other is injustice. They're concomitant; you can't have one without the other, but if you don't get rid of them, you're never going to have a decent society."

**East Bay**, 1557 employees, UWOC

**Shasta, Humboldt, Sacramento, Drum**, 1653 employees, IBEW

**Central Supply**, 181 employees, UWOC

**System dispatchers**, 10 employees, UWOC

**General Construction**, 2325 employees, IBEW

**North Bay, San Francisco, San Jose**, 2809 employees, UWOC

**Desabla, Colgate, Stockton, Coast Valleys**, 1557 employees, IBEW

**Building Maintenance employees at General Office**, 56 employees, UWOC

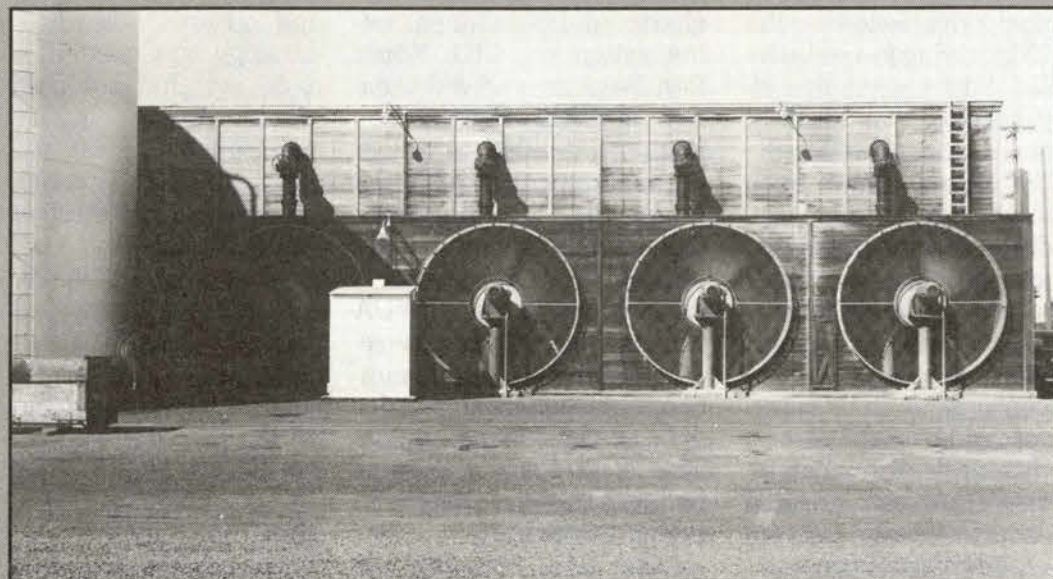
**Gas Supply & Transmission Dept.**, 102 employees, IBEW

**San Joaquin**, 1642 employees, IBEW

After winning various elections by division, both unions set about consolidating their gains. On May 26, 1944, IBEW Local 1245 negotiated its first master contract covering all PG&E divisions that it represented. On August 15 of that year, the UWOC also negotiated a master contract for all of its PG&E locals.

With the war coming to an end, the union tide at PG&E appeared to be rising.

*See NEXT PAGE*



PG&E's Avon Plant in the East Bay. (Photo: Courtesy Ray Michael)



## 8. The great cross-over begins

**D**espite impressive victories at the Divisional level, the IBEW and the UWOC were nowhere near organizing one union on the entire PG&E system. In fact, following World War II, the forces pulling the union movement apart at PG&E were probably as strong as the forces drawing it together. While both the IBEW and the UWOC continued to claim

that a single union for the entire system was their ultimate goal, each union regarded the other with great suspicion, if not outright hostility. That left PG&E plenty of room to make mischief.

For example, the company might tell one union it must bargain for certain working conditions already granted to the other union. Or the company might use the issue of transfers to stir the pot. Mitch Mitchell believes the com-

pany enjoyed the friction that resulted from mixing CIO members with AFL members:

"If they sent a CIO crew in there [to an AFL area], that didn't affect the company a bit. But it affected *us*. There was turmoil for us. But the company could stand that. They always had hopes that the union would go bust, that it wouldn't last. The company was trying to stir up trouble all the time."

Compounding the problem, Mitchell notes, was the fact that each union now had something to lose and did not want to give up what it had fought so hard to gain:

"Each was protecting its own. The status quo is preferable to the unknown, so once they had become established there wasn't any real effort to, you know, to put it back together again. The dues were coming in. You see, there was an enormous amount of money spent by both the AFL and CIO in organizing to begin with. So they wanted to recoup that; they didn't want to have to spend a lot more, because organizing costs money."

Continued competition between the two unions could have left the workforce in a state of permanent discord. However, political events in the nation at large following World War II brought about a crisis in the organizing drive on PG&E.

### Right-wing attacks

The Soviet Union, a major US ally during World War II, became a rival following the war. Right-wing forces in the United States used this rivalry—the Cold War—to attack political opponents within the United States. Those with whom these right-wing fanatics disagreed were branded as communists, whether there was evidence to support such a charge or not. Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin brought this practice of "red-baiting" to new heights—or depths—when he conducted hearings intended to besmirch the reputation of law-abiding Americans.

But McCarthy, later proven to be an outrageous

The UWUA, as a vehicle for organizing one union at PG&E, had run out of steam. The company, sensing the union's disunity, became tougher to deal with. Clearly a new strategy was needed, some bold act that could break PG&E workers out of the logjam they were in and get the organizing campaign moving again.

liar, was only one player in what had become a national hysteria. Just as colonists in Massachusetts in the 17th Century conducted "witch hunts" and burned innocent women at the stake, the American public was led on a witch hunt for communists in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Labor unions were a principal victim of the "anti-red" crusade. In 1947, Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act, which, among other provisions, required union officers to sign affidavits swearing they were not communists. Many American trade unionists protested this anti-red requirement as an infringement upon the civil liberties of union officers. Unfortunately, some unionists began to use the anti-red hysteria to jockey for power within particular unions.

Shortly after the war, the independent Utility Workers Organizing Committee, chartered nationally by the CIO in 1938 as an organizing vehicle, affiliated with the Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA), a newly-chartered International union within the CIO. When Ron Weakley and a delegation of West Coast utility workers attended the founding conference of the UWUA in Atlantic City, they were disturbed by the red-baiting atmosphere. One provision of the proposed UWUA constitution would require *every* worker to sign a non-communist affidavit in order to be admitted into the union. The West Coast delegates believed this provision to be undemocratic.

The Bay Area UWUA group became even more upset when the national

UWUA began to "clean house." Among the victims of this house-cleaning were the UWUA regional director and two national UWUA representatives on the West Coast who had provided valuable assistance to the organizing drive on PG&E.

