

UTILITY REPORTER

Solidarity Day '91
See Pg. 16

Cooperative effort

Local 1245, PG&E kick off 'Healthwise' campaign

Local 1245 and Pacific Gas & Electric embarked on a new approach to health care with the recent kickoff of the Healthwise program.

Traditionally, health care has focused on restoring health to people who have fallen ill. Through Healthwise, the company and the union are seeking to prevent people from getting sick in the first place.

The potential pay-off of this preventative approach to healthcare is two-fold: people will enjoy better health and will also be able to play an active role in holding down health care costs.

The recent kickoff to the Healthwise campaign, conducted at the Santa Rosa headquarters of PG&E's Russian River Division, offered employees something of a blueprint for achieving better health, according to Local 1245 benefits special-

ist Wendy Bothell. Employees completed a written survey that evaluated them on a variety of health-related personal habits, including the extent of their smoking and

drinking, whether or not they wear seatbelts, and the amount of exercise they get.

Participants also obtained readings for their height and weight, blood pressure, and

cholesterol level.

All of these factors were then tallied to provide each employee with an overall assessment of his or her health, as well as an indication of what steps the employee could take to become more "healthwise."

PG&E encouraged employees to take part in the health screening by allowing them to do it on company time. In all, 234 employees participated.

Letter agreement

Healthwise grew out of general negotiations between PG&E and Local 1245 last year.

Although the program was not incorporated into the union contract, a letter agreement signed by both parties provides that half of PG&E's divisions will have the chance to participate in Healthwise in 1991, with the other half being given the opportunity

See PAGE THREE



CHECKING IT OUT

Glen Farnsworth, lineman in PG&E's Santa Rosa Division, has his blood pressure checked during the May kickoff of the "Healthwise" campaign. (Photo: Kathy Maas)



ALIEN ATTACK?

Are VDT workers under attack from outer space? Not exactly, but they might just as well be. See Page 4 for a special report.

Sierra orders beards off

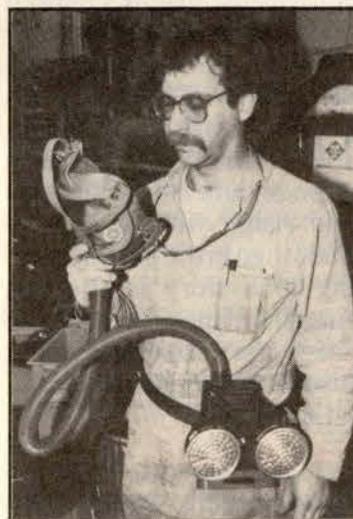
A new policy requiring all plant site personnel to be clean-shaven has generated a storm of protest at Sierra Pacific's two coal-fired power plants in Valmy, Nevada.

The company claims the new policy is necessary to insure that employees wearing respirators on the job can get a proper fit.

Union members charge that the policy tramples on workers' rights while doing nothing to enhance safety. They also say the policy is self-contradictory and is being arbitrarily enforced.

"Even though I've never gone into those areas [that

See PAGE ELEVEN



SIERRA FLIP-FLOP
Mechanic-welder Mark Kearns holds the PAPP respirator he bought after the company said they could be used over beards. Now the company says they can't.



INSIDE

Convention Delegates
Page 2

Measuring Supreme
Court Nominees
Page 3

Cumulative Trauma:
Workers Under Attack
Page 4

Softball Tournament
Page 12

Kicking the Hogs
Out of the Trough
Page 14

CALENDAR

August 3
50th Anniversary
Reception
Chico

August 10
East Bay Stewards
Conference (Special)

August 16
Fresno & Yosemite Div.
Pin Dinner
Fresno

August 17
Fresno & Yosemite Div.
Stewards Conference
Fresno

August 17
Outside Line Stewards
Conference
San Bernardino

August 24
DeSabra Division
Pin Dinner

August 24
Stewards Conference
Chico



UTILITY REPORTER

July 1991
Volume XL
Number 7
Circulation: 27,000

(415) 933-6060

Business Manager & Executive Editor

Jack McNally

President

Howard Stiefer

Executive Board

Jim McCauley
Ron Blakemore
Barbara Symons
Michael J. Davis
Kathy F. Tindall
Andrew G. Dudley

Treasurer

E. L. "Ed" Mallory

Communications Director

Eric Wolfe

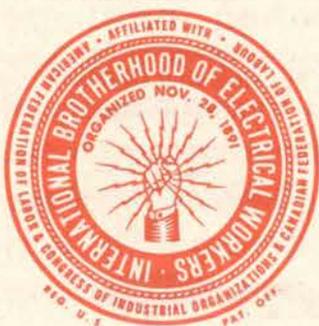
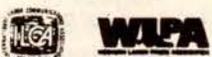
Published monthly at 3063 Citrus Circle, Walnut Creek, California 94598. Official publication of Local Union 1245, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

Second Class postage paid at Walnut Creek and at additional mailing offices. USPS No. 654640, ISSN No. 0190-4965.

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

Single copies 10 cents, subscription \$1.20 annually.

Have you moved lately? If so, please send your complete new address and your social security number to the Utility Reporter, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.



Workers here and abroad

Rolling the union on...

Ugly protest: A member of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union got the dress code at the Windsor, Ontario regional taxoffice changed by wearing his collection of ugly ties to work. The supervisor didn't protest ties with flowers, poodles, and palmtrees, but did hand out one-day suspensions to four workers who wore no ties at all. An arbitrator said that was unreasonable.

Bad boss: 9to5, National Association of Working Women reports this item in its "worst boss" contest: One boss took a blind man and his seeing-eye dog around the office to meet personnel. The man was introduced to management; the dog was introduced to the secretaries.

This is insurance? The US economy entered the current recession with a weaker unemployment insurance system than at any time since World War II, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. In 1990, only 37 percent of the jobless workers nationwide received unemployment benefits in an average month.

Holes in the net: The number of children and families on welfare has soared to record levels nationally. More than 12.5 million Americans, mainly children and their mothers, are now receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children, surpassing a previous high in 1981. There appears to be a stronger link between layoffs and rising welfare applications than in the past, according to a story in the Los Angeles Times, because the safety net of unemployment insurance has more holes in it than before.

Tidy sum: Business Week recently reported that worker pay increased 53 percent during the 1980s, while corporate profits rose 78 percent and the pay of chief executive officers climbed 212 percent to an average of \$1.9 million.

Donald A. Pels of LIN Broadcasting pulled in a nifty \$186 million last year.

Spare the rich: The Bush Administration has attempted to force the IRS to cut back on tax audits of wealthy Americans and corporations and concentrate on lower-income taxpayers instead. According to the House Ways and Means Committee's oversight subcommittee, the White House budget office put pressure on the IRS, which the agency reportedly resisted. The Bush Administration



THE LOOK OF RECOVERY?

President Bush has declared the recession over, but that will come as something of a surprise to the 28,000 job-seekers who filed into this Kansas City state employment office for application forms to fill just 100 openings at a Ford Motor Co. assembly plant.

then slashed the IRS budget allocation for high-income taxpayer audits by \$70 million.

Voice wanted: An "overwhelming majority" of

secretaries said they want some say in decisions to buy office furniture they use, according to a poll of 1,000 secretarial workers by furniture-maker Haworth Inc.

Successful candidates for IBEW convention

Thirteen members of Local 1245 were elected from a field of 123 candidates to attend the International Convention of the IBEW in St. Louis this fall. The winners are:

Perry Zimmerman, Dorothy Fortier, Jim

McCauley, Barbara Symons, Kathy Tindall, Debbie Mazzanti, Sam Tamimi, Mickey Harrington, Ron Blakemore, Leland Thomas, Jr., Lisa Morrison, Anna Gomez, and Bob Choate.

Business Manager **Jack McNally** and President

Howard Stiefer automatically serve as delegates as mandated by the union By Laws.

The list of delegate candidates and the final tally of votes (winners in red) as certified by Patrick C. Gates, judge of the election, is as follows:

Perry Zimmerman	732	Mike Haentjens	253	Bob Johnson	120
Dorothy Fortier	720	Gary Mai	238	Larry Layton	119
Jim McCauley	692	Richard Diaz	229	Jeff Johnstone	117
Barbara Symons	665	Larry Pierce	228	Brian Carpenter	116
Kathy Tindall	623	Richard Dunkin	226	Bob Morante	111
Debbie Mazzanti	549	Terry Jones	225	Cliff Jackson	110
Sam Tamimi	547	Don Ramos	223	Frank Teague	104
Mickey Harrington	526	Grace Coyle	218	Ron Freels	102
Ron Blakemore	454	Ed Mallory	213	Calvin Moss	102
Leland Thomas, Jr.	430	Dennis Mitchell	200	James Cassidy	96
Lisa Morrison	423	Frank Locati	197	John Kenney	96
Anna Gomez	422	Robin Morrison	196	Ted Bare	95
Bob Choate	400	Millie Phillips	194	Craig Banyasz	94
Sandra Weeks	398	Fred H. Pedersen	192	Gene Voight	94
Olivia Mercado	385	Arlis Watson	192	Rick S. Jones	93
Frank Saksenmeier	370	Grover Day	191	Bernard Smallwood	92
Enid Bidou	361	Ron Chan	184	Norman Stout	92
Mike Del Rio	361	Jay Killgore	183	Ed Custer	91
Shirley Roberts	338	Russ Rylee	180	Wayne Fippen	90
A. G. Dudley	325	Jim Findley	179	Sidney Le May	88
Manuel Hernandez	316	Ronald R. Field	170	Al Maclean	85
Edmund Caruso	310	Frank Anderson	169	Mike Richards	85
Art Murray	305	Tom Heyl	166	Walter Mims	84
Debbie Wacker	305	Jeff Sturgis	165	Mike Cronin	83
Bob Gibbs	300	Al Wade	163	John Goodson	83
Donna Dito	296	Steve Ward	163	Gregg King	82
Annette Spencer	295	Bob Abney	156	Dan Penry	82
Patti Eide	294	Litha Saunders	155	John D. Kent	81
Bobby Blair	293	Richard Bidinost	150	Madell Landrum	81
Bob Vieira	288	Jim Russell	144	Mike Robinson	80
Paula Brichacek	286	Gene LeMasters	140	Roy Runnings	79
Mary Jane Peterson	286	Jack Lehman	138	Ivan Lynch	78
Mike Davis	281	Ron Jenkins	137	Frank Marshall	78
Gwen Wynn	272	Robert Martin	137	Robert Weisman	78
Brian Boitano	271	Leslie J. Davis	136	Lou Hogan	70
Dan Lockwood	271	Mike Jensen	136	Keith Neal	69
Dean Gurke	269	Duane Bartlow	134	Jeff Schlocker	65
Dora Carone	266	Bill Butkovich	127	Joe Melin	64
Sylvia O'Connor	265	Steve Montgomery	127	Al James	47
Cora Valdez	263	Bill Caldwell	125	Dwayne Norman	47
Pat Collins	256	Bill Brill	122	James Rupel	47



