1245 UTILITY REPORTER

International Brotherhood
Of Electrical Workers
Local 1245, AFL-CIO
February 1994
Vol. XLIII No. 2

Dark Side of Deregulation
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PG&E fails to list all options

Union calls for halt to Title 206 activity

Local 1245 last month called for a halt to Title 206 demotion and layoff activity at PG&E pending resolution of a union grievance alleging that the company has violated Letter Agreement 88-104.

The union grievance claims PG&E has failed to fill numerous vacancies in the system despite LA 88-104 provisions requiring the company to do so. Because the vacancies were not filled prior to the start of Title 206 activity, the union maintains those vacancies should now become options for employees impacted by Title 206.

The grievance, filed Jan. 10, calls upon the company to "provide all affected employees with all appropriate options as provided by the (Labor) Agreement and associated agreements."

LA 88-104, the product of a lengthy grievance and arbitration process in the 1980s, requires the company to maintain a specified level of bargaining unit positions in a department where contracting out is occuring. The union's goal in negotiating LA 88-104 was to prevent the company from reducing the number of regular employees while contracting out bargaining unit work.

The union maintains that the company has failed to maintain a sufficient number of bargaining unit positions in certain departments–even after adjusting for voluntary retirements.

According to the union, the shortage of positions could run into the hundreds.

For the approximately 400 employees in Gas and Electric T&D who recently received Title 206 notices, this has important practical significance. If the union's charges are substantiated and the situation is remedied, many additional job options would be available for these employees.

Special contract language negotiated last year requires the company to offer those Gas and Electric T&D employees at least one job option. For the most part that means being offered an entry level position in General Construction (GC).

However, if the union's position is upheld, those employees would have a shot at many other non-GC entry-level jobs as well.

"The company already had to reissue the Title 206 notices once before because it was not done properly the first time," said Business Manager Jack McNally. "Now it appears that the violation of LA 88-104 could cause another delay."

Anticipating that the company and union may be unable to resolve the issue, the union has requested an early appointment with an arbitrator. The two parties have set that process in motion.

DOT expands drug testing

The US Department of Transportation has just issued new drug test regulations that will have a sweeping impact on Local 1245 members.

The regulations add random alcohol testing to the existing drug testing program for gas pipeline workers. A breath test result of .04 will be considered a positive test result.

The regulations add all employees with commercial drivers licenses to drug and alcohol testing, including random testing. This will affect an estimated 3-4,000 Local 1245 members.

Details will appear in the next issue of Utility Reporter.

Knudsen says union 'brought out the best'

When he describes what Local 1245 means to him personally, Al Knudsen doesn't hedge one bit.

"My involvement in it was the highlight of my life," said Knudsen, who recently resigned as the Colgate Division representative on the union's Advisory Council after retiring from PG&E.


President Howard Stiefer (left) congratulates retiring Advisory Council member Al Knudsen.

"The great enjoyment of it was helping people who were having problems... The union has brought the best out of me as a person. You have to be able to reach down inside and find the answer to questions you never knew you had answers for," said Knudsen.

"By the time we go to [the company] with a problem, we've already solved a hundred problems. They don't even realize that," he said.

Knudsen played an active role in supporting union tree trimmers during the 1992 lockout and strike against Asplundh Tree. He named the strike as one of the highlights of his union career.

Knudsen, on the Advisory Council since 1984, spoke of his "great pride" in the Council and said he appreciated the opportunity to see how the union operated.

"For the average person to come and see how their union is run, they'd be in awe," said Knudsen.

INSIDE

CALENDAR

February 19
Humboldt Stewards Conf.
Eureka, Ca.

February 19
Humboldt Pin Dinner
Eurkea, Ca.

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Workers here and abroad

Rolling the union on . . .

☞ **Move the Boss:** "The guys in the executive suites now average 157 times what the average factory worker now earns. So here's an idea... Let's say we keep our factories and jobs here...and move our corporate headquarters to Mexico, Korea, Indonesia, wherever else we can get some reasonably priced chief executives."–*Populist radio commentator Jim Hightower*

☞ **Mush!:** The Detroit Free Press reports that a Michigan dogsled operator is developing "a promising business teaching corporate managers to handle the dogs as management training."

☞ **No Escape:** A fire in a Hong Kong company-owned toy factory in southern China killed 84 workers, mostly women. The factory had no fire alarms, no sprinkler system, no fire hoses, and no fire escape. Windows were covered with heavy wire mesh. For several years the AFL-CIO has pushed a boycott of toys made in China to protest human rights abuses in China.

☞ **NAFTA Fallout Begins:** Indians in the Mexican state of Chiapas named passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement as a central reason for their armed uprising last month. NAFTA paves the way for Mexico to import cheap corn from US producers, depriving many Mexican subsistence farmers of their only source of income. Without that income, Mexican farmers will be driven off the land and into Mexico's already over-crowded urban areas. The end result: increased pressure on Mexican workers to enter the US in search of jobs.

☞ **Fired:** Since NAFTA was approved by the US House in November, more than 21 women workers have been fired from the Honeywell plant in Chihuahua, Mexico for attempting to organize an independent union. Nine workers have been fired for the same reason at General Electric's Compania Armadora plant in Juarez. The NAFTA bill failed to include any significant protections for labor rights.

☞ **Cross-Border Organizing:** Labor Notes will conduct a "School on Cross-Border Organizing" in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, just over the border from El Paso, Tex., on May 19-22. Contact Mary McGinn at 313-842-6262 for information. On that same note, the North American Worker to Worker Network met in San Francisco in December to explore ways to support independent democratic organizing in Mexico. Contact NAWWN Coordinator Jackie Van Anda in North Carolina at 919-985-1957.

LET ME CLARIFY SOMETHING, SIMPKINS...I DIDN'T SAY YOU WERE GOING TO MEXICO...I SAID YOUR JOB IS GOING TO MEXICO!"

☞ **Skilled Workers Only:** American businesses, when they hire at all, want high-skill workers. According to the Wall Street Journal, ball-bearing manufacturer Kaydon Corp. in Florida is looking only for people versed in geometry and complex math. Dow Chemical is mainly interested in people "who offer a specialized skill."

☞ **Free Lunch:** American businesses may want skilled workers, but they're not that interested in putting up the money to help create skills. American business spends 1.5% of payroll on training, while businesses in Europe and Japan spend 5% or more, according to the American Society for Training and Development.

☞ **Adopt a Family:** Unemployment benefits ran out for the 760 workers locked out at E.E. Staley in Decatur, Ill. The workers are in danger of losing cars and homes. AIW/UPIU Local 837 is asking unions and union members to "adopt" these families until they return to work. Contact AIW/UPIU Local 837, 2882 N. Dineen, Decatur, Ill. 62526.

☞ **Archives Speaker:** David Olson, who holds the Harry Bridges Chair at the University of Washington, will speak at the annual meeting of the Labor Archives and Research Center on Feb. 25 at 7:00 p.m. The event will be at San Francisco State University, 480 Winston Dr., in San Francisco. It is free and open to the public.

APPOINTMENTS

SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY

Sierra Pacific Power Negotiating Committee
Santiago J. Salazar
Gino J. Aramini

Sierra Pacific Power Grievance Committee
Kenneth R. Hawkins
Toni Van Landingham

CITY OF FALLON

City of Fallon Negotiating Committee
Ed McBroome

SACRAMENTO MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT

Sacramento Municipal Utility District Negotiating Committee
Martin Correia
Raymond Gladden
Don Hurdle
Jim Loy
David Reishus
Arthur A. Torres
Ike Williams

TRI-DAM PROJECT

Tri Dam Project Negotiating Committee
Arthur Gordon
James Wilson

OUTSIDE LINE CONSTRUCTION

Outside Line General Bargaining Committee
Larry Thomson
Jeff Johnstone
Chris Larson

Local 1245 unit meeting changes

Please note the following unit meeting changes:

Unit 4419, Davey Tree, Redding, now meets on the first Tuesday of the month. Time and place remain the same.

Unit 3711, Marin County, has a new meeting time and a new location. The unit will meet on the second Thursday of the month at 5:30 p.m. at Zim's Restaurant in the Northgate Shopping Center in Terra Linda, Ca.

Unit 3716, Vallejo/Napa, has a new meeting location. The unit will meet at Nubias, 1801 Solano Ave., in Vallejo, Ca. Meetings will continue to be on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

South Africa activist to speak

Lybon Mabasa, a leader in the fight to overthrow apartheid, will offer a working class perspective on the upcoming April elections in South Africa.

Tafazzul Hussain, president of the Bangladesh National Workers Federation, is also featured in this event sponsored by Labor Party Forum.

Saturday
February 12
8 p.m.

Women's Building
3543 - 18th St.
San Francisco, Ca.

Organizing drive targets Utility Tree

Following on the heels of a successful campaign to organize Arbor Tree, Local 1245 launched a drive last month to organize Utility Tree.

Utility Tree is the last major non-union contractor performing line clearance tree trimming for Pacific Gas and Electric. Utility Tree currently works in the area encompassing Sacramento, Dixon, Yuba City/Marysville, Stockton, and some work in the Sierras near Highway 50.

The union is committed to a fully-organized tree industry, according to Business Rep. Landis Marttila.

"Utility Tree pays its employees below union scale," said Marttila. "That's just not acceptable. Line clearance tree trimming is hard and dangerous work and the people who do it deserve fair compensation."

Efforts Intensified

During the past two years Local 1245 has greatly intensified its organizing efforts in the line clearance tree trimming industry.

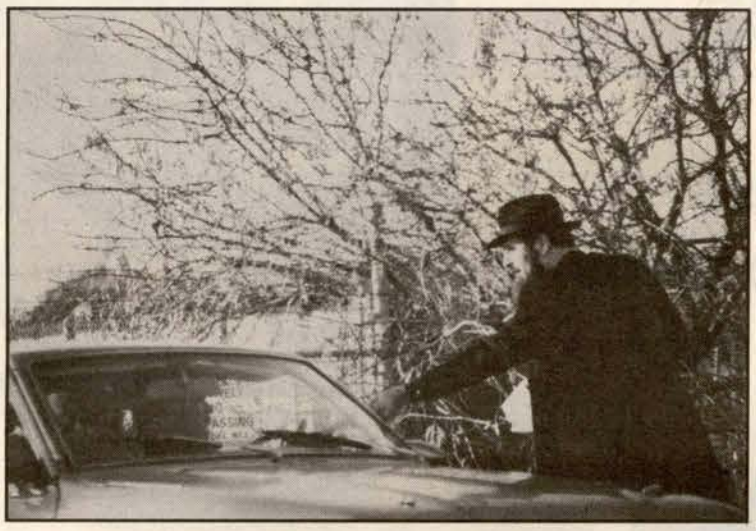
In 1992 the union beat back an attempt by Asplundh Tree to slash wages for tree trimmers. A two-week strike crippled Asplundh's ability to perform work and PG&E eventually cancelled Asplundh's contract.

In late 1992 Local 1245 turned its attention to Arbor Tree. The union maintained an on-going picketline at Arbor facilities in Auburn, Ca., and in 1993 union organizers began contacting Arbor tree trimmers in the Paso Robles area, Arbor's traditional area of operations.

Late last fall Arbor President Steve Alvarez reached agreement with Local 1245 on a labor contract. Arbor was subsequently successful in expanding its PG&E contract area to include the Central Coast area.

Asplundh has also entered into a new agreement with Local 1245. With the wounds largely healed from the 1992 strike, Asplundh successfully bid for PG&E work in the area from San Jose north to San Francisco.

Marttila noted that the large majority of Davey Tree employees formerly doing the work in that area are now being hired by Asplundh, which is honoring their classification/wage level.