### "It was a mess"

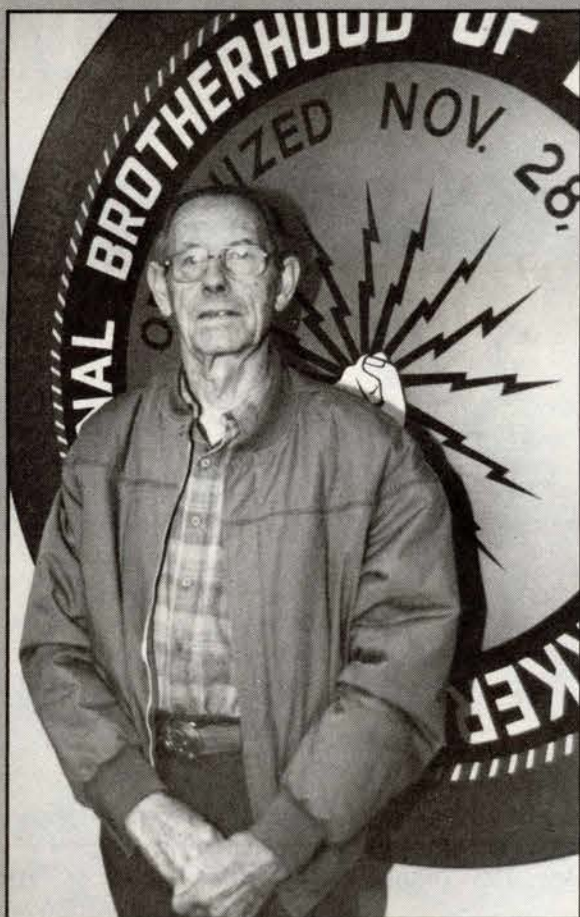
As the rift between the Bay Area locals and the national UWUA organization grew wider, and with the government's Taft-Hartley Act tightening the screws on labor unions in general, the dream of one union on PG&E seemed to be drifting out of reach. Recalls Don Hardie, at that time chairman of the UWUA Local 169 grievance committee:

"It became obvious that we were falling apart ourselves, irrespective of all the outside pressure from the Taft-Hartley bill or anything else. It was a mess."

The UWUA, as a vehicle for organizing one union at PG&E, had run out of steam. The company, sensing the union's disunity, became tougher to deal with, according to Hardie. Clearly a new strategy was needed, some bold act that could break PG&E workers out of the logjam they were in and get the organizing campaign moving again. A defection was in the making.

In January of 1948, Local 169 (Contra Costa County) passed a resolution warning that unless the UWUA amended its policies "the loss of the workers' support for the CIO on PG&E would be the price." It was about this time that Hardie got a telephone call from Ron Weakley. Weakley had decided it was time to get out of the UWUA.

### Local 1245 founder profile: Don Hardie



**D**on Hardie has been an activist for both the UWUA-CIO and, after the cross-over, for the IBEW. He has served on grievance committees and negotiating committees and is active today in the Local 1245 Retirees Club, where he serves as vice president. Hardie has no problem getting directly to the point when asked what principles a union man lives by:

"People have to get a fair shake. I don't think there's anything else."

"Nothing's perfect. I don't think corporations are perfect and I don't think unions are perfect. I don't think the government is perfect. But if they're going to work for you, you've got to organize them."





IBEW International President J. Scott Milne (middle), with Local 1245 Business Manager Ron Weakley (left) and Senior Assistant Business Manager L. L. Mitchell around 1954.

As Hardie recalls the event:

"Almost out of the blue, Ron called me about exploring the idea of saving what we could and getting out. We were both on our days off at the time, so we went over to [IBEW] Local 595 in Oakland. Ron's stepdad was a member of that local and friends with the business manager, man name of Rockwell. So we asked to see the business manager there and we went in to talk to him."

An International representative was also present at that meeting and got on the telephone with Oscar Harbak, the IBEW vice president for the Ninth District in San Francisco. By that afternoon, Hardie and Weakley were in San Francisco meeting with Harbak.

Weakley and Hardie were, of course, not alone in their

feelings about the UWUA. Much of the UWUA's local leadership at PG&E was prepared to jump ship. But they weren't prepared to just walk into the embrace of IBEW Local 1245. With some 5,000 members in eight locals, the UWUA in the Bay Area was a substantial political force, and as long-time CIO activists they had their own ideas about how a union should operate. They worried that the IBEW, which for six decades had operated primarily as a craft union, might concentrate too much on the interests of linemen at the expense of other classifications. Hardie recalls:

"This was probably our main concern, that whatever we got out of the IBEW it would be something that would function democratically and not discriminate be-

cause some are journeymen and some aren't. We wanted to get some kind of a framework that we thought would work and would ensure solidarity and democracy at the same time."

The IBEW, on the other hand, had its own concerns. Some people in Local 1245 genuinely believed that the CIO philosophy was too radical. For years they had looked upon the UWUA people virtually as the enemy. Coming to some kind of accommodation just wasn't going to happen over a friendly cup of coffee.

#### J. Scott Milne

Perhaps one man more than any other grasped the historic opportunity contained in Weakley's and Hardie's proposal. That man was J. Scott Milne, who in the late

1940s was IBEW's International secretary in Washington D.C. A former utility worker himself in the Pacific northwest, Milne was a firm believer in industrial organizing. Before assuming the post of International secretary, Milne had served as IBEW vice president for the Ninth District in San Francisco, where he was instrumental in securing the original charter for Local 1245 in 1941. Obviously he realized that the IBEW, however successful it might be in the more rural areas, had virtually no support in the Bay Area. Now suddenly the way might be opening for the IBEW to organize a system-wide election that would bring all PG&E workers under one union.

First, of course, the rest of the UWUA leadership in the Bay Area had to buy the idea of switching over. In June of 1948, delegates to the Bay

Area Joint Council, representing the eight UWUA locals in the Bay Area, authorized a meeting with IBEW officials to negotiate the terms for a system-wide election on PG&E. The San Jose delegate opposed the talks and Oakland was split, but the talks were supported by delegates from all other areas.

To give members of these UWUA locals a vehicle to switch over, the IBEW agreed to charter a new IBEW local. In October, the IBEW petitioned the NLRB for a system-wide election on PG&E and the following month chartered IBEW Local 1324. To prevent friction with Local 1245, whose cooperation would be needed in the coming campaign, the IBEW put both locals under direct International supervision.

One of the great American labor organizing campaigns of modern times was about to begin.

## 9. No other way out: the rise of Local 1324

**W**hen the great cross-over began, the UWUA had some 5,000 members in eight Bay Area locals, working in four PG&E divisions. Just because Weakley and other local leaders believed the switch should be made, not all of the members necessarily agreed. The various UWUA locals in the Bay Area, after all, had a contract with PG&E through the UWUA joint council. They had the authority to process grievances and conduct other union business. The newly-formed IBEW Local 1324 could offer workers nothing concrete—only dreams of future unity, of "one union on the system." Don Hardie remembers:

"Those of us who refused to belong to the CIO any more and had changed our status were for all practical purposes without any power at all. In this Concord-Martinez-Oleum area, the leadership had all gone to the AFL. They

said: 'This was it—we're going to make this move.' You had the likes of Weakley, Stan Dahlin, who was the line shop steward, the shop station operators, the steam plant—everything in this jurisdiction was solid. We'd gone [over]. So we had to suffer. There was no other way out."

The Contra Costa County PG&E workers weren't alone in their unhappiness. Throughout the Bay Area, discontent with the national leadership of the UWUA had been growing. In the South Bay, one of those ready for a change was Mert Walters.

Walters went to work for PG&E in 1944 as a groundman in Redwood City, on the peninsula. Joining the union had been an easy decision for Walters, who came from a union family. His father and a brother belonged to the newspaper pressman; another brother was a wireman. Soon after being hired Walters was signed up in UWOC Local 137 by a union lineman named Thomas J. McKay,

See **NEXT PAGE**

**Perhaps one man more than any other grasped the historic opportunity contained in Weakley's and Hardie's proposal: J. Scott Milne, IBEW's International secretary. Milne had earlier served as IBEW vice president for the Ninth District in San Francisco, where he was instrumental in securing the original charter for Local 1245 in 1941. Now at last the way might be opening for the IBEW to organize a system-wide election that would bring all PG&E workers under one union.**





Local 1245 staff members L. L. Mitchell, Ron Weakley, Jerry Moran, Spike Ensley and Mert Walters in the 1950s. (Photo: Local 1245 archives)

#### From PAGE Q

more popularly known as "Old Iron Head."

