



Local 1245 helps Sierra Pacific obtain variance

The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN) is revising aspects of the state's Business Code of Conduct following testimony by Local 1245 and the Nevada AFL-CIO.

In remarks delivered by Local 1245 Business Rep. Ray Thomas on behalf of Business Manager Jack McNally, the union argued that Nevada's strict Business Code of Conduct sets unfair parameters on Sierra Pacific Power employees.

Specifically, the union objected to provisions in the Code that bar Customer Service employees from performing both electric distribution utility functions and Provider of Last Resort (PLR) functions. The union argued that variances should be granted to permit employees in small district offices to perform both functions.

Under Nevada's still-evolving plan for utility deregulation, Sierra Pacific's employees can provide revenue cycle services (meter reading, billing, and responding to customer inquiries) for customers who are receiving their power from Sierra Pacific Resources. However, Sierra Pacific employees cannot provide these revenue cycle services for customers who choose to receive their power from an alternative energy provider.

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AN AGREEMENT TOO TOUGH TO SIGN

STARS utilities balk at signing agreement to abide by federal labor laws

By Eric Wolfe

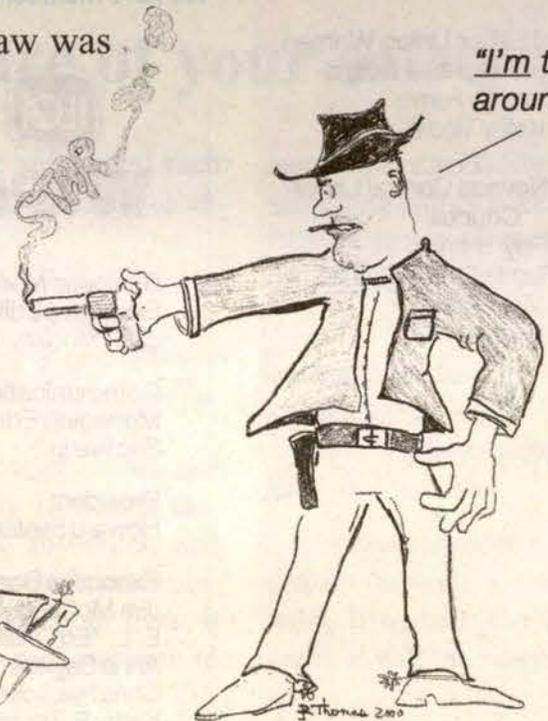
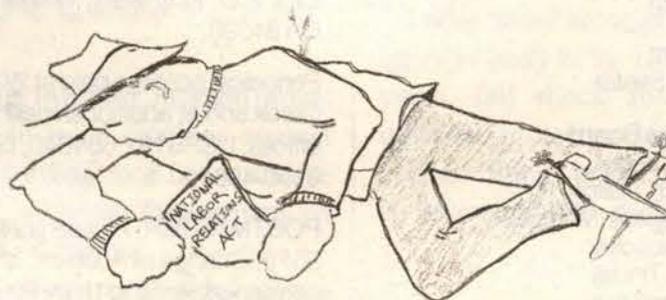
Pacific Gas & Electric embarked on a strategic alliance with four other nuclear utilities in February to share resources and possibly even join their nuclear operations together into a separate company. It was a dramatic act, with sweeping consequences for nuclear employees. The unions representing those employees—including Local 1245—met in July with officials from all five utilities, in part to gain assurances that the utilities were not planning to use this new strategic alliance to attack employees or undermine their unions.

Together the union and company officials negotiated a charter that would commit all parties to abide by the intent of the National Labor Relations Act, and to “engage in no subterfuge for the purpose of evading or defeating any agreements between the parties or principles of the National Labor Relations Act.” The company negotiators then took this agreement back to their respective bosses for signature.

It wasn't much—just an agreement to abide by the nation's labor laws. But apparently that was too much for utility executives gunning for profits in the newly-deregulated electric marketplace. The utility executives rejected the document their own people had negotiated.

For the utilities, a pledge to obey the law was an agreement too tough to sign.

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Ray Thomas

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Tom Brown
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Executive Board Meeting
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Conference
Jack McNally

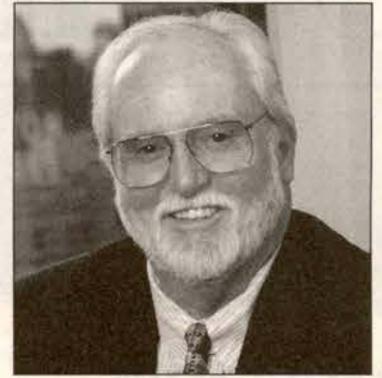
Coalition of Labor Union Women
National Executive Board
Dorothy Fortier
Kathy Tindall

Northern Nevada Central Labor
Council
Ray Thomas
Randy Osborn
Vickie Borst

POINT OF VIEW

Protecting labor standards must be our priority

By Jack McNally, Business Manager



Protecting labor standards has to be a top priority for our union in the current era of utility deregulation.

The possible sale of Pacific Gas & Electric's Diablo Canyon nuclear plant—discussed in this issue of the Utility Reporter—is just one example of the challenges we face. The jobs of our members are on the line as PG&E divests its fossil and steam generation plants. And wage and benefit standards for all utility workers are on the line as independent generating companies begin to move into the California market.

These are not problems that can be resolved overnight. They must be addressed step-by-step, with the long view in mind. Here are the major elements of our strategy:

Protect current members. Local 1245 members at fossil-fuel plants

were among the first to feel the impact of deregulation. Protecting their interests meant taking action at several levels.

First, we drafted language to protect workers and actively lobbied to include this language in the initial deregulation legislation back in 1996. These provisions basically gave incentives to utilities to offer early retirement, severance, and retraining assistance to employees displaced by deregulation.

The next challenge was to make sure PG&E utilized the provisions of this law. In general bargaining we negotiated severance language that applies to all affected workers. Through letter agreement, we bargained additional protections for generation employees, who were the ones most at risk.

Generally speaking, we have been able to give our members in generation the opportunity to choose between an enhanced early retirement, a severance package, another job within PG&E, or a job with the new owner of the existing facility. Most recently we put these options into effect for members at the Pittsburg, Contra Costa & Potrero power plants, now owned by Southern Energy, as well as the Geysers facility owned by Cal-Pines.

Maintain the agreement. Another priority is to protect current and future members at these facilities through bargaining with the new owners. In this regard, we have made significant progress with Duke Energy and Southern Energy.

Organize new facilities. In many ways this is the most difficult challenge of all. In many cases, the companies building new plants in California have no union experience or show outright hostility toward unions. Nonetheless, we allied with building trades unions to organize the Coalition of Unions for Reliable Energy and over the past two years have persuaded many of these new generators to sign neutrality agreements, which generally obligate them to refrain from fighting us when we start organizing their employees.

These organizing efforts, though very difficult, are critically important. Through decades of bargaining we have established wage and benefit standards that are the envy of utility workers throughout the country. If we let our work fall into the hands of non-union companies it will only serve to undermine the standards for our other members.

That is a brief overview of our union's strategy. So far we've made good progress. But there is a lot we still have to do.



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Outsourcing, acting & sweatshop protests

Amazon.com says it is outsourcing some of its customer service work to New Delhi, India. According to the Washington Alliance of Technology Workers (WashTech), which is seeking to unionize Amazon and other high-tech firms in the Northwest, Amazon is telling current employees that they won't lose their jobs. But another company source said that Amazon hopes to eventually move 80% of its customer service work to India. The company's customer service workers in Seattle are paid \$11 an hour. In India, skilled customer service positions pay the equivalent of \$109-175 a month. Microsoft already has many employees in India.

► **"Glad It's Over":** Union actors hit commercial auditions and agencies for the first time in six

Unit update

Unit 3717, Fort Bragg, has changed its November meeting from Nov. 23 to Nov. 21. The time and place will remain the same.
Business Rep. Roy Runnings

Truckee Donner members honor Silva

Members of Local 1245 at Truckee Donner Public Utility District honored Working Foreman Pete Silva, who retired Aug. 31, with a large ad in the Sierra Sun.

"Pete's efforts spanned the gamut from expansion of the PUD's electrical system to fixing downed lines caused by storm damage. His late night adventures included responding to car pole accidents as well as structure fires, frequently leaving his warm bed

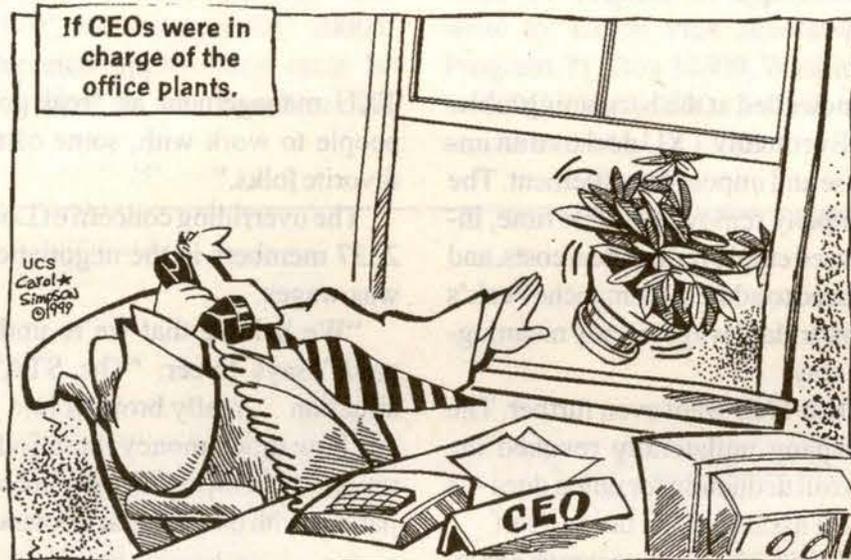
months Oct. 30 as their bitter strike against the ad industry ended. Brett Gilbert, a Screen Actors Guild member who had made most of his money off commercials prior to the work stoppage, said he was "very glad" the strike is over. "I'm headed down to my agent with 200 new headshots right now. I did a couple of out-of-town stand-up comedy gigs and tried temping, but I got fired the first day," he said.