UTILITY TREE TARGETED
Business Rep. Landis Marttila leaflets line clearance tree trimmers at the Utility Tree yard in Dixon, Ca. *(Photo: Eric Wolfe)*

1994 PG&E Shift Premiums

See Section 110.2 (Amount of Shift Premium) and 110.7 (Sunday Premium) of the Physical Contract and corresponding Sections 11.2 and 11.7 of the Clerical Contract.

Premiums are based on a 1994 weighted average straight-time hourly rate of $21.41.

Second Shift Premium:	**$ .96**
Third Shift & Sunday Premium:	**$1.93**
Sunday Second Shift Premium:	**$2.89**
Sunday Third Shift Premium:	**$3.86**
Relief Premium:	**$20.44**

1994 NUCLEAR PREMIUMS

Certified Fuel Handler Premium	**$1.55**
Reactor Operator License Premium	**$3.09**
Senior Reactor Operator License Premium	**$3.86**
Senior Reactor Operator License Premium For Senior Control Operator at DCPP	**$5.02**

1994 REMOTE REPORTING EXPENSE ALLOWANCE

See Section 202.21(c) (Remote Reporting) of the Physical Contract

Less than 15 Miles	**$12.50**
15 Miles or More	**$18.00**

1994 PERSONAL VEHICLE EXPENSE ALLOWANCE

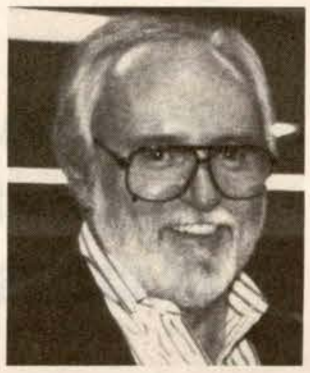
See Section 201.6 (Personal Vehicle) of the Physical Contract. See Section 15.2 (Transportation) of the Clerical Contract.

$ .29 per mile

POINT OF VIEW

Downsizing takes toll on PG&E employees

Jack McNally, IBEW 1245 Business Manager



The consequences of PG&E's decision to downsize and restructure are becoming more evident each month. As Title 206 and Title 19 demotion and layoff procedures are implemented, peoples' lives are being disrupted, sometimes seriously. There is a lot of anxiety about what the future holds.

As a union, generally we cannot halt downsizing and restructuring. But we are not powerless. We have a book of rules the company, by law, must follow: the labor agreement that has been negotiated by the union and the company.

That book of rules is actually a book of rights. Over the years, through hard bargaining with the company, union negotiators have crafted and recrafted contract language with one overriding purpose in mind: to prevent the company from treating employees in an arbitrary or unfair manner.

It is the responsibility of the union to make sure that the labor agreement is enforced. That's not always an easy task.

We are now in the middle of a downsizing that is nearly unprecedented. Title 206 and Title 19 are solid provisions of the contract, but not since the 1950s have they been put through a test like this. When it comes to each member's individual situation, many questions about the interpretation and application of the contract arise.

We meet with management to make sure that our members' rights are not violated. In those instances where we disagree with the company, we file formal grievances.

However, working through all the questions pertaining to Titles 206 and 19 is not an easy process. Often these questions have no quick or clear answers and we simply have to work them through, adhering to the contract as faithfully as possible.

It would be our preference not to go through these disruptive processes at all. We have said all along that the company should use attrition to accomplish its goals.

When PG&E decided to push ahead with its plan, it naturally started to create anxieties for our members. That anxiety was needlessly prolonged when the first 206 notices to our Gas and Electric T&D members were done incorrectly. After Local 1245 intervened, they were reissued.

Anxiety was compounded by some local managers who distributed information prematurely.

Obviously there is *still* a problem, as evidenced by the union grievance filed last month. As reported on Page 1, that grievance contends that the company's most recent Title 206 notices fail to include many of the job options to which our members are entitled.

And there will be more questions and more issues coming up as the Title 19 process kicks in.

I'm sure it's tempting for some members to think that the union can protect them from anything the

See PAGE EIGHTEEN

Mastering the art of quick response:

Field Reporting Specialist constantly adapts to the needs of crews working in the field

Field Reporting Specialist Carman Guzman at her desk at SMUD headquarters in Sacramento.

Story & Photos
by Eric Wolfe

Angel Berry (left), a member of SMUD's Organization of SMUD Employees, and Guzman call up a block map, which displays all utility equipment belonging to SMUD in a particular neighborhood. They can generate paper maps for crews to use in the field.

Guzman picks up spay lugs from Local 1245 member John Moch, warehouseman.

Carman Guzman could plan out her day from start to finish. But it would be a waste of time.

As a field reporting specialist for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Guzman has to be something of a quick-response artist. When a line crew needs tools or materials out in the field, for example, it's Guzman's job to make sure they get them.

"As things come up I respond to the crew's needs," says Guzman. "No two days are the same."

But don't get the idea she sits around by the phone waiting for foremen to call in requests for materials. There's plenty else to do.

In fact, after traveling around with someone like Guzman for a few hours, you begin to wonder if God rested on the seventh day of creation after all. Maybe instead he was secretly creating the field reporting specialist to perform all the tasks he forgot to assign to someone else.

Consider:

When Guzman arrives in the morning, she'll check the board to find out who is foreman or lead lineman on the crews she's assigned to. She collects overtime reports from crews coming in from night work and checks to see if they qualify for rest periods or overtime pay. Construction maps from various job packages will tell her what materials are going to be needed and where.

At the direction of her supervisor she'll assign a job to a particular crew, register the job in the computer, get a printout of needed materials, and order them as necessary.

She scans the job package for other items needing her attention. Does the work impinge on Southern Pacific property? If so, the railroad requires five days advance notification before construction can begin.

The SMUD Land Department will notify her of any permits needed from the city or problems with other utilities. Perhaps Pacific Bell wants to be present for a pole changeout. Guzman will get a preferred date from her supervisor, then contact Pac Bell to see what arrangements can be worked out.

"When we need to dig somewhere, we call in the exact location to Underground Service Alert (USA)," Guzman explains. "USA notifies all the utilities in the area that activity is scheduled."

Other utilities then send out locators to locate and mark underground facilities.

"Then whoever's digging digs around that utility and hopefully doesn't dig *into* that utility," Guzman notes.

To perform her job well, Guzman has to be well-acquainted with all relevant regulations and procedures. She also needs to be able to turn on a dime.

As she thumbs through a job package, a lineman coming off a job approaches and

Guzman measures out hand coils requested by a crew in the field.

On the Job
An irregular series about regular people and the work they do.

wants to know why he didn't earn a rest period. Guzman takes a minute to explain the rest period policy to him. Then, as she is about to resume her inspection of the job package, a call comes in from the field. A crew working at Second and Stockton Streets needs two 795 hand coils, 35 feet long. And a torch.

Right now, please.

Off she goes, gathering up the needed items.

Out in the Field

Out in the field, her job requirements may be transformed again. Guzman is assigned to four line crews, one rocksaw (cable replacement) crew, and labor crews as needed. She may be needed to pull wire, operate a boom, or do some ground work.

"She does so many things," says Don Kreuter, the foreman who requested the 795 hand coils and torch.

"The job is of such a broad scope. She does paperwork, does ordering for four crews, transporting–she runs the derricks on the booms," he explains.

She brings other skills to the jobsite as well, some of which you'd never find in a published job description.

For example, Kreuter says Guzman once applied a disinfectant known for its stinging quality to a minor wound an employee sufferred in the field. She then blew on the wound to ease the stinging, a procedure she called "blowing the burny stuff off." This act of maternal thoughtfulness earned her a nickname that stuck.

They call her Mom.

Took Test on a Dare

Guzman is a mom for real. Motherhood, in fact, is partly responsible for Guzman being a field reporting specialist.

When she started at SMUD 21 years ago, Guzman was a clerk trainee earning $2 an hour. When her marriage ended in divorce, and she needed to earn more money to support her small child, Guzman tried out for clerk driver. According to Guzman, only one other female had held a position in construction at SMUD at that time.

"I took the test on a dare," Guzman recalls. Out of 149 taking the test, only a handful were women. Guzman wasn't intimidated by the odds and finished seventh out of 149.

After being hired, Guzman encountered some of the problems that women still encounter in physical classifications: getting respect from male co-workers.

"The first two years I went home crying a lot–and it wasn't from the work," Guzman recalls.

"I took a lot of rough treatment. First because I was Hispanic and second because I was a woman. There was a lot of prejudice going on at that time. I took a lot of harassment."

Like other women before and after, Guzman discovered some creative ways to deflect workplace harassment. She remembers one occasion when a couple of co-workers were giving her a hard time.

"I turned to them and said, 'Why don't you tell me what I am doing wrong so I can learn to do it right?' "

According to Guzman, one of the men acknowledged up front that they were giving her trouble because she was a woman.

"I told him, 'You can help me in one of two ways. Either help me learn to do the job well, or let me go on welfare and support me with your tax dollars."

Eventually she won acceptance on the job site, and

See NEXT PAGE

Guzman picks up cutters from tool repairman Carlos Flores, a 14-year union member.

Guzman after making delivery to Foreman Don Kreuter at a job site at Second and Stockton Streets in Sacramento.

Assisting line crew.

Guzman lends hand to Bob Flatland on conversion and reconductoring job in Alley between T and U Streets and 5th and 6th Streets in Sacramento. At far right, Guzman presents a membership card from a new member to Business Rep. Dennis Seyfer.

Carman Guzman

From Page 5

those sorts of conflicts faded. "Once I got my respect," she says, "they helped me a lot."

Mother of Five

Guzman has since remarried. She is mother to five children and takes considerable pride in the fact that she never did have to go on welfare back when she was the single parent of a baby girl.

"I wanted more for her. I wanted more for me," says Guzman.

When working in the field, Guzman tries to get back to the yard by 3 p.m. so that she can begin ordering materials that crews will need for the next day. As crews begin coming in around 4 p.m., they may tell her of other materials they need. The order goes to warehouse employees, who come in at 5:00 a.m. and load the materials onto the trucks.

At the end of a job, a crew turns in its job package, along with any comments on changes that have been made. Guzman will verify the crew's map with the job instructions from the estimator, and she'll notify the estimator of any changes from the original instructions.

If necessary, Guzman will draw up a map indicating incidental repairs that are needed–such as a sidewalk damaged by the work. She also will notify other utilities that the work is done.

Finally she closes the job out on the computer and submits it to job balancing, which verifies the materials that were used.

"I like what I do," says Guzman. "I know I'm good at what I do."

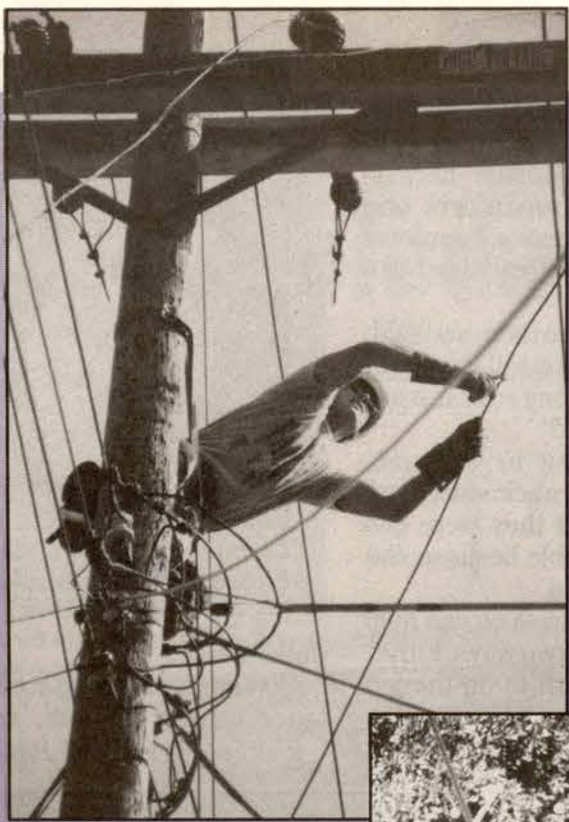
And she does a lot. Besides being a mother and a field reporting specialist, Guzman is a union shop steward, sits on the board of the SMUD Employees Association, and serves on a committee that is trying to identify ways to reduce paperwork.