But Walters began to have second thoughts about his union after the UWOC became part of the UWUA. He remembers national officers of the UWUA addressing the local membership at a state UWUA conference in Santa Cruz early in 1948:

"The national officers tried to tell us how we had to run affairs. We didn't buy it. We had tried to set up a strike fund and they told us we couldn't. I remember I told them it was my money and I'd do with it what I wanted. I was young and feisty then. But they didn't believe in strikes."

By November of that year, when IBEW Local 1324 was chartered, Walters was ready to cross over. So ready, in fact, that he devised a plan to take a lot of other UWUA members with him:

"A guy named Manny Ferrara and myself took three days off on the UWUA payroll—got a three-day leave of absence from PG&E. That was in the Peninsula District, San Jose Division. We went out and pulled the guys off the poles and out of the ditches and signed them up in the IBEW. We signed up more members than we had in the UWUA. We signed up every-

body but one individual."

Around the Bay Area the drive was on to bring UWUA members over to the IBEW. During the early months of 1949, units of Local 1324 were established in Martinez, Santa Rosa and Ukiah, along with a unit covering San Francisco, San Mateo and Redwood City. In large part these units were composed of employees who had simply come over to the IBEW from the UWUA. In cases like UWUA Local 169 in Contra Costa County or Local 137 on the peninsula, the switchover to the IBEW was rapid and massive, which raised an interesting question: Who did the union treasury belong to?

#### Everyone claims funds

The national UWUA believed it had a claim to the funds, since they were collected in the name of the UWUA. But the members of those locals saw it another way. If there was money in the union treasury it was because the members had put it there. If they now chose to switch over to the IBEW, they believed their money ought to come with them. Just to make sure that it did, they devised some creative security measures. In the South Bay, as Mert Walters recounts:

"They come looking for the money. But they couldn't

find it. Manny Ferrara was secretary of Local 137. He hid all the money in tin cans in his back yard. When it was time to actually go into the IBEW, we took all the money we had and paid membership dues for six months for all the people that were in the unit."

Ray Michael recalls that Local 169 in Contra Costa County employed a similar approach. Stan Dahlin, given the local treasury for safekeeping, hid the money under his house. As with Local 137, by the time the UWUA came looking for the money, it had already been spent buying

block memberships in the IBEW.

Despite this creative money management, the growing band of Local 1324 members faced significant obstacles on three fronts:

First, they had to keep the peace with Local 1245, which was none too happy about having another IBEW local organizing on PG&E.

Second, they had to convince more UWUA members to come over to the IBEW. Understandably, the UWUA national leadership was extremely hostile to these efforts. And despite losing control of some local treasuries, the UWUA was still able to collect union dues from IBEW supporters through a dues checkoff provision in the contract. That meant that IBEW members were still having to pay dues to the organization they were trying to oust.

Third, there was PG&E to think about.

The company employed several strategies to combat the union election drive. For starters, PG&E continued to honor the UWUA dues checkoff in the hope that the IBEW would be provoked into filing unfair labor practice charges. That in turn would delay the election, something that PG&E wanted to do at all costs. But the IBEW didn't fall for it.

Next, early in 1949, the company attempted to have 51 classifications eliminated from the proposed bargaining unit. If the company suc-

ceeded in this maneuver it would blow an enormous hole in the IBEW's dream of "one union on the system." The UWUA mounted token opposition to the company's proposal, but by this time the UWUA was more concerned about fighting the IBEW than fighting PG&E. It was up to the IBEW to keep the 51 classifications in the bargaining unit.

#### Vicious and vindictive

Ron Weakley and Don Hardie testified on this issue at great length during the NLRB hearings. According to Stanley Neyhart, the union's attorney, these union men were subjected to violent red-baiting by the company. The company's behavior prompted Neyhart to declare that, in all his years of hearings before the NLRB up to that time, he had never seen a corporation display such a vicious and vindictive attitude toward its employees.

PG&E, of course, knew exactly what it was doing. By red-baiting the witnesses, the company was simply throwing gasoline on the fire that was already raging between the two unions. National UWUA officials had already been using red-baiting in an effort to discredit their IBEW opponents. That prompted the following remarks from C. P. Hughes, an IBEW International representative in charge of the organizing drive, to UWUA national representative Edward Shedlock:



Oscar Harbak, IBEW Ninth District vice president, presents members of IBEW Local 1245 Executive Board (before amalgamation) with gold emblems in recognition of their service in representing 7,000 IBEW members in outlying PG&E districts. From left: Elmer Bushby, Drew Baker, Shep Shephard, E. O. Bruntrock, Mitch Mitchell, Gordon Strazzo, Bill White, Frank Gilleran, Ward Anderson, Gene Ripperdan. In the foreground are Harbak, Chet Sorensen, Local 1245 president, and Charles Mason, Local 1245 business manager. (Photo: Local 1245 archives)



"Administrator Shedlock, by his irresponsible red-baiting is casting a shadow on the loyalty and Americanism of every honest PG&E union man who now considers himself an IBEW member... It is high time that these malicious attacks cease. I therefore demand that Mr. Shedlock either make public a list of all PG&E personnel accused of communistic connections together with specific charges against each, or stop this slander."

The UWUA was apparently unable to produce such a list.

And the UWUA had other problems. Many of the

members of IBEW Local 1324 continued to hold membership in their old UWUA locals. When they attended UWUA meetings, they naturally tried to convince the UWUA loyalists to come over to the IBEW. This tactic infuriated the UWUA.

On February 8, 1949, for example, an IBEW supporter named Al Tiegel attended a meeting of UWUA Local 133 in San Francisco. Edward Shedlock, the UWUA national representative, challenged Tiegel's right to be there since Tiegel was known to support the IBEW. Tiegel responded that he was still a paid-up member of Local 133 because

of the dues check-off enjoyed by the UWUA. Shedlock finally allowed Tiegel to stay, but said that he wouldn't be permitted to speak.

That tactic didn't work either. The members called for a vote and promptly voted to let Tiegel speak. Shedlock set aside the vote on the grounds that his rights as a national representative superseded those of the membership. Shedlock then declared a "parliamentary emergency" and adjourned the meeting. Refusing to leave, the members elected a new chair and continued the meeting long enough to condemn the previous chair's actions.

## 10. The struggle intensifies: the IBEW versus the UWUA

**T**he UWUA suffered a major setback in March of 1949. Superior Court Judge Milton Sapiro ruled that PG&E workers who had switched to the IBEW should not be required to pay dues to their former union, the UWUA, through a dues checkoff. He ruled that, because the contract had expired, doubt now existed about who the legitimate bargaining representative was.

In April, the NLRB hearings on the make-up of the bargaining unit were coming to a close and Local 1324 believed that a representation election would soon be scheduled. But as spring turned to summer there was still no word from the NLRB.

### Support from Local 1245

However, Local 1324 was making progress on another front. In July, the Executive Board of Local 1245 pledged its support for "one union on the system." Of course both Local 1245 and 1324 were under International supervision, and were expected to cooperate in the organizing drive. The issue of whether and when—and how—to amalgamate the two unions was left to another day. In August the two locals met in Belmont and Santa Rosa, the first of many such joint meetings.