Conducting recent San Francisco Division Cablemen/Cablemen's Helper ad hoc negotiations with PG&E are (left side of table) union members Howard Braden and Patrick Cantwell, along with Senior Asst. Business Manager Darrel Mitchell and Business Rep. Ed Caruso.

'Healthwise' aims at prevention



Computer provides personalized "Healthwise" evaluation for Fred Bush, light crew foreman in the Gas Department.

From PAGE ONE
in 1992.

In addition to the screening, the program provides reimbursements up to \$100 annually for any employee who participates in nutrition, weight loss, pre-natal or smoking cessation programs.

Health clubs excluded

The union had wanted health club memberships to qualify for reimbursement as well, but the company refused, according to Bothell.

Nonetheless, the union believes the reimbursement plan is a valuable incentive for promoting health-oriented activities among PG&E employees.

"At least it was a foot in the door," Bothell said.



Jeanne Osteen, helper, has her cholesterol checked. (Photos: Kathy Maas)

POINT OF VIEW

Where does court nominee stand on workers' rights?

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager

Crime, affirmative action, and abortion, the "single issue" or "special interest" issues, will be the major points addressed in confirming, criticizing, or praising Clarence Thomas, President Bush's nominee for the US Supreme Court.

US Senate confirmation hearings will question the nominee on his views concerning the law, with the full US Senate voting whether or not to confirm Clarence Thomas' appointment to the highest court in the land.

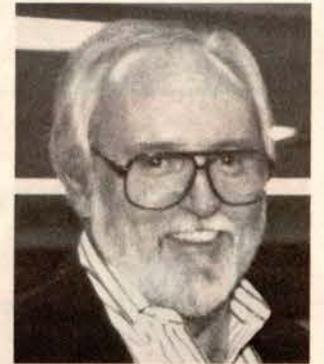
In this process, I doubt much time will be spent on worker rights issues, the issues that affect the majority of Americans on a daily basis.

Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, speaking for the US Supreme Court in 1937 when it declared the National Labor Relations Act constitutional, said:

"Long ago we stated the reason for labor organizations. We said that they (workers) were organized out of the necessities of the situation; that he was dependent ordinarily on his daily wage for the maintenance of himself and family; that if the employer refused to pay him the wages that he thought fair, he was nevertheless unable to leave the employer and resist arbitrary and unfair treatment; that union was essential to give laborers opportunity to deal on equality with their employer."

This case, NLRB vs Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation, was a five to four decision by the Supreme Court. We have a national labor law confirmed by one vote. *There's a lesson on the importance of one vote.*

There have been many



NLRB and court decisions on the interpretation of this law since it was enacted and as amended. The individuals who made these decisions and interpretations were appointed by the various presidents we have had over the years.

Today, organized labor sees many of the decisions as a continuous dilution of a law that was supposed to protect workers by putting them on a level playing field with the employers.

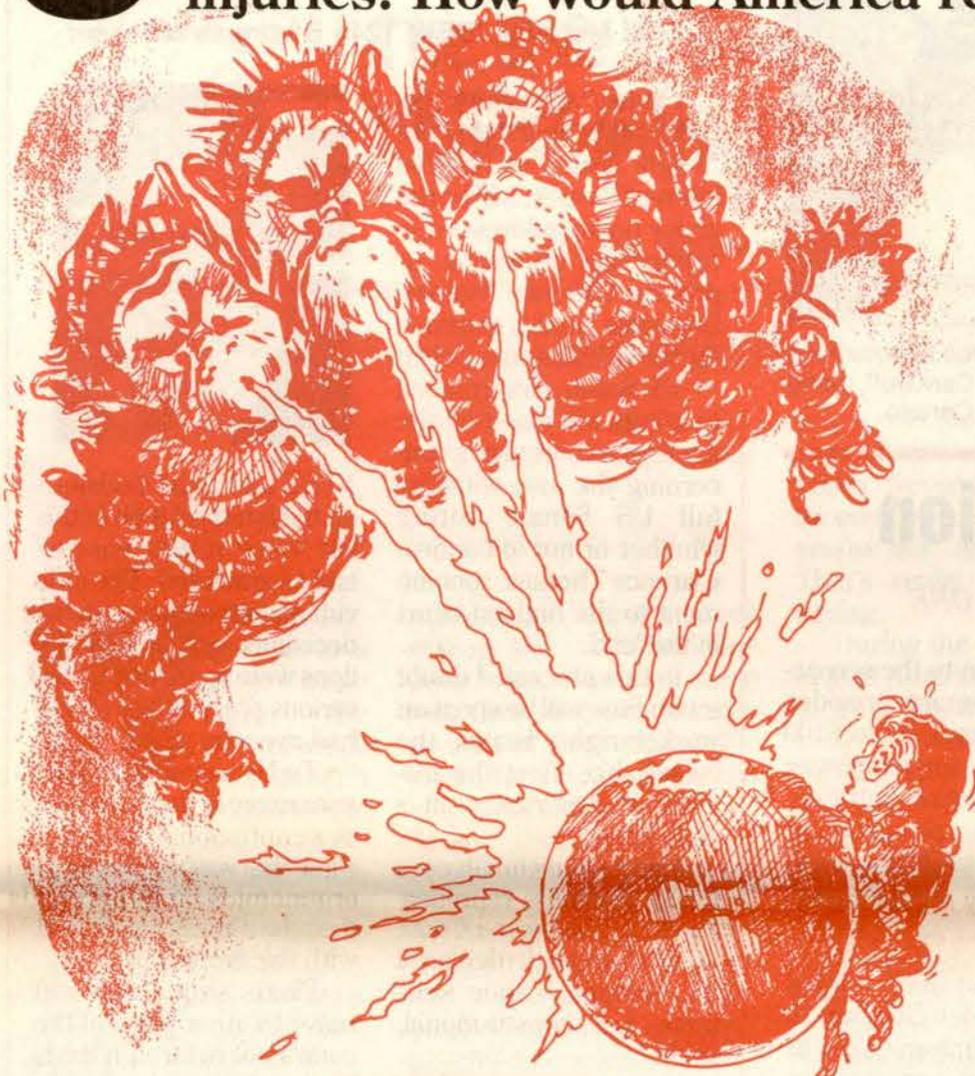
Plants shut down and move to other parts of the country or to foreign lands leaving thousands of workers without a job. We have seen corporate mergers and buyouts by the rich power brokers who then skim off assets and cash, leaving the company and its employees twisting in the wind.

The court has ruled that strikers can be permanently replaced, and employers are allowed to use the administrative procedures of the NLRB to unnecessarily delay and thwart worker organizing efforts.

It is clear the Supreme Court has now shifted to the right. Recent decisions of the Supreme Court expand police power to search without a warrant, expand police power to use illegally obtained evidence and confessions in court. These decisions torture the 4th, 5th, and 6th

See PAGE TEN

Suppose a battalion of three-headed aliens descended from outer space spewing Giant Paralysis-Inducing Laserbeams (GPILs) that struck down hundreds of thousands of Americans with crippling injuries. How would America respond?



Alien Menace

Obviously there would be an outburst of public rage and a huge American military counter-assault.

Now suppose the aliens give up the “three-headed look” for the more stylish “three-piece suit look” and take up jobs leading the nation’s major corporations. They trade in their GPILs for Video Display Terminals (VDTs). Before long, hundreds of thousands of VDT operators are struck down by crippling cumulative trauma disorders.

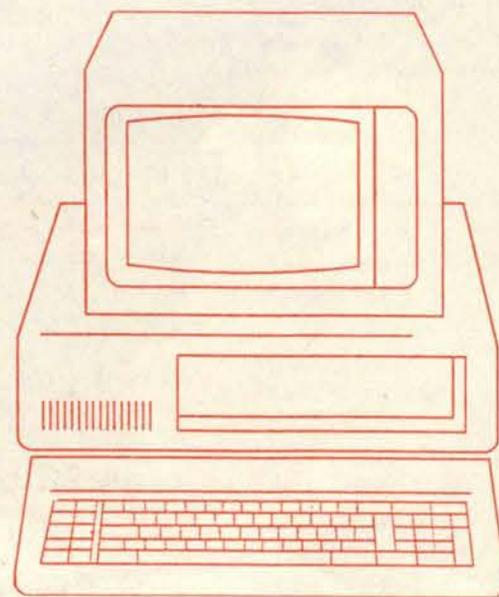
Now what is America’s response? What counter-assaults do our political leaders, public health officials, and business executives launch against this menace?