"I try to get involved in what's going on," she explains.

By almost any standard, you'd have to say she succeeded at that.

The Field Reporting Specialist's job: Helping out where needed

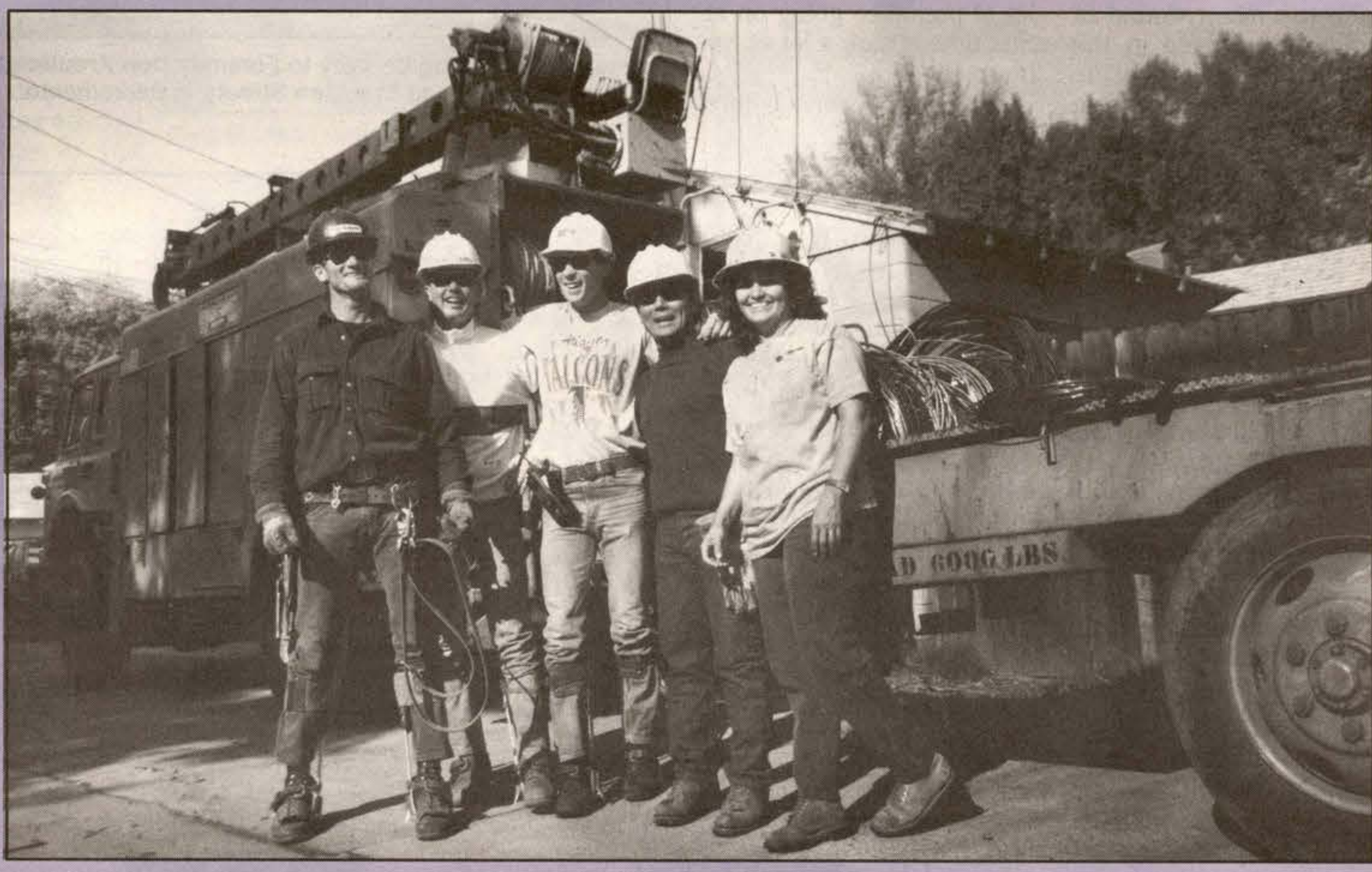
Responsible for assisting four line crews, Guzman lends a hand to Jim Baird's crew working on a conversion and reconductoring job in the alley between T and U Streets and 5th and 6th Streets in Sacramento.



Bob Flatland.

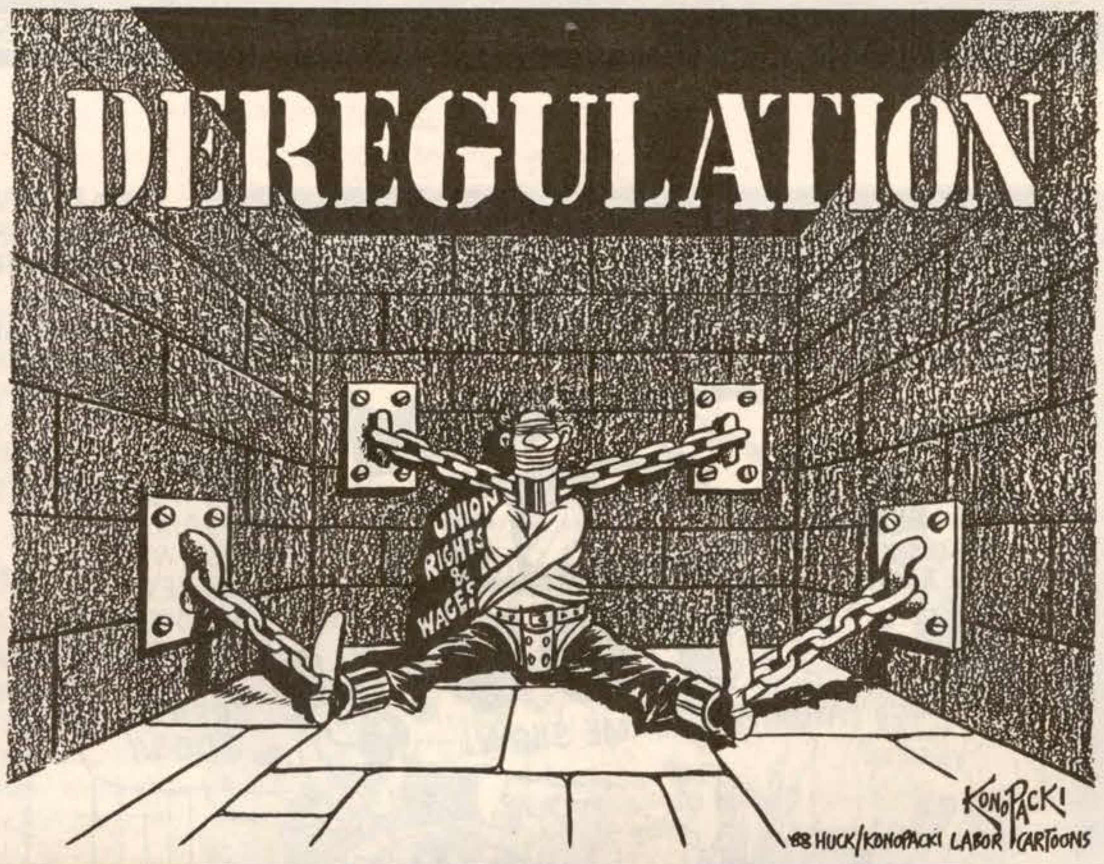
Jim Baird.

Mark Flatland (left) and Greg Smelser.



From left: Greg Smelser, apprentice; Mark Flatland and Bob Flatland, linemen; Jim Baird, foreman; Carman Guzman.

The Dark Side of Deregulation



How deregulation has affected workers and consumers in telecommunications and other industries

By Jack McNally and Eric Wolfe

When Pacific Bell announced plans last month to cut 10,000 jobs by 1997, the company's chief executive officer proclaimed that the reductions would "improve customer service."

It's peculiar logic. Common sense suggests if you have fewer employees providing service, you get less service, not more. Try handling the same volume of customer inquiries with half as many employees and you quickly figure this out.

But in the increasingly competitive world of telecommunications, Pac Bell has a more pressing concern than customer service. That concern is cutting costs in order to beat the competition. The race is on to build the national "information superhighway" and Pac Bell wants to be a contender.

Competition is the most-publicized legacy of telephone deregulation. News reports inform us daily of the vigorous competition now underway in the telecommunications industry, how it is paving the way to a new era of technological marvels.

But telephone deregulation, set in motion by the breakup of AT&T a decade ago, has another legacy. It is a darker legacy, one that tends to be overlooked in the "golly gee whiz" news reports about the information highway.

We can explore this shadowy side of telephone deregulation by asking a simple question: What are the consequences for the customers who use the service and for the workers who provide it?

It's an important question for members of Local 1245 to ponder.

In 1992 the US Congress passed the National Energy Policy Act, greatly accelerating the deregulation of energy utilities like PG&E. The problems faced by telephone workers since telephone deregulation in the 1980s offer us a glimpse of the problems that are beginning to confront Local 1245 members under utility deregulation in the 1990s.

Layoffs, Layoffs, and More Layoffs

First some facts.

In the decade since its monopoly was broken up, AT&T has eliminated about 140,000 union jobs.

Last August, AT&T announced it will close 40 operator centers in 26 states, affecting 4,000 workers. All

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Utility Deregulation

Who Gains

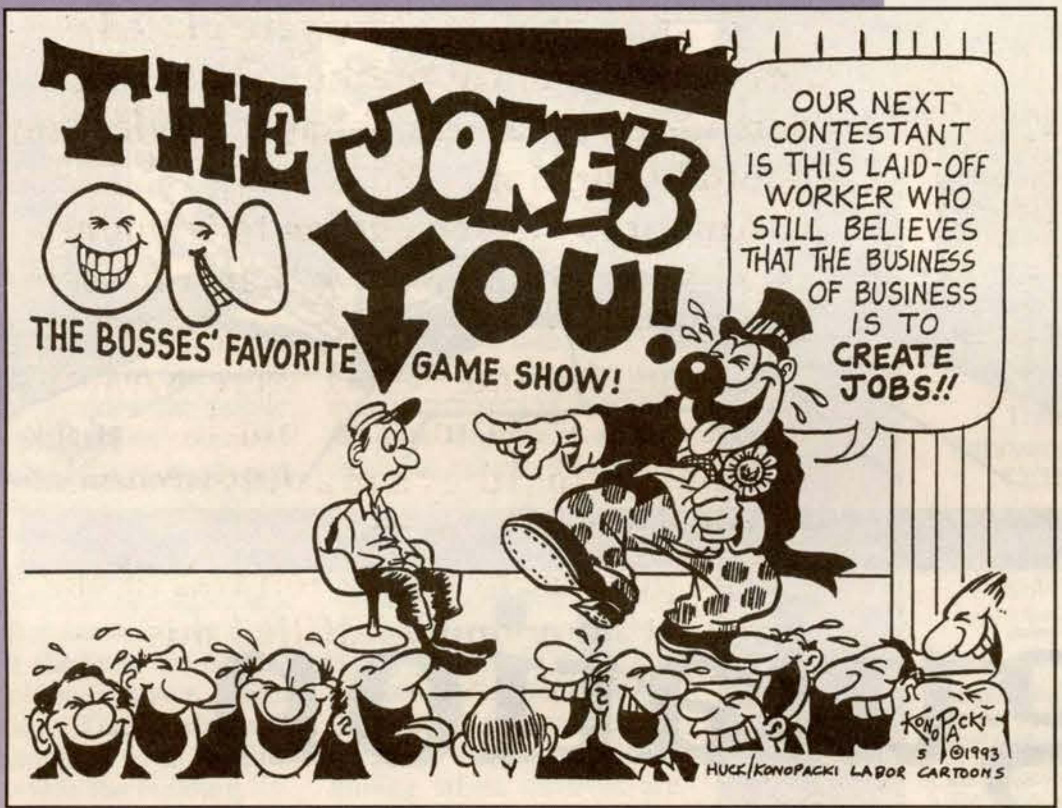
Who Loses

Who Decides

Part 2 in a Series

From PAGE SEVEN

but two of the seven new regional centers will be located in right-to-work states. AT&T already uses a nonunion subcontractor, American Transtec, for some operator services.