Meanwhile, the battle

between Local 1324 and the UWUA for the hearts and minds of PG&E workers in the Bay Area continued. Ron Weakley remembers what union meetings were like during this period:

"Of course there was a lot of arguing at meetings of both groups—the Utility Workers and 1324—about how we should proceed. We'd go to the meetings and debate and harangue about getting one union on the system, and how the Utility Workers weren't serving the people and so forth. The UWUA barred some of us, but quite often we'd get in. There was very little violence. We had a little shoving around and a few challenges, but as far as any major bloodying of people, there was none of that. PG&E workers were a fairly conservative bunch anyway and they weren't prone to that kind of waterfront battling."

Although Weakley had become a prime mover in the union drive, he was not always center stage. He had a knack for tapping the talents of others. One such person was Gene Hastings. When Hastings, as a new PG&E employee in 1945, complained about contract provisions relating to returning veterans, Weakley immediately made a motion to have Hastings appointed to head up a veterans committee. It

was an application of the old mining camp principle: "If you don't like the grub, next time you get to cook."

### Ready for responsibility

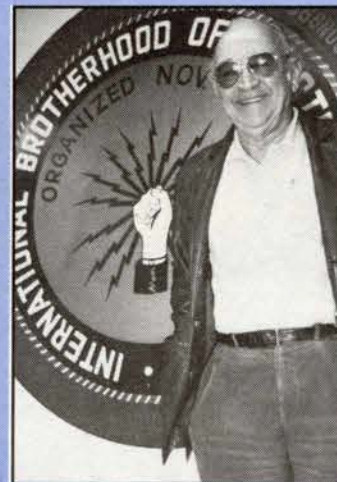
Hastings quickly proved that he was ready for responsibility. Union was in his blood:

"Where I got my start was in the United Mine Workers, which is a good place to start. My father was a coal miner. When I was in junior high school in 1935 my father came home from a picket line: they were on strike. He told me how the sheriff and his deputies escorted the scabs through the picket line. They were shaking the scabs down to make sure they didn't have any guns. My father said you could see the outline of the gun in one scab's pocket. Hearing that was pretty impressive for a junior high school kid.

"He also told me about the superintendent driving his car through the line. He gunned it up and the coal miners just split, and he didn't hit any of them. After a couple days of that, the third time that he speeded up his automobile and they all split apart, well, there was a great big tree laying in the road. He smacked the tree—was in the hospital. Those were the days when the coal miners used to

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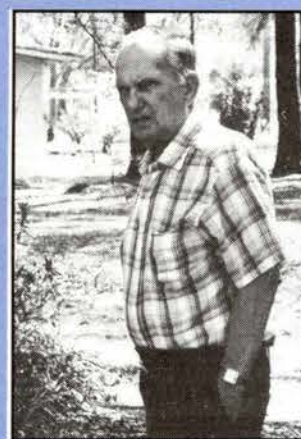
### Local 1245 founder profile: Gene Hastings



**G**ene Hastings is a former president of the UWUA local in Contra Costa County and served briefly as president of Local 1245 after the amalgamation in 1951. He served as a business representative on the Local 1245 staff in the 1950s and 1960s under Business Manager Ron Weakley. Hastings was active in the Democratic Party in Contra Costa County for many years. His activism continued into his retirement: Hastings helped launch the Local 1245 Retirees Club and is an active supporter of the National Council of Senior Citizens.

"Labor unions," Hastings says, "have a real job in front of them in the 1990s. It's going to have to be done by the union members. They're going to have to get up in their meetings, their clubs, their organizations—you just have to spread the word. These problems can only be solved by unity."

### Local 1245 founder profile: Mert Walters



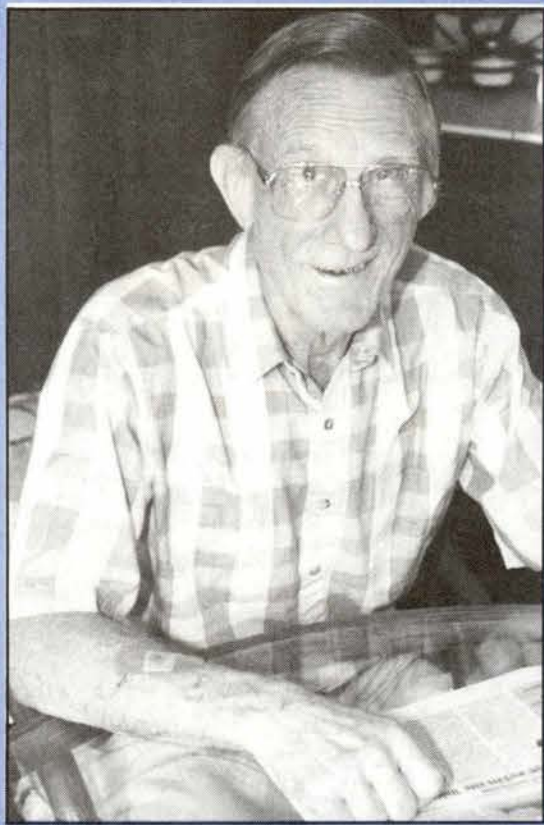
**M**ert Walters went to work for PG&E in 1944, becoming a lineman in December of 1948. He served as vice president of UWOC Local 137, covering the Peninsula District of the San Jose Division.

At the first meeting of the Executive Board of IBEW Local 1324 Walters was elected vice president. He was hired by the International as an organizer for Local 1324 in May of 1950.

For Local 1245 Walters served as business representative, assistant business manager and senior assistant business manager, retiring in 1981.



## Local 1245 founder profile: L. L. "Mitch" Mitchell



**L.** L. "Mitch" Mitchell served the IBEW for over 40 years, as a steward, on the Executive Board of the pre-amalgamated Local 1245, as senior assistant business manager, and as business manager. Along with Ron Weakley he was a major architect of the amalgamation that created the modern-day Local 1245. Even in retirement Mitchell remains active in civic affairs and continues to think about the future of the labor movement. When asked what it's going to take for the union to continue to do its job and change and grow with the times, he offered this response:

"You've got to look at the shorter work week. It can't stay at 40 hours; there are too many people. So you've got to do like they did after the Depression, [when the nation] went to a 40-hour week. Prior to that you worked eight, 10, 12 hours a day, five to seven days a week. We've got to protect those basic things. What I see happening is that people are willing to work four 10-hour days to get their 40 hours, which is ridiculous. People *died* for the eight-hour day and yet here we are giving it away. You have to be defensive in that regard and you have to be diligent in terms of trying to get a reduction of those hours to a 30-hour week, or 32 hours, four eight-hour days, or five six-hour days or whatever it is, to spread the work out.

"That's what happened with the New Deal: you don't work people overtime—you hire workers. The easiest way [for a company] to get around a lot of these benefits that are being paid is to pay overtime [rather than hire more workers]. You've got to protect those sorts of things. People don't realize the heart of that agreement is the hours section. That's the real meat.

"I can remember when I first worked for PG&E they would send us out and we would work 32 hours in a row, never stop. No rest periods, no nothing."

### From PAGE 5

strike every year."