Unlike the alien attack, the crippling effects of cumulative trauma disorders are real. Many unions and a growing number of public officials demand strong legislative and regulatory action to combat the epidemic, which according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics accounts for half of the nation’s occupational illnesses.

But American business has crafted a different strategy: slow down, delay, stall, and impede.

Among those put at risk by this strategy of inaction are the growing legions of workers who spend a significant part of their day punching keys at VDTs, including over a thousand members of Local 1245. (See Utility Reporter, May 1991).

In Part 2 of this series on cumulative trauma disorders, we look at what California politicians and regulators have done--or have failed to do--to defend workers against this occupational health menace...



Domestic Menace

Up against the giants

Cal-OSHA is the current theater of operations in labor's continuing fight to protect workers from the ravages of cumulative trauma disorders

Part 2

By Eric Wolfe

When Cal-OSHA convened an ad hoc advisory committee this spring to help draft an ergonomics safety standard, it must have given union participants a keen sense of *deja vu*.

They had, indeed, been here before.

Four years ago, responding to a petition from three unions, Cal-OSHA convened an ad hoc committee to study the need for an ergonomics standard for VDT workers. After meeting from September of 1987 to May of 1989, a majority on that committee recommended that a standard be adopted to protect workers from VDT hazards, including cumulative trauma disorders.

Cal-OSHA advised the Standards Board, which holds the final say in such matters, to reject the proposed standard. The standard was rejected.

In an effort to gloss over its betrayal of workers, Cal-OSHA made some high-sounding noise about the need to adopt a general ergonomics standard that would protect *all* California workers, not just VDT operators.

Waiting for Cal-OSHA to produce such a standard, however, was like putting a tooth under your pillow expecting to find money for your mortgage payment there in the morning. The tooth fairy just doesn't deliver like she used to. And neither does Cal-OSHA.

Cal-OSHA took care to

polish up its image by ordering employers in a few isolated cases to redesign their VDT stations. But the promised general ergonomics standard, which could have required protections for all VDT operators and for other employees at risk for cumulative trauma disorders, was instead buried in Cal-OSHA bureaucracy.

As a result, during the next two years untold thousands of California workers fell victim to the painful and crippling effects of cumulative trauma disorders.

Unions, meanwhile, continued the fight for VDT standards on other fronts. In 1990, after many years of trying, labor activists persuaded the California Legislature to enact a bill to regulate the operation of VDTs.

Bitter taste

The bill was vetoed by then-Gov. George Deukmejian, a Republican, who justified the veto on the grounds that a law mandating standards would "eliminate employers' flexibility." Hearing of the governor's concern for employer "flexibility" surely left a bitter taste

in the mouths of those workers who must literally pry open stiff fingers each morning because a cumulative trauma disorder has robbed them of *their* flexibility.

Faced with such unyielding hostility toward workers at the state level, unions brought the battle to the local level. In December of 1990, workers achieved a landmark victory when the San Francisco Board of Supervisors approved an ordinance strictly regulating the use of VDTs.

Other cities, including Los Angeles, began to consider VDT legislation of their own.

It was in this atmosphere of growing public agitation for safety standards that Cal-OSHA this year suddenly convened a new ad hoc committee to help write a general ergonomics standard. In fact, Cal-OSHA's deputy chief for health and standards development, Frank Ciofalo, said he was putting this project on a "fast track" in order to develop a standard as soon as possible.

Spectre of preemption

So what changed? Did Cal-OSHA develop a sudden in-

terest in the health of workers at risk for cumulative trauma disorders?

Labor representatives doubt it. Instead, they suspect that the San Francisco ordinance alarmed California business leaders into pressuring Cal-OSHA to draft a state-wide standard in order to preempt local VDT ordinances.

Whether or not a state standard would indeed preempt local ordinances is unclear. Business representatives on the new ad hoc committee reportedly want a clause written into the standard expressly preempting local ordinances. Labor representatives want the standard to contain language that would permit localities to adopt stricter standards.

But no matter what any standard may say about preemption, the issue ultimately would have to be decided by the courts, according to Lynn Welsh, staff counsel to Cal-OSHA's parent body, the California Department of Industrial Relations.

Welsh said the courts could find that local ordinances merely "add on" to

state law. If there is no direct conflict between the two, the courts could let the laws coexist.

On the other hand, the courts could rule that state regulations *necessarily* preempt local law because the California Labor Code vests the power of regulating health and safety in the Standards Board. Using this reasoning it is conceivable that the courts could even overturn state laws regulating ergonomics on the grounds that the Standards Board is the *only* body authorized to regulate health and safety matters.

Welsh, who will have a hand in actually drafting the proposed ergonomics standard, said Cal-OSHA is committed to sending a draft standard to the Standards Board for approval in 1992.

The delaying game is apparently over. A standard of some sort is on the way.

Formidable opposition

Whether that standard has any teeth depends to a great extent on how much pressure unions can bring to bear on the process. Labor faces formidable opposition.

Among those opposed to effective regulation of VDTs in California are giant corporations that manufacture them, like IBM, and corporations that employ large numbers of VDT operators, like Bank of America and AT&T. Because a general ergonomics standard could regulate *all* occupational exposures, not just VDTs, other employers and employers' associations have also joined the battle, like the

See NEXT PAGE

In 1987, Cal-OSHA convened an ad hoc committee to study the need for ergonomics standards for VDT workers. Waiting for Cal-OSHA to produce such a standard, however, was like putting a tooth under your pillow expecting to find money for your mortgage payment there in the morning. The tooth fairy just doesn't deliver like she used to. And neither does Cal-OSHA.

Bills seek mandatory standards

Even as unions fight for a strong ergonomics standard from Cal-OSHA, they are keeping the pressure up on the legislative front as well.

Many believe that it was passage of the San Francisco VDT ordinance that spurred the current activity by Cal-OSHA. Progress on VDT and ergonomics safety bills in the Legislature will make it clear to Cal-OSHA that the public wants tough ergonomic health standards.

Assembly Bill 644 by Tom Hayden, which would mandate ergonomic protections for VDT operators, passed the Assembly Ways and Means Committee last month and could be voted on by the entire Assembly later this year.

AB 2110 by Terry Friedman is similar to AB 644 but contains additional protections for vision problems and for pregnant VDT workers.

AB 2122, also by Friedman, would implement a statewide ergonomics program through the Department of Health Services.

No action is expected on Friedman's bills until next year.

At some point in the future, the general public may have an opportunity to give feedback on any ergonomic standard proposed by Cal-OSHA. Local 1245 members in California concerned about cumulative trauma disorders would certainly want to participate in that process.

In the meantime, Local 1245 members can act now to help create tough ergonomics standards by urging their assembly members to support AB 644.

Up against the giants

From PAGE FIVE

Associated General Contractors and Gallo Salami.

These forces clearly gained the upper hand in the early stages of the ad hoc committee's work.

When the Cal-OSHA staff presented its first draft of the proposed standard in April, union representatives on the ad hoc committee realized it was not nearly strong enough. They stated firm opposition to any standard that could-through preemption-weaken the protections that had already been won in the San Francisco ordinance.

Corporate hue and cry

But labor's concerns were drowned out by the hue and cry raised by corporate interests.

Although labor representatives can only speculate about what channels these corporate protests were sent through, they apparently hit the mark. When a second draft standard was presented to the ad hoc committee in June, it was even weaker than the first draft.

According to Barbara Kellogg of Service Employees Local 790, the first draft established a hierarchy of workplace controls, a feature strongly backed by labor. In this hierarchy, engineering controls, such as redesigning equipment, are used first. Second in priority are administrative controls, such as implementing frequent rest breaks.

The last priority, to be used only when the other options have been exhausted, is personal protective equipment.

The principle behind this

hierarchy, said Kellogg, is to "make the workplace safe rather than trying to create a situation where you have to make the individual workers safe in an essentially unsafe environment."

Out the window

But that hierarchy went out the window in the second draft, which, according to Kellogg, "had language that personal protective equipment shall be an integral part of the program and shall be used as a substitute for administrative or engineering controls where the protection provided is 'equally effective.'"

A section on medical monitoring also underwent a mysterious transformation between the first draft and the second.

Unions were deeply concerned about language in the first draft that provided for medical monitoring only by company doctors. According to Kellogg, labor representatives told Cal-OSHA they believed that employees "should have a right to get a second opinion from a physician of their own choosing."

Monitoring eliminated

In the second draft, Cal-OSHA responded to these concerns by simply *eliminating* the entire section on medical monitoring.

Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, who represented Local 1245 at the June meeting of the ad hoc advisory committee, called the second draft a "toothless tiger."

"Working people need and deserve a standard with some teeth in it," said For-

"Why should it be necessary for any employees to be injured? Why not take preventative action so that people don't have to suffer?"

*Dorothy Fortier
Assistant Business Manager*



"Here's another OSHA fine to pay off. See if there's some small change in the coffee fund."

tier. "Gums just won't get the job done."

Chamber of Commerce

Not surprisingly, the California Chamber of Commerce is playing a key role in the corporate fight to block regulation of VDTs. Representing the Chamber's interests on Cal-OSHA's ad hoc committee is John Cammidge, a soft-spoken Bank of America executive.

Cammidge gained valuable experience for this assignment last year when he was point man in the San Francisco Chamber's fight to defeat the San Francisco VDT ordinance. During those hearings, the Chamber brought in an "expert" who advanced the absurd position that there is no relationship between cumulative trauma disorders and working at a VDT.

Following its defeat in San Francisco, the Chamber seems to have beaten a retreat on this point and now appears willing to acknowledge that an occupational problem exists.

But is the Chamber willing to support a standard? That seems to depend on whether they think a standard will take some of the heat off of business.

