



## Local 1245 lambastes CPUC report

Local 1245 responded angrily to a CPUC report that accused PG&E of tolerating an "error prone work culture."

In a letter to CPUC President Richard Bilas, Business Manager Jack McNally called the report on the Dec. 8 San Francisco power outage an "outrageous publicity stunt" designed to upstage a report being released on the same day by California's Independent System Operator.

The ISO, which conducted a more extensive investigation than the CPUC, found no evidence of any such "error prone" work culture at PG&E.

"No one can dispute that the outage was serious and that PG&E should be held accountable," McNally wrote. But he noted that PG&E's reliability had risen substantially in recent years due to major investments by the company.

"The biggest threat to reliability today is from the PUC itself," McNally charged, noting that the commission recently took away \$80 million from PG&E for transmission improvements, and has called for PG&E to spend less money on tree trimming.

McNally called PG&E workers "second to none in their capabilities, their integrity, and their commitment to their work."

See Page Two for Full Text

## Members ratify new pact with SMUD

Local 1245 members ratified a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Sacramento Municipal Utility District last month that boosts wages, enhances job security, establishes a state-certified apprenticeship for various classifications, and lays the foundation for a "2% at 55" retirement provision.

The MOU, ratified by an overwhelming 78% of members voting, provides wage increases of 2.75% in the first year and 2.25% in the second year. Wage increases in the third year will be tied to the Consumer Price Index, with a maximum hike of 4% and a wage re-opener at 6%.

These negotiations marked the second time the union had attempted to bargain a "2% at 55" retirement provision. Under this formula, "2" is the multiplier used to determine an

### UNION NEGOTIATORS

Representing Local 1245 on the SMUD negotiating committee were: Les Hulett, line foreman; Ray Gladden, building maintenance mechanic; Art Torres, electrician and union Advisory Council member; Dave Relshus, senior vehicle mechanic; David Doll, meter technician; Martin Correia, tree trimmer; Ike Williams, utility crew foreman; and Business Rep. Dennis Seyfer.

employee's retirement pay. An employee with 25 years of service, for example, would receive two times 25, or 50%, of his or her base rate.

The negotiations produced a funding mechanism for 2% at 55, but

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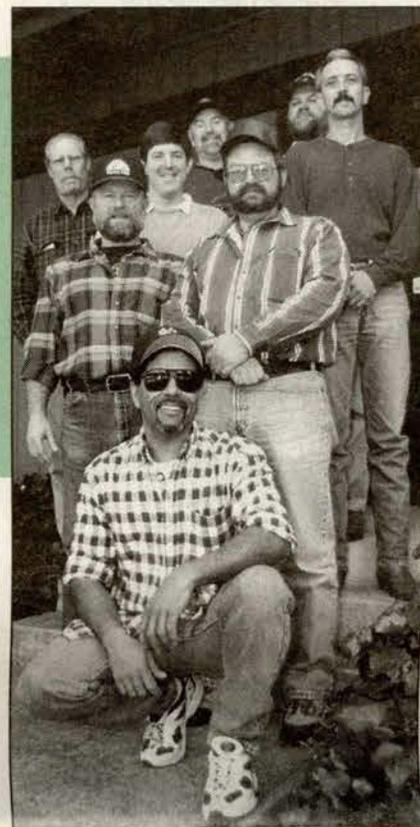


Photo: Eric Wolfe

## Job security talks at Sierra Pacific Power

Local 1245 opened negotiations with Sierra Pacific Power last month over job security concerns in the wake of the company's proposed divestiture of three generating stations.

Union membership has grown to 99% among the 200 or so employees at the three affected plants, including generation employees in warehouse, fleet maintenance and diesel hydro. The membership growth comes in spite of Nevada's "right-to-work" law, which forbids labor agreements that require employees to pay dues.

"These employees have made a conscious decision at these three



### TALKS BEGIN

Local 1245 began divestiture talks with Sierra Pacific Power on March 19. Representing the union are Sierra Pacific Power employees Mark Chidwick, John East, Grant Garrison, John Mauldin, Randy Osborn, Lee Soukup, and (not pictured) Steve Dobyms and Tom Cornell, assisted by Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Perry Zimmerman and Business Rep. Ray Thomas.

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April 24  
Service Awards  
Chico, CA

April 24  
PG&E Steward Conferences  
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May 1  
MICKEY HARRINGTON  
Retirement Party  
Sacramento, CA  
RSVP by April 21 to Austin Lea  
(925) 933-6060 ext. 240

May 1-2  
Advisory Council  
Sacramento, CA

May 15  
Service Awards  
Fresno/Merced, CA

May 22  
Service Awards  
Redding, CA

**APPOINTMENTS**

**CONFERENCES, COUNCILS & CONVENTIONS**

California State AFL-CIO  
Legislative Conference  
Jack McNally  
Jim McCauley  
Ed Mallory  
Mike Davis  
Jim Findley  
Mickey Harrington  
Eric Wolfe

Nevada State AFL-CIO  
Legislative Conference  
Jack McNally  
Bob Choate  
Perry Zimmerman  
John Stralla

IBEW 1999 Telecomm. Conference  
Jack Osburn  
Monte Nelson  
Kathy Silas

IBEW Spring Meeting of Calif. State  
Assoc. of Electrical Workers  
Jack McNally  
Art Murray  
Rich Dunkin  
Jim McCauley  
Kit Stice

Western Hemisphere Workers'  
Conference on NAFTA  
Hunter Stern  
Millie Phillips  
Robin David  
David Walters  
Bob Quinn  
Aaron Reavan

California Labor Federation  
Women's Conference  
Dorothy Fortier  
Kathy Tindall  
Chris Habecker  
Anna Bayless-Martinez

**POINT OF VIEW**

**CPUC's contemptible slur**

By Jack McNally, Business Manager



Business Manager Jack McNally has sent this letter to CPUC President Richard Bilas, with copies to several media outlets and political leaders:

The Public Utilities Commission report on the December 8<sup>th</sup> power outage in San Francisco was an outrageous publicity stunt that unfairly slurred PG&E employees and obscured rather than clarified our understanding of the outage.

The PUC, which accused PG&E of having an "error-prone work culture," is in no position to make such a sweeping claim. The PUC does not have legal authority over California's transmission grid, and the PUC staff knows very little about the transmission system.

Nevertheless, the PUC deliberately timed the release of its report to up-

stage a report being released on the same day by the Independent System Operator (ISO).

The ISO was established by the California Legislature to operate and regulate the transmission grid and to insure electric reliability for the people of California. Under current regulations, the ISO is required to make a report and recommendations to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on its findings about disturbances such as the December 8<sup>th</sup> outage. The ISO's investigation of the outage was far more authoritative than the PUC's, and it found no evidence of any so-called "error-prone work culture."

The PUC's flight from reality does a disservice to the public, which has a right to know exactly what went

wrong on December 8<sup>th</sup>, and to the 14,000 men and women who work diligently, day and night, to provide reliable electric and gas service to 4.5 million PG&E customers. PG&E employees work long hours under frequently difficult and dangerous circumstances to keep service reliable. To brand the whole workforce as "error prone" because of the December 8<sup>th</sup> outage may get headlines for the PUC, but it is outrageously unfair. The PUC's consultant trotted out boiler plate criteria and then attempted to force the facts to fit a critique they already had designed. A careful reading of the recommendations in the report suggests to me that the report is simply a bid for additional work by the consultants who wrote it, rather than a serious effort to uncover the truth.

No one can dispute that the outage was serious and that PG&E should be held accountable. As a member of the governing board of the ISO, I take the issue of accountability very seriously. I have no desire to excuse inappropriate behavior by PG&E. In the past, I've publicly called PG&E management to account. I protested loudly when PG&E cut its workforce to dangerously-low levels in the early 1990s, reductions that led to disastrous and prolonged outages during the storms of 1995.

However, in recent years PG&E has worked very hard to do the right thing. They've focused on reliability and spent shareholder money to improve the system. PG&E's reliability has risen substantially, though you would never know it from the PUC consultant's snide report.

The biggest threat to reliability today is from the PUC itself. It is the PUC that last year took away \$80



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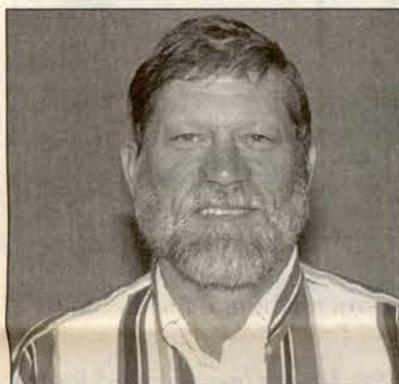
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**Q: Do you favor legislation making it easier for workers to organize unions?**



▶ “Yes I do. As the business climate gets more and more competitive, businesses are getting more benefits from state and local governments to maintain their operations in California. Workers need similar benefits--for instance, speaking with one voice so their needs and concerns are listened to. I’m concerned about job security for employees and I’m afraid they’re getting left in the dust by technology.”