Hastings says it was Weakley who eventually talked him into running for president of UWUA Local 169 in Contra Costa County. It was an interesting position to be in during the cross-over. The national UWUA was trying to persuade the local membership to dump any officers who supported switching to the IBEW. In Contra Costa County, where the membership was determined to leave the UWUA, these arguments had little effect. But in other areas, the members were more evenly divided. Hastings recalls taking a trip to a UWUA meeting in Napa with Ed White to promote the cross-over to the IBEW:

"It was a little different story up in Napa. We wanted to give our presentation as far as to why we were going into the IBEW. Their theme song was that they don't want to know; they're satisfied with the CIO. They were not going to let us, if they could help it, convince anybody that this was the thing to do. I was real glad that I had old six-foot three-inch tall Ed White alongside of me because there were some of the people got a little bit mad."

Like Weakley and Hardie, Hastings was a victim of red-baiting:

"We were called communists, the whole bit. Of course nobody could prove it. But this was one of the ploys that the CIO used, to call a fellow communist. The CIO was going to lose 5,000 members—they'd call you anything."

By autumn of 1949 IBEW

had made significant progress in organizing the North Bay. The NLRB was still silent on when it would schedule an election. And Local 1324 still had no contract and no representation rights on PG&E. All it had to offer was the dream of "one union on the system." Some began to wonder privately how long this movement could survive on nothing but a dream.

### Layoffs create crisis

In September, a round of layoffs at PG&E created a crisis for the UWUA. With many of its best leaders gone over to the IBEW, the UWUA was unable to react decisively to the layoffs. The UWUA leadership outlined the following plan of action, as recounted in a UWUA newsletter:

"Your Negotiating Committee met with company representatives on Tuesday, September 6th to gather information as to the reason for the lay-offs at this time, just what employees are to be affected, the numerical number to be laid-off, and interpretation of the contractual rules that govern if, and when layoffs cannot be avoided. At this time your committee is passing the information on to the membership for their discussion, consideration and development of a course of action."

The IBEW took the UWUA apart over this issue, particularly the notion that the leadership had to go to the members to figure out a course of action. What are leaders for, the IBEW wanted to know, if not to come up with a course of action?

"Either the contract has a seniority clause or it does not have one," the IBEW declared in its weekly newsletter in September. "If it has one it's up to the UWUA leadership to enforce it as part of the contract approved previously by the employees." In October the IBEW continued to press the issue. The IBEW newsletter accused the UWUA leadership of pushing through the contract at the beginning of the year without adequate input from the members, and then asking the members to enforce that contract.

"We always thought the membership approved the contract and the officials policed and enforced it," observed the IBEW.

### IBEW economic program

But the IBEW campaign was not limited to criticizing the UWUA. The IBEW organizers had a program they wanted to see implemented at PG&E to benefit the workers and in October, still awaiting word from the NLRB about an election date, they published "An Economic Program for Bay Division Employees." Among its provisions were: a business manager and full time representatives to represent the members; wage increases across the board, and a study of inequities and job reclassifications; adequate pension with joint administration; improved hospitalization and health plan; uniform grievance machinery for the entire system; a joint apprentice training program; improved arbitration machinery; complete organization of

**"We were called communists, the whole bit. Of course nobody could prove it. But this was one of the ploys that the CIO used, to call a fellow communist. The CIO was going to lose 5,000 members--they'd call you anything."**

*Gene Hastings*





clerical workers; a joint job bidding committee to determine job awards; and stronger seniority guarantees.

#### Letter to NLRB

It was a manifesto that detailed all the hopes that were wrapped up in the slogan "one union on the system." But still there was no election date. On November 5, 1949, Local 1324 published an open letter to the NLRB in its newsletter:

"It is more than 10 months since the IBEW first petitioned for an election. The average jury can reach a decision in a few weeks. Any further delay must certainly be construed by IBEW members as out and out Board sympathy for union breaking. The IBEW wants nothing from the NLRB except a simple decision on the election. After 10 months it is certainly entitled to that."

On November 29, the

IBEW got its answer. The NLRB ordered an election for physical employees and rejected the company's bid to exclude 1675 employees in 51 classifications from the bargaining unit. Even so-called professional and technical employees were included. The NLRB rejected pleas from the company and from the UWUA to break down the bargaining units by division: it would be one election on the whole system.

## 11. "The employees will decide"

**A**nd what an election it was to be. The PG&E representation vote posed massive logistical problems for the NLRB. Due to the unit's historic size, the NLRB was forced to waive the 30-day rule and allow nearly two months for setting up the election machinery.

PG&E was one of the most spread-out utilities in the United States, covering an enormous geographical area. The NLRB decided that General Construction would vote by mailed ballots. To accommodate the rest of the PG&E employees, the NLRB established 100 polling places. Fifty NLRB officials were brought in from all over the West to conduct the election.

For the International staff of the IBEW, working under International Vice President Oscar Harbak, the election was the culmination of over a year of hard work in which they assisted the campaign and supervised the two locals. Those International representatives included Chuck Hughes, Merritt Snyder, Larry Drew, "Heavy" Newcombe, and Kenny Favel.

#### UWUA's "last outpost"

Ron Weakley worked behind the scenes for much of the organizing drive; his name rarely appeared in the Local 1324 newsletter. But three weeks before the election, Weakley decided to speak out. In an open letter to the UWUA published in the IBEW newsletter, Weakley

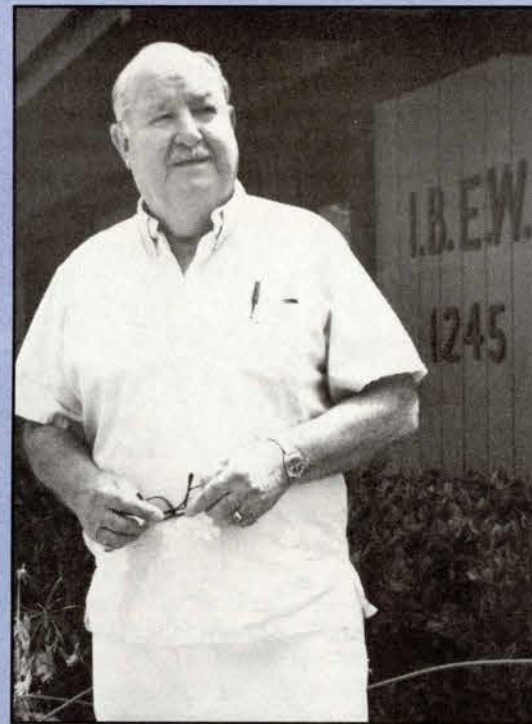
took a last, almost wistful, look back at the CIO union he and others had once helped to build, and were now trying to defeat. He addressed his letter to "The Leaders of UWUA's Last Outpost":

"I remember a few years ago, around here pioneering a union, when it was tough to advance the cause of Organized Labor on this system," Weakley wrote. "The old CIO Union was built, not because of, but in spite of, eastern pie-cards and johnny-come-latelys. Our full time, elected leadership in those days worked hard with many of us to build a Union of 7000 members on this Coast...Those days are gone forever. The old CIO is dead and you can take much of the credit for its funeral. We, whom you continued to slander, are not proud and do not boast about the death of a good Union... You demanded a Union of political adherents to you and your planned program. We demanded a strong, unified Union which would and could act in our behalf in collective bargaining. You have placed your program before the employees and we have submitted ours. The employees will soon decide which they believe to be the better program."