► **Sweatshop Protest:** Ten University of Michigan students were arrested inside a Kohl's department store in Ann Arbor in October dur-

many times in the same night," the ad said.

The ad lauded Silva's "commitment, service and dedication."

"As brothers and sisters of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1245, we salute your years of service to Truckee. It has been our privilege to work with you," the employees said in the ad, which featured the signatures of Silva's fellow union members.



"I'm outsourcing the geranium now."

ing a protest against the union-busting campaign at the Chentex sweatshop in Nicaragua, Labor Notes reported. Chentex makes clothing for Kohl's. The action was one of over 90 protests organized by the Campaign for Labor Rights against Kohl's and Target (which also contracts with Chentex) in 82 cities.

► **Unions Preferred:** A new poll by Peter D. Hart Research Associates found that 40 million workers would vote for a union if they had a chance. That's twice as many as 10 years ago.

► **Auto Strike in Brazil:** Assembly lines at some of Brazil's biggest automobile plants ground to a halt on Nov. 7 during a 24-hour strike by thousands of workers demanding higher wages. The Metalworkers Union representing workers at Ford, Volkswagen, Mercedes Benz, Toyota and Scania, as well as workers in several auto parts factories, said at least 60,000 workers had walked off their jobs in Sao Bernardo do Campo, an industrial suburb on the outskirts of Sao Paulo. The union has said a longer strike will begin soon if workers are denied a 10% wage increase. The National Vehicle Manufacturer Association is offering 6.5%.



AFL-CIO chief arrested at rally

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and four other union leaders were arrested Nov. 3 after linking arms and briefly blocking traffic at a hospital rally in Washington DC in support of more than 1,200 striking nurses.

Sweeney and the other union leaders were put in plastic wrist restraints and led into a police van.

The union leaders were charged with impeding traffic after blocking vehicles for 15 minutes on one lane of a two-way street outside Washington Hospital Center, according to the Metropolitan Police Department. They paid a \$50 fine and were released.

Dozens of strikers and other supporters cheered and chanted, "Shame on MedStar," referring to MedStar Health Inc., operator of the city's largest private hospital, with 907 beds.

"The position that the nurses here are standing for—no mandatory overtime, safe staffing and involvement in patient care—affects nurses all over this country," said American Nurses Association President Mary Foley before her arrest.

The unionized nurses called the rally to support their walkout, which began Sept. 20.

Negotiations continued Friday with a federal mediator over issues that include mandatory overtime, salaries and patient care.

The AFL-CIO and District of Columbia Nurses Association also announced they filed a lawsuit Nov. 3 against the hospital and Denver-based U.S. Nursing Corp., which has been supplying about 700 replacement nurses since the walkout began.

AN AGREEMENT TOO TOUGH TO SIGN

STARS utilities balk at signing agreement to abide by federal labor laws

► From Page 1

On February 1, 2000, five nuclear utilities in California, Texas, Kansas and Missouri launched the Strategic Teaming and Resource Sharing initiative, dubbed STARS.

The STARS utilities say they want to cooperate in regulatory affairs, coordinate procurement and inventories, and share labor and other resources. STARS promotional materials envision “virtual centers of excellence” providing learning opportunities for “STARS employees,” and suggest that efficiency measures taken now could improve employees’ job security down the road.

But when you scratch this veneer of happy talk, a far more troubling picture of STARS begins to emerge.

It is a picture of utilities infatuated with the profit potential of today’s deregulated electricity market. It is a picture of utilities looking for ways to marginalize their unions, and to erode the contractual protections that unions have negotiated for utility employees over many decades.

“Obviously these utilities are going to be concerned about their profits,” says IBEW Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally. “But our concern is whether these utilities are going to deal with their employees in good faith.”

STONEWALLED AT COMANCHE PEAK

Standing in stark contrast to the STARS promotional literature is the plight of union workers at Comanche Peak—one of the five nuclear facilities participating in STARS.

Comanche Peak, operated by a company called TXU, is a dual-reactor plant located about 80 miles southwest of Dallas. Employees there are represented by IBEW Local 2337. When the labor agreement expired in October of 1999, TXU

stonewalled at the bargaining table.

Eventually TXU declared an impasse and imposed a settlement. The company removed double time, increased employee medical costs, and refused to address Comanche Peak’s substandard wages in any meaningful way.

But TXU went even further. The company unilaterally revoked the payroll deduction for union dues—a direct assault on the union itself.

Local 2337 has separate agreements covering employees in nuclear generation, lignite mining, lignite generation, and gas generation—a little over 2,000 employees in all, according to Local 2337 Business Manager Mike Speer.

“They’ve declared impasse and imposed contracts at each and every one of those” bargaining units, says Speer, who sarcastically refers to

TXU management as “real good people to work with, some of my favorite folks.”

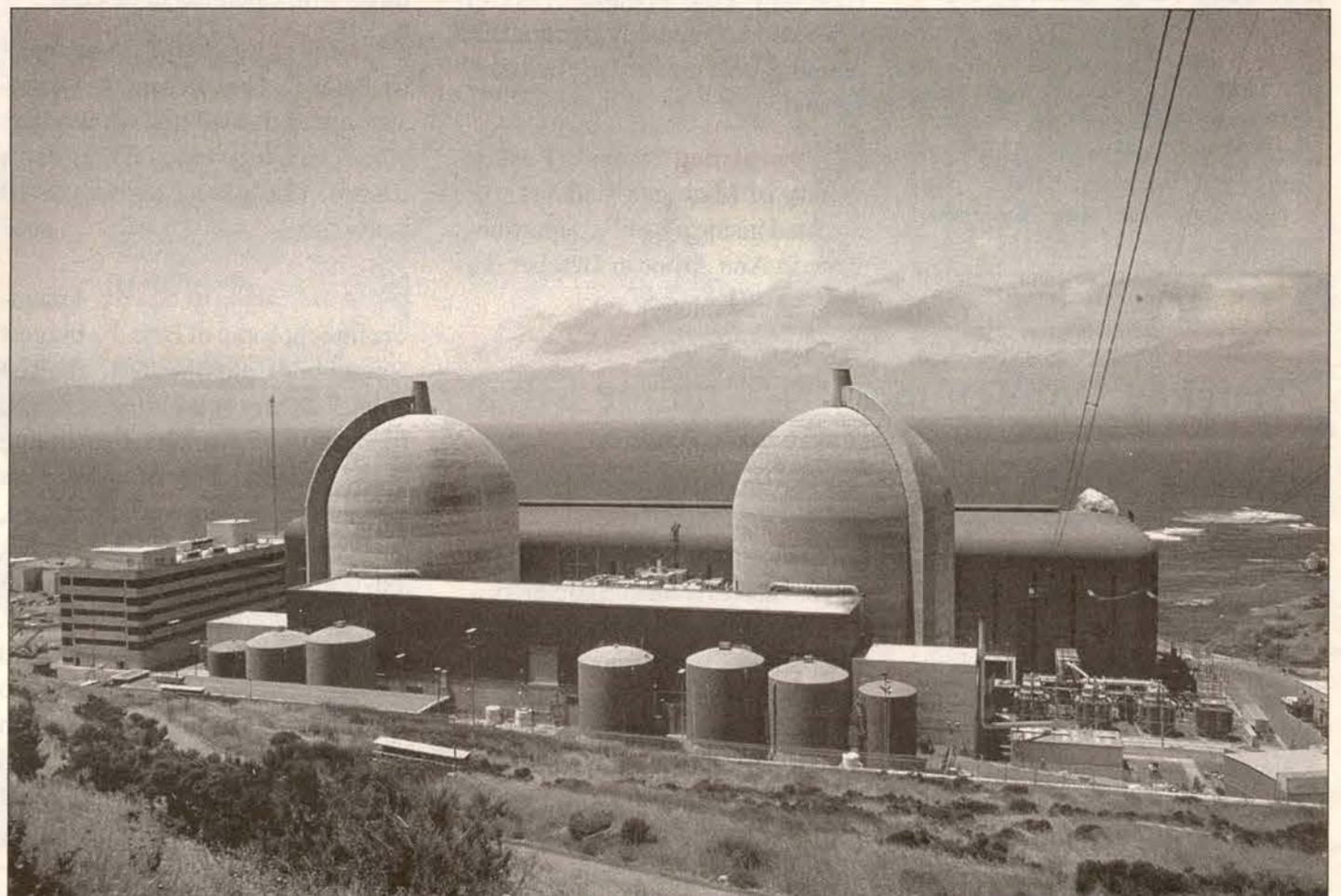
The overriding concern of Local 2337 members in the negotiations was wages.