Kevin Herd  
Service Rep.  
PG&E  
San Jose Call Center



▶ “Yes. Legislation seems to be going in the opposite direction lately and we need to turn that around. The only true friend the working man has in the workplace is the union.”

Rich Cowart  
Lineman  
PG&E Concord



▶ “Absolutely I favor it. It seems strange that any worker would be afraid to organize, but they are. I once talked to a couple of nonunion Marriott janitorial workers who were servicing PG&E’s San Ramon Learning Center. When I suggested maybe they should organize, you should’ve seen the look on their face--they were afraid they’d be terminated. Whatever legislation you pass has to have the teeth to take that fear away from those nonunion employees so they feel free to make those choices.”

Joe Osterlund  
Field Garage Mech. A  
PG&E GC Oakland



▶ “It would be beneficial to everyone. We need more unions...for more stable wages and long-term jobs. In order to form a more perfect union you have to stand behind one.”

Kim Reed  
Service Rep.  
PG&E Fresno Call Center

Have a union issue you’d like to see addressed in *Speaking Out*? Send your suggested topic to: *Speaking Out*, IBEW 1245, P.O. Box 4790, Walnut Creek, CA 94596. Opinions expressed are those of the individual, and do not necessarily reflect official Local 1245 policy.



## 'Footlocker 8' fight sweatshops

A New Hampshire district judge has ruled that eight New Hampshire citizens arrested for protesting sweatshops cannot use the state's "competing harms" principle as a defense.

The so-called "Footlocker 8" were arrested last year for passing out leaflets outside the Foot Locker, a retailer located in a privately-owned mall. The citizens said their actions were necessary in order to stop the exploitation of workers who make products for Nike, Disney, and J.C. Penney. The Foot Locker chain is Nike's number one wholesale customer.

Under "competing harms," an otherwise illegal act is permissible in New Hampshire if it is taken in order to prevent a greater crime from being committed.

"The abuses committed in sweatshops—exploitation of children, starvation wages, and repression of union organizing—are much worse than any harm caused by our leafleting," said Judy Elliott, one of the defendants.

With the competing harms defense foreclosed, the defendants could be found guilty of criminal trespass. In that event they plan to appeal to the state Supreme Court on free speech grounds.

Courts in some states have ruled that malls cannot prohibit free speech, but the issue has never been tested in New Hampshire courts.

The joining of labor and free speech issues dates back to the early 20th Century, when the Industrial Workers of the World defied local ordinances banning them from speaking on street corners.

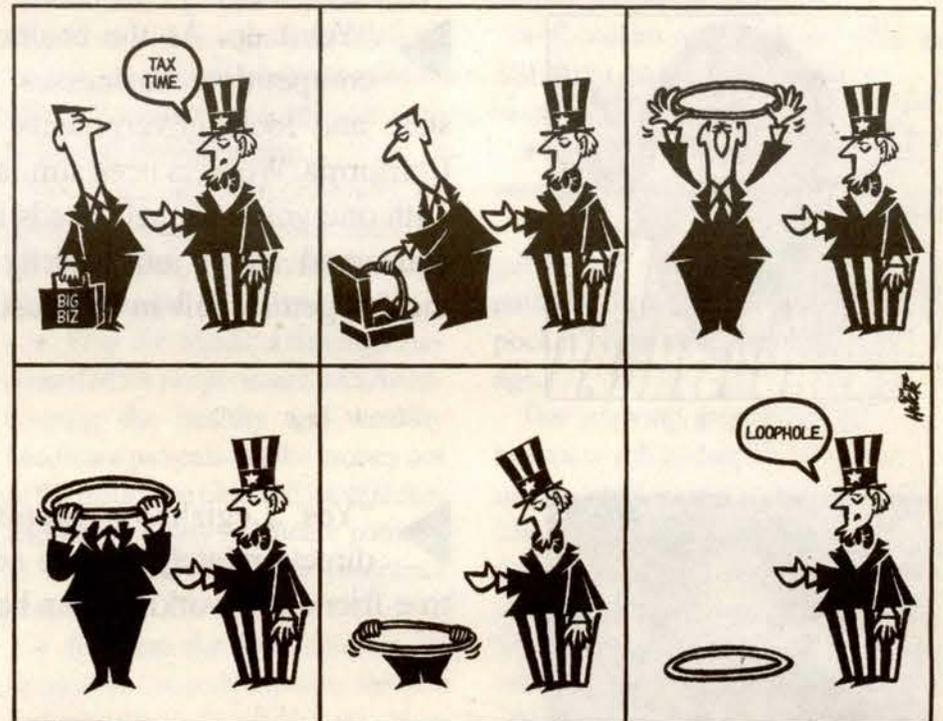
## Janitor lockup, Gray's advice & bye-bye Cincinnati

International labor solidarity is becoming more than just a slogan as workers from different countries discover they have common adversaries. Workers in the southern United States have begun meeting with German workers under the auspices of the Transnational Information Exchange to discuss how to respond when German companies look to the American South as a possible source of cheap labor, according to the magazine *Southern Exposure*.

Another case of international solidarity: Dutch union activists are trying to assist workers at a DSM Polymer plant in Virginia. The union has pressured the Netherlands-based DMS company to recognize the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers as the workers' union representative.

► **Two Faces of Partnership:** In a recent opinion column in the *Seattle Times*, Boeing Vice President Jerry Calhoun wrote: "When Bill Johnson, president of IAM District Lodge 751...issues a call for the union, company and employees to work as partners—we could not agree more." Pictured here, courtesy of Labor Notes, are the buttons distributed by Calhoun's company during a union organizing campaign among a group of salaried workers in Wichita, KS last year.

► **Romanians March:** Tens of thousands of workers from the four largest trade union confederations marched through Romanian cities on March 24 to denounce government austerity measures. The unions have threatened to stage a general strike in the near future unless their demands are met. These include indexation of wages, new labor legislation, an end to redundancies, lower



utility prices for consumers and a grace period for companies unable to pay their debts.

► **Janitors Locked Up:** Janitorial contractors in the Los Angeles area have been routinely locking janitors inside stores overnight, *Labor Notes* reported. The janitors must stay there without pay after finishing their work until managers arrive in the morning. The contractors say it's to avoid theft.

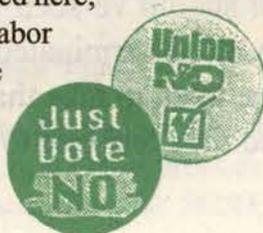
► **Gray's Hotel Advice:** Rumors that Gov. Gray Davis wants government employees to stay in unionized hotels for business travel has ruffled the feathers of California's nonunion hotels, the *Wall Street Journal* reported. Davis's office says the rumor is untrue, but it's the governor's "strong preference" that his 100-person staff stay at unionized hotels.

► **Shipbuilders Walk:** Some 8,000 members of United Steelworkers of America Local 8888 walked off the job at Newport News Shipbuilding Inc. in Virginia on April 5 when contract talks broke down, *Reuters* reported. Negotiations had focused on wage and pension issues.

► **UPS Race Case:** United Parcel Service has agreed to pay \$12.1 million to settle charges of racial discrimination brought by 16 African American UPS workers in Oakland, Ca., *Labor Notes* reported. The workers charged that the company discriminated against them in route assignments and promotions.

► **Goodbye Cincinnati:** The Association of Flight Attendants is moving its 1999 convention out of Cincinnati to protest a city charter amendment that forbids the extension of anti-discrimination laws to gays and lesbians.

► **Pickle Protest:** The Mt. Olive Pickle Co. has been placed on the AFL-CIO's "Do Not Buy!" list for refusing to recognize the Farm Labor Organizing Committee as the representative for field workers who supply Mt. Olive with cucumbers for pickling and packing. More than 2,000 Mt. Olive migrant and seasonal workers signed union cards during an organizing drive kicked off last summer with a 70-mile march in North Carolina.



## SMUD agreement ratified

### ► From Page 1

implementation of this formula is contingent upon a comparable settlement being reached in negotiations now underway between SMUD and another bargaining unit.

Job security is assured for all IBEW-represented employees through the 3-year term of the agreement, except for employees at the Rancho Seco nuclear facility, which no longer provides power and is slated for decommissioning.

The job security provisions are especially important for SMUD tree trimmers, in light of the District's plan to contract out tree trimming work and phase down its in-house tree trimming workforce to 20 permanent employees. The phase down will be accomplished entirely through attrition.

While Local 1245 has agreements with the tree trimming contractors who will be starting to perform some of this work, the loss of in-house tree trimmers is felt keenly by SMUD employees.