On January 25, 1950, the employees rendered their decision in the certification election for all physical employees at PG&E:

**IBEW: 6749**  
**UWUA: 2550**  
**Neither union: 241**  
**Challenged ballots: 266**

### Local 1245 founder profile: Ron Weakley



**R**on Weakley, who served as Local 1245 Business Manager from 1951 to 1972, helped orchestrate one of the most dramatic defections in labor history when he led 5,000 members of the UWUA-CIO into the IBEW-AFL in the late 1940s. Forty years later, Weakley still believes strongly in the union movement he helped create:

"Now Local 1245 is a going concern and it has become institutionalized, but it's not a corporate thing. Money isn't everything; the union still has a soul 'beyond the bank.' And I've enjoyed watching it go along and prosper. It's an honor to have been involved in it."

"But this wasn't a one man operation. Whatever I was able to accomplish was a joint effort. There were a hell of a lot of good people involved. They deserve the credit. The credit should go to the group. An organized effort is what did it, and the adherence to principle, not an individual. You have to have someone to sort of pilot the boat, but if you don't have anybody pulling the oars then you sink."

The IBEW had won a decisive victory. Following the election, the union newsletter paid tribute to some of the individuals who had made the victory possible: Les Glasson of San Francisco, 33 years with PG&E and president of the first council in 1937; Ed White of Oakland, described as the "hard-working wheelhorse of our organization"; William Haars of Oakland; Ed Hanlon and Bill Kennedy of San Francisco; Milt Ingraham of Ukiah; Don Hardie, Gene Hastings and Ron Weakley of Martinez. Also mentioned were "Broth-

ers Mercer, Carrithers and Hughes of Santa Rosa; Brothers Troxel and Gibbs of Redwood City."

These were the individuals, the newsletter said, who "have taken an active part in the heartbreaking job of rebuilding an organization after they saw the degeneration and imminent collapse of the Union they built with hard work, loss of sleep, personal sacrifices and sometimes apathetic support by those they worked so hard for."

See NEXT PAGE

### Hourly wage rates through the years

1940		1970	
Lineman	1.45	Lineman	5.50
Gas Serviceman	1.35	Gas Serviceman	5.02
Meter Reader	1.44	Meter Reader	4.48
Helper	1.00	Helper	3.95
Laborer	.92	Laborer	3.65
1950		Equip. operator	4.78
Lineman	1.98	Typist	3.41
Gas Serviceman	1.86	1980	
Meter Reader	1.70	Lineman	11.56
Helper	1.60	Gas Serviceman	11.02
Laborer	1.48	Meter Reader	10.04
1960		Helper	8.26
Lineman	3.24	Laborer	7.64
Gas Serviceman	3.04	Equip. operator	10.34
Meter Reader	2.71	Typist	10.70
Helper	2.51	1990	
Laborer	1.77	Lineman	19.87
Equip. operator	2.60	Gas Serviceman	19.09
Typist	2.80	Meter Reader	15.40
		Helper	15.06
		Laborer	14.28
		Equip. operator	18.13
		Typist	16.72





Staff of amalgamated Local 1245, in 1952, from left, front row: Ed Hanlon, San Francisco Division; Al Kaznowski, Sacramento and Drum Division, Sacramento Municipal Utility District and City Lines; Hans Elliot, San Joaquin Division; Ron Weakley, business manager; Ed White, assigned to organization; Howard Sevey, office manager. Back row, from left: Gene Hastings, North Bay Division; Al Hansen, East Bay Division, Key System, Oakland, Alameda, Berkeley; Paul Yochem, Outside Line Construction; Don Hoebel, De Sabla, Colgate and Sierra Pacific Power; L. L. Mitchell, Stockton Division, City of Lodi; Jim Gibbs, Shasta and Humboldt Division. Not present: Mert Walters, San Jose, Coast Valleys and Gas Supply and Control; Paul Smith, General Construction. (Photo: Local 1245 archives)

## 12. Amalgamation: "People are people"

**T**he IBEW faced a host of pressing problems following its election triumph. PG&E workers had had no raises for more than 14 months. Under the UWUA a huge backlog of grievances had accumulated and important security provisions had been negotiated away. Further complicating matters, the UWUA still held bargaining rights for clerical workers in three PG&E divisions. A comeback bid by the UWUA was by no means out of the question either.

The IBEW faced internal problems as well. There were now two IBEW locals on the system, both under International supervision: Local 1245 and Local 1324. For there to be truly "one union on the system," some process of reconciliation—and eventual amalgamation—was needed.

The first steps along that road had already been taken prior to the election when Mitch Mitchell and other Local 1245 members decided to meet with some of the CIO cross-overs. Mitchell recalls

coming down from Humboldt: "I had to come down to the San Francisco office—the IBEW was in San Francisco at that time—and we were told, 'Don't associate with these people from the CIO—the Weakleys, the Hastings, the Hardies—those are badasses. Don't get involved with them.' Another fellow by the name of Elmer Bushby and I didn't buy all this malarkey. You know, people are people, and I didn't think, just because they were affiliated with another organization, that they weren't interested and concerned about the welfare of people in PG&E. They were PG&E employees.

"So Elmer and I arranged to meet with Don Hardie. We started meeting with him when we'd be down here and talking about what we could do to organize and get everybody together. Weakley, of course, was a real strategist. He never was really out in front, but he was pushing everybody. He was meeting with his own people and strategizing to put things together. I didn't meet up with him for quite some time after we

started meeting with these other people—before he came out of the woodwork."

Don Hardie describes why amalgamation, after the election, was such a pressing concern:

"It became obvious that the company was still going to be happy if it had two locals to pit against one another even though they were under the same International. They could still play their game. The thing we had set out to do was to have one [local]. There had to be some mechanism to get this done.

"Here were people who

had been at sword's points over a number of years and all kinds of things said about each other that had to be overcome. [Local 1245] people had to realize that we weren't a bunch of people running around with bombs in our back pockets and all that crap, that we were actually interested in having a bargaining unit.

### Meeting of the minds

"By that time," Hardie continues, "we had had enough meetings with the 1245 people to where there was—at least with some of us on both sides—a meeting of the minds. People like Mitchell, Hansen, other people, who began to start seeing eye to eye with us on things. It was coming."

The IBEW International convention of 1950 in Miami provided an occasion for representatives of the two locals to get better acquainted. They had just pulled off a major organizing victory at PG&E, and according to Gene Hastings, who was one of the delegates, the PG&E delegation enjoyed something of a celebrity status at the convention:

"There's no question about it. There was a camaraderie thing back at the convention. The IBEW was real proud of the fact that they were going to have a large local on the [PG&E] property. That was the beginning of Local 1245 as one identity with Local 1324."

Ironically, while things seemed to be coming together inside the convention, things were falling apart outside: During the convention a hurricane struck Miami. Coconuts, according to one report, "were flying around like cannon balls." Ray Michael remembers:

"Scared my wife to death, that storm that came through. It was bad. It tore up trees and took the top off one of the hotels and put it off across the street. It was a storm. Here we had three thousand electricians in town and they have a hurricane that wiped out all the electricity. They made quite a deal about that of course."

