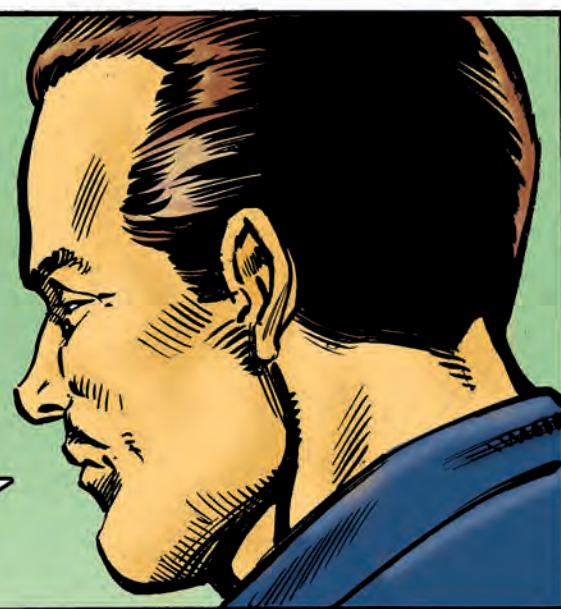


COMPETITION



IN MY DAY, THERE WERE TWO TYPES OF UTILITIES; INVESTOR-OWNED AND PUBLIC-OWNED. THEY WERE REGULATED MONOPOLIES. SERVICE CAME FIRST AND PROFIT CAME SECOND. BUT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, TIMES ARE CHANGING.



ROOFTOP SOLAR IS NEW AND BIG. VERY GENEROUS TAX BREAKS AND SUBSIDIES PAID BY NON-SOLAR CUSTOMERS HAVE MADE ROOFTOP SOLAR VERY POPULAR. WHEN THE SUN IS SHINING OUR UTILITY LOAD DROPS.

IT'S MORE THAN THAT. WHEN A ROOFTOP UNIT IS PRODUCING MORE THAN THE HOUSE NEEDS, THE UTILITY HAS TO BUY IT-- FOR THREE TIMES THE USUAL PRICE.

BIG COMPANIES LIKE APPLE, FACEBOOK AND YAHOO! HAVE BUILT THEIR OWN SOLAR FARMS, AND APPLE IS EVEN SELLING ITS EXCESS POWER.



PRIVATE

KEEP OUT

LOCAL POWER

STATE LINE

COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION PROGRAMS BUY POWER FOR THEIR CITIZENS, BYPASSING THE UTILITY. INSTEAD OF GENERATING LOCALLY AND CREATING LOCAL JOBS, THEY BUY OUT-OF-STATE POWER, OFTEN GENERATED BY FOSSIL FUELS.

ALL THIS LOAD LOSS TO THE UTILITY SPELLS TROUBLE. THEY STILL HAVE THE SAME OPERATING COSTS, BUT LESS LOAD MEANS LESS REVENUE, WHICH MEANS HIGHER BILLS FOR THE REST OF US.

LARGE-SCALE STORAGE USING BATTERIES IS ANOTHER NEW DEVELOPMENT THAT OFTEN BYPASSES OUR SYSTEM.

ARE WE JUST TALKING ABOUT GENERATION?

DIDN'T WE LOSE A LOT OF GENERATION ALREADY?



YES, BUT IT'S NOT JUST GENERATION. WELL-FINANCED HIGH-TECH COMPANIES ARE PUSHING FOR MICROGRIDS, WHICH COULD COST US ALL OUR JOBS. I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE. I SAW IT HAPPEN TO THE AUTO WORKERS IN THE 1970S, TRUCKERS IN THE 1980S, TELEPHONE WORKERS IN THE 1990S. IF WE AREN'T ON TOP OF THIS, WE'LL BE IN THE HISTORY BOOKS WITH THEM. WE'VE GOT TO LEARN WHAT WE CAN FROM EVERYWHERE. WE'VE GOT TO GET SMARTER TECHNICALLY. WE HAVE TO BE MORE SAVVY WITH POLITICIANS AND REGULATORS. FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN, OUR MEMBERS ARE UP FOR THE COMPETITION.