“We believe that we’re underpaid,” says Speer. “The STARS situation ... really brought into focus how much money these [other union workers] are making in comparison with the people at Comanche

Peak. I grant you there may be some location issues that may warrant some variation in the pay, but we’re the low-man on the totem pole by a substantial amount.”

Local 2337 had hoped to bring its terms of employment closer to the levels enjoyed at other STARS plants. But in fact the reverse could be happening: employees at other STARS plants may soon be in a fight to prevent erosion of their own wage

The companies’ refusal to sign a simple pledge to obey the nation’s labor laws sends a deliberate message: employees stand directly in the line of fire as these companies saunter down a road called electric deregulation.



Pacific Gas & Electric's Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant near San Luis Obispo, Ca.

and benefit standards.

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DOG EAT DOG

Fear and greed are the twin children of electric deregulation, and nowhere is this more evident than in the nuclear industry.

Some states have tried to help utilities prepare for competition by enabling them to pay off nuclear debts at an accelerated rate. Nevertheless, some utilities fear there is little left to salvage from their nuclear investments. That fear, coupled with regulatory pressure on utilities in some states to divest their nuclear assets, has resulted in many nuclear plants being put on the market at bargain basement prices.

And where there are bargains, there are bargain hunters. Take Peco Energy Co. of Pennsylvania, for example.

Peco formed a joint venture with British Energy Corp. to purchase several reactors, and then merged with Unicom (parent company of Chicago's Commonwealth Edison) to form Exelon Corp., which now owns 19 reactors at 11 different sites.

Outfits like Exelon clearly believe there are profits yet to be made in nuclear power. But they also clearly believe that, in a deregulated electric marketplace, those profits will go to large utilities able to exercise significant market power.

In the dog-eat-dog logic of market capitalism, such mergers create anxiety among the remaining nuclear utilities, who may begin to see merger or other forms of cooperation as a requirement for survival—and perhaps the gateway to new opportunities for profit.

SUBSTANTIAL THREAT TO WORKERS

There are many paths to market dominance. Most employer strategies include cutting costs. Some may seek to involve employees in finding ways to improve efficiency. And

The collapse of this agreement has left the unions still looking for a way to create some kind of framework for talks between the utilities and the five unions. And it has left the companies looking for ways to get what they want without having to agree to anything.

some will test more direct approaches to reducing labor costs.

Like open confrontation with their unions.

The STARS initiative consists of five utilities who want their nuclear operations to be a force in the new electric marketplace. They are Pacific Gas & Electric's Diablo Canyon nuclear plant in San Luis Obispo, the Callaway nuclear plant near St. Louis, the Wolf Creek nuclear plant in Burlington, Ks., the South Texas Nuclear Operating Project near Houston, and the Comanche Peak nuclear plant near Dallas.

The threat to labor standards may be most apparent at Comanche Peak in Texas, but in truth the rise of STARS poses a substantial threat to workers at all of the plants.

Local 1245 Business Rep. Dan Lockwood, who represents Local 1245 employees at Diablo Canyon, says that STARS could give utilities an opportunity to erode labor standards by shifting work from high wage states like California to low-wage states like Texas.

Consider dose-metry clerks, who monitor radioactive intake among the employees.

"Our clerks are paid a lot better than they are in Texas," says Lockwood. From management's perspective, why would you base those positions in California? Lockwood asks.

"Instead of home basing them at Diablo Canyon and traveling them to an outage, you could home base them in Texas and travel them to Diablo Canyon. You shift work to another state to save money for the entity as a whole."

A similar dynamic could harm Diablo Canyon warehousemen.

"Out of the five plants in STARS, we're one of the few that has stock-

piled complete replacement components," says Lockwood. "All of the plants are similar in design—they could utilize our warehouse facility for replacement parts."

But if STARS could pay lower taxes on that inventory by keeping it in Texas, Lockwood asks, why would they keep it in California? "Our employees here could lose the warehouse and we could see downsizing of warehousemen."

Lockwood said the unions were willing to discuss labor-sharing issues if the companies had been willing to make a commitment to deal with the unions in good faith.

"We came up with an agreement we felt everybody could live with—a pledge to obey the law—but the companies refused to sign it," said Lockwood.

The collapse of this agreement has left the unions still looking for a way to create some kind of framework for talks between the utilities and the five unions. And it has left the companies looking for ways to get what they want without having to agree to anything.

MANDATORY LABOR SHARING?

One of the things the utilities clearly want is the freedom to engage in labor sharing.

Labor sharing already exists at some STARS utilities. The Wolf Creek plant in Kansas, through an agreement known as the Utilities Service Alliance, has shared labor with other nuclear utilities in recent years.

"It's been an overall positive experience for the workers," says Todd Newkirk, business manager of IBEW Local 304, which represents Wolf

'A greased skid': Deregulation & accountability

The deregulation of electric utilities raises serious issues of accountability, particularly when applied to utilities operating nuclear plants.

Prior to deregulation, utilities were answerable to state regulatory agencies like California's Public Utilities Commission. Local unions and public interest groups have utilized these state agencies to raise issues affecting workers and consumers—even in nuclear matters, which have always had a substantial amount of federal oversight.

But as utilities spill across state and regional boundaries, they grow beyond the reach of state regulatory agencies. Regulatory authority is gravitating to the federal level. As CPUC President Loretta Lynch recently told the Wall Street Journal, the term "deregulation" doesn't describe what happened in California. "What we did," says Lynch, "was federalize our power system without realizing it."

But it appears that federal regulation is not providing adequate opportunities for public input. Paul Gunter, an analyst with the non-profit Nuclear Information Resource Service, believes recent changes in the regulatory structure have effectively thwarted public scrutiny of nuclear mergers. Gunter says the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has turned nuclear license transfers into an informal process.

"It's a greased skid, with no opportunity for intervention by anyone—including unions," says Gunter. The process of discovery is eliminated, he says, which means "you don't have a good picture of the qualifications of the shell corporation taking over."

STARS

► From Page 5

Creek employees. "It gets workers extra cash, an opportunity to see different parts of the country, and a chance to learn and share different work methods on nuclear tasks."

The downside, though, is "the constant fear in the workforce that if volunteers don't participate these companies will try to make it a mandatory program," says Newkirk.

The prospect of mandatory travel is especially worrisome to employees at Diablo Canyon, according to Mark Taylor, a control technician who represents Diablo Canyon work-

ers on the Local 1245 Advisory Council.

"The problems for us would be pretty immense," says Taylor. "We're clear out here in California. If you're living in Kansas, Texas or Missouri, it would be a lot shorter trip."

The refusal of the STARS utilities to sign an agreement signaling their intent to engage in good faith bargaining is troubling to Taylor.

"I just wish they'd come to the table and sit down and agree to talk. It's disconcerting to me that they weren't even willing to agree" to sign a pledge to obey the law, says Taylor.

The utilities' rejection of that basic agreement also troubles Newkirk.

"I was very surprised they wouldn't sign. I viewed the agree-

ment as non-threatening and just a step toward having a harmonious process," says Newkirk.

For now the unions are refusing to go along with labor sharing until the companies come back to the table.

"They're trying to deal with us individually rather than as a group," says IBEW Local 66 Business Rep. Charlie Nelson, whose union represents workers at the South Texas Project. "Our unions are taking the position that nobody's going (on labor sharing assignments) if we can't come to an agreement."

Meanwhile the utilities may be engaging in a bit of subterfuge to try to get what they want.

Recently, Newkirk says, management at the Wolf Creek plants in Kansas tried to bring up mechanics from Comanche Peak. "We said, 'Sorry, without an agreement with the unions we're just not going to do it.'"

All of these are issues that could be discussed if the unions had assurances that the utilities would bargain with them in good faith under the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act.

But that's something the utilities have refused to do, a fact that astonishes Mooshegian.

"My understanding of it was that they aren't willing to abide by the federal law," he recalls. "It's unbelievable."

His feelings are shared by Nelson, the IBEW representative for the South Texas Project.

"I was pretty dumbfounded" by the utilities' attitude," says Nelson. "I just didn't believe it, couldn't understand it."

PRESERVING LABOR AGREEMENTS

So far STARS is only a paper company with "virtual" employees. But the behavior of the individual utilities who make up STARS offers a glimpse of what utility workers can expect if STARS becomes a real company with real employees.

Nuclear plant workers who currently enjoy union-negotiated wages, benefits, and working conditions could suddenly find themselves in a vastly different environment.

Of the five unions at STARS plants, only two have successor clauses in their labor agreements. Depending on what kind of corporation STARS evolves into, those successor clauses provide some protections for union-represented employees at Diablo Canyon and the South Texas Project. Their existing labor agreements could give them a foundation for future negotiations with a STARS corporation.

The situation is more problematic for union workers at Comanche Peak, Callahan and Wolf Creek, where the local labor agreements have no successor clauses. A spin-off of their plants to STARS could leave them high and dry.