"It's a gigantic change," said Martin Correia, who represented tree trimmers on the bargaining committee. "Contractors have always been here for us to help us keep up. But with this agreement, it brings them all in.

### Unit updates

**Unit 2314, Hayward/Livermore/Fremont,** now meets at Roundtable Pizza in Castro Valley, effective immediately. Meetings are on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 5 p.m.

**Ed Caruso,**  
Business Rep.

**Unit 3811, Sacramento,** now meets every first Wednesday of the month at 5:15 p.m.

**Wayne Greer,**  
Business Rep.

"My big heartache about it is that we were highly regarded for our work, as far as morale, safety, all of it. They're throwing all of it out," Correia said.

Union negotiators fended off an effort by the company to shift medical costs onto employees. The union refused to agree to a "flex plan" for medical benefits, according to Building Maintenance Mechanic Ray Gladden, one of the negotiators.

"We ended up with just a \$5 co-payment for office visits and prescription drugs," he said.

### On-Call Pay

On-call policy was one of the more controversial items during bargaining, according to Art Torres, an electrician who represents SMUD employees on the Local 1245 Advisory Council.

"They wanted more control over personnel during storm conditions. They wanted you to sit by the phone without paying you for it," said Torres.

Union negotiators were satisfied with the final on-call formula agreed to by the company.

"We ended up with eight hours pay for the foreman on call, two hours pay every day for employees on call," said Gladden.

Overtime premium pay was standardized at time-and-a-half for pre-arranged work on Saturday, with all other work over the normal shift paid at double time.

### "Interest-Based Bargaining"

The union negotiators expressed appreciation for the District's use of an outside facilitator and "interest-based bargaining" techniques during the negotiations.

"The facilitator was a big help," said Dave Reischus, a senior vehicle mechanic. "If you got off track he would bring us back to the issue at hand."

"Since he was the neutral party," noted Art Torres, "he could ask the sticky questions. The parties didn't have to answer to each other, but they had to answer to him."



### SUPPORT APPRECIATED

Business Manager Jack McNally (right) was honored recently at the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus meeting in Seattle for his understanding of issues important to minority members of the IBEW and for his support of the goals and objectives of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus. Also honored was Keith Edwards (left), assistant business manager of IBEW Local 48. Presenting the plaques was Minority Caucus President Robbie Sparks of IBEW Local 2127.

## Sierra Pacific Power talks

### ► From Page 1

plants to stand as one," said Local 1245 Business Rep. Ray Thomas. "We're facing this as one."

The divestiture was triggered by AB 366, passed by the Nevada Legislature in 1997, which requires Nevada's electric utilities to leave the generation business. Sierra Pacific Power must divest Valmy, a coal plant outside of Winnamucka; Ft. Churchill, a natural gas plant in Yerrington; and Tracy, a natural gas plant east of Reno.

Business Manager Jack McNally recently negotiated a two-year no-layoff pledge from the company, but the union is deeply concerned about the terms and conditions that would apply to generation employees who end up working for a new owner.

Pension issues will also be a major component of the talks.

The union negotiated significant severance benefits last year in general bargaining. The current talks will deal with the specific application of that severance benefit to employees affected by divestiture.

Union members are bringing a wealth of experience to the divestiture talks, according to Thomas.

"These folks know the issues and the concerns of the workers at the plants. They're taking their responsibility very seriously," said Thomas.

The talks could be influenced by actions of the Nevada Legislature, which remains in session until May 30. Legislators approved a general restructuring plan with the passage of AB 366, but could take further action in the current session.

Serving on the negotiating committee, along with Assistant Business Manager Perry Zimmerman and Business Rep. Ray Thomas are: Mark Chidwick, Control Room Operator, Ft. Churchill; John East, Control Room Operator, Tracy; Grant Garrison, Lab Technician, Tracy; John Mauldin, Scrubber Foreman, Valmy; Randy Osborn, Mechanic Welder, Valmy; Lee Soukup, Mechanic Welder, Ft. Churchill; Steve Dobyons, Traveling Diesel Turbin Mechanic, and Tom Cornell, Apprentice SCAT Electrician.

# A new day in Sacramento

**T**hey cheered speeches by Gov. Gray Davis and Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa. They studied bills designed to improve the lives of working people. They received training on how to buttonhole legislators.

Then they headed for the state capitol, 600 union activists determined to transform last November's election victories into tangible gains for California's working people.

No doubt about it, Sacramento was thick with labor folks during the California Labor Federation's annual legislative conference. It was the happiest such event in a long time—the first legislative session in 16 years where labor isn't facing a hostile governor.

The federation's top priorities, grouped under the banner "Building Prosperity," include:

- ◆ Restoring premium pay for the eight-hour day.

- ◆ Strengthen Cal-OSHA and laws that protect workers' health and safety.

- ◆ Permitting employees to use sick leave to care for ailing children or parents.

- ◆ Winning long-overdue improvements to Unemployment Insurance, Disability Insurance, and Workers' Compensation benefits.

- ◆ Reducing the barriers employees face when trying to organize unions.

- ◆ Strengthening laws against age discrimination.

- ◆ Cracking down on employers who illegally avoid paying Workers Compensation, overtime pay, and other benefits.

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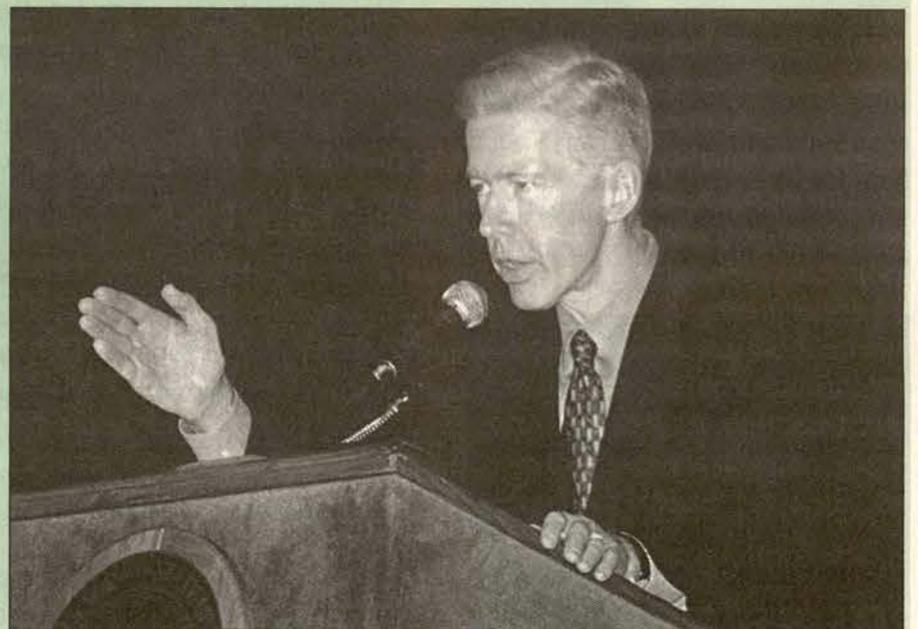
**'We have joined together in protests for 16 years. Finally, the doors of the Governor's office are open to labor. You are no longer a sparring partner, you are a working partner.'**

Gov. Gray Davis



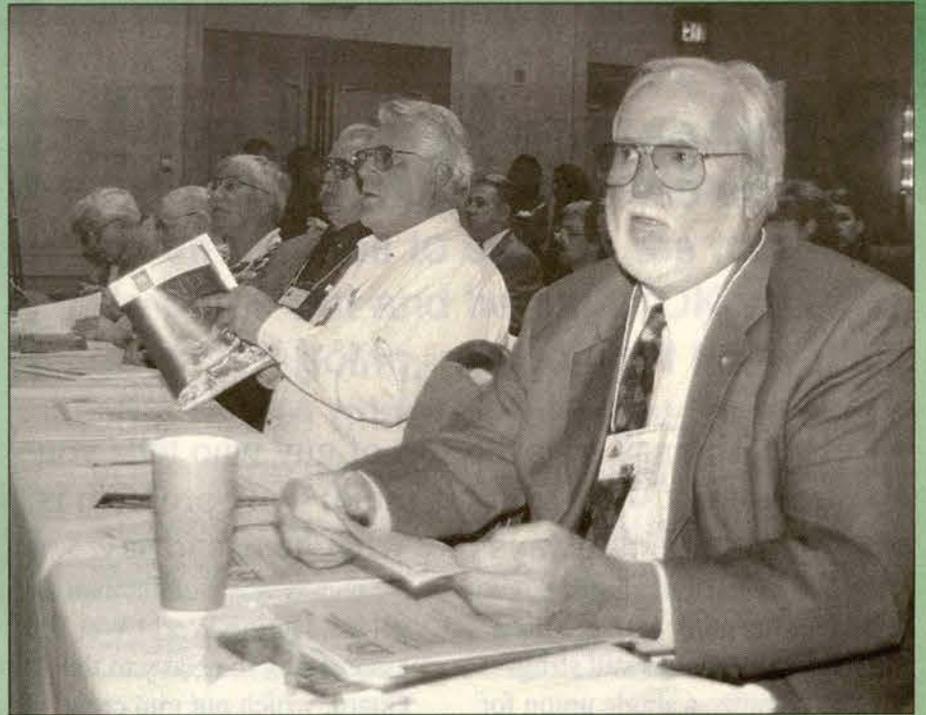
**'Now we have no excuses—we have a Democratic governor and legislature. We must deliver for California's working families.'**

Antonio Villaraigosa, Assembly Speaker



LOCAL 1245 DELEGATION

Local 1245 delegates to the Legislative Conference were, from right: Business Manager Jack McNally, Advisory Council member Jim Findley, Business Rep. Mickey Harrington, and Executive Board members Jim McCauley, Ed Mallory, and Mike Davis. Delegate not pictured: Communications Director Eric Wolfe.