Cammidge notes that some businesses have recently been cited by Cal-OSHA for maintaining unsafe working conditions for VDT operators. He correctly points out that, without any standard in place, there's no sure way for businesses to know what is required of them.

The Chamber, Cammidge told the Utility Reporter, favors "a process that will help

companies come up with the appropriate remedy but without prescribing it in the forefront."

Apparently what this means is that the Chamber is willing for Cal-OSHA to tell business what needs to be done, just so long as business doesn't actually have to do anything.

Sacrificial lambs

In a sense, the battle being waged in the Cal-OSHA ad hoc committee comes down to this: under what circumstances can Cal-OSHA order a company to change the way it does business?

The second draft of the proposed standard, presented by Cal-OSHA staff to the ad hoc committee in June, stated that employers must perform "worksite evaluations" in cases where an employee is diagnosed with a cumulative trauma disorder, or in cases where 5 percent or more of the employees performing similar work report symptoms of cumulative trauma disorder.

In other words, action would be triggered only after injuries had occurred. Unions argue that this approach turns workers into guinea pigs—or worse, into sacrificial lambs.

"Why should it be necessary for any employees to be injured?" asks Local 1245's Fortier. "Why not take preventative action so that people don't have to suffer?"

Preventative action

Preventative action is, indeed, possible. The risk factors for cumulative trauma disorders are well-known. They include, among other

See NEXT PAGE

From PAGE SIX

things, repetitive movements, forceful exertions, and awkward postures.

Perhaps to better focus the debate, the Cal-OSHA staff proposed an "alternative" section in the second draft which included one additional mechanism for triggering a worksite evaluation—one that doesn't require someone to get hurt.

In the "alternative" language, a worksite evaluation would be triggered if any employee is exposed to any "risk factor" for cumulative trauma disorders, including manipulation of heavy objects, repetitive movements, use of vibrating tools, and "assumption of a substantially non-neutral posture which is not properly supported by an external device."

Following the work site evaluation, employers would be required to take certain specified measures to reduce the risks.

Would business agree to use such "risk factors" to trigger work site evaluations and corrective measures?

"I don't think we're arguing there are *no* ways of coming up with measurable risk factors," Cammidge told the Utility Reporter, "but the ones that are listed [in the Cal-OSHA draft] are not only ambiguous but I think can be misleading."

Cammidge cited "non-neutral posture" as an example of ambiguous language.

Kellogg of the Service Employees agrees that the "non-neutral posture" language needs reworking, but she said that there is nothing ambiguous about most of the risk factors listed in the proposed standard, risk factors like repetitive movement and use of vibrating tools.

Risk factors are real

"The risk factors defined in the standard *are* risk factors. There's no question that people who do that work are at higher levels of risk" for cumulative trauma disorders, said Kellogg. "Those risk factors are not ambiguous or misleading."

Kellogg suggested that business and labor let the medical experts have the final say on risk factors.

"If John Cammidge is willing to go along with the medical people on the committee in defining what the risk factors are, and go along with their recommendation, then we're perfectly happy with that," said Kellogg.

Despite a few tantalizing glimmers of hope that business will accept some form of meaningful regulation of ergonomic hazards that give rise to cumulative trauma disorders, an ergonomics standard is no longer on the "fast track" envisioned by Cal-OSHA's Ciofalo in April. Instead, Ciofalo now plans to appoint three subcommittees to try to untangle some of the disagreements in which the ad hoc committee has become entangled.

One subcommittee will attempt to refine technical language in an effort to head off clashes over definitions of terms, such as the "non-neutral posture" phrase that troubled Cammidge.

Construction exemption?

A second subcommittee will discuss whether the ergonomics standard should contain an exemption for the construction industry. Contractors argue for such an exemption on the grounds that construction workers tend to be transient. Labor opposes a blanket exemption for construction. Another possible issue for this group would be whether the proposed exemption would apply to construction workers employed by utility companies.

A third subcommittee will address so-called "labor-management" issues, which presumably means the whole gamut of issues separating business and labor in this dispute.

It remains to be seen if business is prepared to accept a truly preventative approach to cumulative trauma disorders. Union representatives like Kellogg anticipate a bruising battle over these issues in the months ahead. She believes that victory is possible only if unions keep the pressure on Cal-OSHA.

"I don't think we can ignore this one," said Kellogg.

(This fall the Utility Reporter will look at what Local 1245's employers are doing about cumulative trauma)



A SHOW OF SOLIDARITY

Local 1245 members employed by Pacific Gas & Electric recently turned out in a show of support for union brothers and sisters in construction trades picketing a scab contractor on a project south of San Francisco. Members are, from left: Terry Spooner, Tony Street, John Mahoney, Douglas Parrot, Sam Rincon, Dean Uccelli, and Jay Daniels. (Photo: Landis Marttila)

Tentative agreement with City of Willits

Local 1245 reached a tentative agreement with the City of Willits on June 28.

The Memorandum of Understanding, the first between Local 1245 and the City of Willits, maintains 100 percent employer-paid Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) benefits, as well as 100 percent-paid health, dental and vision care. The agreement also provides 12 paid holidays.

One of the most important bargaining achievements, according to Local 1245 attorney Jane Brunner, is the establishment of binding arbitration.

The MOU maintains the current salaries of union members, and includes a provision that if any employee in the city gets a raise, it will be extended to bargaining unit members.

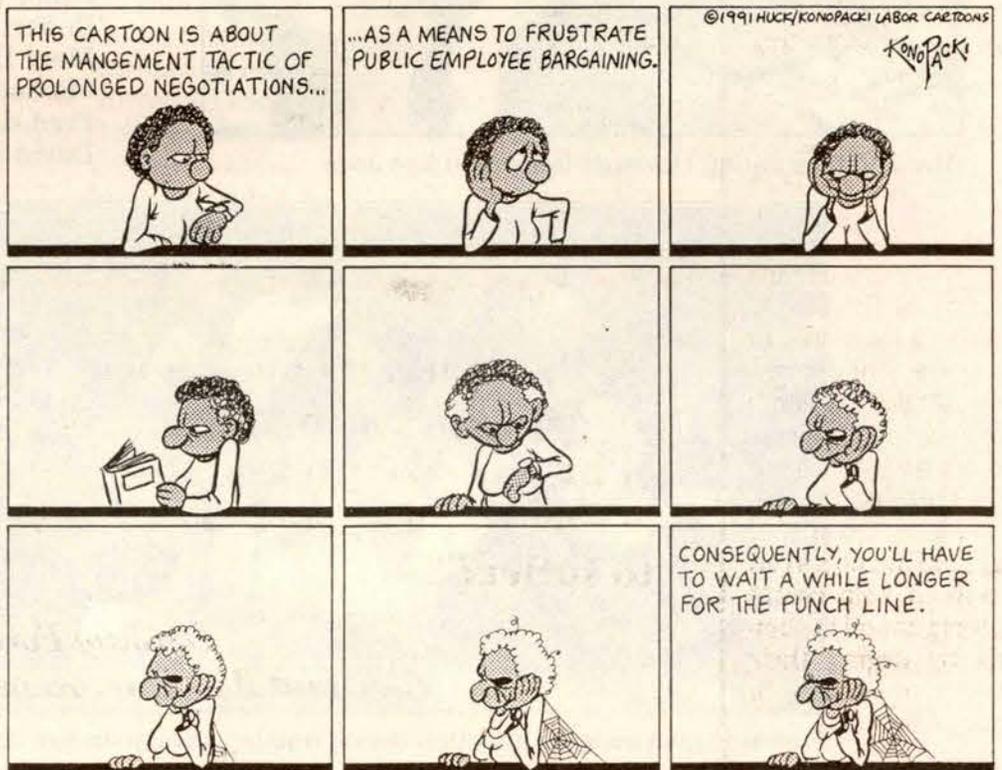
There were improvements in standby pay and compensatory time provisions.

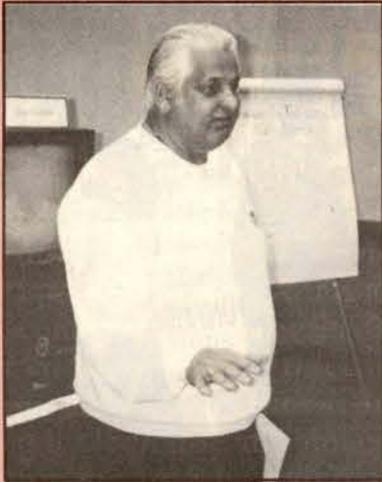
"It was clear from the beginning that the city was not happy with IBEW on the property," said Business Rep. Bob Choate, who served on the bargaining team. "For years the city impasse their employees into agreements, and it was the same approach in this bargaining."

But, Choate said, "threats from the city did not shake the morale of the bargaining team. With several bargaining table maneuvers by the team, we were able to stay out of impasse and reach an agreement."

In addition to Choate and Brunner, the bargaining team, which met with the city on eight occasions, included Irene Longarier, office assistant; Jerry Campbell, maintenance department; and J. C. England, plant operator.

Local 1245 represents clerical and maintenance employees at the City of Willits, as well as employees in plant operations.





IBEW International Rep Dick Robbins led the training.

PG&E shop stewards brush up



Regional stewards training in Sacramento had its lighter moments.

Local 1245 shop out the Pacific attended four conferences this sponsored by the IBEW the full gamut of stew including legal rights and procedures, and the stors. International Robbins conducted the participating steward v International President cate of completion.