Since 1988, the seven regional phone companies--the "Baby Bells"--have eliminated approximately 60,000 jobs. And there is more axing to come.

New Jersey Bell, which already has cut 5,000 jobs since 1989, now plans to get rid of another 3,400. US West announced last August that it will eliminate 9,000 of its 53,000 employees. GTE Corp. last month announced plans to cut 17,000 workers over the next three years, mostly in local telephone operations. NYNEX plans to reduce its workforce by a third--shedding approximately 25,000 jobs.

What is driving this onslaught, this relentless destruction of so many high-wage, high-skill jobs?

Part of it is driven by the desire to automate, to replace people with advanced technology. Part of it is driven by the desire to reduce labor costs by replacing well-paid organized workers with under-paid unorganized workers.

All of it is driven by the need to gain a competitive advantage and maximize profits in the deregulated telecommunications industry.

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***All* of it is driven by the need to gain a competitive advantage and maximize profits in the deregulated telecommunications industry.**

Competition: the Theory ...and the Reality

Deregulation sounds great in theory. You don't need regulations to assure the quality of products, or to keep a lid on prices: A competitive free market will force companies to keep quality high and prices reasonable.

Americans like the idea of competition. It provides room for individual initiative. It fits nicely with our image of America as a place where anybody can get to the top.

But we know that, in reality, there is not enough room at the top for everybody. Those few who make it to the top tend to use their economic power to keep others from rising. Competition fades, and power is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the wealthiest economic players.

Ordinary people suffer twice over from this loss of power: as consumers, we pay higher prices; as workers we receive lower wages.

Unregulated competition led to extraordinary abuses in the early part of this century. Ultimately the American people decided that certain services should be regulated in the public interest. (See Part I in this series, "Public Empowerment," Utility Reporter, January 1994.)

In the 1930s, telephone service, electric power, and other services essential to the conduct of everyday life were placed under some degree of public control to assure universal access, reliable service and equitable pricing.

Americans didn't stop believing in competition. But they weren't going to let *unregulated* competition deprive them of essential services.

The American people were saying this: Companies like AT&T will be permitted to monopolize a market, but they have a duty serve the broader public interest.

The purpose of regulation was to make sure that a monopoly fulfilled this responsibility to serve.

Regulation: It Worked

And regulation worked. It's hard to argue otherwise.

In the decades following the 1930s, virtually all Americans were connected to telephone, gas and electric service. We also benefitted in varying degrees from stable, regulated services in other key industries, such as trucking, rail transport, air travel, and banking.

Regulation, however, has not been without problems.

Public regulatory agencies, like any bureaucracy, may become larger than their mission warrants. There is also the danger that regulators will begin to identify more with the corporations they are supposed to regulate than with the public they are pledged to serve.

These are not problems with regulation as such, but with how regulation is administered. There is no free lunch. If citizens do not remain vigilant, public agencies may become inefficient or stray from their mission.

There is another problem sometimes associated with regulation: its impact on the industry being regulated. In the absence of competitive pressures, regulated monopolies may not operate as efficiently as possible, and may be slow to adopt new technologies that could benefit the public.

AT&T: Any Color of Phone You Want

This was one of the arguments used against AT&T when it had monopoly control in the telephone industry. The old joke was that AT&T would provide you any color telephone you wanted, so long as you wanted black.

AT&T's power was vast. Prior to 1984, it dominated the market for long distance calls. It dominated the telephone equipment manufacturing market through its 100% ownership of Western Electric Company. And it controlled the market for local telephone service through its 100% ownership of 22 Bell Operating Companies.

This was Ma Bell: a company with an image falling somewhere between Aunt Bea from the Andy Griffith show and Big Brother from George Orwell's "1984." Reliable but imperious. Stable but resistant to change.

For most people, this didn't make a damn bit of difference. AT&T still fulfilled its basic mission of providing affordable, universal service.

Technological Changes Undermined Stability

But rapid changes in technology began to undermine the stability of the AT&T monopoly. Business customers were eager to make use of new data transmission services and more sophisticated terminal equipment. Correctly or not, AT&T was perceived as being too slow in making new technology available to customers.

Some business customers began to regard AT&T's monopoly as an obstacle to progress. And so did the US government.

In 1969, the Federal Communications Commission permitted MCI into a specialized corner of the long distance market. Utilizing microwave technology, MCI connected businesses in two cities: St. Louis and Chicago.

It was a small but significant chink in AT&T's armor.

By the mid-1970s, AT&T was up to its eyeballs in anti-trust suits. In 1982, settlement of a suit brought by the US Justice Department resulted in the breakup of AT&T.

The newly-independent Baby Bells, including Pacific Bell, took over AT&T's local service. In addition, the door was opened for competition in long distance service and in manufacturing telecommunications equipment.

It was easy to see the bright side of deregulation. In some cases, long distance rates went down. And for specialized customers, there were more options in terms of telephone equipment, data transmission, and information technology.

It took a little longer for the dark side of deregulation to come into view.

Goodbye to Universal Service

Prior to the breakup of AT&T, local service was partly subsidized by long distance service.

This policy reflected the public's commitment to universal access. By holding down the cost, basic service would be available to virtually everyone.

Deregulation reversed that arrangement. Competition forced long distance rates down. But local telephone rates, according to a 1989 study by R. B. Horwitz, rose 40% between 1984 and 1989.

Upward pressure was also put on installation fees, which hit rural areas and low income households the hardest. According to the Public Utility Law Project of New York, one-quarter of low income households in New York today do not have a telephone.

Instead of long distance service subsidizing universal access, it's the other way around: basic and local users, Horwitz found, are now subsidizing sophisticated and business users.

Chalk up universal service as a casualty of deregulation.

In laying out its vision of the information highway, the Clinton administration recently declared that it wants an open system, a system connecting everyone and accessible to all. At the same time, the Clinton administration wants to get rid of regulations that prevent cable TV, local telephone, and long distance companies from competing with each other in creating the information highway.

The experience so far in the telecommunications industry suggests that universal access and deregulation will be a very difficult marriage to pull off.

Decline in Service Quality

Access is one problem. But what about the quality of service you receive when you *do* have access to today's telephone system?

Does downsizing improve service, like the CEOs would have us believe?

Downsizing "has not provided better service," says Joan Moore, a spokeswoman for Communications Workers of America Local 9410 in San Francisco.

"Customers are waiting longer for installations, they're waiting longer for repairs. There aren't enough people to do the work," she says. The pressure to do more

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In the 1930s, telephone service, electric power, and other services essential to the conduct of everyday life were placed under some degree of public control to assure universal access, reliable service and equitable pricing.

Americans weren't going to let *unregulated* competition deprive them of essential services.

Companies like AT&T were permitted to monopolize a market, but it was also understood that they had a duty to serve the broader public interest.

The purpose of regulation was to make sure that a monopoly fulfilled this responsibility to serve.

"Customers are waiting longer for installations, they're waiting longer for repairs. There aren't enough people to do the work..."

The company "is cutting costs on the backs of workers rather than competing on the quality of service. We don't think it's good business practice."

Joan Moore, CWA Local 9410

Pacific Bell Maintenance Administrator Anna Perroni feels the pressures of corporate cost-cutting. Perroni is one of many union employees who recently faced the prospect of forced relocation to a regional Customer Service Bureau as part of Pacific Bell's corporate consolidation efforts. *(Photo: Joan Moore)*

From PAGE NINE

work with fewer people has also created "a serious problem of forced overtime," says Moore. That has consequences for productivity as employees pace themselves to make it through longer shifts.

"What the're doing is cutting costs on the backs of workers rather than competing on the quality of service," declares Moore. "We don't think it's good business practice."

If downsizing is a poor business practice, why are local telephone companies like Pacific Bell doing it? Unlike long distance companies, the local companies are still regulated. Why do they feel compelled to slash costs and endanger service quality?

The answer is profit.

US Labor Secretary: downsizing's a dud

Union officials aren't the only ones skeptical about the benefits of downsizing. In an article published last month in the San Francisco Examiner, US Labor Secretary Robert Reich notes:

"Employees fearful of getting the ax are hardly likely to pursue labor-saving innovations. Nor are they likely to volunteer that extra time and energy that so often makes a difference in productivity."

A recent study of 531 companies by the Wyatt Co. found that three-quarters of the companies had cut their payrolls. Reich notes that 58% of the companies expected higher productivity, but only 34% experienced it.

"While 61% sought to improve customer service, only 33% concluded they'd achieved it," Reich says.

In recent years many states have adopted a new approach to regulating local phone service. The conventional way was to figure the company's cost, add in something for profit, and then calculate the rate needed to generate that much money.

The new approach, sometimes called incentive ratemaking, tries to mimic the market. The utility and the regulators agree on a rate, which produces revenue for the utility. If the utility overspends, those expenses eat into the revenue stream and leave less for profit.

But if a utility can reduce its spending by cutting costs, more of that revenue stream will go to profits.

The effects of this approach are predictable. Local phone companies want profits for shareholders--any company does. And they want profits to help finance new construction and/or mergers so they can be players in building the national information highway.

What's a CEO to do? Cut your workforce, even if it means harming service quality. Then tell the public you're doing it to improve service quality and hope no one notices.

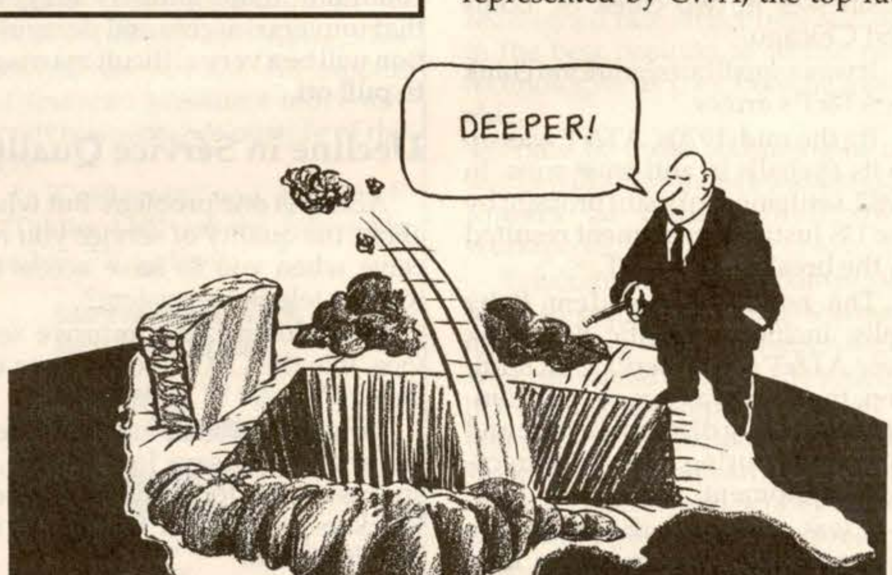
Labor Exploitation: Wages and Benefits

Some customers could benefit from phone competition in the form of lower rates, at least in the short run. Workers, however, will not benefit.