► From Page 6

In his keynote address, Gov. Davis gave the delegates reason to hope that at least part of this agenda will be quickly achieved.

"We must provide fair wages and a safe workplace...by enforcing the



Saunders

laws on the books," Davis proclaimed. "And Marcy is going to do it," he said, point to his recently-appointed

Commissioner of Labor, Marcy Saunders, who until recently was head of the San Mateo County Building and Construction Trades Council.

"We have joined together in protests for 16 years," Davis told the delegates. "Finally, the doors of the Governor's office are open to labor. You are no longer a sparring partner, you are a working partner."

Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa roused the delegates with pledges of support for AB 633, the federation's underground economy bill, and AB 442, protecting workers' right to organize.

"I come here as an organizer," said Villaraigosa, who indeed worked as a union organizer earlier in life. "I come as part of the labor movement itself. Now we have no excuses—we have a Democratic governor and legislature. We must deliver for California's working families."

Displaying his legendary cautiousness, Davis urged the union delegates to have patience—in effect telling them not to expect everything at once.

"We don't want class warfare...We're going to make progress working together—business, labor and government," he said.

However, after waiting 16 years for a chance to enact pro-worker, pro-family legislation, the union delegates were more interested in taking action than cooling their heels. The day after Davis's speech the delegates streamed into the capitol building in search of legislators to educate on labor's "Building Prosperity" program. Among them was Jim Findley, Local 1245's Advisory Council member in the North Bay, who joined other unionists from his area in visiting Assemblywoman Virginia Strom-Martin.

Armed with a packet of materials and a passion for real progress, the unionists walked Strom-Martin through the particulars of a number of bills. In this case it was an easy sell: Strom-Martin has compiled a staunchly pro-worker voting record during her tenure in the Assembly.

With a Democratic governor and Democratic majorities in the Assem-

bly and state Senate, union members have reason to hope for genuine change. But business lobbyists far outnumber labor lobbyists, and already there are signs that much of labor's agenda will face stiff opposition.

Next month:  
Bills that need our support.

**After the governor's speech, union members streamed into the capitol building in search of legislators to educate on labor's "Building Prosperity" program.**



Photo: Eric Wolfe

LEGISLATIVE VISIT

Local 1245 Advisory Council member Jim Findley urges Assembly Member Virginia Strom-Martin to continue her support for daily overtime premium pay. Clockwise, from left: Alexander Mallonee, executive secretary treasurer of the North Bay Central Labor Council; Jim Findley; Kris Organ, SEIU; and Katie Hargreaves, North Bay Central Labor Council.

# Straight-talkin' Thomas

By Eric Wolfe

**L**eland Thomas Jr. is the sort of guy who tells you straight out what's on his mind. Only problem is, you might not always like what he has to say.

Thomas honed his straight-talking skills a half-century ago, at a time when Local 1245 was still struggling to organize a single union for all PG&E workers.

"It was a lot harder than a lot of people think, organizing," Thomas recalled during a recent interview. "Especially on PG&E property, where you had 3500 non-members [mixed in] with the union members and you've got a lot of resentment going on."



Thomas received a good education about unions while serving in the Navy's Armed Guard during World War II, where he spent a lot of time talking with merchant marines affiliated with the Sailors Union of the Pacific.

Thomas was a union man from the get-go. During World War II he was assigned by the Navy to the Armed Guard, which put gun crews on merchant ships. There he met merchant marines affiliated with the Sailors Union of the Pacific—"pretty damn strong union guys"—and received an education on labor solidarity.

He hired on at PG&E in 1947 as a laborer in San Jose, all mouth and potential. He joined the Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA), at that time the dominant union on PG&E property in the Bay Area. But shortly thereafter he received a visit at home from some employees who wanted to replace the UWUA with the IBEW.

There's respect in Thomas's voice as he recalls some of the names: Phil Rourke, Glen Hamrick, Frank Jones...

"A lot of these old guys were contract linemen before they went in the service," said Thomas. "When they came out, they went to work for the utilities. They had their 'A' cards—had to carry them in their shoe because if the company found out they were union they would make you miserable enough to get out."

## "It Was Terrible"

Despite the resistance, PG&E employees pressed ahead, knowing full well that a strong union was the only way things would ever improve.

"PG&E was about the lousiest as far as wages and conditions at that time. Even the telephone company paid more," Thomas said. "There was nothing really as far as sick

leave, vacation, even retirement—it was terrible."

And there was no such thing as automatic progression for apprentices. To make journeyman could take up to 10 years, according to Thomas.

"There was resentment there, too, because sometimes some guy would have seniority as an apprentice, and they'd go over and make some guy with less seniority a journeyman. It all depended on how the general foreman saw you, or your pole partner, or your subforeman."

Thomas himself made lineman in 1953 when the general foreman came out on a job where Thomas was working with a journeyman named Vern Kurtz.

"Harry Davis, the general foreman, came out on the job one day and hollered up the pole, 'Vern, you think that kid can handle lineman?' And Vern said, 'You're goddamn right he can,' and Harry Davis said, 'Lee, start putting lineman on your timecard Monday.' And that's how I made lineman," Thomas said.

A year or two later Business Rep. Jerry Moran recruited Thomas to be a steward. In those days, long before the union security clause was negotiated, it was the stewards' job to keep people signed up. Some employees simply refused to join, although they never refused to take the union-negotiated raises and benefits.

Taking a break while working on a hot 12kv transfer in California are (from left) Al F. Willit, Richard Richard Thomas Jr. and Bud. According to Thomas, the photo was taken sometime in 1967.



"Sometimes it wasn't comfortable working with somebody like that," Thomas acknowledged. "I've had guys invite me out on the street. And I went that route a few times. I've told people, 'I know what asphalt tastes like.'"

## Exercising Power

Although the union might occasionally provide an excuse for individuals to brawl, its real function has always been to provide individuals a way to exercise power as a group. At the worksite, it is often the steward who speaks up for the group, makes it a united front, a union. It's true today, probably even

# Thomas

Taking a break while working on a hot 12kv transfer in Campbell, Ca. are (from left) Al Randal, J. Willit, Richard Richards, Lee Thomas Jr. and Bud Goffrey. According to Thomas the photo was taken sometime prior to 1967.



“One day seven mi  
He come  
guys, get  
only seven  
your cont  
nearest q  
here. If yo  
shop stew



The brothers Thomas (left) included, from left: Bill, Ed, Bud, Dick, Lee Jr., Ken, Jim, LeRoy, and Dale. Like Lee Jr., Ed, LeRoy and Dale were PG&E employees. Four nephews also worked for PG&E: Robert Pospishek, Richard Pospishek, Allen Thomas, and LeRoy Thomas. LeRoy (also known as Lee) is currently Ad Council Representative for Humboldt Division.

support function that has fa  
relevance as more and mor  
and benefits are spelled ou  
contracts.

Consider this story about  
drinker, probably a World  
veteran, one of the guys w  
think they were going to m  
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alcoholic, he was a sly alco  
drank when no one was lo  
Thomas recalled.

When he was called out

“Sometimes it wasn’t comfortable working with somebody like that,” Thomas acknowledged. “I’ve had guys invite me out on the street. And I went that route a few times. I’ve told people, ‘I know what asphalt tastes like.’”

### Exercising Power

Although the union might occasionally provide an excuse for individuals to brawl, it’s real function has always been to provide individuals a way to exercise power as a group. At the worksite, it is often the steward who speaks up for the group, makes it a united front, a union. It’s true today, probably even

truer back then.

Thomas illustrates the point with another story about Harry Davis, the general foreman:

“We used a lot of steam in those days. In the building they had the boilers, and he had a steam whistle in his office. A chain came down that had a salt shaker on the end of the chain—it used to hang just to the right of him a couple of feet. And at 8 o’clock he’d blow the whistle, and at 4:30 he’d blow the whistle.