Sacramento

Stewart Anderson
Ken Brown
Luckey Carter
Steve Chapman
Thomas Conwell
Barney Curtice
Howard Danielsen
Grover Day
Sharon Delgado
Domenick Dicce
Patti Eide
Frank Elliott
Clarence Felkins

Jerome Fernandez
Timothy Foley
Dennis Goodman
Marie Graham
Constance Haase
Eric Helmle
Harvey Iness
Danny Jackson
Mike Johnson
Christine Lay
Jerry Lee
Olivia Mercado
Forrest Merrel

Bob Morante
Michael Oelrichs
Gary Outlaw
Fred Pedersen
Jimmy Ramirez
Terry Rist
Russ Rylee
Luis Sabala
Myron Stetler
Arnold Streetman
Stanley Teausant
William Tomlinson
Mike Vrooman



Problem solving during regional stewards training in Sacramento.



Give and take during stewards training in San Jose.

San Jose

John W. Coates
Brian Cook
Robert Dailey
Mary Davis
Michael Davis
Fred deAguinaga
David Dow

Art Garza
Manny Hernandez
Ron Hill
Mike Jensen
Nancy Landeros
Richard Landucci
David Mackley
Richard Manley
James Mauzey
Shea Moore

Robin Morrison
Magdalena Munoz
George Naranjo
Gerald Roza
Barbara Saunders
Paul Shirley
Pat Stoffey
Robert Storment
Ron Weeks
Sandra Weeks



Stewards give their full attention during training session in San Jose.



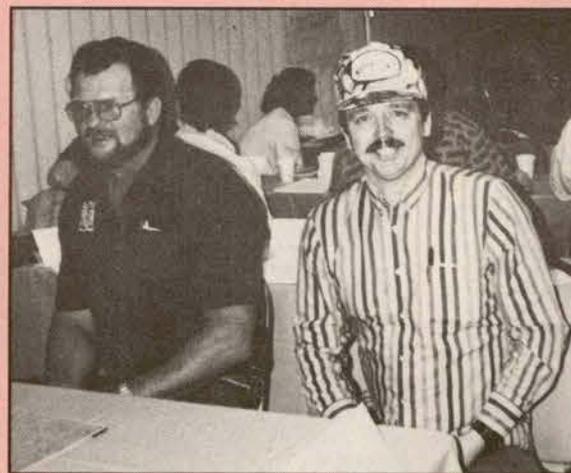
PG&E stewards at training session in San Jose.

stewards brush up skills in regional training pro



ento had its lighter moments.

Local 1245 shop stewards from throughout the Pacific Gas and Electric system attended four regional steward training conferences this spring. The conferences, sponsored by the IBEW International, covered the full gamut of steward responsibilities, including legal rights and obligations, grievance procedures, and the standards used by arbitrators. International Representative Dick Robbins conducted the training sessions. Each participating steward will receive a letter from International President J. J. Barry and a certificate of completion.



PG&E stewards at Fresno training session.



Problem solving during regional stewards training in Sacramento.



PG&E stewards at Fresno training session.

F
Pete Altamira
Fidela Barrios
Tess Bock
Wayne D. Co
L. T. Cordova
Marvin Danie
Darlene Devin
Karl Feil
Dee Green
Chris Habeck
Diana L. Herr
J. M. Jacobso

Jose

Art Garza
Manny Hernandez
Ron Hill
Mike Jensen
Nancy Landeros
Richard Landucci
David Mackley
Richard Manley
James Mauzey
Shea Moore

Robin Morrison
Magdalena Munoz
George Naranjo
Gerald Roza
Barbara Saunders
Paul Shirley
Pat Stoffey
Robert Storment
Ron Weeks
Sandra Weeks



PG&E stewards at training session in San Jose.

Concord

Bradford Applin
Wilma Arjona
William Attinger
Michael Bellmer
Linda Bostic
Martha Bowman
Pamela Caballero
Robert Castillo
Kevin Christensen
William Coutts
Michael Crater
Leslie Davis
Jerry De Baca
James Dorman
Barbra Fain
Alfonso Faustino Jr.
David Fritz
Guy George
Shirley Henry
Harry Hom
James Horton
William Hunt

Clifton Jackson
Richard Jaster
John Kent
Felicia Mack
Carl Makarczyk
Michael Malloy
Rebecca Marquez
David Meier
Michael Noard

Robert Olague
Millie Phillips
Doris Pierce
Robert Quinn
Rao Nagaraja
Theodore Rios
Frank Robertson
Alfredo Salinas
William Smith

William Stage
Melissa Stewart
Barbara Symon
Norman Tkach
Della Underwo
Corazon Valdez
John Vernatter
Donna Whetsto
R. G. Woodford



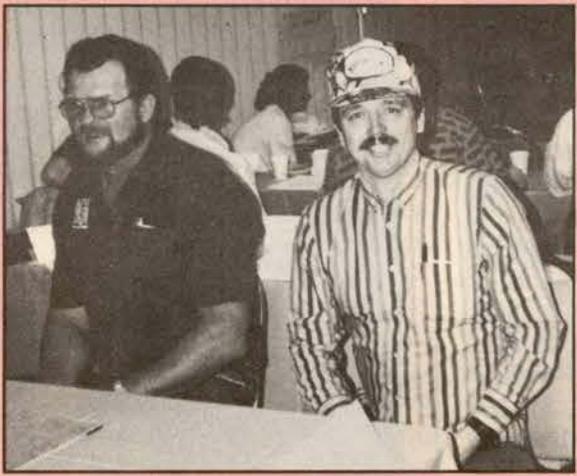
Business Rep Frank Saxenmeier and Cliff Jackson.



Good turnout for regio

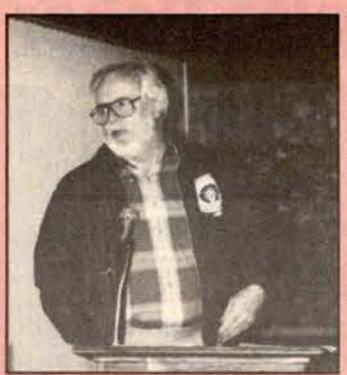
skills in regional training programs

stewards from through-
as and Electric system
regional steward training
spring. The conferences,
International, covered
ard responsibilities, in-
l obligations, grievance
ndards used by arbitra-
representative Dick Rob-
aining sessions. Each
ill receive a letter from
J. J. Barry and a certifi-



PG&E stewards at Fresno training session.

Fresno



Business Manager Jack McNally at regional training session in Fresno.

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Pete Altamirano | Terry Jones | Daniel Pronold |
| Fidela Barrios | Linda Jurado | Robert Richerson Sr. |
| Tess Bock | Daniel Lockwood | Dave Sahlstrom |
| Wayne D. Cook | Ernie Magana | John Shertenlieb |
| L. T. Cordova | Edward Mallory | Rex Shoulet |
| Marvin Daniels | Robert McCormack | Bradley Solso |
| Darlene Devine | Emet Miranda | Gary Uratsu |
| Karl Feil | Dean Mooney | Jennifer Varner |
| Dee Green | Christopher More | Chris Van Dyke |
| Chris Habecker | Lisa Morrison | Arthur Verret Sr. |
| Diana L. Herr | Joy O'Hagan | Billy Arthur Weilage |
| J. M. Jacobson | Sal Perales | Robert Whitley |



PG&E stewards at Fresno training session.



Business Representatives Frank Hutchins, Ron Van Dyke and Mike Haentjens at stewards training session in Fresno.

Concord

- | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Bradford Applin | Clifton Jackson | Robert Olague | William Stage |
| Wilma Arjona | Richard Jaster | Millie Phillips | Melissa Steward |
| William Attinger | John Kent * | Doris Pierce | Barbara Symons |
| Michael Bellmer | Felicia Mack | Robert Quinn | Norman Tkachenko |
| Linda Bostic | Carl Makarczyk | Rao Nagaraja | Della Underwood |
| Martha Bowman | Michael Malloy / | Theodore Rios | Corazon Valdez |
| Pamela Caballero | Rebecca Marquez | Frank Robertson | John Vernatter |
| Robert Castillo | David Meier | Alfredo Salinas | Donna Whetstone |
| Kevin Christensen | Michael Noard | William Smith | R. G. Woodford |
| William Coutts | | | |
| Michael Crater | | | |
| Leslie Davis | | | |
| Jerry De Baca | | | |
| James Dorman | | | |
| Barbra Fain | | | |
| Alfonso Faustino Jr. | | | |
| David Fritz | | | |
| Guy George | | | |
| Shirley Henry | | | |
| Harry Hom | | | |
| James Horton | | | |
| William Hunt | | | |



Business Rep Frank Saxenmeier and Cliff Jackson.



Good turnout for regional stewards training in Concord.



PG&E stewards at Fresno training.

Delta Poker Run: fun on the water

By Jim Dorman

Local 1245's Day on the Delta Poker Run started from Brannan Island State Recreation Area on a warm Saturday morning at 7:30 on the first day of June. After stops at Tower Park, Herman and Helens, Moore's Riverboat, Spindrift and Lighthouse Restaurant, contestants returned to Brannan Island for hot dogs, hot links, chili beans, pork 'n beans and a raffle of many gifts that started at 4:30.

The drawing of poker hands ended at 6 p.m. Only two boats did not make it to the picnic area by 6 p.m.

Ramp raffle gifts included a \$35 gift certificate to Stuart Anderson's donated by Clayton Bowers, and a \$50 discount coupon towards a condominium rental at Lake Tahoe donated by Sea & Ski Travel Agency.

Also donated to the raffle were: a welding torch kit donated by Contra Costa Welding Supply; two fire extinguishers and 10 Pittsburg Power Plant hats donated by Pittsburg Power Plant; two First Aid kits donated by Contra Costa Power Plant; four VHS full-length feature videos donated by Premiere Video; and three dinners-for-two with drinks at the New Mecca donated by the New Mecca.

Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally do-

nated six Local 1245 hats, three "Union Yes" hats, and five "Union Yes" coffee cups. One "Delta Poker Run 1991" hat was donated by Dan Dotey and Jim Dorman.