They're not supposed to. It's not part of the plan.

We can see the effects of deregulation on workers most clearly in the long distance market, where some competition now exists.

At AT&T, where employees are represented by CWA, the top rate



CORPORATE DOWNSIZING

for an operator is $13.80. At non-union Sprint, a competing long distance carrier, the top rate for an operator is $10.20. That's 26% less.

"Over the years we've been able to build up a decent job," says Rick Braswell, a Washington DC-based CWA organizer. He points out that unionized workers at AT&T also enjoy fully-paid health insurance and other benefits.

"We're not ashamed of that," says Braswell. "We bargained for it."

Sprint, by contrast, offers a "cafeteria style" benefits plan, he says, that "whittles away benefits as the years go by." When it comes to health insurance, Sprint employees pay higher premiums and higher deductibles for inferior coverage.

"All of this is done without any consent by the employees. It's just announced," says Braswell.

Labor Exploitation: Working Conditions

The effects of competition can also be seen in the erosion of working conditions.

At non-union Sprint, for example, employee conversations with customers are monitored "to catch people, not to help them," says Braswell. At AT&T, where there are union protections, monitored phone calls are used for coaching, not discipline.

Sprint workers who are even a few seconds late are cited with an "occurance," according to a Sprint customer agent in Winona, Minn. whose remarks appeared in the AFL-CIO News. Six occurrences in one year is cause for termination, the Sprint worker said.

Until recently, Sprint did not permit its customer agents to immediately disconnect obscene phone calls. Company policy required employees to "warn him twice and then thank him for using Sprint," according to a Sprint customer agent in Florida.

CWA is currently attempting to organize Sprint, but the company puts up stiff resistance. Sprint trains managers in union-avoidance techniques and has even published a "Union-Free Management Guide."

Throughout the industry there is a push for quantity over quality, for more speed, for fewer people doing more work. It is an environment that breeds psychological stress, repetitive motion injuries, and job insecurity. At non-union companies like Sprint, workers are simply defenseless.

While their non-union status clearly hurts Sprint workers, it also hurts unionized AT&T workers. The existence of inferior wages and working conditions at Sprint puts pressure on AT&T to lower its own standards in the name of competition.

Says Braswell: "We see zero benefit to deregulation. It's nothing to look forward to."

Wrecked Wages, Compromised Safety

Look in any direction. Deregulation has left a trail of wrecked wages.

Airline deregulation, according to unpublished research by P. Cremieux of the University of California at Berkeley, caused real wages to drop 10% to 20% for pilots, 0% to 17% for mechanics, and 25% to 40% for flight attendants by the end of the 1980s.

Railroad deregulation caused a drop in wages of at least 20% for railroad workers, according to a 1990 report by The Brookings Institution.

The Brookings Institution also found substantial wage losses for truckers under deregulation. Following passage of the Motor Carrier Act by the US Congress in 1980, a flood of nonunion operators entered the Truckload (TL) sector of the industry, paying wages that were 25% to 35% below union scale.

Deregulation also raises public safety issues.

A 1989 study by T. Corsi and P. Fanara found that new entrants in the trucking industry in 1985-86 had a significantly higher accident rate than carriers that had been in business before deregulation.

Several studies suggest that safety margins are being shrunk in the airline industry, according to a survey of the available literature by Dickens, Finegan and Associates. However, these studies found that shrinking safety margins have not translated into higher accident rates--not yet, anyway.

Nonetheless, deferring maintenance in order to cut costs is a practice that should trouble any air traveler. Statistics from the Machinists union indicate that the number of mechanics in the industry was 12% to 15% lower in 1989 than before deregulation.

Between 1982 and 1987, the average number of mechanics per aircraft declined by more than 15%. Maintenance spending declined from 13% of total operating expenses in 1977 to 11% in 1988.

The airlines have also reduced their hiring standards since deregulation.

P. S. Dempsey, in a 1990 report for the Economic Policy Institute, found that prospective pilots prior to deregulation needed 2,300 hours of flight time experience and uncorrected 20/20 vision to get a

See NEXT PAGE

The existence of non-union competitors endangers the standards enjoyed by AT&T's unionized workers. Inferior wages and working conditions at Sprint puts pressure on AT&T to lower its own standards in the name of competition.

Says CWA organizer Rick Braswell: "We see zero benefit to deregulation. It's nothing to look forward to."

And what about users of electricity? What safety margin do we expect in the handling of a deadly force that is found in virtually every home and business in America?

How do we insure that power producers, transmitters and distributors make adequate investments in safety when competitive pressures demand: cut costs, cut costs, cut costs.

It is a question that belongs near the center of any discussion about utility deregulation. But you hear nary a peep.

A member of the Local 1245/PG&E barehand committee during tests at the Los Banos testing site in 1990. Safety has been a top priority at regulated utilities. Whether it can remain a high priority in a deregulated, cost-cutting environment is by no means certain. *(Photo: Russ Rylee)*

From PAGE ELEVEN

job at one of the major airlines. By 1989, all but one of the major airlines had reduced these requirements to just 800 hours of flight experience and correctible vision.

At some future date, when it is too late, average drivers and average airplane passengers could become victims of safety standards compromised by deregulation.

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Deregulation: the Long View

It is not possible to declare that "Deregulation is good" or "Deregulation is bad." There are too many factors at play, the issues are too complex.

But it is useful to ask: "Who does deregulation help?" and "Who does deregulation hurt?" It is useful to ask: "What are the long-term consequences of deregulation?"

It is also useful to ask this: "Can the competing interests of workers, consumers, small business, and big business be reconciled? And if so, what is the proper role of democratic government in the entire process?"

In future articles in this series, we will look at the these questions as they relate to the gas and electric industries, particularly as they affect gas and electric workers like those represented by Local 1245. The impact of the deregulation now taking place in telecommunications provides clues about the type of problems we will face.

First, it is very clear that deregulation in telecommunications has hurt workers. AT&T was once a bastion of strength for the Communications Workers of America. Today, fewer than 45% of AT&T workers are unionized and other telecommunications companies remain entirely unorganized.

Wage and benefit standards have suffered accordingly, as have working conditions.

Workers will suffer even more as phone companies rush to reduce costs by automating. A plan drafted by Bellcore, the research arm of the seven Baby Bells, calls for End-to-End Automation--which means "no human activity" from the time of an order to delivery of service.

On the other hand, large business users are the big beneficiaries of telephone deregulation, at least in the short run. They benefit from redesigned rate structures, and are in the best position to utilize new technologies as they become available.

Some of those technologies no doubt will allow those business customers to reduce their own workforces.

Telecommunications companies hope to come out as big winners, too. Creating the information highway has already begun the process of merging the telephone, cable TV, entertainment, computer and software industries into an information mega-industry. John Sculley, chairman of Apple Computer, predicts that revenues from this industry could reach $3.5 *trillion* worldwide by the year 2001.

That is very serious money. Constructing the information highway will attract many players. But only the most aggressive--and the most

Labor TV looks at airline safety

To remain viable in the era of deregulation, airlines have taken to trimming their costs. Has cost cutting put the traveling public in danger by compromising safety standards?

That is the troubling topic tackled in "Taking Off," a special edition of the public TV series "We Do the Work."

Wayne Gallimore, an aircraft mechanic at United Airlines for 28 years shares with viewers his worries about what will happen if financial pressures move aircraft maintenance outside of the US.

In California, you can catch "Taking Off" on the following public TV stations:

San Francisco, TV 9:
Feb. 20, 3:30 pm

San Mateo, TV 60:
Feb. 9, 6:30 pm

Sacramento, TV 7:
Feb. 15, 9:30 pm,
and Feb. 16, 2:30 am.

Los Angeles, TV 28:
Feb. 26, 1:30 pm,
and Feb. 27, 12 mid.

Eureka, TV 13:
Every Tuesday, 7:30 pm

ruthless--will come out on top.

Already the competitive field is shrinking as companies forge alliances for the mega-battle ahead.

In 1993 alone, AT&T and five of the seven regional phone companies spent over $52 billion acquiring cable TV and cellular phone companies, according to statistics reported by Kim Moody in Labor Notes.

New Robber Barons and the Return to Monopoly

What are these new corporate heavy-weights going to look like? A quick look at one of the contenders provides some interesting clues.

Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, at 37, is the second richest person in America. Microsoft currently supplies 80% of all the personal computer operating-system software in the world, and 50% of all the application software. It has a market capitalizaton of $23 billion, more than GM, Xerox, or IBM.

As the information highway takes shape, all the phones, faxes and TVs in people's homes will be integrated into a single communications machine--a computer. That computer probably will resemble the cable TV box that currently sits on top of your TV, and most likely it will be equipped with standardized software. As John Seabrook wrote in the January 10 issue of The New Yorker:

"Bill Gates would like to have his software inside that box."

According to Seabrook, a rival software executive made this observation about Gates:

"...Bill believes that...now is the time to conquer new foes, plunder new lands. He doesn't like being compared to John D. Rockefeller--he goes, 'Hey, I'm not a grasping monopolist am I?'--but he doesn't know how to behave any other way. To hold war councils and to design strategies with the explicit aim of crushing an opponent--this is very American."

The comparison to Rockefeller is on target. Like Rockefeller a century ago, Gates is merely doing what an unregulated competitive market requires: clawing his way to the top.

Gates isn't the only one jockeying for a dominant position in the emerging economy of the 21st century. Would-be robber barons are lining up for a chance to fleece the public along the information highway.

If history is any guide, we can expect a burst of competition, followed by bankruptcies, mergers, and takeovers, followed by the emergence of a few giant players. And like the railroad magnates a century ago, these players will seek ways to share power and to avoid engaging in any real competition.

For all practical purposes, a return to monopoly.

The question is, will it be an unregulated monopoly--free to restrict access, extort high prices, and abuse workers? Or will it be a closely regulated monopoly, answerable to the people and made to serve the broad public interest?

The Public Interest

It may turn out to be in the public interest to have competition in the telecommunications industry--and in the utility industry for that matter. But healthy competition, competition that doesn't maul workers and cheat consumers, will require regulation.

Contrary to what is commonly assumed, regulation is not the enemy of competition. The success of any truly competitive market in telecommunications--or in electricity--will depend on effective regulation.

Unfortunately, some short-sighted regulators seem to think their job is done. The California Public Utilities Commission has begun to adopt the view that, with competitive forces coming into play, the PUC should withdraw from the telecommunications arena. In the same vein, Gov. Wilson recently called for reducing the PUC staff and curtailing the PUC's role in regulating energy.

But the regulator's job is *not* over. Rapid changes in telecommunications technology, along with corporate mergers and acquisitions, will present a constant threat of return to monopoly control and abuse of power. Would-be robber barons will present a moving target--one that challenges the skills and the commitment of public regulators. If regulators shrink from that challenge, the public will inevitably suffer.