“One day he blew the whistle about seven minutes to eight in the morning. He come out and he said, ‘OK you guys, get going, get going! I know it’s only seven minutes ’til

eight, but read your contract—you get paid to the nearest quarter-hour. So just get out of here. If you don’t believe me, ask your shop steward right there.’

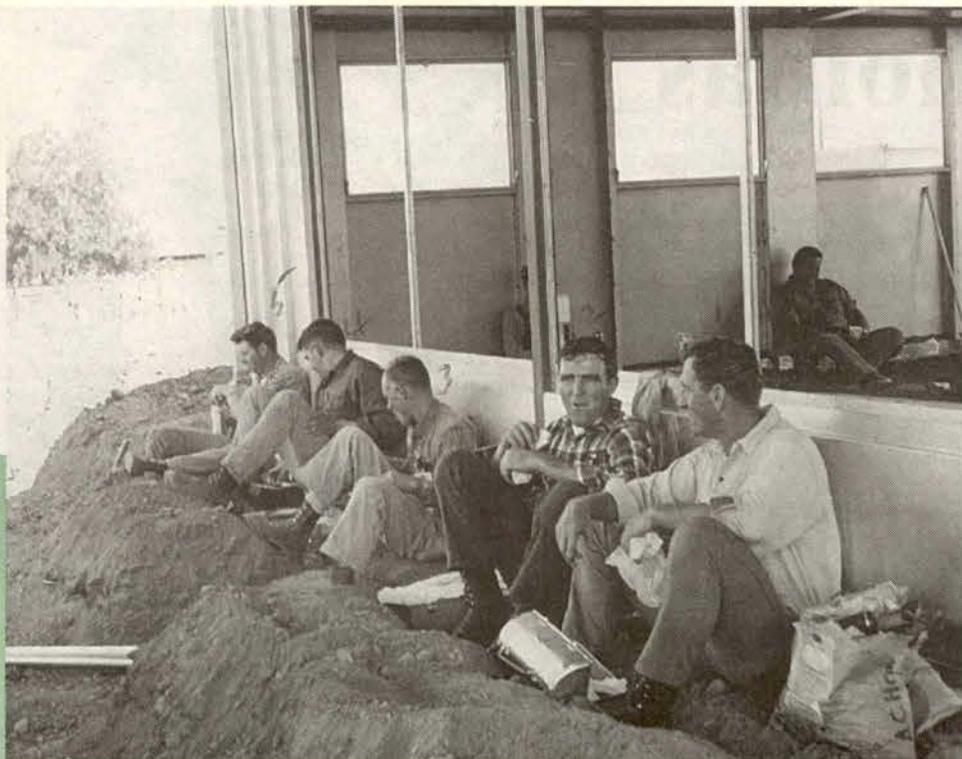
“He pointed to me, and I said, ‘That’s right. And that means we can quit seven minutes early for lunch, go back seven minutes late for lunch, quit seven minutes early...’ He looked at me and said, ‘Go to hell, kid.’ Anyway, he went and told my boss, an old former lineman, and said, ‘You better grab on to that kid.’”

Then, as now, the union steward defended the contract. But in those earlier times the union was woven more deeply into the fabric of people’s lives, providing a mutual



Leland Thomas Jr., center, Manager L. L. Mitchell (left)

Working on  
Campbell,  
andal, J.  
ds, Lee  
Goffrey.  
The photo  
prior to



The brothers Thomas (left) included, from left: Bill, Ed, Bud, Dick, Lee Jr., Ken, Jim, LeRoy, and Dale. Like Lee Jr., Ed, LeRoy and Dale were PG&E employees. Four nephews also worked for PG&E: Robert Pospishek, Richard Pospishek, Allen Thomas, and LeRoy Thomas. LeRoy (also known as Lee) is currently Ad Council Representative for Humboldt Division.

**“One day he blew the whistle about seven minutes to eight in the morning. He come out and he said, ‘OK you guys, get going, get going! I know it’s only seven minutes ’til eight, but read your contract—you get paid to the nearest quarter-hour. So just get out of here. If you don’t believe me, ask your shop steward right there.’ ”**

support function that has faded in relevance as more and more rights and benefits are spelled out in contracts.

Consider this story about a heavy drinker, probably a World War II veteran, one of the guys who “didn’t think they were going to make it out of World War II and were still celebrating.”

“He wasn’t a loud, partying alcoholic, he was a sly alcoholic—drank when no one was looking,” Thomas recalled.

When he was called out for

overtime, his crew would “hide him somplace to sleep it off.” Eventually the company caught on and laid him off. A steward, Thomas’s brother Dale, convinced the general foreman to give the employee a six month leave “to take a cure.”

But the “cure” didn’t take. When he was killed in a car wreck, people in his family wouldn’t even serve as pall bearers, Thomas recalled, “so a lot of union guys took the day off to act as pall bearers.”

Page 10 ►

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Then, as now, the union steward defended the contract. But in those earlier times the union was woven more deeply into the fabric of people’s lives, providing a mutual



Leland Thomas Jr., center, with his two union mentors: Senior Assistant Business Manager L. L. Mitchell (left) and Business Manager Ron Weakley.

# Straight-talkin' Thomas

## ► From Page 9

"That was what got me interested in the union, I think, being a shop steward... A guy gets hurt and it's always the union guys, it seems, who kick in and help him."

There's a flip side to Thomas's admiration for some of the old-timers who built the union: he thinks many of today's workers are, well, soft.

"I go to the unit meetings and get into it with the linemen. I say, 'It used to be that you fell off a pole and broke your back you had to prove it to get light duty. And now you guys get light duty because somebody hurts your pride.'"

Union members have responded favorably to Thomas's acid wit. They elected him to the Advisory Council—he served from 1957 to 1963—and then to the union's presidency. For the next 23 years he served in a variety of roles: president, vice-president, business representative assigned to safety and training, and business representative for Nevada. During that time he also worked stints at PG&E and in Outside Construction.

## Maverick Style

Holding leadership roles didn't seem to curb his maverick style.

Consider that night in 1963 in New York, where Thomas and Business Manager Ron Weakley were attending a national AFL-CIO convention. At a banquet to honor William Packler of the Utility Workers Union of America, Thomas was impressed to see former Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson sitting beside Packler at the head table. Thomas was less interested in the presence of AFL-CIO President George Meany, who sat on Packler's other side.

Thomas told Weakley he wanted to get Stevenson's autograph. "Ron said, 'I don't know if they'll let you that close, Lee.'"

"We'll see," Thomas replied, and in full view of the two or three

thousand assembled guests, Thomas started for the head table. Meany, seeing Thomas approach, began gesturing angrily for him to go away. Thomas never even broke stride.

"I walked over and said, 'Mr. Stevenson, I'm a farmer from California and I'd appreciate it if you'd sign this (program).' And he said, 'Sure.'"

Thomas figures Meany was upset because Thomas didn't ask for *his* autograph.

"I know I've been stubborn," Thomas confessed.

## Riling Folks, Causing Trouble

But there's more than stubbornness to Leland Thomas. When he stands fast, more than likely there's some principle

involved. And there are few principles he puts higher than sticking with the union. Though long retired, he's still a fixture at the local unit meetings. Riling folks, causing trouble.

"Every once in a while someone says the dues are too high," said Thomas, who clearly relishes every opportunity to fight the good fight one more time.

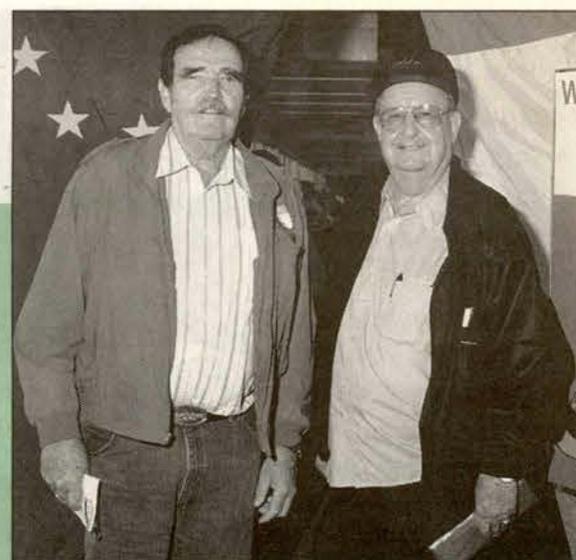
"I say, the percentage of the dues is the same now as it's been for 30 years, what the hell are you talking about? I usually say, you want to lower your dues? Bid to a lower-paying job—your dues go down. Or you can sit around on your ass complaining about everything and maybe they'll have another [downsizing] and you might get laid off and you might not have to

pay *any* dues."

Thomas smiled as he relates the usual response he gets to such diatribes: "They say, 'Oh, f— you, Thomas.'"