Two dinners-for-two were donated by Helen and Herman's, two shirts were donated by Tower Park, and two dinners-for-two were donated by Moore's Riverboat.

A "thank you" goes from Poker Run Chairman Bill Pate and myself, Jim Dorman, chairman of Antioch Unit 2317 (the hosting unit), to the volunteers, who included Dave McClelland, Judi McClelland, Gary Daugherty, Dianne Daugherty, Alan Johnson, Maxine Johnson, Tom Warren, Bob Wilcox and Ida Lee.

Winning hands

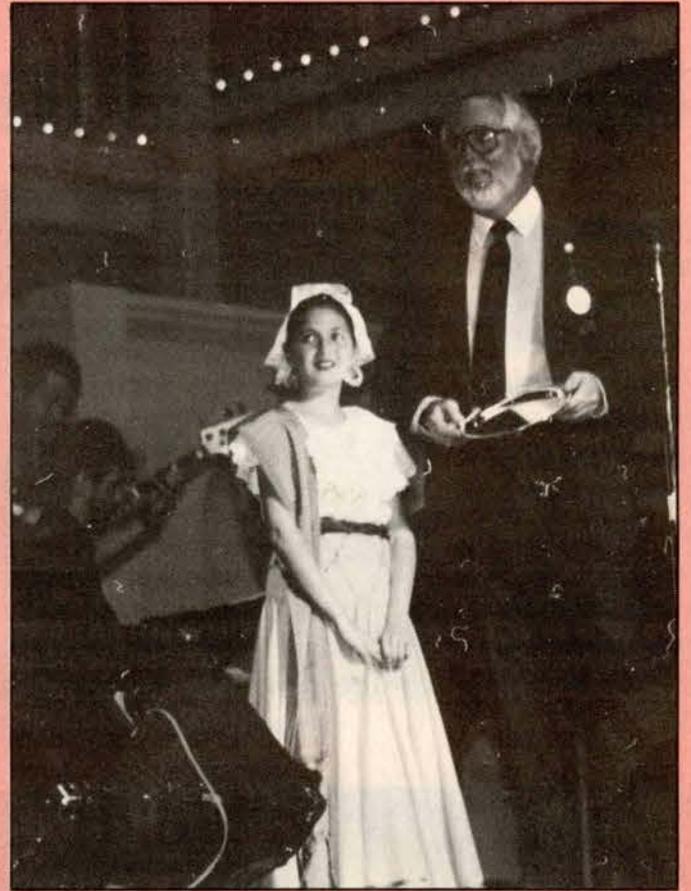
Men winners were Mike Elford (\$45 with 3 Jacks), Don McCrary (\$40 with 3 Sevens), Jim Fletcher (\$35 with 3 Twos), Lowell Poulsen (\$30 with two pair, Aces & Queens), Charles Leake (\$25 with two pair, Kings & Sevens), Darrel Britt (\$20 with two pair, Queens and Fours), James Martin (\$15 with two pair, Jacks & Fours), Joe Aror (\$10 with two pair, Tens & Sevens), and John de Graef (\$5 with two pair, Eights & Fours).

Women winners were Carol Sievers (\$45 with a Straight-9, 8, 7, 6, 5), Pat Phillips (\$40 with a Straight-8, 7, 6, 5, 4), Pat Betcher (\$35

with 3 Jacks), Sandy Bohannon (\$30 with two pairs, Eights & Sevens), Mary Maldonado (\$25 with pair of Aces, K, 5, 2), Sue Good (\$20 with pair of Aces, J, 7, 5), Debi Dollosso (\$15 with pair of Aces, J, 7, 2), Mary Maldonado (\$10 with pair of Aces, J, 5, 2), and Judi McClelland (\$5 pair of Aces, 9, 5, 4).

Non-adult winners were Joshua Gaerlan (\$20 with 3 Kings), Matthew McClelland (\$15 with a pair of Aces), Michael Eflord (\$10 with a pair of Eights, K, 7, 3), Joseph Gaerlan (\$5 with a pair of Eights, J, 5, 3).

We had 131 hands played in the Men category, 100 hands played in the Women category, and 25 hands played in the Non-Adult category. We collected \$768, and after paying out \$360 in expenses were left with \$408 to pay out in prizes, and we paid \$500 out in prizes, giving a final tally of \$92 short. This was because of the increase in the cost of hot links over hot dogs and chili beans over pork 'n beans. This difference was picked up by the Antioch Unit 2317 for this year.



McNALLY HONORED
Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally recently received the "President's Award" for his role in the United Way's fundraising effort for 1990-1991 in the Bay Area. McNally and other recipients were presented their awards by children in costume in a gala celebration complete with live music. Local 1245 members provided substantial assistance to the United Way campaign.

POINT OF VIEW

Where does court nominee stand on workers' rights?

From PAGE THREE
amendments of the Bill of Rights.

Workers should understand that the stated US policy of "encouraging the practice and procedure of collective bargaining and of protecting the exercise by workers of full freedom of association, self-organization, and designation of representatives of their own choosing, for the purpose of negotiating the terms and conditions of their employment or other mutual aid or protection" is also under close scrutiny for chinks in it's ar-

mor by the courts.

Certain individual rights are under attack and these attacks can and do easily spill over to worker rights.

Appointment to the US Supreme Court is for life. The intent was to guarantee the independence of the judiciary. Clarence Thomas is 43 years old and if confirmed would have the opportunity to serve for a very long time.

His views on worker rights are just as important, if not more so, as his views on crime, affirmative action, and abortion.



RETIREMENT PLANNING SEMINAR

Local 1245 members filled the meeting hall at union headquarters in Walnut Creek in May to receive some tips on retirement financial planning from consultant Robert Gallo. The Walnut Creek meeting was one of several such seminars offered around northern California free of charge to members.

Sierra Pacific orders workers to shave beards

From PAGE ONE

require a respirator] I have to shave," said Earl Jones, a Local 1245 shop steward who works in the plant's warehouse.

Even as Jones speaks, up pulls a truck driven by troubleman Kelly Riggs, an 18-year union member still sporting a full beard. Riggs said he was told to shave before reporting for an assignment at the plant. When he refused, Riggs said he was told to go ahead and report anyway.

Incidents like this fuel the employees' belief that enforcement of the policy is arbitrary.

"They're just infringing on our rights," said Riggs. "Where it is a health hazard, they should shave it off. But these guys working in the warehouse, they never have to wear a respirator. Why should they have to shave it off?"

The company refers to OSHA regulations in outlining the new policy. But Jones maintains that the company misconstrues the OSHA regulations.

OSHA does in fact address conditions that could prevent a proper seal when wearing a respirator. According to an OSHA regulation cited in a company document, "such conditions may be a growth of beard" or sideburns, among others.

"If you can pass the company's fit test with this thing on [a PAPR respirator], which I did with my beard and glasses on, that ought to be enough. I don't know why they have a fit test if it's not good for anything."

Mark Kearns, mechanic welder

However, the OSHA document clearly addresses itself to conditions that *may* be a problem. It does not suggest that facial hair is necessarily a problem in obtaining a seal, nor does it expressly prohibit facial hair.

"I think it's harrassment," said Jones.

Skeeter Morris, another Local 1245 steward forced to undergo the razor, believes the policy makes no sense.

"People have grown facial hair here for 20 years," said Morris. "So what's the big deal?"

Mark Kearns, a mechanic-welder at Valmy and a union member since 1984, thinks the company is just plain mixed up. A couple of years ago, he said, the company decided that employees could keep their beards if they used a Positive Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR).

"Several of us bought these," said the newly-shaven Kearns, holding up his PAPR.

"Now the company says they're not adequate."

"If you can pass the company's fit test with this thing, which I did with my beard and glasses on, that ought to be enough," Kearns declared. "I don't know why they have a fit test if it's not good for anything."

Kearns said he was going to hang on to his PAPR until the company figures out "what they're going to do."

Fuzzy thinking

The new policy was spelled out in a Sierra Pacific memo issued on May 10. While the company seeks to get rid of the fuzz on workers' faces, the memo itself displays a bit of fuzzy thinking.

Employees, the memo states, are "required to be clean shaven and to remain clean shaven during their assigned work hours."

This presumably means that employees are free to go home at night and grow beards or mustaches any



KEEPS HIS Troubleman Kelly Riggs, when called out to the plant, refused to shave his beard. He was told to report in anyway, fueling suspicions that the policy is being arbitrarily enforced.

length they wish so long as they are clean shaven again each morning when reporting for work.

Local 1245 Business Rep. John Stralla shares the employees' skepticism that safety was really the issue in the new policy.

"They make people cut their beards off. Why don't they make them stop smoking?" Stralla asked. "That's about the most dangerous thing they do."

Stralla said a grievance was in the works.

Unionists lend hand to Tribune

Union members are coming to the rescue of the Oakland Tribune.

In an effort to help out the financially-ailing newspaper—which employs 400 workers from eight different local unions—half-price subscriptions are being offered to union members who sign up for six months or one year.

"We must do all we can to save our members' jobs, and the way to do that is to keep the Tribune running," said Owen Marron, executive secretary-treasurer of the Alameda County Central Labor Council. "If the Tribune were to close, the void would be filled by arch-conservative voices from outside Oakland."

The Tribune's editor and publisher, Robert C. Maynard, said it "makes sense that organized labor and the ownership of the Tribune would work together for the survival and prosperity of the only Eastbay newspaper that works in a daily and constructive manner with its colleagues in organized labor."

The idea of urging union members to subscribe originated when Tribune workers represented by Local 595 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers urged others in the building and construction trades to sign up.

The six-month rate to union members is \$24.76 rather than the regular \$49.51.

For 12 months it is \$49.51 rather than the regular \$99.01.