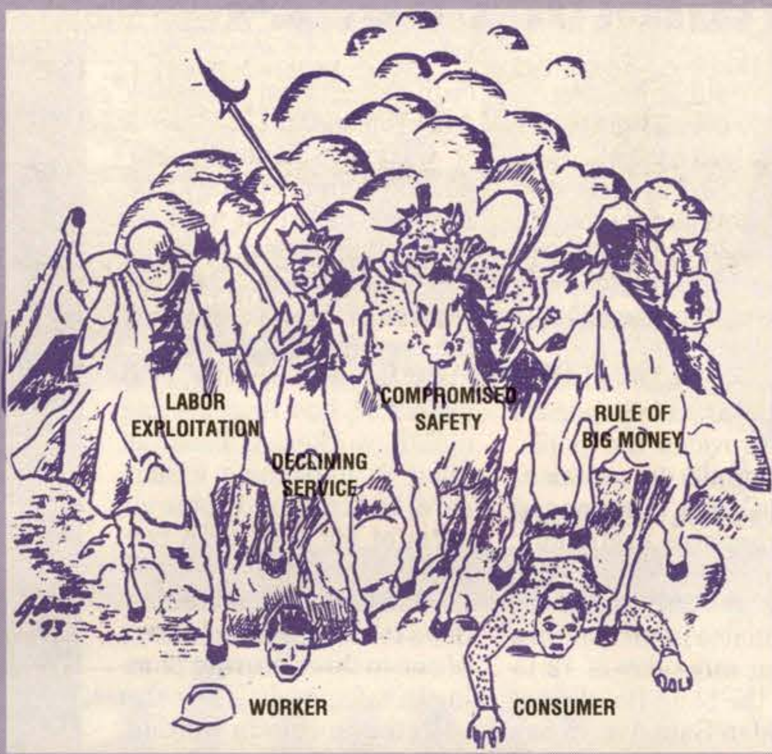
Gas and electric deregulation will pose similar problems in the near future.

The challenge to consumers and workers is to make sure that so-called "free market" politicians--backed by big business--are not permitted to dismantle the regulatory structures that protect the public interest, and to make sure that the regulators themselves do not lose sight of the people they are pledged to serve.

Those people are you and me.

Coming up: Part 3 in the Utility Reporter series on deregulation will take a look at natural gas deregulation.

Four Horsemen of Deregulation



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Ergonomic hearing slated for Feb. 24

A public hearing on ergonomic safety set for Feb. 24 in San Francisco is a crucial moment in labor's long campaign to protect workers from crippling cumulative trauma disorders.

The hearing, conducted by the Cal-OSHA Standards Board, provides the public an opportunity to comment on Cal-OSHA's proposed comprehensive ergonomic standard.

Members of the public are also invited to participate in a rally that same day at 12:15 p.m. at the State Building at 455 Golden Gate Ave. in San Francisco. The hearing will be conducted in an auditorium inside the building.

The proposed standard follows a succession of VDT worker protection bills sponsored in the state legislature by the California Labor Federation. All of the bills were defeated, vetoed or amended beyond recognition in the face of massive oppositin from employer organizations and the computer industry.

Shaped by Cal-OSHA staff members, the proposed standard is an historic first attempt to establish a single standard to protect workers in any situation where cumulative trauma is a threat. It covers everything from meatpacking plants, where the peril has been reconized for decades, to computer keyboards where injured workers often encounter skepticism rather than sympathy and protection.

California Labor Federation Executive Secretary Jack Henning called on workers to attend and speak up at the San Francisco hearing, the second of two hearings on the ergonomic standard.

At the first hearing, conducted in Los Angeles last month, workers praised the effort to implement a standard, but criticized some aspects of the Cal-OSHA proposal.

Workers voiced objections to the proposed delays of one to three years in phasing in safeguards. They also objected to certain wording that allows employers to use their own discretion in determining when controls are "feasible."

Another problem with the proposed standard was the absence of any mandate for worksite evaluation of dangers–even for known high-risk employment such as meat packing, grocery price scanning and computer terminal keyboard operation–unless injuries or symptoms develop or problems are otherwise identified.

"This creates the danger that workers must be injured first before the employer is required to take corrective action," said Perry Kenny, director of the California State Employees Association's Civil Service Division.

Employer representatives, who have fought cumulative trauma safeguards to a standstill before the legislature for the past decade, tried to raise the spectre of worker fraud as they did during workers' compensation reform debates last year and earlier in Sacramento.

Their insistence upon substituting "should" in place of "shall" in sections specifying safety controls was characterized as "absurd" by Maggie Robbins of the Service Employees International Union.

Local 1245 members who would like to provide written testimony about their personal experiences with cumulative trauma disorders should contact Local 1245 Business Rep. Landis Marttila at the Walnut Creek office: 510-933-6060.

Wounded in the line of duty

Does your workplace threaten life and limb or is it just making you sick?

Let's Stop Injuries in the Line of Duty!

Join us in a

Rally for Workplace Safety!

Thursday
February 24, 1994
12:15 p.m.

State Building
455 Golden Gate Ave.
San Francisco
(outside the OSH Standards Board Hearing)

We also need people to testify at this hearing before the OSH Standards Board which will decide whether an effective regulation requiring "PREVENTION OF CUMULATIVE TRAUMA DISORDERS" will be issued. CTDs include but are not limited to back injuries, carpal tunnel syndrome, bursitis, ligament sprains, muscle strains, trigger finger, hand arm vibration syndrome, etc.

We can make California a safer place to work

Sponsors: SAN FRANCISCO LABOR COUNCIL • ALAMEDA COUNTY CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL • CONTRA COSTA COUNTY CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL • SAN MATEO CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL • WORKSAFE!

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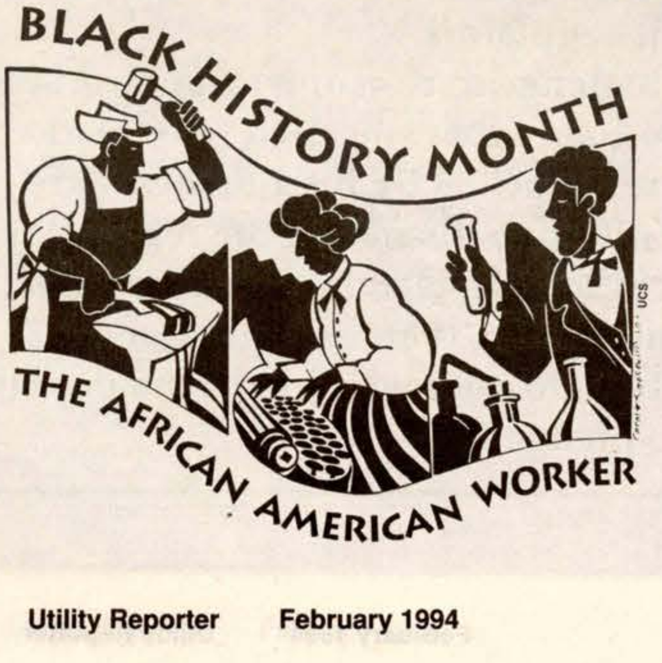


Bankrupt VDT manufacturer evades worker lawsuits

A major VDT manufacturer is headed for bankruptcy and threatens to take any delayed claims by Cumulative Trauma Disorder victims down with it.

Systems Integrators Inc., manufacturer of Coyote VDT terminals, has filed for bankruptcy in US District Court at Wilmington, Del.

Any victims who failed to meet the Jan. 14 deadline for filing proof of claims against the company are now permanently barred from claiming compensation for Cumulative Trauma Disorder injuries.

Hundreds of victims have filed suits against Systems Integrators Inc.

Today's wonderfully automated office let's you do more than is humanly possible.

Sierra Pacific Power members value union

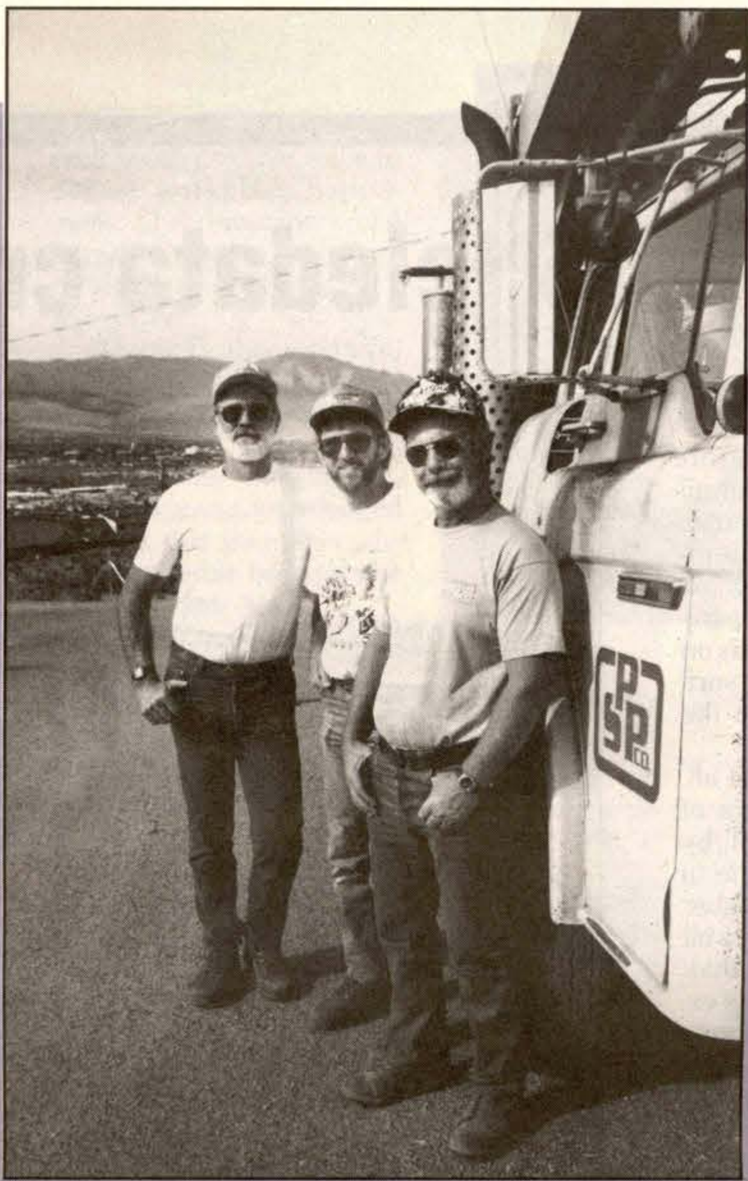
With general bargaining just around the corner, Local 1245 members at Sierra Pacific Power know the value of staying united behind their union.

"I've always been union and will be 'til the day I die. You gotta stay organized or they'll walk all over you," says Dennis Gannon.

Union steward Bob Ford wants to see health care benefits protected. He offers this opinion of the union's value for Sierra Pacific workers:

"What would we have without it?"

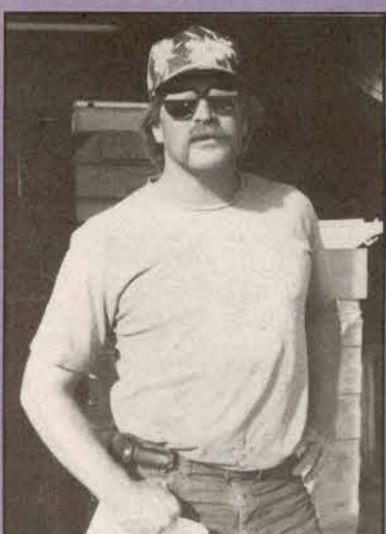
Veteran union members Mike Baxter and Ron Hayes say they hope bargaining will produce a retirement package that lets them out sooner and with more money.