Through the years, though, union members have shown they appreciate Thomas's hard-headed adherence to principle. He was elected to six consecutive International conventions of the IBEW and still gets a warm reception when he occasionally stops by a meeting of the Advisory Council to regale everyone about how much tougher and interesting life used to be.

"I tried to be as honest as I could," Thomas says of his years in the union leadership, "and I think the membership appreciated that."



Leland Thomas Jr. (left) and Ron Weakley on an Alaskan tour last fall. The two union leaders remain good friends. Below (from left), Weakley and Thomas attend an AFL-CIO convention in New York in 1963.



While attending an AFL-CIO convention in New York, Thomas told Weakley he wanted to get Adlai Stevenson's autograph. "Ron said, 'I don't know if they'll let you that close, Lee.'"

"We'll see," Thomas replied.

## Why 'Workers' Memorial Day'?

California workers today face significant risks of illness, injury and death on the job.

Based on national estimates, Californians annually suffer approximately 780 job-related deaths from injury, 1.584 million nonfatal injuries, 7,200 deaths from occupational disease, and 104,000 occupational illnesses among the civilian workforce.

The pricetag? An estimated \$21 billion annually in California.

The recent Tosca refinery fire, which claimed four workers lives, reminds us that workplaces continue to pose a significant risk to workers' lives.

On the bright side, more than 187,000 people can say that their life has been saved since the passage of

the OSHA Act, a law which union members fought for and helped win in 1970.

For years, California was widely recognized as having the best occupational safety and health program in the nation, but over the past 16 years it has been severely weakened.

Workers need an aggressive Cal-OSHA committed to setting and enforcing standards to protect the health and safety of California workers. We need changes in the administration of Cal-OSHA, and we need a Cal-OSHA budget that allows

the agency to meet all of its mandates as well as to implement programs to prevent injuries, illnesses and deaths.

Asking for life: that's not asking for too much.



### POINT OF VIEW

## Contemptible slur by CPUC

► From Page 2

million from PG&E for transmission improvements, despite a legislative directive to spend that money to improve the system. And it is the PUC—incredibly enough—that has called for PG&E to spend less money on tree trimming and to hire untrained workers to reduce costs.

The members of our union are second to none in their capabilities, their integrity, and their commitment to their work. To impugn their culture in this way—without any basis in fact—is contemptible and counterproductive.

## AB 1127: a cure for Cal-OSHA

AB 1127 would go a long way to fixing what ails Cal-OSHA.

The bill would stiffen penalties against employers, expand ergonomic protections, strengthen the complaint procedure, require abatement of unsafe conditions pending appeal, increase Cal-OSHA's power to shut down operations that pose an "imminent hazard" to workers, permit injured workers to use Cal-OSHA standards in civil and criminal litigation, and increase the time workers have to file discrimination complaints.

Hearings on this bill were scheduled for April 9 in Richmond.

Contact your state legislators. Urge them to support AB 1127.

By the Local 1245  
Safety Committee



## Watch out for that last step!

The saying "Watch out for that last step" never has more meaning than the moment when you take that last step and find yourself falling backwards.

It isn't known what part of the brain decides you are on the last step of a ladder when you are not, sending you stumbling down. Falls from step ladders are avoidable, yet are a common accident in the workplace and at home.

Step ladders come in various sizes and configurations. They are rated by types.

Type III ladders are considered household and are rated for only 200 pounds. Type II ladders are called commercial and rated for 225 pounds. Industrial rated ladders can support 250 pounds, while type 1A ladders are called Professional and can handle 300 pounds.

It is important to size up the job you are planning and make sure that the ladder is rated for the intended load.

Next to load rating in importance is the length of ladder. Choosing a ladder too short for the job could cause you to need to use the top two steps. Avoid this temptation! The ladder's stability—and yours—can be a serious problem when you use

those last two steps.

Leaning a ladder up against something is another bad choice. The feet of the ladder cannot come in complete contact with the ground, causing the ladder to slide down.

Placement of the ladder is also crucial. Place the ladder so that you will not have to lean your body away from the ladder. It is not safe to extend a leg in the opposite direction to counter balance leaning your body in the other direction. Move the ladder to the new location. Be sure to lock the legs of the ladder, check the ground for unstable conditions, and be sure all legs are in good contact with the ground.

Clear all debris from the work location. Later it could be the cause of unsafe footing and a fall from the last step.

Getting up and down the ladder is a dangerous time. Always give these tasks your full attention.

Bringing tools or materials with you takes hands away from climbing and diverts your attention.

Remember: when getting down a ladder, use both hands. Keep your attention focused. And be sure you do indeed "watch out for that last step"!

## Spring driving reminder

Hopefully we've all been defensive drivers during the cold, wet conditions of winter. But as spring approaches, temperatures rise, and rain decreases, more people will venture outdoors, which means more traffic and congestion...and a greater chance of an accident.

Let's apply the defensive driving

we did during the cold, dark winter months to the warm, bright spring and summer months!

And remember: you may be out there being a good defensive driver, but that other person might be looking at all the pretty new flowers popping up all over. So watch out for the rubber-neckers!



## Equal pay: still a top priority

### Malveaux speaks

More than 200 women gathered the day before the California Labor Federation's legislative conference last month to share experiences and strategies for women in labor.

Syndicated columnist and economist Dr. Julianne Malveaux reminded women that unions are the only wage insurance there is.

"Women union members earn 30% more," she said. "Nearly half of full-time, year-round women workers earn less than \$20,000. It is a sign of profound arrogance that elected federal representatives earning \$135,000 won't raise the minimum wage above \$6 an hour."

### Family Leave

The Work and Family project is sponsoring free workshops on your rights under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and the California Family Rights Act.

Find out what rights these laws provide, and how they interact with Workers Compensation, Pregnancy Discrimination laws, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**San Francisco: April 14**

ILWU, 1188 Franklin St.  
Call: 415-864-8848

**Foster City: April 19**

Carpenters Hall, 1153 Chess Dr.  
Call: 650-341-7711

**Oakland: May 3**

ILWU, 99 Hegenberger Road  
Call: 415-864-8848

**San Jose: May 5**

2102 Almaden Rd., Suite 107  
Call: 408-266-3790

**Martinez: May 12**

UFCW, 4121 Alhambra Ave.  
Call: 925-372-8608

**E**qual pay is still a top priority for working women, even though you don't hear much about the issue these days in the mainstream media.

In a survey of 50,000 women conducted in 1997, the AFL-CIO's Working Women's Department found that 99% of women say equal pay is important, but one-third say they don't have it.

Equal pay isn't just about fairness. For many women it's about survival.

Nearly two-thirds of working women reported that they provide half or more of their household income, according to Karen Nussbaum, director of the AFL-CIO's Working Women's Department. Just over half of married women contribute about half or more of their household income. About 40% of working women head their own households, and 28% of them have dependent children.

Says Nussbaum, writing in *Working USA*:

"Some political leaders may persist in painting women as secondary wage earners, but women know their pay is essential."

The women in the survey believe they have it harder at work because of their gender.

"Men in my company get the promotions and women don't," wrote a woman in Baltimore. Many others echoed her sentiment.

The women in the survey not only believed they got short shrift at work, they saw themselves as having to do more than their share at home. Understandably, many of them would like to see employers adopt "family friendly" policies such as flexible hours or more control over their hours.

#### "Destroying Family Life"

"Companies have this idea that there is no other life outside your job—six- and seven-day operations and ten-

and twelve-hour days are destroying family life," wrote a Michigan woman.

Although other surveys have shown that men regard equal pay as one solution to family income problems, some women in the AFL-CIO survey were optimistic that men would join with women in demanding work policies that are more "family friendly."

"I don't know if men would be interested in flexibility. My husband thinks flexibility is getting willing to sleep on the other side of the bed," reported one woman in the survey.

While one-third of the women reported that they were not receiving equal pay, the proportion was higher for some women. Half of African American working women say they want equal pay but do not have it, while 42% of women in clerical and secretarial positions say equal pay is important but they do not have it.