"We're not certain if our collective bargaining agreement would remain in place, depending on how this new company is formed," says Mooshegian, the Operating Engineers representative for Callaway workers in Missouri. "We might have

THE AGREEMENT TOO TOUGH TO SIGN

STARS - IUOE - IBEW CHARTER

As a result of the formation of STARS by Callaway, Wolf Creek, Comanche Peak, South Texas and Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plants it has become necessary for the parties signatory to labor agreements at these locations to address certain issues. The Unions associated with this charter currently are International Union of Operating Engineers Local 148 and Locals 66, 304, 1245, and 2337 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

General Principles

Due to the changes in the electric generating industry, the parties agree to identify and address the concerns of both labor and management. In addressing these concerns, the parties mutually agree and declare it to be their purpose and intent to promote the principles of good labor relations. The parties further declare and agree that they recognize not only the requirements but the intent of National Labor Relations Act as to it being the policy of the United States to encourage labor and management to address through good faith bargaining all mandatory subjects of negotiations. The parties finally pledge that they will engage in no subterfuge for the purpose of evading or defeating any agreements between the parties or principles of the National Labor Relations Act.

Adoption of Recommendations

The parties recognize that all current labor agreements are to remain separate and distinct. This organization may develop recommendations for submission to entities signatory to the labor agreements of this group. It is agreed that all involved parties must approve the recommendations in order to implement at any location.

Steering Committee

This organization shall have a steering committee comprised of one appointee from each employer and one from each local union. Both the employers and the unions will appoint one individual each to serve as co-chairpersons.

The purpose of the steering committee is to monitor the application of this charter, identify subjects to be addressed by the coalition and approve recommended agreements to be referred to the signatory organizations.

The committee will meet at least quarterly with meetings scheduled twelve months in advance. A temporary secretary will be appointed at each meeting to develop an agreed to account of the meeting.

For the Employers:

Callaway Nuclear Power Plant

Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant

Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant

South Texas Nuclear Operating Project

Wolf Creek Nuclear Power Plant

For the Unions:

IBEW 66

IBEW 304

IBEW 1245

IBEW 2337

IUOE 148

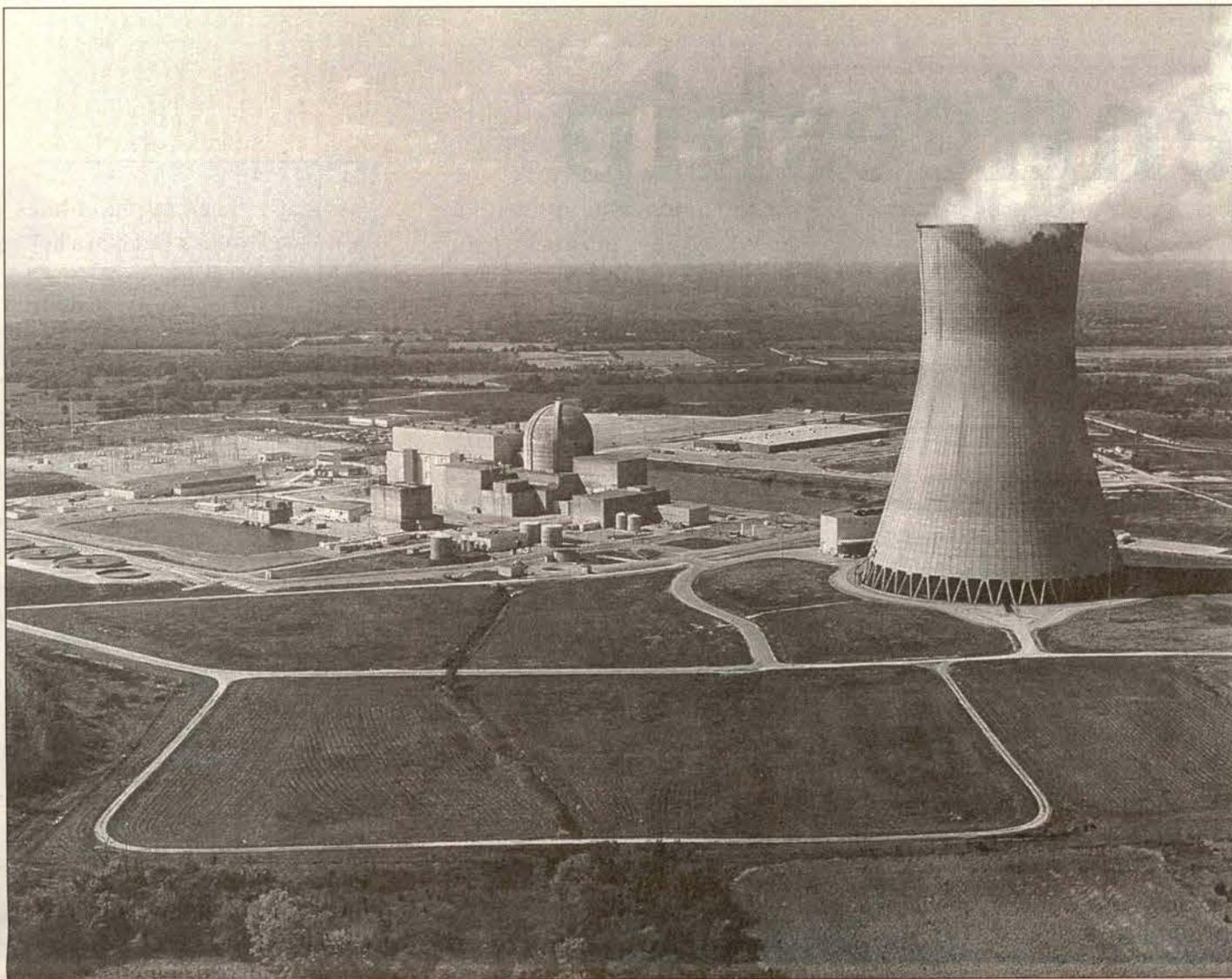
HIDDEN DANGERS

Though STARS sings its virtues, labor sharing poses hidden dangers for workers, which is precisely why the unions want a written commitment from the companies to bargain with them in good faith.

"As far as the labor sharing aspect, we're concerned if we send out people from Callaway to another location, what's going to happen to that work back at Callaway?" asks Eric Mooshegian, Business Manager of Operating Engineers Local 148, which represents operations and maintenance employees at the Callaway plant in Missouri. "Are they going to contract it out on us?"

Contracting is already a sore point with Mooshegian, who says the amount of subcontracting "has increased dramatically" over the past five years. The union believes the company has violated the labor agreement by increasing the amount of contracting while decreasing the regular workforce, and the dispute is headed for arbitration.

Backfilling traveler's jobs with contractors is just one of the potential problems that unions have with labor sharing. There are others, such as per diem payments, travel arrangements, and family visits.



Ameren Corporation's Callaway nuclear facility near Fulton, Missouri.

to organize all the employees again.”

His union attempted to get successor language in the last round of negotiations with Callaway management, but that effort was unsuccessful, Mooshegian says.

A similar situation exists at the Wolf Creek plant in Kansas.

“We have an extreme urgency to get meaningful successor language,” says Newkirk of IBEW Local 304. “Any transfer of assets without successor language is a serious concern to the worker.”

Workers at Comanche Peak, already struggling to maintain a bargaining relationship with their current employer, could face serious trouble gaining recognition if there is a change in ownership.

Union members at the South Texas Project near Houston could find some protection in the successor language in their labor agreement, depending on the type of corporation STARS becomes, according to Nelson, the IBEW representative.

But successor language by itself is no magic bullet as nuclear employees seek to defend their wages, benefits and working conditions at a new employer.

“Successor language gives us a foundation for a bargaining relationship with a new employer, if that’s what STARS becomes,” says Local 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Darrel Mitchell. “But every contract has to be renewed. Then the question is, what kind of employer will we be facing across the table?”

PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN

For now, no one knows for sure if STARS will become an actual employer.

But the STARS utilities have been waging a major propaganda campaign to gain employee support for the concept. Information pieces explain how STARS will improve per-

formance by “making it easier to identify and apply best practices and share expertise among plants.”

One piece of STARS literature reassures employees that “Cutting costs through efficiencies and economies makes it less likely new owners would need to pare budgets by reducing headcount.” The piece goes on to warn that “personal performance and productivity will be key factors in job retention.”

Important as good performance is, most employees recognize that their job security depends on their collective bargaining strength. Without the protection of a union contract, any individual employee can be tossed into the street at the whim of management.

“The companies are trying to sell STARS to the employees,” observes Taylor, the Diablo Canyon control technician. “Most people didn’t buy it. They want to know why the companies didn’t want to sit down with the unions.”

Could mergers jeopardize nuclear safety?

No one has established that consumers or workers will benefit from the growing concentration of power in the nuclear industry.

One area that deserves attention is safety.

Last year, acting chairman of the NRC Edward McGaffigan told the Wall Street Journal that he sees safety benefits “to running fleets of plants on a uniform basis rather than having them become the forgotten stepchildren of utilities that have sold off their other plants.”

Nonetheless, there may be reason for concern.

Consider Peco Energy’s joint venture with British Energy to operate several nuclear reactors in the United States. A recent report by Britain’s Nuclear Installations Inspectorate—Britain’s equivalent of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission—roundly criticized British Energy’s operation of nuclear facilities in Britain.

The report warned that management failures and severe job cuts have jeopardized key operations.

“Our judgment is that in key safety areas... staff levels are at, and in a limited number of areas, below that required to sustain the work load and discharge the requirements of licensees.”

Inability to meet requirements is not the kind of language you like to see associated with operation of a nuclear plant.