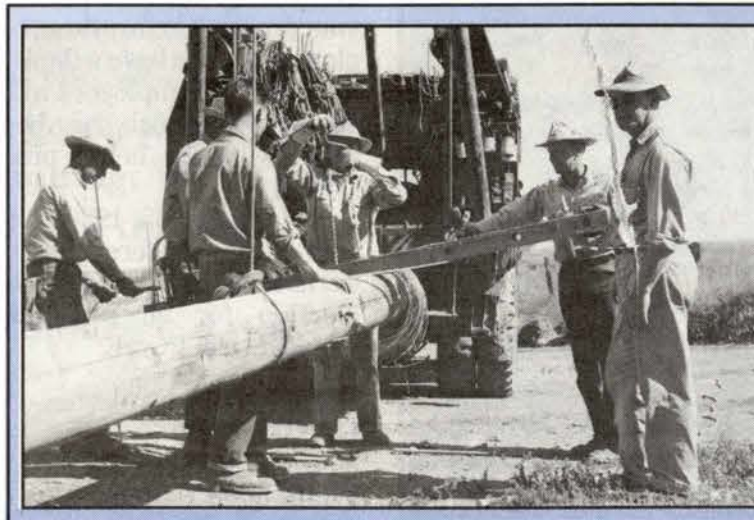
Ron Weakley and Mitch Mitchell met for the first time at the Miami gathering, where they sized each other up and began talking about the future structure of the IBEW on the PG&E system. That discussion, begun in 1950 in the middle of a hurricane, would continue the following year during a different sort of storm. The UWUA in 1951 petitioned the NLRB for a new election at PG&E.

### Consolidating the unit

By this time the IBEW had put some of the key union activists at PG&E on the International payroll and given them the job of consolidating the unit. Among them were Weakley, Mitchell, Mert Walters, and Gene Hastings. It was during organizing trips to the North Bay that Mitchell remembers getting better acquainted with Weakley:

"He was from the Bay Area and I was from Humboldt, so we met in North Bay trying to convince these people to vote IBEW. We would meet somewhere and then we would go together. Riding from Santa Rosa to Healdsburg or wherever it was, you'd engage in all kinds of conversation. You learn each other's backgrounds and what they've done and how well you do this and how well you do that."

Obviously both men were bright and dedicated union



Line construction crew working in Woodland, California, in 1950. Line foreman was Jake Gearhart (Photo: courtesy George Gardner)



men, each a leader in his own right. Although the International still had both local unions under supervision, the time would soon come, both men knew, when the two locals would be amalgamated. Several good men aspired to the leadership of the new organization that would be created by the amalgamation. But movements often find their own leaders, and by 1951 it was becoming clear that those leaders were Weakley and Mitchell.

Mitchell says Weakley's political skills made him the logical choice for business manager. Mitchell became Weakley's top assistant. Mitchell recalls:

"It was just a tacit understanding. It just sort of became a thing: this is what's going to happen, you know. Not that you talked about it that way. It's just something you understand. And the IO understood it, I guess, at the same time. Weakley was a leader."

#### New charter issued

On February 28, 1951, the two locals were officially amalgamated and a new charter was issued by the

International. Because it was the older of the two locals, Local 1245's number was carried over to the new local. Don Hardie, who had been a trustee for Local 1324, believes it was the right choice:

"I think they chose wisely. I think historically the number had been established on the property, whether we liked it or not, or even if we felt we were better than they were, they had been here longer than 1324 had been here. So why not?"

"The important thing was to finally get this company arguing with one union and no opportunity to split it. Even today, the fact that the clerical workers are part of the IBEW instead of being left out there in somebody else's bailiwick makes a hell of a lot of difference for the kind of clerical conditions you have. They have more bargaining strength."

"I can remember a time," Hardie continues, "when the linemen wouldn't take their raise until the company took care of the other end of the line. When you get that kind of solidarity, you've got a winner."

**"The important thing was to finally get this company arguing with one union and no opportunity to split it. I can remember a time when the linemen wouldn't take their raise until the company took care of the other end of the line [the clerical]. When you get that kind of solidarity, you've got a winner."**

*Don Hardie*



## 13. "One union on the system"

**O**n June 29, 1951, the IBEW entered the home stretch in its bid to have "one union on the system" at PG&E. On that day, the UWUA petitioned for a separate system-wide election

for approximately 2500 clerical workers. The IBEW, which already represented clerical workers in five PG&E divisions (Sacramento, Humboldt, Shasta, Colgate and Coast Valleys) promptly intervened. Ultimately the election would cover both clerical and physical, but with separate balloting for each.

As part of its campaign, Local 1245 offered a specific program for clerical workers. The union's priorities were: 1) Wage security; 2) Working conditions, including a job bidding procedure to insure that classification and company seniority rights would be protected in awarding jobs; 3) Job security, including setting the steps of demotion in cases of layoffs and cutbacks so that employees go down in the order they came up; 4) Pension security.

As with the first election, the NLRB took a long time to sort out the issues and set a date. In the meantime, on December 3, 1951, the International ended Local 1245's supervision and restored its autonomy. Also that month two International representatives were assigned to assist the clerical organizing drive: Merritt Snyder and Della E. McIntyre. McIntyre, a 14-year member, was one of the first women to have a prominent role in IBEW's long history of organizing on

PG&E.

The clerical bargaining committee for units which had already achieved representation consisted of: George Pappani, payroll clerk, Salinas; Al Shoof, meter history clerk, Marysville; Edith Shook, clerk B, Red Bluff; and Al Kaznowski, former payroll clerk and in 1951 a business representative for Local 1245.

#### "Professionals split out"

In early 1952, the San Francisco Area Group of Professional Employees Association petitioned to represent the "professional" and "technical" employees of PG&E, employees who were included in the IBEW's physical unit in the 1950 election. Local 1245 charged that PG&E was behind this effort to split the professional and technical people—about 300 workers—out of the unit. While Local 1245 didn't oppose establishing a professional unit within IBEW, it opposed any arrangement that would create more than one union on the property. Unfortunately, UWUA's bid for a new election had given PG&E an opportunity to carve away at the unit.

On March 19, 1952, the ballot tally was announced. IBEW again had won the physical unit. The vote was 5072 for the IBEW, 3158 for

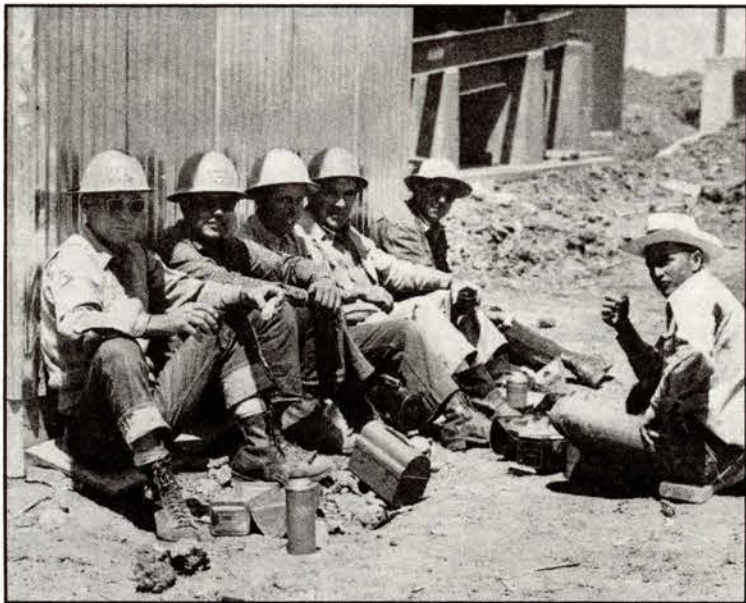
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**LOCAL 1245 JOINT POLICY AND EXECUTIVE BOARD: 1952**