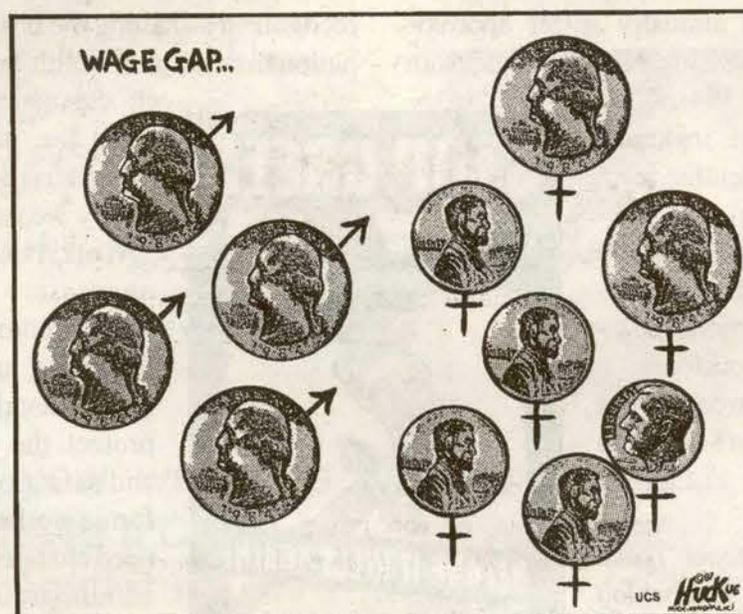
#### Situation Has Worsened

More than nine out of ten working women say that protection from downsizing and layoffs is important, but only one-third say they are protected. In general, working women believe their situation has worsened with respect to job security, finding

affordable child care, and making ends meet.

Statistics suggest these concerns are grounded in reality: one-third of working women lack retirement benefits, 30% lack health coverage, and 29% don't even have paid sick leave.

Nearly all the surveyed women believed that businesses should be involved in addressing these problems, but they also see a role for other institutions. Nearly four out of five of the surveyed women believed government should be involved, and three-quarters of the women believed unions could be helpful.



### Survey 2000

The AFL-CIO Working Women's Department is conducting a new survey as it prepares for its Working Women Conference 2000 in Chicago, scheduled for March 11-12, 2000.

All women members of Local 1245 are invited to share their views on the issues facing working women. The survey appears on the following page. Just fill it out and send it in to the address listed at the top of the survey.

# ASK A WORKING WOMAN SURVEY

Discuss the questions below in a group if you can—whether it is two of you over coffee or 2,000 at a conference—or answer it on your own. Everyone should fill in her own form and send it on to *Ask A Working Woman, AFL-CIO, 815 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20006.*

Your concerns will be added to those of thousands of other working women and will set the priorities for change in workplaces and in laws. We'll present the findings at **WORKING WOMEN CONFERENCE 2000** in Chicago, March 11-12, 2000.

**SURVEY RESPONSES ARE KEPT COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL.**

**1. If you could make changes on the job, what would be your highest priorities? CHECK THREE.**

- Child care and after-school care
- Elder care
- Equal pay
- Higher pay/promotions
- More control over work hours  
(*shift work, overtime, truly flexible schedules*)
- Respect on the job
- Safe work environment
- Retirement security
- Health insurance
- Fair pay and benefits for part-time, temporary and contract workers
- Job security
- Stronger programs to end discrimination and sexual harassment
- Career development and training

**2. Indicate your top TWO choices for laws that would most improve your life as a working woman.**

- Stronger equal pay/pay equity laws
- Laws to improve the quality and affordability of child care and after-school care
- Laws to improve the quality and affordability of health care
- Laws to strengthen pensions and Social Security to make retirement more secure
- Laws to expand Family and Medical Leave and to provide for paid leave
- Laws to ensure that workers who are in part-time, temporary or contract jobs are treated fairly when it comes to pay and benefits
- Stronger Affirmative Action laws to provide more opportunities for all women
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Do you think an organization for working women could help you achieve some of these goals?**

- Yes     No

What are the qualities or characteristics you want in an organization? (For example, listens to your concerns; enough clout to get the job done.) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. We will elect a new President of the United States in 2000. If you could tell him or her one thing about what it's like to be a working woman, what would you say?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. We'd like to know a little about you. This will help us know that we are reaching a wide variety of working women. All of this information is confidential.**

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Do you work  Part-time or  Full-time?

Do you work more than one job?  Yes  No

Do you have children under 18?  Yes  No

If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you caring for an elderly or disabled adult?

- Yes  No

What is your yearly income? \_\_\_\_\_

Marital status:  Married  Unmarried with partner

- Single, Widowed, Divorced

What is your race/ethnicity? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of a union?  Yes  No

If yes, \_\_\_\_\_ Union \_\_\_\_\_ Local

What other organizations, if any, are you a member of? \_\_\_\_\_

**YES!** I want to get the results of this survey and would like more information about **Working Women Conference 2000.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Organization/Union \_\_\_\_\_ Local \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_



## Sensible ways to strengthen Medicare

### Make a Date...

The Local 1245 Retiree Club invites you to join us for companionship, discussion and projects. Current meeting locations are:

**East Bay Chapter:** meets 2nd Thursday each month, 10 a.m., at Local 1245 headquarters, 3063 Citrus Circle, Walnut Creek, CA.

**San Jose Chapter:** meets 1st Thursday each month, 10 a.m., at Local 332, 1870 Stone Ave., San Jose.

If you are interested in starting a chapter in your area, call Austin Lea at the union hall:

(925) 933-6060 ext. 240.

By Orv Owen

The President's bipartisan commission on Medicare reform was unable to reach a decision on what to do, but Local 1245 retirees believe there is plenty that can be done to help strengthen this vital federal program.

We agree with the National Council of Senior Citizens and the Congress of California Seniors that the fundamental structure and principles of the high-quality Medicare system should remain intact—and should be expanded.

We oppose any proposals that would make the Medicare system less than universal for senior citizens.

We further oppose any proposals that would transform the Medicare system into a program under which

benefits are a product based solely on the contributions paid, and where benefits are conditioned on the showing of financial need. We are supportive of the following:

- ◆ Efforts to force all Medicare patients into managed care should be slowed down. We must reduce the bloated capitation rates to HMOs.

- ◆ Stop the Medical Savings Account (MSA) experiment. MSAs encourage the healthy and wealthy Medicare patients to take money out of the insurance plan and leave sicker and less wealthy Medicare patients in a financially weaker insurance plan.

- ◆ Increase the Medicare tax as needed to keep the system solvent and secure.

- ◆ Reduce tax breaks for corporations and the wealthy. Tax all corpo-

rations and block loopholes.

- ◆ Consider removing the cap on SSI taxes on individuals who earn over \$67,700 a year.

- ◆ Apply the Medicare tax to unearned as well as earned income.

- ◆ Stop balancing the federal budget on the shoulders of Medicare patients through increased out-of-pocket costs and decreased coverage.

The growing generation of baby boomers will be largely retired early in the next century, dependent on Medicare system savings and a relatively shrinking pool of workers for support. We need to prepare now to build a Medicare system that all generations can look forward to and benefit from. Medicare should be for everyone.

Keep the faith!

## Local 1245 retirees back 'Patient Bill of Rights'

By Orv Owen

The Patient Bill of Rights legislation is currently under consideration by both state and federal legislative bodies.

Local 1245 retirees affirmed their support for the Patient Bill of Rights at the Feb. 6 gathering in Walnut Creek. Among the provisions that we support are:

- Timely access to appropriate health care.

- Affordable choice of qualified health care professionals.

- The right to high quality health care.

- Health care that is free of financial barriers that delay or impede access to health care.

- The right to have medical information remain confidential and not be discriminated against in managed health care.

- The right to be represented in decision making and in organization

and regulation of health care matters.

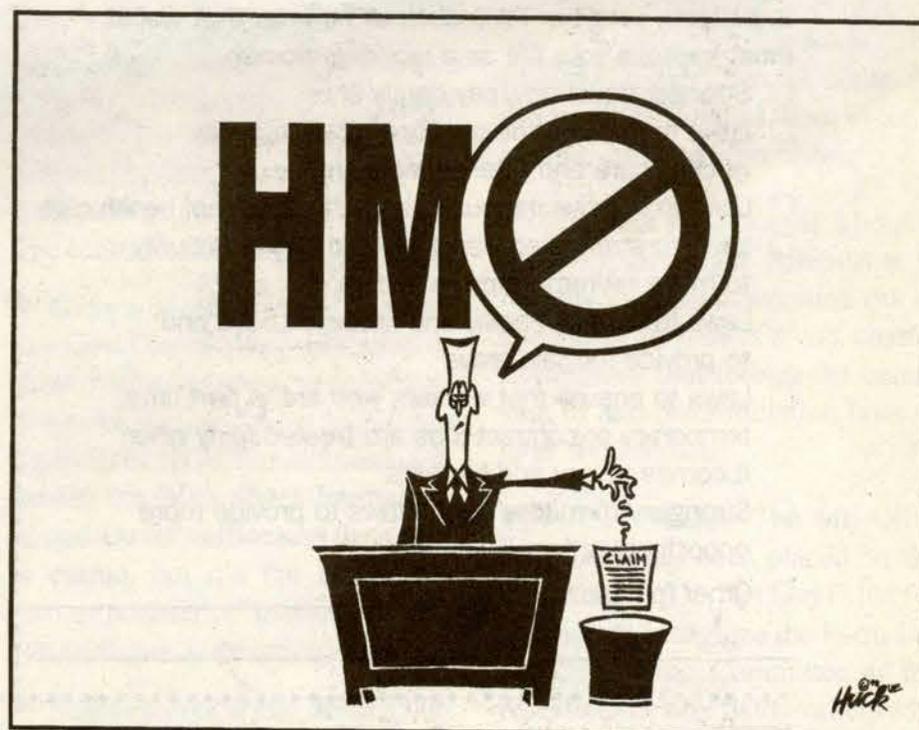
- The right to the vigorous enforcement of Patient Bill of Rights for all our citizens.