Attrition of the workforce has become a concern at some US nuclear plants as well, and consumers can hardly feel encouraged at the thought that operators like British Energy are now bringing their management style to the US market.

Apprenticeship

Delivering skilled workers for today's economy

The backbone of any industry is the skill of its workforce, and nowhere is this more true than the electric construction industry, where talent and training are essential ingredients in the delivery of safe and reliable power.

In California, a principal source of new talent for the electric construction industry is the California-Nevada Joint Apprenticeship Training program in Riverside, Ca., operated by IBEW and the National Electrical Contractors Association. The JATC, which turns out 30-40 journeyman linemen annually, is currently training about 200 apprentices. The program also provides training for various small utilities.

Some apprentices come fresh

out of high school. Others bring years of experience in the industry in some other classification. All of them bring a belief that they can master the physical demands and rigorous standards required of aspiring linemen.

"Our mission is to provide education and professional training to have qualified, skillful, professional journeyman linemen serving the public. Our job is to produce those workers," says Armando Mendez, the program's director.

Mendez is assisted by Training Coordinator John Gosser and eight instructors. A satellite school is operated in Sacramento by Instructor Mark Aragon.

The program consists of at least 7,000 hours of on-the-job training, plus eight hours of formal class-

room work every other Saturday. Apprentices work throughout California and Nevada to help ensure they are trained in all aspects of the job, according to Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Art Murray, a union representative on the Training Trust.

Not everyone makes the grade. Up to 15% of new apprentices do not see the program through to completion. Nevertheless, the program is able to bring the vast majority into the workforce as journeymen.

"We have a pretty good retention rate," says Mendez.

Those who make it through turn out with the skills needed to keep our electricity-based economy humming. Graduating apprentices have been trained to climb, rig, bus out transformers, string wire, troubleshoot, install and maintain overhead and underground residential distribution and transmission systems, build substations and switchyards, and work safely and productively in all types of weather and terrain.

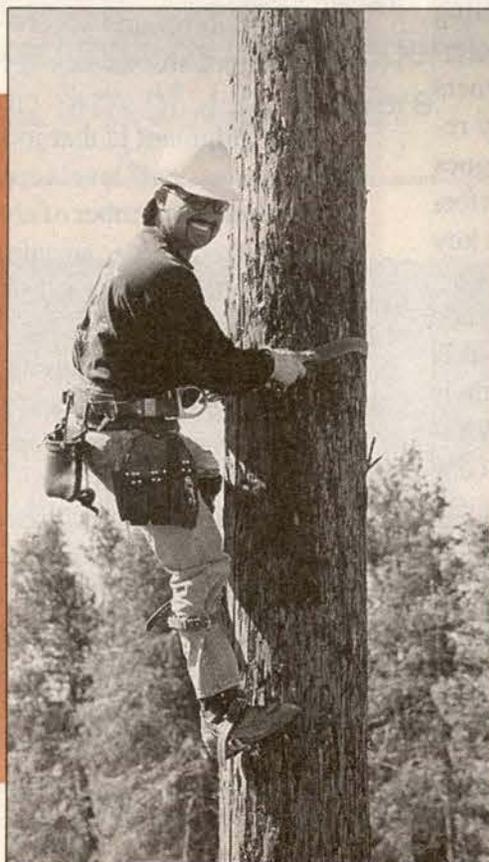
"The people who come through our union's joint apprenticeship program are some of the best-trained journeymen you'll find anywhere," said Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally. "They've got the hands-on training that employers need."

And in today's hot economy, opportunities abound for new journeymen.

"Everybody's working," says Mendez, and that situation should continue as work picks up for Pacific Gas & Electric, Southern California Edison, and San Diego Gas & Electric.



Apprentices Brian Mallard and Mel Wood



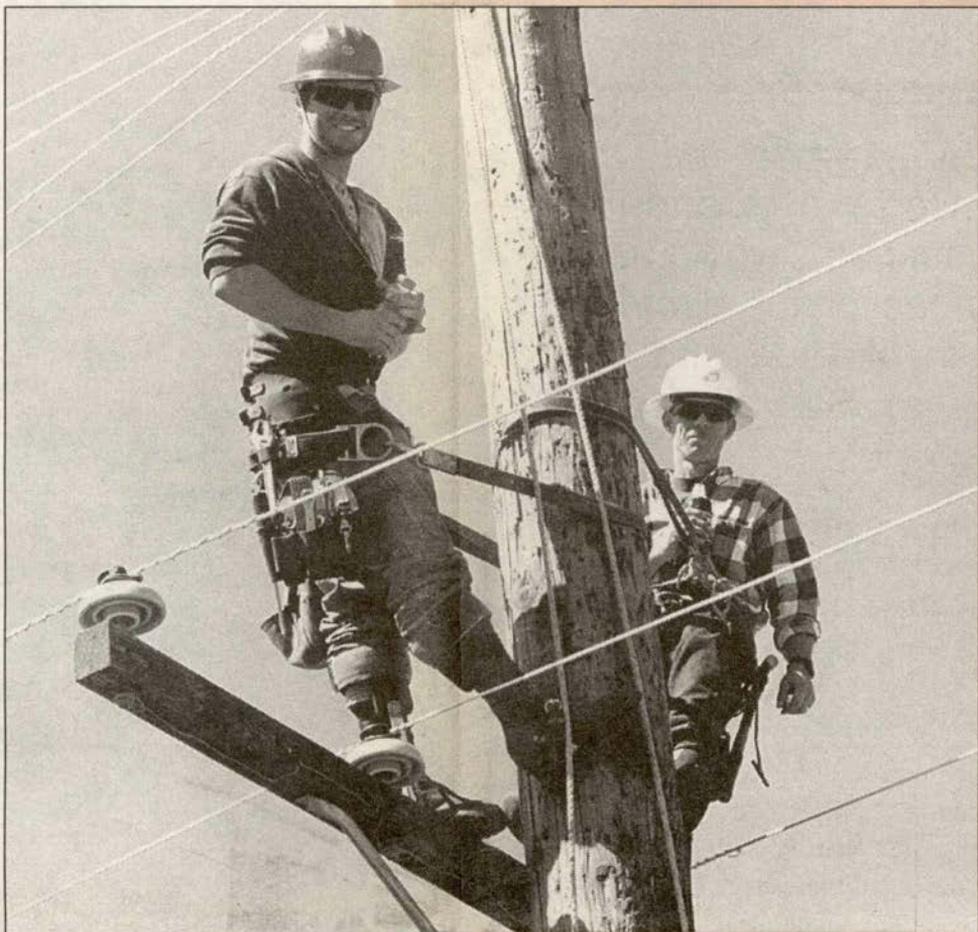
Robert Bravo, apprentice

Apprenticeship Month

The role of apprenticeship programs in building the California economy was recently recognized by Gov. Gray Davis, who declared October as Apprenticeship Month in California.

"It is the goal of this administration to match the needs of workers with those of employers," says Stephen Smith, director of the California Department of Industrial Relations. "We want to strengthen the apprenticeship alliance among industry, labor, education and government for recruiting workers and teaching the skills they and their employers need."

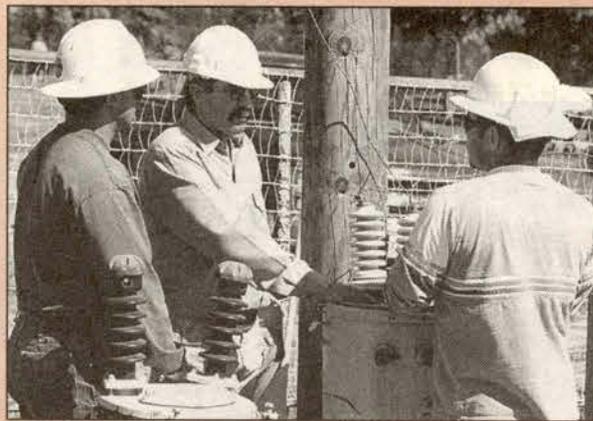
The California apprenticeship system, which combines on-the-job experience with classroom instruction, was formalized in 1939 with passage of the Shelley-Maloney Apprentice Labor Standards Act.