For details, call the Tribune at (415) 645-2667.

Local 1245 member wins CLUW post

A Local 1245 shop steward has been elected as president of the San Francisco chapter of Coalition of Labor Union Women.

Millie Phillips, a control operator at PG&E's Hunters Point power station, served as San Francisco CLUW's interim president from September of 1990 until March, when she was elected to a full two-year term.

According to Phillips, CLUW has four objectives: to help women gain leadership positions in labor, to help women organize, to promote affirmative action in the workplace and in unions, and

to promote the education of women in general.

Phillips said she placed a high priority on linking other issue areas up with the labor movement.

"In my view, there aren't any single issues anymore," said Phillips. "Workers' safety and health issues are tied into environmental issues, for example."

Other CLUW officers serving with Phillips are Vice President Suzanne Forsythe of OPIEU Local 29, Secretary Linda Ray of SEIU Local 790, and Treasurer Marjorie Starne, retired member of UE of San Francisco.



Millie Phillips

VICTIMS OF AMERICA'S DOMESTIC WAR



THEY NEED YOU. SO DO WE.

The 29th National AFL-CIO Conference on Community Services July 21-26, 1991 Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill Washington DC Unions Get the Job Done For registration and special discount packet call: (202) 637-5190

Local 1245

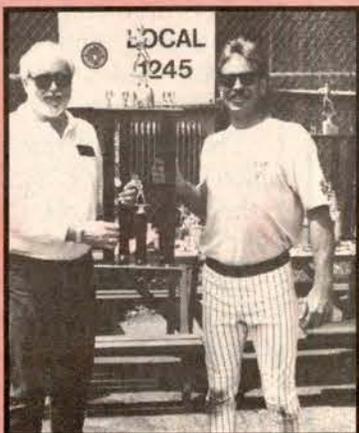
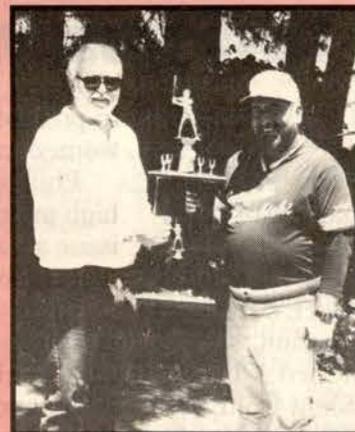
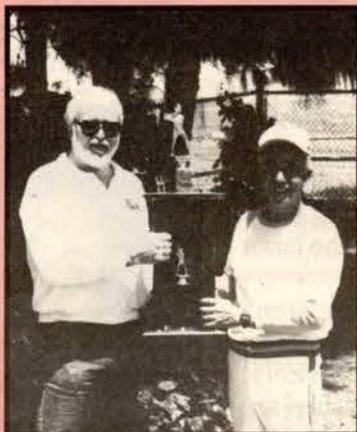
Fourteenth Annual Slow Pitch Softball Tournament

May 18-19, 1991



Winning Teams

1. Livermore Lushes
2. Lisbon Backhoe
3. Death Squad
4. Fairfield Mtsushi



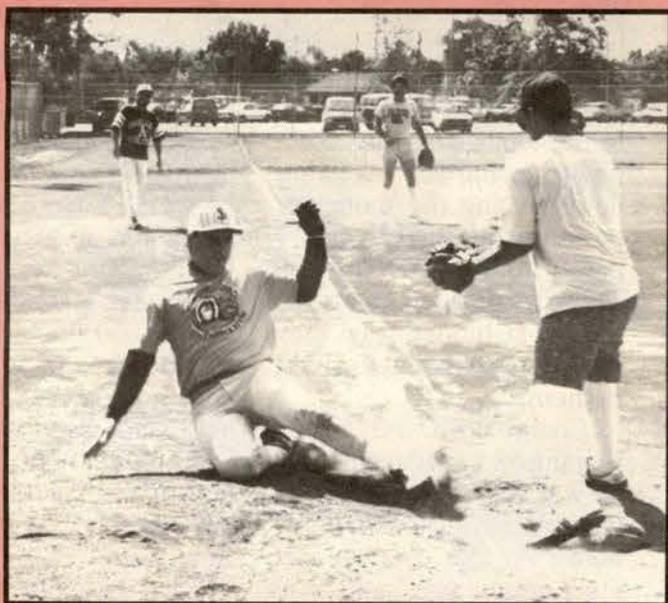
Winning Managers

Local 1245

Play ball!



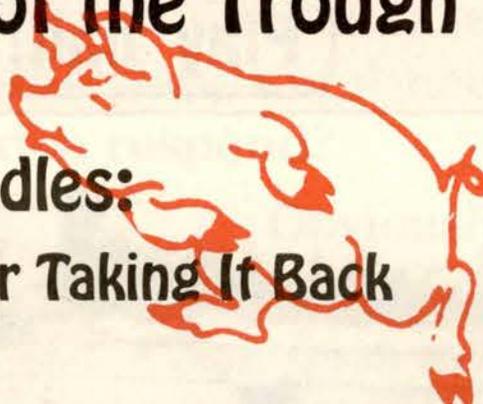
Photos by Ed Caruso



'Kicking the Hogs Out of the Trough'



The S & L Swindles: Our Money, Our Country, Our Taking It Back



By Jim Hightower

Texas Agriculture Commissioner (1983-1990), populist organizer, & political humorist



Jim Hightower (Photo: Eric Wolfe)

Excerpted from Bay Area speech given June 5, 1991, to benefit Plant Closures Project & KPFA radio

"The little bee sucks the blossom but the big bee gets the honey. The little man picks the cotton but the big man gets the money."

--Texas country swing musician Bob Wills

We in this country are in a very huge fight, the likes of which we haven't faced in many years, a fight for the very soul of our democracy. A fight against the greedheads who are stealing from you and me, who are stealing from our children, from our environment, stealing from our destiny as a people.

Our challenge is the same one Franklin Roosevelt took up 60 years ago when he accepted the Democratic Party's nomination in 1932—he said, "Join me in this crusade not to win votes alone, but to restore America to its own people."

There's no justice in America today for working people, no justice for dirt farmers, very little justice for small business people, minority enterprises, entrepreneurs, inventors and wild catters. No justice for old folks, precious little justice for children in our society.

We don't respect workers. We have a work ethic we respect. But we're not honoring workers, we're not rewarding workers.

The very top dogs in our society, from the White House to Wall Street, may salute the American work ethic, but they disrespect the American worker.

General Motors just a year ago laid off several thousand workers in Detroit on the

basis those workers were excess and could be done away with. That very same year they put bonuses in the pockets of 3300 white collar executives, including the chief executive, Roger B. Smith, [who went] from \$700,000 a year retirement payout annually to \$1.25 million annually.

Their rationale was that this was necessary to make General Motors more competitive with other US corporations. They had just laid off I believe something on the order of 13, 14 thousand workers on the basis that in order to be more competitive they had to lay off the workers. Now they're saying in order to be more competitive we have to increase bonuses to our executives. Here are people who think they're the top dogs and the rest of us are fire hydrants.

Philosophy of greed

The government of the people, instead of standing with the working folks of this country, are implementing a pernicious philosophy of

greed. A philosophy that says, "I got mine, you get yours. Never give a sucker an even break. I'm rich and you're not. Adios chump." That's really what they're saying.

During the 1980s, 80 percent of American people lost income. The richest 10 percent of Americans had a 16 percent increase in their income. The richest 5 percent, they had a 24 percent increase. The richest one percent, had a 74 percent increase in their's. They started with \$314,000 average income in 1980. They ended the decade with \$540,000 in average income.

None of us is more than one or two paychecks removed from poverty, and why is that? Because we don't own anything. You subtract what you owe from what you have, you're in trouble. And if you lose your paycheck for one, two, three months, you're in serious trouble. They're coming to knock on your door and take away from you what you think you have, like your car, and like your house.

The few have the most and they got more under Reagan. Reagan and the Congress.

In 1973, for example, the wealthiest one percent of American families owned 19

percent of everything. That's all the cash, stocks and bonds, the houses, the vacation homes, the yachts, the tupperware, everything. By 1988, one-half of one percent owned 33 percent of all of that. That's 400,000 families. One-half of one percent owned more than the bottom 90 percent.

Redistribution of wealth?

People say to me, "Hightower, you're talking about the redistribution of wealth, aren't you?"

Well, yes sir, I am. We have had the most massive redistribution of wealth in our history during the 1980s, taken from the many and siphoning that wealth off up to the top. Using the taxing power, using the spending power, using the monetary power, using the regulatory power of the government. Those wealthy few got their's the old-fashioned way: they got the government to give it to them.

George Bush when he was running for president in 1988, he was scooting around the country saying "We got a boom" in this country. But most people are looking at their pocketbook, checking their purse, looking at that bank account at the end of

the month and they're saying, "A boom for whom?" Not for them. That boom is like so much distant thunder, rumbling off the horizon there. You hear it, you see the occasional flashes of lightning, the Donny Trumps, people like that. You see that. But like they say out in West Texas, thunder ain't rain.

In 1986, Michael Milken made \$550 million, personal income. What is \$550 million? Think of it like this. Consider the typical American, somebody who made \$30,000 a year. [Say] Michael Milken was 10 times more industrious, more smart, better looking, than that typical American. Then he might have taken home \$300,000. If he was 100 times better, then he would have taken home \$3 million. If he was a thousand times better, he would have taken \$30 million. If he was 10,000 times better he would have taken \$300 million. If he was 15,000 times better he would have taken \$450 million. He took \$550 million. He was nearly 20,000 times better than the typical American.

That's the distortion that results from this philosophy of greed.