### Concerns About Pension

In addition to the Patient Bill of Rights, many Local 1245 retirees are voicing concern about the PG&E pension plan.

The union pension agreement with PG&E became effective in 1954 and has been adjusted from time to time to improve the pension benefits for current employees as well as retired employees.

The agreement provides opportunities, in the past and currently, to bargain in good faith for possible pension plan improvements. There is no legal obligation to make adjustments to the plan, but the commitment to good faith bargaining does allow the parties an opportunity to review and consider pension plan



improvements for retired employees.

When you are on a fixed monthly retirement benefit, unprotected from

inflation and increases in the cost of living, you appreciate any consideration of improvements in your monthly benefit and quality of life.

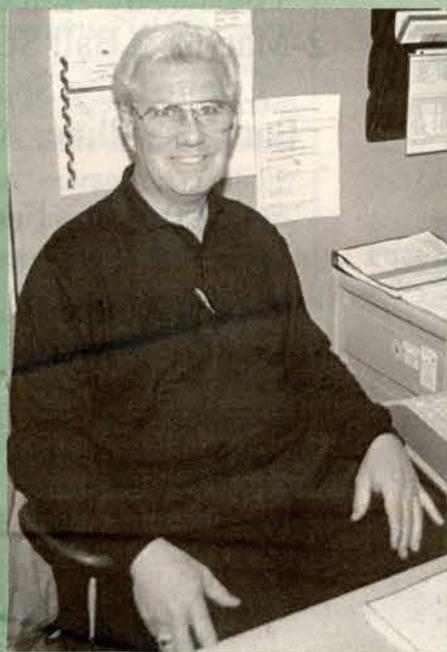
# Getting ready to bargain at Citizens Communications



**S**trengthening seniority, boosting wages, preserving medical benefits, and improving retirement are among the concerns that Local 1245 members will bring to the table when bargaining begins this summer for a new labor agreement with Citizens Communications.

Members offered more than 500 proposals for bargaining at four unit meetings and a stewards conference last month. The current agreement terms out on Sept. 30.

"Money is the biggest issue," said union steward Kathey Silas, a service rep-



Local 1245 members at the Citizens Communications Call Center outside Sacramento include Service Representatives Rick Tietjen (above left) and Jim Stovall, left.

representative at Citizens Communications Call Center outside Sacramento. She said an incentive plan long in use by the company has lost its appeal. "Get rid of that and increase wages," she said.

"We'd like to see it converted to dollars per hour, so the employees here can make a wage comparable to Roseville Telecomm and Pac Bell," said Local 1245 Business Rep. Jack Osburn, who noted that the current incentive plan gives the company the ability "to shrink the goal posts and move them ten yards farther down the field."

Osburn said the union was holding special meetings on the fourth Tuesday of every month at the Call Center to give employees a chance to ask questions and explore bargaining issues in more detail. The meetings run from 3:30 p.m. to about 6:30 p.m.

Medical costs are a priority for Larry Martin, a central office technician

working out of Burney.

"I'm concerned about our medical and where our company is going with it. We've started paying more. Is the company to ask us to pay even more? Or are we going to get back to where we ought to be—with the company paying more?" he asked.

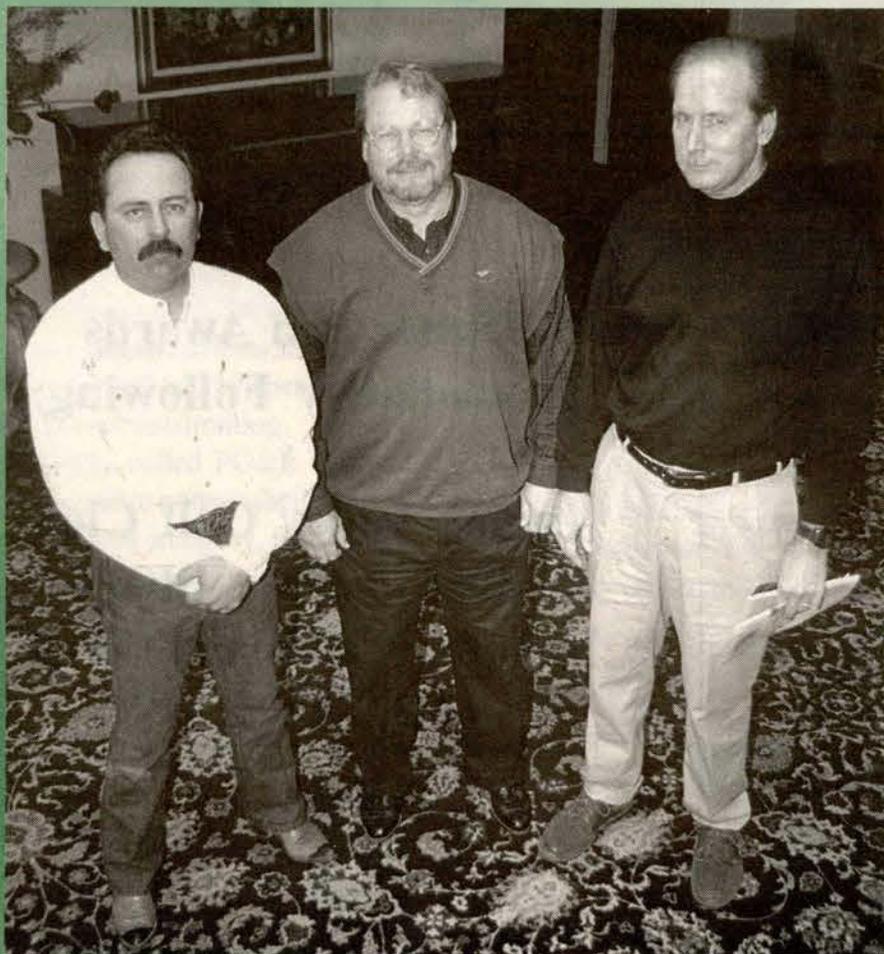
Martin, who served on the bargaining committee during the last set of negotiations, also expressed hope that retirement benefits could be improved.

"I'd like to see us get to a point where we can retire early without losing our retirement," he said. Currently, employees' retirement benefit is reduced 5% per year if retiring prior to age 65.

"I'd like to see seniority strengthened when it comes to job bidding," said Mike Mena, a plant technician who represents Citizens Communications employees on the Local 1245 Advisory Council.

Rick Tietjen, a Service Representative, said he'd like to see the union negotiate another paid holiday, noting that Citizens' employees don't get President's Day off.

The union represents about 300 employees at Citizens Communications in California, which provides telecommunications services to mostly rural customers on both coasts.



Attending a recent Local 1245 Advisory Council meeting were (at left, from left): Advisory Council member Mike Mena, Business Rep. Jack Osburn, and Central Office Technician Larry Martin. Working at the plant service center in Elk Grove are (below, from left) Pat Schmeltz, line assigner; and Sylvia Rupel, line assigner and union steward.





# Fourteenth Annual IBEW Local 1245 Golf Tournament

Barbecue Chicken  
or New York Steak  
  
Drawing Prizes!  
Long Drive Prizes!

**Saturday, Aug. 28, 1999**

Indian Valley Golf Club  
Novato, California  
First Tee Time: 11:00 a.m.

Guests Are Welcome!  
2-Man Best Ball Scramble  
Limited Tee Spaces  
Entry Deadline: Aug. 2

\$90 Entry Fee  
(Includes Cart, Green Fees, Dinner)

\$80 Entry Fee  
(Cart & Green Fee Only, No Dinner)

**Hole-in-One Prize!**

**Fore!**

**Dinner and Awards  
Immediately Following:**

**Indian Valley Golf Club  
3035 Novato Blvd.  
Novato, California 94948  
(415) 897-1118**

**Don't Miss Out--Register Now! Deadline is Aug. 2!**

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_  Chicken  Steak  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name \_\_\_\_\_  Chicken  Steak  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name \_\_\_\_\_  Chicken  Steak  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

4. Name \_\_\_\_\_  Chicken  Steak  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

Checks  
Payable to  
"Local 1245  
Golf Tournament"  
Mail to:  
PO Box 4790  
Walnut Creek,  
CA 94596

For Further  
Information Call:  
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925-933-6060 Ext. 338  
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*Foursomes are not necessary*