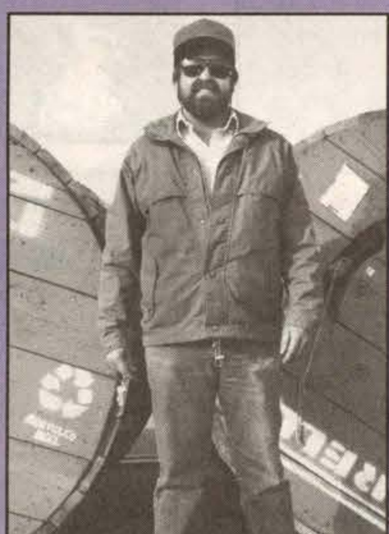
From left: Mike Baxter, a 35-year union member; Bob Ford, 13 years; Ron Hayes, 28 years.

George Duran, lineman (left), 15-year union member and Bill Keating, lineman, 14 years.

Dennis Gannon, service utilityman and 14-year union member, says the best thing about having a union is that there is "somebody there to fight for our benefits."



Andy Pinochi, inspector, 16 years in the union.



Brad Byington, electric meterman, 18 years in the union.

Nevada AFL-CIO scholarships

The Nevada State AFL-CIO will award $2,000 scholarships to two graduating high school seniors who write the best essays on the topic: "Unions' Effect on Workplace Safety."

Applicants must be a natural or legally-adopted child of an active or retired member in good standing of any local union affiliated with the Nevada State AFL-CIO.

Applications must be mailed by registered or certified mail only and postmarked by June 1, 1994, to: Nevada State AFL-CIO, 223 South Division St., Carson City, NV 89703.

For an application form and a complete list of requirements and eligibility criteria, contact Claude Evans at 702-882-7490.

New three-year pact at Wells REC

A new three year agreement at Wells REC in Wells, Nev. provides for wage increases and an increase in the retirement formula.

According to Business Rep. Art Murray, wages will be increased by 4% in the first year of the agreement and by 3% in each of the next two years.

The company agreed to increase the retirement entitlement formula from 1.6 to 1.7.

Michelin boycott

Tires bearing the Michelin brand name have been added to the labor movement's US-wide boycott list by the AFL-CIO.

The boycott was called by the United Rubber Workers union after Michelin unilaterally imposed new working conditions at four plants it purchased from Uniroyal in 1990.

The boycott *only* targets tires carrying the Michelin brand.

Local 1245 teledata crews in Hawaii:

This wasn't the sort of trip to Hawaii that most people imagine themselves taking: an adventure in paradise with heavy emphasis on beach-combing, fishing, surfing and general fun in the sun.

Nope, not like that at all. In fact, when members of Local 1245 employed by Henkels & McCoy came to Kauai, Hawaii in September of 1992, conditions were a bit more primitive than that. Bring a sleeping bag and expect to sleep in a tent, they were told.

The cause of these primitive conditions was Hurricane Iniki, which struck Kauai on Sept. 11. Hurricane Iniki had wiped out half the island's 20,000 homes and made a mess of virtually all the tourist hotels.

Iniki also downed 90% of all utility poles, leaving the island without electricity and with only minimal telephone service. Restoring that telephone service was the immense challenge facing the Henkels & McCoy crews when they began arriving on Sept. 27, sleeping bags in hand.

Fortunately for the crews, sleeping space was arranged at the last minute at one of the island's few operating hotels. But the union members were hardly living in the lap of luxury. For the first week, the hotel lacked phones, power and hot water.

Working conditions were equally rugged. The crews found themselves working six and seven days a week in a landscape that sometimes resembled a war zone.

"There's still a lot of houses lying in two," said Local 1245 Business Representative Art Murray, who

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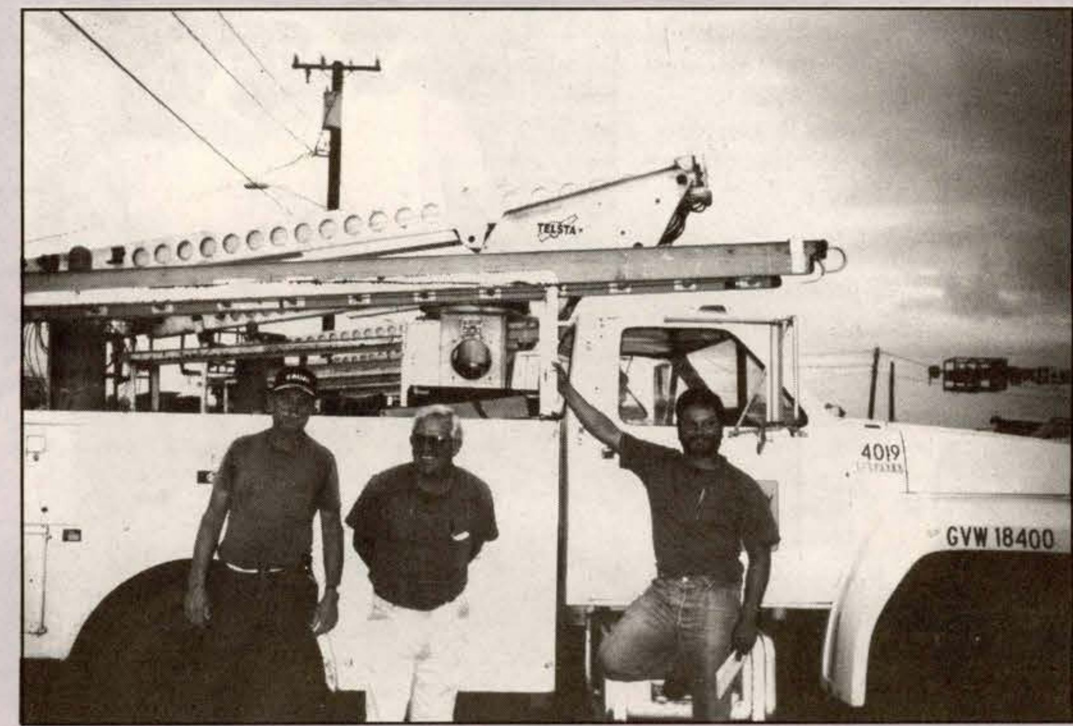
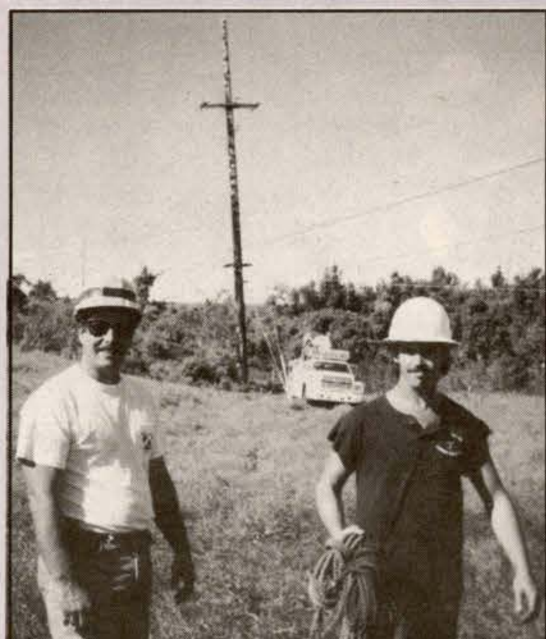


From left: Jim Woods, Bob Ringelspaugh, Abel Gutierrez. *(Photos: Art Murray)*

Dick Madsen (left) and Bill Smith.

From left: Rickey Dickerson, Jim Rabideau, Bobby Ramey.



Mark Beebe (left) and Willie Lott.

From left: Barry Durham, Richard Clayborn, Steve Hawley, Steven "Blair" Durham.

not exactly an Adventure in Paradise

Patrick Derion Walker (left) and Jerry Coffey.

Henry "Ed" Kluver.

John Frawley (left) and Charlie Sasser.

From left: Scott Ringelspaugh, Roger Robinson, Roger Osborne.

From left: Brian Lee, Clyde Osborne, Angelo Kalaveras, Bill Bentley, George Steele, Fritz Knotts.

From left: Bob Adams, Ricky Thaxton, Dan Flynn, James Patricelli.

recently visited worksites in Kauai, more than a year after the storm.

"There's still some temporary dump sites with piles of refrigerators, piles of beds and piles of construction materials. And there's still a lot of people living under blue tarps over there," said Murray.

The first crews began work Sept. 28, 1992, within a day of being called. In less than a week there were 150 linemen, splicers and installation and repair (I&R) workers on the job, lifting downed lines off the ground, splicing them together, and reconnecting customers.

A shortage of line trucks made it necessary for crews to set poles by hand and to raise the cable to the top of the poles using handlines. Blocks, tackles, chain hoists? Forget it. In those first few days, the usual tools of the trade were not available.

Conditions like these called for ingenuity. In the absence of line trucks, Henkels & McCoy struck a deal with Hertz Rent-a-Car. Crews and materials were soon being ferried about by a fleet of Lincoln Continentals and Mercury Grand Marquises.

As more equipment arrived, work became more routine. In addition to repairing damage, the crews have performed extensive upgrading of the island's telephone system, according to Murray.

The project now has a projected completion date of mid-1994. After that, members who have been on the job for nearly two years will probably be looking forward to a vacation.

But maybe not in Hawaii.

Some material for this story came from Performance, a Henkels & McCoy newsletter.

Designate your choice of treating physician

By Sharon K. Brady

In January 1994 a new set of workers' compensation laws went into effect. The new laws limit your right to choose a treating doctor if you sustain an on-the-job injury or illness after Jan. 1, 1994. You should act immediately to preserve your right to choose a treating doctor.

To preserve your right to be treated by the doctor of your choice for on-the-job injuries, you must designate your choice of physician *in writing before* your injury occurs. This means that you should put a written statement in your personnel file designating your "regular physician and surgeon" now. If you become injured, you can then begin treating with that doctor.

If you wait until you are injured, you may be forced to treat with your employer's doctor for up to one year following the injury. The laws for pre-1994 injuries stated that injured workers could switch to their doctor after only 30 days. However, the new laws require that you treat for anywhere from 30 days to one year with your employer's doctor if you do not pre-designate a treating physician.

Local 1245 has a "choice of treating doctor" form for you to fill out and turn in to your employer. Call the union hall and request one. Or if you prefer, write a letter to your employer stating who your treating doctor will be if you are injured or ill, make a copy for your records, and turn it in to your supervisor or personnel department.

The specifics on how long you must treat with your employer's doctor if you do not pre-select a doctor are set forth below.

If your employer does *not* contract with at least two health care organizations for health care services, and you have not pre-designated your choice of treating doctors and you are injured on the job, you must treat with your employer's choice of treating physician for 30 days. After 30 days, you may then treat with the doctor of your choice.

However, if your employer contracts with at least two health care organizations and you have failed to pre-designate your choice of treating physician, one of two situations will apply:

1. If your treating physician is *not affiliated* with (is outside) the health care organization, you must treat with the health organization for *180 days* (six months) before being allowed to treat with a physician of your own choice, or

2. If your treating physician *is affiliated* with (is inside) the health care organization, the employer may require you to treat with that health care organization for *one year.* (Only after the one year will you be permitted to opt out for treatment with a physician of your choice.)

Since the interpretation of these rules is uncertain, the easiest way for you to avoid problems in the future is to designate your treating doctors now. If you are later injured on the job, you will be able to treat with that doctor immediately, and will not have to worry about which of the above time limits applies to you. Act now and avoid hardship later.

(Sharon K. Brady is an attorney with Mastagni, Holstedt & Chiurazzi, 1912 "I" Street, Suite 102, Sacramento, CA 95814.)