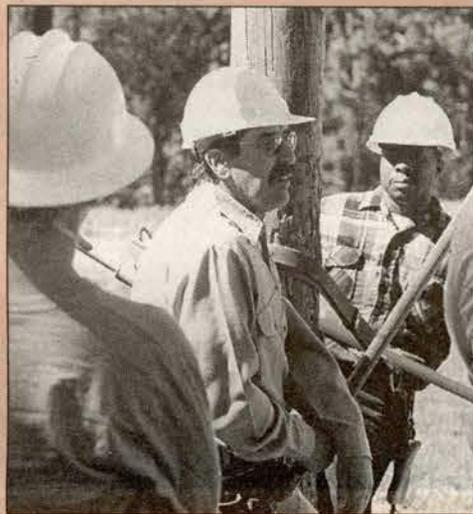
Apprentices Brian Mallard and Mel Wooden



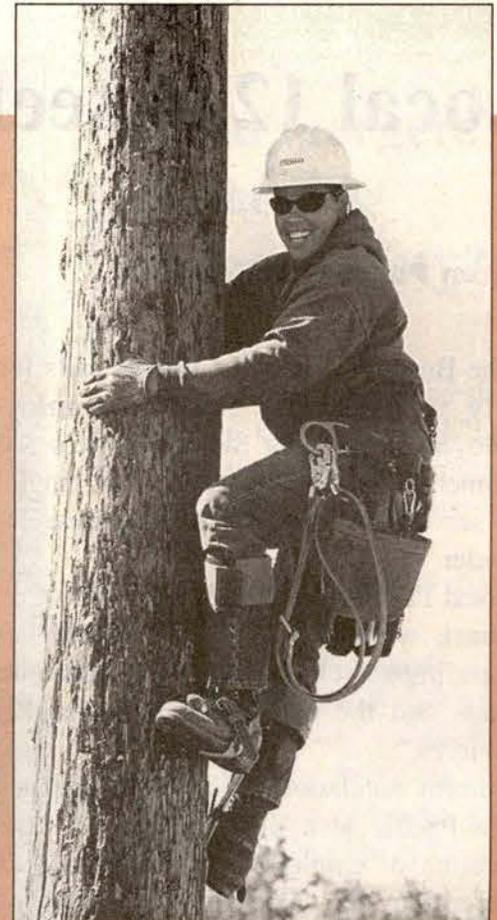
From left: Jeff Riemer, apprentice; Lori Frakes, apprentice (partially visible); Dennis Schmidt, apprentice (recently turned journeyman); Frank Erdodi, apprentice (recently turned journeyman); Roger Bailes, instructor; Cliff Evans, apprentice; Rob Allaway, apprentice; Chris Dagenais, apprentice; Greg Owens, apprentice.



From left: Dave Smith, apprentice, Roger Bailes, instructor, Eric Mendoza, apprentice.



From left: Lori Frakes, apprentice (back to camera), Roger Bailes, instructor, Cliff Evans, apprentice.



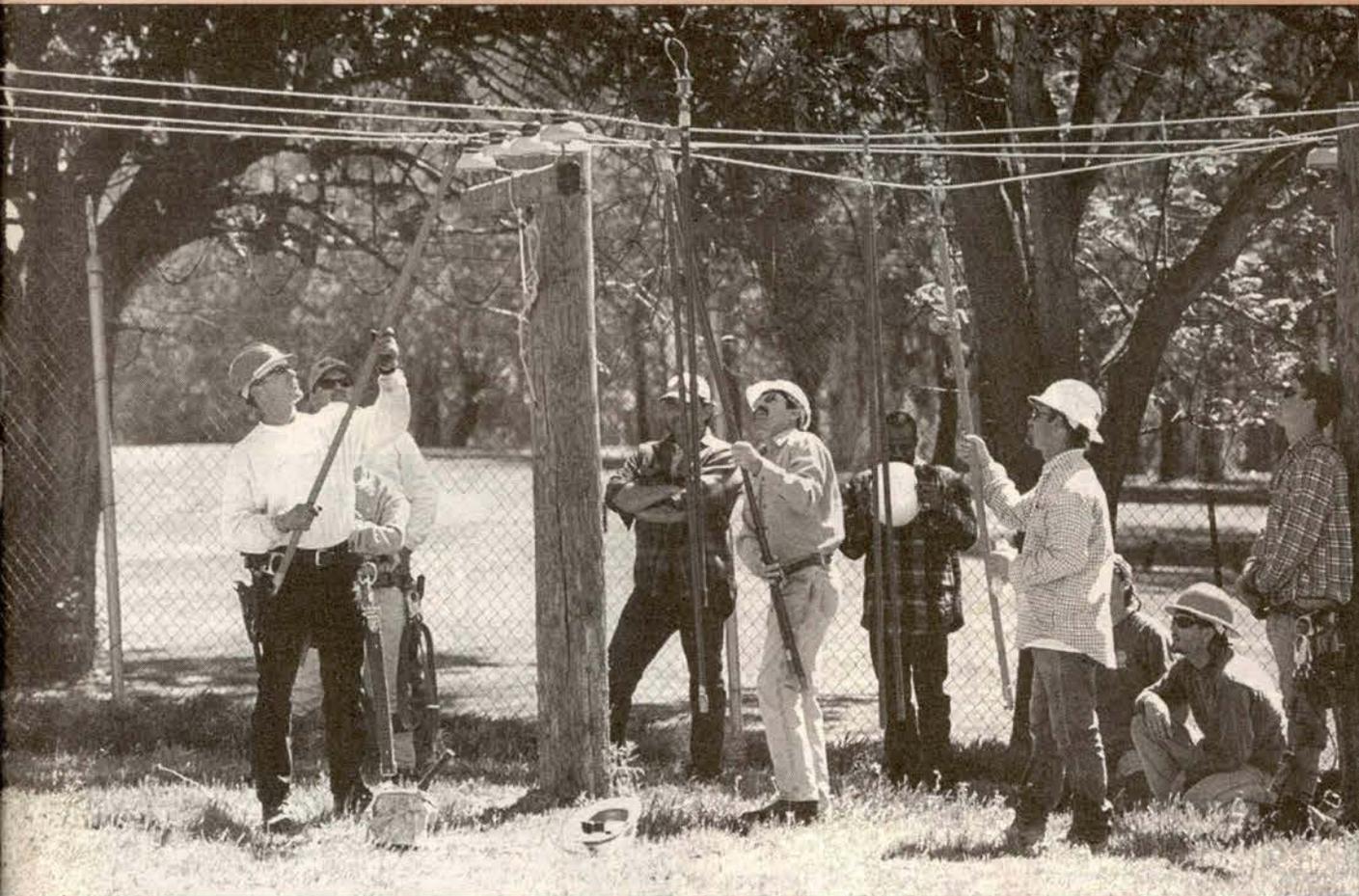
Apprentice Freddy Ortiz.



For More Information

Anyone interested in finding out more about the Joint Apprenticeship Training Program should contact the program at (909) 685-VOLT, or send a fax to (909) 685-WIRE requesting an application.

To be accepted into the program applicants must have a copy of their high school transcript showing at least one year of Algebra, with a passing grade, or one semester of adult or college Algebra.



From left: Jeff Riemer, apprentice; Lori Frakes, apprentice (partially visible); Dennis Schmidt, apprentice (recently turned journeyman); Frank Erdodi, apprentice (recently turned journeyman); Roger Bailes, instructor; Cliff Evans, apprentice; Rob Laway, apprentice; Chris Dagenais, apprentice; Greg Owens, apprentice.

Local 1245 seeks protection for Sierra Pacific jobs

► From Page 1

The Business Code of Conduct calls for the utility to physically separate employees. Employees who serve Sierra Pacific's regular customers would be separated from employees who serve customers of an alternative energy provider.

Local 1245 warned that the Business Code of Conduct, without a variance, "would have a serious impact on the electrical consumer in Nevada and the employees at Sierra Pacific Resources."

Current regulations, the union argued, hold Sierra Pacific at a disadvantage "in that the separation of employees or facilities, and the meter reading and customer service rules, would be costly to implement and will increase ongoing costs."

While Local 1245 and Sierra Pacific were in agreement on the need for a variance, the union

"Employees of Sierra Pacific and Nevada Power currently provide top quality electrical service," the union stated in its recent testimony, noting that customer service has been ranked high by the independent rating firm of J.D. Powers.



Judy Mason, Customer Service Working Foreman and 19-year union member.

and company differ in their long-term vision for electric service in Nevada. The company would like to eventually shed its role as a Provider of Last Resort for the state's electric customers. The union believes Sierra Pacific should remain the default provider to assure that high quality, universal service survives in Nevada.



Nanette Segura (left) and Karen Filsinger are both Customer Service Representatives in billing—and 14-year members of IBEW Local 1245.

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"Employees of Sierra Pacific and Nevada Power currently provide top quality electrical service," the union stated in its recent testimony to the PUCN, noting that customer service has been ranked high by the independent rating firm of J.D. Powers.

The future direction of deregulation in Nevada still remains very much in doubt. A committee representing many of the interested parties—and being closely monitored by Local 1245—is supposed to recommend an implementation plan to Gov. Kenny Guinn by Jan. 15, 2001.

At the same time, there is some sentiment in the legislature for overhauling the entire deregulation scheme, or perhaps even shutting it down.



Vickie Borst is a Customer Service Representative in the Call Center, a union steward, and a 19-year IBEW member.



Michelle Lyons is a Customer Service Representative in the Call Center and a two-year member of IBEW Local 1245.

Survey to gather data on retired members

By Orv Owen

Retirees from the East Bay and San Jose chapters of the Local 1245 Retirees Club met in Walnut Creek on Sept. 14 at the invitation of Business Manager Jack McNally to develop a questionnaire that will be sent to retired members of Local 1245.

The general purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain the facts about the living conditions of our retired members, and to develop an informed perspective on what their basic needs are. This vital information is necessary in any future bargaining or discussions between Local 1245 and the employers of current and future Local 1245 retirees.

The questionnaire, which is now in development, will be mailed to all Local 1245 retirees.

We encourage all Local 1245 retirees to complete the questionnaire and to send it back to the union as soon as possible. This factual information will be extremely useful to union negotiators, and will enhance their understanding of the plight of



JOINT MEETING

Attending a special joint meeting of the East Bay and San Jose Chapters of the Retirees Club in September were, standing, from left: Tom Young, Franklin Chandler, Ralph Weidling; Ray Michael. Seated, from left: Watie Anthney, Orv Owen, Richard Murphy, Jack Hill, and Don Hardie.

the early retirees—many of whom receive pension benefits less than the poverty level of \$15,000 a year.