Attending a Local 1245 Joint Policy and Executive Board meeting, California Hotel, San Francisco, on March 23-24, 1952, are (from left): L.E. Barbour, policy committee, Colgate; Jesse Nash, policy committee, San Francisco; Donald Hardie, policy committee, East Bay; Kenneth Ambrose, policy committee, SMUD; Robert Glasgow, policy committee, Sacramento; Sydney Hudson, policy committee, Line Construction; H. A. Sturges, policy committee, North Bay; J. W. Cochrane, policy committee, Clerical at large; H.O. Eddie, policy committee, Humboldt; William Cook, policy committee, Key System; George Wagner, treasurer, Outside Construction; Cecil Davis, Vice President, San Joaquin; F. R. Brown, Executive Board member, Southern Area; R. T. Weakley, business manager; Frank Gilleran, president-Executive Board member, Stockton; Elmer Bushby, recording secretary, Executive Board member, Colgate; Ray Pembroke, Executive Board member, Northern Area; Marvin Brooks, Executive Board member, Central Area; Alex Purmal, Executive Board member, General and Line Construction; W. H. Bowser, policy committee, Sacramento City Lines; D. L. Smalley, policy committee, Stockton; John W. Jarrell, policy committee, Shasta; P. H. Roehr, policy committee, San Jose; W. N. Stephenson, policy committee, Drum; Charles Rawlins, policy committee, De Sabla; Edward Sunkler, policy committee, Coast Valleys; J.P. Jorgensen, policy committee, Gas Supply & Control; Glen Mosier, policy committee, San Joaquin. Standing, from left: A. D. Coatney, policy committee, Sierra Pacific; J. C. Loschy, policy committee, General Construction. (Local 1245 archives)





#### WORKING IN BELMONT

Working in Belmont, California, are (from left) Bruce Perkins, unidentified, Frank Constane (?), John Bruna, Joseph Martin and Don Wiley. Early 1950s. (Photo: courtesy Joseph Martin)



#### GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

General Construction line crew in Sacramento Valley north of Woodland, California, from left: Ray Decker, Norman Harmon, unidentified, Don Jacoby, Jake Gearhart, Claude Jackson, Francis Penell, Charles Floyd, Mike Collett, unknown, Lyle Schulze. 1957-58. (Photo: courtesy Lyle Schulze)

#### From PAGE W

the UWUA, 156 for "no union."

But no party got a majority in the clerical election, where the results were 994 for the IBEW, 716 for the UWUA, and 364 for "no union." A runoff would be needed.

On April 28, 1952, the clerical runoff election vote tally was announced: IBEW-1327, UWUA-436. On May 5, 1952, IBEW was certified as representative for the clerical unit. Clerical agreements at the districts represented by Local 1245 prior to the election were extended to all clerical workers at PG&E. Two new representatives were added for the clerical unit: Elmer Bushby, clerk A, from Colgate, and Richard

Prothero, clerk C, from Humboldt.

There was, in the end, a blemish on the victory. On May 13, just a week after IBEW was certified as representative for the clerical unit, ballots were counted in the separate election for professional and technical employees. IBEW received 205 votes, the UWUA received only nine votes, but the San Francisco Area Group of Professional Workers—later to become Engineers and Scientists of California—received 390 votes.

But it was only a small blemish. After a half-century of trying, the IBEW had won an enormous victory. For all practical purposes, there was indeed "one union on the system." PG&E workers had a unified voice at last.

## 14. Fifty years of union: Carry it on

**T**he job of the union did not end with the election victories of 1951 and 1952. It was, in fact, just beginning.

Deprived now of its International subsidy, Local 1245 members had to put their organization on a sound financial footing by enacting a dues increase. Relations with the UWUA, which still represented workers at other utilities, had to be repaired. And there was a constant need to sign up members because the contract contained no union security clause.

Just putting a roof over the organization's head was an issue. Having had temporary headquarters at the Sailors Union of the Pacific in San Francisco during the election campaigns, Local 1245 now was in search of new office space, which it found in May of 1952 at IBEW Local 595 in Oakland.

Creating a structure for the amalgamated union was also a great challenge. The old Local 1245 had been a typical AFL union, with power concentrated at the top. The Bay Area people who crossed over to the IBEW in 1948 brought with them the democratic ideals of the CIO, which emphasized empowerment of the rank and file. Together they hammered out a new structure that preserved positive elements of both traditions. The business manager was given broad authority to conduct the business of the union, insuring that the union could speak with one voice in dealing with the outside world. But control over finances was vested in an elected Executive Board, whose decisions in turn were subject to review by an elected group of rank and file members called the Policy Committee. That committee was later renamed the Advisory Council and continues to serve that function to this day.

But probably the largest problem of all coming out of the gate was combining the two contracts. The two groups—AFL and CIO—may have been amalgamated in

**In the end, victory was achieved because those individuals realized that their only true strength was to act collectively. Through union, they could have a genuine voice in determining their own destiny.**

name, but their contracts reflected very different philosophies. Reconciling their differences, and then getting PG&E's agreement, was a major undertaking.

In the years ahead there would be enormous challenges: Grievance procedures were in desperate need of overhauling. Safety concerns needed to be addressed. A proposed Right-to-Work law had to be combatted in 1958. And eventually a union security clause would have to be negotiated to give the union the stability it needed to protect the interests of PG&E workers over the long haul.

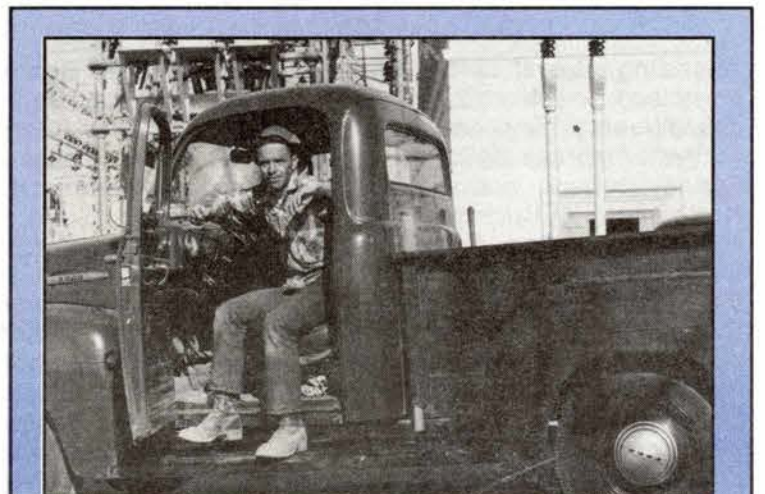
Without a doubt, Local 1245 bears the imprint of the great historical forces of our age. Its character was fashioned by the rise of AFL craft unions in the late 19th century, by the Wobblies who first sounded the battle cry of industrial organizing, and by the CIO which transformed that battle cry into a practical program of industrial unionism. Local 1245, like so many other unions, benefitted from the pro-labor legislation of the New Deal in the 1930s,

and it suffered from the anti-Communist hysteria of the 1940s and early 1950s.

But Local 1245 was never just a mere product of those historical forces. Every step of the way, the union cause at PG&E was advanced by individual workers who had the courage to envision a better life for themselves and their fellow workers. Each injustice on the job that was protested, each election authorization card circulated, each grievance filed, was the act of an individual who cared enough to say: "This is wrong, I'm going to help make it right."

In the end, victory was achieved because those individuals realized that their only true strength was to act collectively. Through union, they could have a genuine voice in determining their own destiny. It was, at its heart, a dream of democracy—not just at the polling place but at the work place.

Individuals who believed in that dream and worked to make it a reality brought the union this far. And they are the ones who will carry it on.



General Construction Station Mechanic Jerry Wells at Semi Tropic Substation in Wasco, California. 1952. (Photo: courtesy Walt Rhinehart)