[Recently] George Bush was absolutely giddy because the Dow Jones Average had gone above 3,000. Wall Street's whizzing, it's above 3,000. Do you know what the Dow Jones Average is? I don't. Does it move you that it's above 3,000, does it make a lot of difference? I want to know what the *Bill Jones* Average is. What's the price of spam today? That's the indicator I'm interested in.

Do you know what the Dow Jones Average is? I don't. Does it move you that it's above 3,000, does it make a lot of difference? I want to know what the *Bill Jones* Average is. What's the price of spam today? That's the indicator I'm interested in. Sure Wall Street's whizzing, but it's whizzing on you and me.

Sure Wall Street's whizzing but it's whizzing on you and me.

This has been a meaner and rougher administration. Right out of the chute they veto the plant closing notification bill, they veto the family leave bill, they veto the civil rights bill. Right out of the chute George Bush proposed a capital gains tax break for the wealthiest families in America.

Highflying hucksters

But nowhere have we seen the economic voodoo as outlandishly applied as we have in this Savings and Loan bailout ripoff, in which our government is letting a bunch of highflying hucksters and Wall Street speculators steal billions of dollars out of our pockets. The S & L debacle under Ronald Reagan, that was bad enough. In which they said, "We're going to lift the limit on FDIC guaranteed deposit from \$40,000 to \$100,000. Then we're going to allow the S & Ls to pay 10, 11, 12 percent interest on those deposits so we can attract the super wealthy to come in there." And they did. "Then because these folks are such geniuses we're going to turn them loose to build highrise buildings in Houston, strip shopping centers in Miami, condos in Aspen and that kind of thing." Inevitably leading to the kind of demise we have.

If ignorance was bliss these guys were ecstatic to start with, 'cause this didn't have a prayer or working from the get-go.

That was bad enough. Now comes Brother Bush and the Congress saying, "We want you, middle income people, low income people, to pick up the tab for this. You and your children, to clean up the mess that you profited not a dime for and now have to pay for."

Structural thievery

Whose mistakes are we bailing out here? We did have an embarrassment of thieves down in Texas, no question about that. But the issue is not the few thieves. You can add up everything they took and it's just a minor few billions of dollars. The issue is the structural thievery that took place, that allowed the

rich investors and speculators to move in and cause the debacle and now come in and pick the carcass of the S & Ls and get paid by us taxpayers to do that.

One of those is the poster-boy of S & L syndrome, Neil Bush himself. You want to get one of those Neil Bush loans, don't you? Has no interest, no principle, never matures.

Neil Bush got punished of course for his indiscretions by the Federal government. They said if he was going to have to do anything unethical as an S & L or banking person in the future he would actually have to consult a lawyer before he did it. The S & L bailout of the Silverado S & L (that he was a director of) cost the taxpayers roughly a billion dollars.

The government agency set up to deal with this crisis, in a moment of exuberance, tried to file suit and recover from Neil Bush and 10 other directors of that Savings and Loan, as high as \$200 million of that cost, 20 percent of the bailout. Then they negotiated a settlement in which they said OK we'll take 50 million, 5 percent of the bailout. Then it turns out the part of the settlement that is going to be paid by the directors is only \$27 million, less than 3 percent of the actual bailout.

Neil Bush pays 'zippo'

And then you learn that Neil Bush is broke and apparently he doesn't have any insurance. So the amount he will pay will be zippo, none a'tall, not a bit.

So he escapes, as the son of the president of the United States. If you did to a 7-11 what Neil Bush and this administration did to the Savings and Loan industry you'd be doing 10 to 20 in the state penitentiary.

But Neil Bush is taking a walk. We the taxpayers are assessed the tab for this. Pretty good tab, too. 1989, the first bailout: \$50 billion. Brother Bush said, "Never again will the taxpayers have to bail out the S & Ls."

His never again lasted about 18 months. They were back in March this year, got \$78 billion more. They're going to come back in August looking for \$80 to \$100 billion. Stanford University

My old Aunt Eula, used to farm down in Texas, she told me some years ago, "The water won't ever clear up until you get the hogs out of the creek." That is exactly the problem: the hogs are in the creek. They are fouling our economic, our political, our environmental waters. You do not get the hog out of the creek by saying, "Here hog, here hog." You get the hog out of the creek by putting your shoulders to it and shoving it out of the creek.

says we're talking about \$1.4 trillion going into the S & L bailout.

We come along and say we've got this toxic pollution problem here, we ought to be cleaning this mess up. They say, "Yes, you're sure right about that, but we don't have any money." We go in and say we need affordable day care, affordable health care, affordable housing. They say, "Well yes, those are big problems and we sure care a lot about that, but we've got a federal deficit and it just can't be done." We need fair farm prices, we need a jobs program, we need to repair the infrastructure. They say, "Yes, all that's true, but we won't be able to fit those things in."

But here come the bankers [asking for a bailout]: *\$1.4 trillion right on the table.*

Now agreed, that's off-budget. As Dave Berry wrote, that means they write it down on an entirely separate piece of paper.

Somebody's got to pay

It is of course *on* budget. Somebody's got to pay for it. It's going to be you and me and our children and our grandchildren over 40 years time that are going to pay for this bailout if we let 'em get away with it. *I believe not a dime of our tax money should be spent on this bailout.*

You say, "Hightower, that's cute, but where you gonna get the money to pay for that bailout." Well, like Jesse Jackson says, "We're going to get it from where it went." The people who had the party in the 80s and made that mess, they should be the ones to pay for the cleanup. It's possible to do that. Let us ask them to do that.

Sadly, we've had strong Democratic participation in this robbery of the people going on in Washington DC. It's kind of like being bit by your pet dog. That bite'll heal but you'll never feel the same about that dog again.

Go see some of the [Democratic wobblers on the S & L issue] and say "We notice in March you voted five different times to give \$78 billion to the S & L hucksters. You're going to have another opportunity in August and I'm just almost sure you're going to straighten up before then."

Kickin' the hogs out

My old Aunt Eula, used to farm down in Texas, she told me some years ago, "The water won't ever clear up until you get the hogs out of the creek." That is exactly the problem: the hogs are in the creek. They are fouling our economic, our political, our environmental waters. You do not get the hog out of the creek by saying, "Here hog, here hog." You get the hog out of the creek by putting your shoulders to it and shoving it out of the creek. And that's what politics really is: an organized way to shove the hogs out of the creek.

We've been fairly comfortable over the years since the 1930s because we thought we had a party doing that for us [the Democratic Party]. But they've been doing it to us.

The Savings and Loan bailout whizzed through the Senate Banking Committee chaired by a Democrat from Michigan, two days after Mr. Bush presented it to them without a public hearing, with eight minutes of public deliberation by them, on a voice

vote. More of a grunt, actually.

Some people think we need a third party. I think we could use a second party. And I want it to be my party, the Democratic Party. But it's not going to be that until Democrats get out of the living rooms and corporate suites of the rich where they go to raise money, and begin to get into the communities and neighborhoods of folks like you, all across the country, raising issues, raising hope, and raising a little bit of hell. That's what politics is supposed to be all about.

The true political perspective in America is not right to left, it's top to bottom. That's where people are, they're out here [in the community]. You've got to be talking to them.

People say, "Well, Hightower, all that's cute, but after all what is it you're really talking about. What are you seeking in life?"

Well, this will do:

"We want more school-houses and less jails, more books and less arsons, more learning and less vice, more constant work and less crime, more leisure and less greed, more justice and less revenge. In fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better nature."

That's from Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor in 1893. That'll do.

For more information, contact Jim Hightower's Financial Democracy Campaign, 604 W. Chapel Hill St., Durham, NC 27702.

In California, call Plant Closures Project at (415) 763-6584.

“We Are One”

That was the theme of Solidarity Day ten years ago, when hundreds of thousands of working women and men gathered in Washington to show that they were unified and ready to meet the attack on the labor movement launched by the Reagan Administration. They promised to keep on fighting for economic and social justice, regardless of the political fashion of the moment. It has not always been easy, but that promise was kept.

Now, the time has come for the labor movement to gather in Washington once again to show its solidarity--to demonstrate its continuing commitment to achieving a better life for the working people of this country.

Solidarity Day 1991 will have three goals:

*A ban on the permanent replacement of strikers. From the New York Daily News to Phelps Dodge in Arizona, corporate bosses have been hiring non-union workers as permanent replacements. Permitting permanent replacement disrupts the American system of collective bargaining and threatens the ability of the trade union movement to negotiate fair and effective

SOLIDARITY WORKS!

labor contracts. On Solidarity Day 1991, the trade union movement will call on Congress to put a stop to this ugly practice.

*National health care reform. While the United States spends more on

health care than any other nation in the world, soaring costs have put even the most basic health care beyond the reach of too many working people. On Solidarity Day 1991, the trade union movement will

demonstrate its support of a program of national health care that will provide access for all, cost containment, and quality care.

*Full freedom of association at home and abroad. In this country, the law places a maze of obstacles in the path of workers seeking to organize into unions. Many public employees at the state and federal levels are denied essential collective bargaining rights. Abroad, workers in countries governed by regimes of the right and left continue their struggle for free and independent unions. On Solidarity Day 1991, the trade union movement will reaffirm its commitment to the freedom of association that is fundamental to a democratic society. We will insist that our rights as free women and men be respected.

The AFL-CIO declares Aug. 31, the Saturday of Labor Day weekend, to be Solidarity Day 1991. We call on all union members to come to Washington on that day to demonstrate for our rights and show America that we are one, we are strong, and we are determined.

-Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council, Bal Harbour, Florida, Feb. 18-22, 1991

Our Democracy Is A Joke



And It Ain't Funny Anymore!

DEMAND
The Right To Organize
DEMAND
The Right To Strike

Solidarity Day
 Saturday, August 31, 1991
 Washington, D.C.

Huck/Konopacki Labor Cartoons - June, 1991