If it was not for Social Security, half of today's elderly would live in poverty. One in four people age 65 and older depend on Social Security

for at least 90% of their income, and three in five count on it for at least half their income.

Many of our current retirees spent some part of their life during the Great Depression and will oppose any legislation that would turn back the clock to 1929. We don't want to replace the proven success of Social Security with the great risk of private retirement accounts invested in a stock market which is subject to historical crashes.

So there are two things you can do right now to protect your retirement income: tell your member of Congress to defend Social Security, and help Local 1245 help you by returning the questionnaire when it arrives in the mail.

Keep the faith!

(Orv Owen is a retired Assistant Business Manager of Local 1245)



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.

Congratulations!

The Local 1245 Retirees Club congratulates these recently-retired members of the union. We invite you to participate in—or start!—a Retirees Club chapter in your area.

John Martensen, 30 years
Gilroy, CA

Judith Miller, 17 years
Walnut Creek, CA

Jerry Newkirk, 34 years
Bakersfield, CA

Klaus Oncken, 17 years
Petaluma, CA

Michael Perryman, 35 years
Novato, CA

Felton Prescott, 34 years
Modesto, CA

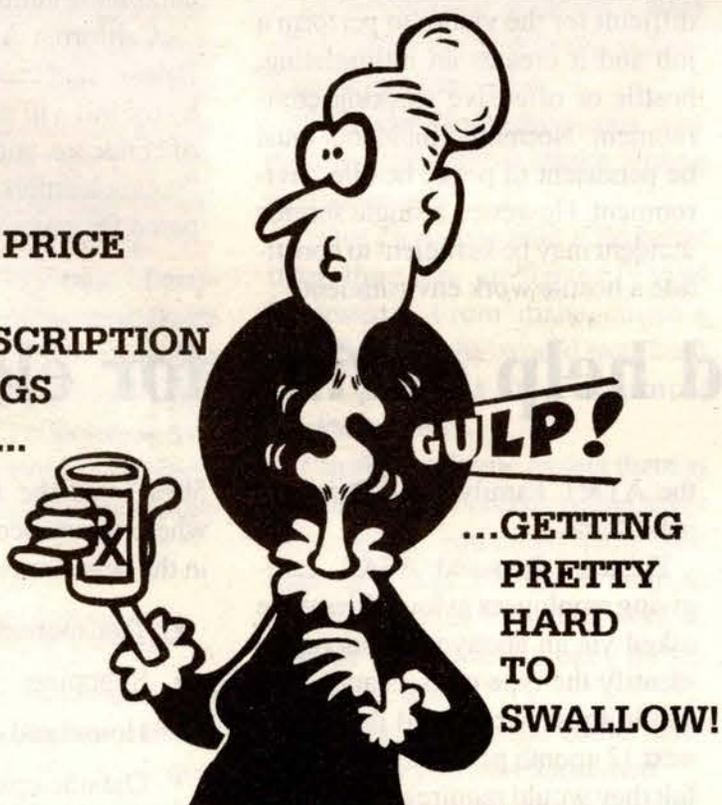
Clayton Rapoza, 35 years
Stockton, CA

Richard Rodgers Jr., 32 years
Camino, CA

Humberto Rodriguez, 36 years
Pacifica, CA

Billie Rogers, 15 years
Walnut Creek, CA

**THE PRICE
OF
PRESCRIPTION
DRUGS
ARE...**



**GULP!
...GETTING
PRETTY
HARD
TO
SWALLOW!**



Sexual harassment: it's against the law

WOMEN WORKERS' HISTORY

Maud Gonne Club

Regarded derisively by the men as "petticoat butchers," women went to work in Chicago meat-packing plants for the first time in the early 1900s—at pay scales 30% below male rates. Bosses made a point of keeping women's pay low. At one plant, when the take-home pay of the fastest piece workers reached a certain level, the rates of all the women would be cut—the slower workers penalized for the productivity of the fastest.

The rate finagling was first noticed by Maggie Condon, one of the fastest workers; she made common cause with Hannah O'Day, one of the slower workers. One day in 1902, Hannah raised her red handkerchief on a stick in the plant, and several hundred women followed her out on a strike. Their job action was unsuccessful, but Maggie, Hannah and other women workers were determined to organize. They formed a club, which they called the Maud Gonne Club after a noted Irish revolutionary.



In 1903 what started as the Maud Gonne Club became chartered as Local 183 of the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen. Although not long-lasting, the local union twice took important stands for equality. Local 183 delegates to a meatcutters' convention were instrumental in defeating a resolution calling for a ban on women meat trimmers. On another occasion, the Maudites did themselves proud when a black woman came to a meeting. "What'll I do with her?" asked Sergeant-at-Arms Hannah O'Day. Responded the president, Mollie Daley: "I say, admit her at once and let yez give her a hearty welcome!" Union members applauded warmly.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines define sexual harassment as:

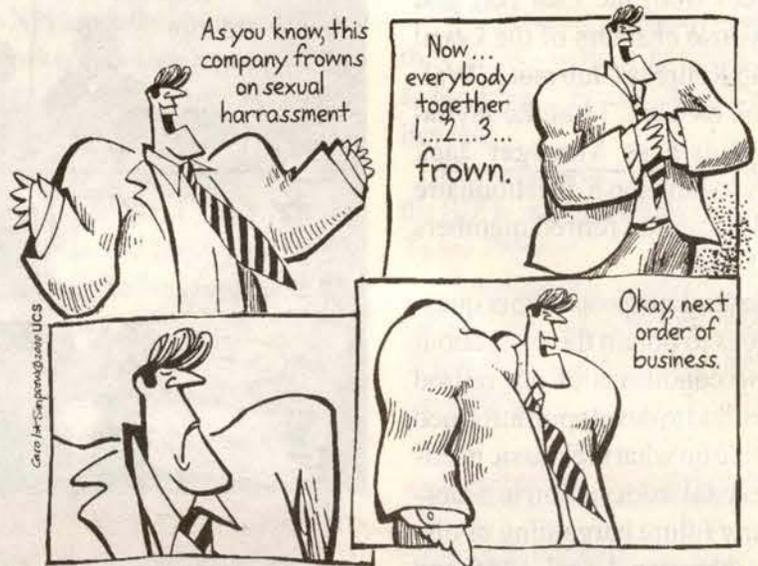
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- Unwelcome requests for sexual favors
- Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

There are two general categories of sexual harassment:

Quid pro quo (literally meaning "this for that"): This is generally defined as instances where submission to unwelcome conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a condition of employment or the basis for employment decisions.

Quid pro quo harassment is the most clear cut. It involves some one in a position of authority, stating or implying that the victim's job, promotion or assignment depends on complying with sexual advances. A one-time incident may be sufficient



to prove quid pro quo harassment.

The second general category of sexual harassment is the "hostile work environment," defined as undesirable, unwanted conduct that unreasonably interferes with the victim's job performance or creates an intimidating, offensive workplace.

This type of harassment can occur when a supervisor or co-worker harasses someone solely because of gender. Such harassment makes it difficult for the victim to perform a job and it creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Normally, incidents must be persistent to prove hostile environment. However, a single serious incident may be sufficient to constitute a hostile work environment.

Gov. Davis signs childcare bill

A labor-sponsored childcare bill to improve the quality of childcare services for working families, AB 212, was signed by Gov. Davis on Sept. 22.

The bill provides \$15 million in stipends for childcare workers who complete training.

California AFL-CIO chief Art Pulaski said that funding provided by the bill will improve the quality of childcare, and helps ensure that "young learners will be better prepared for school."

Families need help caring for elderly

A survey conducted by the National Council on the Aging (NCOA) has identified the challenges faced by workers who provide care for an elderly relative.

The survey was sponsored by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Communications Workers of America and AT&T through a joint project called

the AT&T Family Care Development Fund.

Thirteen thousand AT&T caregiving employees in four cities were asked via an anonymous survey to identify the type of assistance they would most likely need during the next 12-month period. Almost 70% felt they would require assistance in locating elder care programs and over

50% listed the following as areas where assistance would be needed in the near future:

- Transportation
- Shopping
- Household chores
- Outside upkeep of the home
- Finding legal information

Scholarships available for IBEW members and kin

Want to pick up some money to further your education or to help finance the education of a member of your family? Help is now available!

The IBEW Founders' Scholarship is for qualified IBEW members (but not their families.) The

scholarship is for up to \$24,000 over a period not to exceed 8 years. Request an application from: IBEW Founders Scholarship, 1125 15th St. NW, Washington, DC 20005. Completed applications must be postmarked no later than March 1, 2001.

The Union Plus Scholarship is available to union members, spouses and their dependent children. To request an application, write to: Union Plus Scholarship Program, PO Box 34800, Washington, DC 20043-4800. Awards are announced May 31, 2001.

The IBEW Local 1245 "Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship" provides scholarship assistance to the children of Local 1245 members. Please check the back page of the January 2001 issue of the Utility Reporter for more information.



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS

1125 Fifteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 633-7000
http://ibew.org

J. J. BARRY
International President

EDWIN D. HILL
International Secretary-Treasurer

May 17, 2000

TO: ALL FINANCIAL SECRETARIES

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

This is a reminder to you that there will be a \$1.00 increase in per capita tax to become effective January 1, 2001. This increase was approved by the delegates of the 35th IBEW International Convention, which was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, during the week of September 16 through 20, 1996. Accordingly, the following rates will apply for all per capita payments covering the period of January 2001, and thereafter:

"A" Members - \$20.30 per month

"BA" Members - \$9.00 per month

In accordance with Article IX of the *IBEW Constitution*, \$9.00 per month from each member shall go into the General Fund, and the additional amount paid by our "A" members of \$11.30 per month shall go into the Pension Benefit Fund.

Please notify all of the members in your local union concerning this dues increase, and you may also need to notify the employers to increase payroll deductions. In addition, if your local union is submitting Per Capita Reports to this office by computer, please make sure that the new rates are entered in your system. It will not be necessary to amend the local union bylaws with respect to this dues increase, because this action was approved at the IBEW International Convention.

This monthly per capita tax payment to the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers is a duty that is required of each individual member. It is the responsibility of each Financial Secretary to collect and forward all per capita payments to the International Office in a timely manner.

Best wishes.

Fraternally yours,

J. J. Barry
J. J. Barry
International President

Edwin D. Hill
Edwin D. Hill
International Secretary-Treasurer

JJB/EDH:bjj
Copy to all International Officers

Three awards for Utility Reporter

Local 1245 has won three awards in the labor journalism contest sponsored by the International Labor Communications Association.

The Utility Reporter took second place in the Unique Performance category for coverage of the Local 1245 "Who Ya Gonna Call?" rally at the California Public Utilities Commission in November of 1999. The judges called the article "a comprehensive account about a powerful rally, with a public service message shining throughout."

Local 1245 took third place for editorial excellence in non-periodical publications for its informational booklet called "Proving the Power of Unity." The judges called the booklet "a simply but strong statement about the benefits of union membership and representation."

The Utility Reporter was also recognized in the Labor History category, winning third place for "Best Biographical Profile" for an obituary honoring former Senior Assistant Business Manager L. L. Mitchell. "This is a substantial obituary of L.L. Mitchell, a leader in this local for over 25 years. In discussing Mitchell's career, the article not only pays tribute to his personal qualities and commitment to the union, but also indicates several of the major developments of the period."



San Jose, Ca.

April 15, 2000

The Honorees

50 Years

Eugene Warren

40 Years

James Hershman

35 Years

Lynne Rodriguez

Wayne Capps

V. M. Rhodes

Timothy Gathers

Vincent Piazza

Warren Mercer

H.R. Batey

Robert Standley

Peter Mandon

R. Mendez

M.E. Clampitt

C.L. Napolitano

Darwin Ernst

John Ferrara

Roger Sharp

John Alaga

Shirley Gagne

Daine Mitchell

Barry Vetter

James Andereson

Ronald Morris

Dean Montero

30 Years

David Shahenian

Daniel Love

Norman Feyling

Jeffrey Hickey

David Mader

Walter Truluck

Frank Perez

Michael Miller

Steven Sanfillipo

William Ferguson

Robert Skillman

Jeffrey Kennedy

Paul Morrow

Edward Engeldinger

Ralph Layne

Thomas Cvietkovich

Ben Rizo

Michael McGinley

Kenneth Resop

Alan Pierce

Wilton Mixon

John Sandoval

Armand Guerrero

Antonio Lozano

John Weininger

Edward Wiens

Buzz Lenahan

Steve Diaz

David Miller

Joseph Flores

David Davis

Steven Mogensen

Charles Chapman

William Bullard

Lonnie Moseley

Kenneth Turner

Joe Gaeta

Edward Flores

Joann Avalos

Edward Carr

James Jaklich

Kenneth Padron

Daniel Melanephy

Alfonso Casas

Thomas Rivera, Jr.

Sandra Brown

Vincent Revino

Ruben Lopez

Donald Poulsen

Keith Roessler

Christopher Ohlson

Tom Willis

Terry Bryant

25 Years

Juan Mendoza

Edward Hernandez

Keith Bowman

Frank Oclassen

Dana Mickelson

Jan Langone

Gilbert Garcia Jr.

Barbara Parysek

Dawn Garrett

Richard Ortiz

Shirley Gagne

David Miguel

Adam Mendolla

James Murray

Vincent Martinez

20 Years

Janice Bergh

Bill Brill Jr.

Pat Stoffey

Sonia Sainz

Vida Anderson

Maria Rogers

Gary Zuniga

Keith Fisher

Geraldine Raymundo

Susie Oka

Amante Buentipo

Jim Rojas

Theodore Arreg

Richard Davis

John Ibarra

Robert Stephens

Gary Overman

Joey Hernandez

Rocky Demateo

Barry Prior

Thomas Vance

David Najar

Filomeno Perez

D.K. Thorne



35 Years



30 Years



25 Years



20 Years



McNally writes governor about safety board vacancy

Local 1245 Business Manager Jack McNally urged Gov. Gray Davis to move quickly to fill vacancies on the Cal-OSHA Standards Board.

In a letter sent to the governor in late September, McNally noted that the Sept. 21 meeting of the Standards Board lacked a quorum, which prevented the Board from conducting business. He reminded the governor that the labor seat on the Standards Board has been vacant since May 31, 1999, a vacancy that McNally called "troubling."

Another seat on the Board has also become vacant.

McNally said that leaving seats vacant on the Standards Board "seems to send the wrong message to the workers in this state."

"We feel strongly that the Cal-OSHA Standards Board should receive prompt attention. Safety should not take a back seat..." McNally wrote. He said that by filling the vacancies with appointees who understand the plight of workers, "everyone will know 'Safety Does Matter' here."

Felon poses as inspector

A paroled felon who allegedly victimized several minority-owned small businesses in the Los Angeles County area by posing as a Cal-OSHA inspector was recently arrested in a joint Cal-OSHA sting operation conducted by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Major Crimes Unit.

The suspect, Mark Dwayne Jackson, threatened to impose severe monetary fines and penalties for non-existent safety violations unless the owners agreed to a cash

settlement. In return, Jackson promised not to issue citations against them, according to a news release by the California Department of Industrial Relations.

Jackson was apprehended after a business owner agreed to be wired and pass marked money to the suspect.

"Impersonation of a Cal-OSHA inspector undermines the real work of Cal-OSHA, which is to protect workplace safety and health," said John Howard, the Cal-OSHA chief.

By the Local 1245
Safety Committee



Prevent driving accidents

Some recent vehicular accidents should serve to remind us that when we are behind a steering wheel we must stay focused on our driving.

Driving seems to come naturally for many of us. When we've been at it for a long time, we may start getting a little lax.

Today there are more and more cars and trucks on the streets and highways, increasing congestion and also stress as we try to stay on schedule.

Under these conditions, drivers tend to speed, fail to yield right of way to pedestrians, and even run

red lights.

Under these conditions it's important to keep our perspective and remember that our busy schedules aren't worth getting in an accident.

Do more than avoid accidents: prevent them. Be sure all passengers and cargo are secured properly. Plan the route to your destination. Drive defensively. Try to anticipate what the other driver will do.

Above all, obey the rules of road. With everyone staying focused on road safety, we can reduce accidents and make driving conditions safer for everyone.

Take care of your safety gear

Many people are injured each year by falling from an elevated position.

Electrical workers frequently work out of bucket trucks, ladders, roofs, scaffolding, etc. We all use different ways of reaching the work to get the job done.

Today there are many kinds and types of body belts, harnesses, lanyards, fall shock absorbers, and other fall protection safety devices.

These things protect our lives. It is important for each worker to

inspect his or her safety gear daily, or more frequently if necessary, for any cuts, frayed areas, contaminated areas, or other problems.

Be sure all hooks are the double-locking kind to ensure they do not accidentally release. And never release your safety equipment to reach the extra distance.

Safety equipment is designed to protect us while we are doing our work. If we take care of our equipment, it will take care of us.

Current members of the Local 1245 Safety Committee are: Stoney Burke, Alameda Power & Telecommunications; Keith Hopp, Pacific Gas & Electric; Ralph Muraca, City of Santa Clara; Mark Rose, Davey Tree; Al White, Pacific Gas & Electric; Rod Wright, Modesto Irrigation District; and Assistant Business Manager Art Murray.



50 Years: James Williamson

Bakersfield, Ca.
May 12, 2000



The Honorees

50 Years
 James Williamson
 Donovan Rockhill

40 Years
 Paul James

35 years
 Russell Yaws
 D.H. Sands
 R.W. Howard
 Gary Glover
 Dee Fisher

30 Years
 M. Williams Jr.
 Andrew Wedel
 Thomas Vontz
 Arthur Romero
 James Rogers
 Lorry Patt
 Dwight Jennings
 Louis Hogan
 Raymond Behill

25 Years
 Grant Salyers
 Daniel Ramirez
 Lee Haring
 Samuel Bailey

20 Years
 Robert Sills
 Mike Sears
 Jeannine Rollins
 Steve Morris
 Jeff Kunz
 Jennifer Heriford
 Larry Hagans
 DS Grundhofer
 Marshall Elijah
 Charles Dougherty
 David Davis
 Gary Carter
 EB Canfield III
 Joseph Abiecunas



40 Years: Paul James



35 Years: D. H. Sands



35 Years: Gary Glover



35 Years: Dee Fisher



30 Years: Louis Hogan