Notice: Making a false or fraudulent workers' compensation claim is a felony subject to up to 5 years in prison or a fine of up to $50,000 or double the value of the fraud, whichever is greater, or by both imprisonment and fine.

Media's unnatural snub of workers

By Jeff Cohen and Norman Solomon

"We'd love to give unions more coverage...But these days we really have to watch our OVERHEAD."

It's a good thing Labor Day was established. Otherwise, a whole year might pass at some news outlets with hardly any acknowledgment that workers exist.

Recently the national edition of the New York Times carried the front-page headline, "Kodak Will Cut 10,000 Jobs; Further Hard Choices Likely." The "hard choices" were those of Kodak's managers. Their statements--along with those of Wall Street analysts--dominated the article. But Kodak workers were invisible in the story; not a single affected employee was quoted.

For years now, news about workers has been shrinking in mainstream media. To editors, this is a natural process: After all, industries that were once big news are now declining; so is union membership.

But in fact, the process is unnatural...and biased. Most Americans--whether in a union or not--work for a salary or wage. Millions of us are interested in issues like job security and safety, fair treatment by management, benefits, pensions, etc.

So there's nothing natural or neutral going on when CNN or PBS offers various regular programs looking at corporate and investment issues, but not a single show devoted to workers' issues.

Nor is there anything natural about newspapers that have daily business sections, but no labor pages.

Newspapers do report on workplace issues in the business section, but such coverage is often biased. During his years covering the labor beat for the Chicago Tribune, James Warren insisted on not reporting to the business desk. His reason? "Business editors have a skewed view on labor stories and the business section tends to be a bulletin board for corporate America."

William Serrin covered work and labor for the New York Times until 1986. "I had the curious idea that you have to put workers in the paper like you put corporate executives in the paper," he recalled. "I was suspect. And the more good stories I wrote, the harder I did my job, the more suspect I was."

When Serrin submitted stories, like a profile of a steel worker, editors would sometimes react: "Bill, you're too pro-worker."

"Pro-worker" sympathies of a reporter are subject to question, but who challenges pro-business bias? A Los Angeles Times poll revealed that in labor-management disputes, 53% of newspaper editors said they generally sided with management, while only 8% sided with labor.

Perhaps this explains why strike coverage often focuses more on how the strike is hurting consumers than on the issues *rankling* the workers. During a recent short-lived railroad strike, newspapers accused the rarely quoted workers--who'd been without a contract or a raise for years--of everything from causing "commuter chaos" to threatening the country's "economic recovery."

Buried at the end of one article was the acknowledgment that "most train riders expressed support for the striking workers."

In 1989, researcher Jonathan Tasini tallied a year's worth of reporting on workers' issues aired on the CBS, NBC and ABC evening news. It amounted to only 2.3% of total news coverage.

Coal miners in the Soviet Union got far more coverage on American TV than did striking miners in Virginia.

In all of 1989, workplace safety warranted a total of 40 seconds on "NBC Nightly News."

NBC's corporate parent, General Electric, which has an appalling work-safety record, benefits from such noncoverage.

POINT OF VIEW

Downsizing takes a toll

From PAGE THREE

company throws at them. Unfortunately, that's not the case. In our legal system management and unions both have rights. They're using theirs and we're using ours.

Our rights are embedded in the labor agreement that the union negotiates with the company. Those rights are upheld by the diligence of the union in enforcing that agreement.

These are difficult times and there are more difficult times ahead. It is easy in these circumstances for management to shift blame somewhere else for what *they* are doing.

But union members know the score. In the long run, our only real strength is our unity. And the labor agreement is the way we put that unity to work for us.

Retiree Club news from around the system

By Orville Owen

Here's a wrap up of news from Retiree Club chapters throughout Local 1245's jurisdiction:

Reno Chapter: According to Local 1245 staff attorney Tom Dalzell, the Nevada Public Service Commission will hold hearings this summer on Sierra Pacific Power's rate case, which will include a look at the employee discount benefit.

It is expected that the Office of the Consumers Advocate will once again attack the discount benefit of current employees as well as our retirees. Retirees should spread the world that the discount will be under attack and we should begin organizing and preparing our opposition activity now.

San Jose Chapter: At our Dec. 2, 1993 meeting we welcomed three new members to Local 1245 Retirees Club.

New member Richard Murphy retired from the City of Santa Clara Electric Department over 10 years ago. During his working years Richard helped organize the electric employees into Local 1245. He served as shop steward and unit chairman and also served on the union's negotiating committee.

New members Bob Watts and Bob Martin worked for PG&E at the San Jose office. Both were active and shop stewards. They both optioned to accept the Voluntary Retirement Incentive offered last year.

East Bay Chapter: Robert Samuel discussed Freedom Investment Fund with retirees on Jan. 13 at union headquarters in Walnut Creek. (Additional information appears at right.)

The chapter discussed a plan by the State Council of Senior Citizens to put a single-payer type health plan on the ballot in California. "Clinton's plan gives states the leeway to institute their own plans," noted Don Hardie.

The ballot initiative would set California on the road to a Canadian-style system, which many unions support as the most equitable and cost-effective plan.

The East Bay chapter will elect new officers at the February meeting. The East Bay Chapter meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Walnut Creek headquarters.

The Future: Next month we hope to add a new chapter in the Marysville, Oroville area.

Brother Al Knudsen, the former Advisory Council member who recently retired from PG&E, will be off and running in organizing Local 1245 retirees in the area. Al told me that he would accept any and all assistance.

Organizing all of our retired members is still the prime goal of the Retirees Club. The issues and policies that caused us to band together over the past years are still alive and kicking, and the struggle for fairness and dignity still goes on. We must have a voice in those matters that concern our retirement years.

Our Retirees Club will give us the voice.

Keep the faith!

Robert Samuel discusses the labor-backed Freedom Investment Fund with East Bay Chapter retirees at the January meeting at union headquarters in Walnut Creek.

IBEW Local 1245 Retirees Corner

Who's old?

Who's Old?

Age is a quality of mind.
If you have left your dreams behind,
If hope can no longer look ahead,
Then you are old.

But if from life you take the best,
And if in life you keep the jest,
If love you hold,
No matter how the years go by,
No matter how the birthdays fly,
You are not old.

(Author unknown)

Please Post

Unfair to Labor!

Please Don't Patronize

Please Post

The California Labor Federation has placed the following firms on its "We Don't Patronize" list. Firms are placed on this list after a written request from an affiliated union has been approved by the Federation's Executive Council. All friends of labor are urged to avoid patronizing these firms. *Remember: they are not fair to their employees!*

Hotels, Restaurants & Theme Parks

All Marriott Hotels in California with the specific exception of the Marriott Hotel at Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco, which is a union house.
Round Table Pizza: All Round Table Pizza parlors in California.
Taco Bell: All Taco Bell fast food outlets in California except those located in Santa Clara and San Benito counties.

Contra Costa County

Days' Inn, Richmond.
Holiday Inn, Walnut Creek.
Humphrey's Restaurant, Antioch.
Scott's Bar & Grill, Walnut Creek.

Los Angeles Area

The Sheraton Los Angeles Airport, 6101 West Century Blvd.
University Hilton Hotel, 3540 South Figueroa St.

Monterey Area

Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove.
Casa Munras, Fremont and Munras, Monterey.
Doubletree Inn, 2 Portola Plaza, Monterey.
Days Inn, 1400 Del Monte Blvd., Seaside.
Sheraton Hotel, 350 Calle Principal, Monterey.

Napa

Napa Elks Lodge No. 832 bar and restaurant, 2480 Soscol Ave., Napa.

Oakland

Scott's Restaurant, 73 Jack London Square.

Ontario

Ontario Red Lion Inn.

Oxnard

Opus I Restaurant, in the Embassy Suites Hotel.
Oxnard Financial Plaza Hilton Hotel, 600 Esplanade Drive.

Sacramento Area

Andiamo!, 3145 Folsom Blvd.
Auburn Joe's, 13480 Lincoln Way, Auburn.
All Black Angus.
California Fats, 1015 Front St., Old Sacramento
All Chevy's.
Continental Inn, 3343 Bradshaw, Rancho Cordova.
Courtyard, 10683 White Rock Rd., Rancho Cordova.
All Days Inns.
Delta King, 1000 Front St., Old Sacramento.
All Denny's.
Discovery Inn, 350 Bercut Drive.
Distillery, 2107 "L" St.
Elk Grove General Store, 9805 Elk Grove Blvd., Elk Grove.
All Eppie's Restaurants.
Fox and Goose, 1001 "R" St.
Frank Fat's, 806 "L" St.
Frasinetti Winery & Restaurant, 7395 Frasinetti Rd., Florin.
Fat City Bar & Cafe, 1001 Front St., Old Sacramento
Fulton's Prime Rib Inn, 906 Second St., Old Sacramento.
Harbor Inn, 1250 Halyard Dr., West Sacramento.
Hoffman's, formerly the Club, 808 "O" St.
Hyatt Regency Hotel, L Street between 12th and 13th Streets opposite Capitol Park.
Jeremiah's, 4241 Florin Rd.
Limelighter Bar, Restaurant & Card Room, 1014 Alhambra Blvd.
Los Padres, Jay Street and Embarcadero, Old Sacramento.
All Lyons.
Max's Opera Cafe, Arden Fair Shopping Center.
Melarkey's, 1517 Broadway.
Palomino Room, 3405 El Camino Ave.
Pennisi's Restaurant, 1030 "J" St.
Red Lion Inn, 2001 West Point Way, Sacramento.
Residence Inn, 1530 Howe Ave., Sacramento.
Rodeway Inn, I-80 & Wyatt Avenue, North Highlands.
Sacramento Inn, Arden Way at Interstate 80, Sacramento.
Sacramento Joe's, 2052 Sacramento Blvd.
Sheraton Sunrise Hotel, Sunrise Blvd. at Highway 50.
Shot of Class, 1020 11th St.
All Sixpence Inns.
The Nut Tree and Coffee Tree, Vacaville between Sacramento and San Francisco on Interstate 80.
Vagabond Inn, 909 3rd St.
Vince's Restaurant & Bar, 840 Harbor Blvd., West Sacramento

San Diego Area

Anthony's Restaurants, 166 Solana Hills Dr., Solana Beach; 215 Bay Blvd., Chula Vista; 9530 Murray Dr., La Mesa; 1360 Harbor Dr., San Diego; 1355 Harbor Dr., San Diego; 11666 Avena Place, San Diego.
Bali Hai Restaurant, 2232 Shelter Island Dr., San Diego.
Hob Nob Restaurant, 2271 First Ave., San Diego.
San Diego Princess (formerly Vacation Village), 1404 W. Vacation Rd., San Diego.
Tom Ham's Light House, 2150 Harbor Island Dr., San Diego.

San Francisco

Alfred's, 886 Broadway.
Alioto's No. 8, Fisherman's Wharf.
Behihana of Tokyo, 1737 Post St.
Campton Place Hotel, 340 Sutter St.
Ernie's, 847 Montgomery St.
Fisherman's Grotto No. 9, Fisherman's Wharf.
Galleria Park Hotel, 191 Sutter St.
Jack in the Box, all locations.
Juliana Hotel, 590 Bush St.
The Mandarin, Ghirardelli Square.
Mandarin Oriental Hotel, 333 Sansome St.
McDonald's, all locations.
Monticello Inn, 227 Ellis St.
Nikko Hotel, 22 Mason St.
North Beach Restaurant, 1512 Stockton St.
Park Hyatt, 333 Battery St.
Perry's, 1944 Union St.
Pompei's Grotto, Fisherman's Wharf.
Prescott Hotel, 545 Post St.
Richelieu Hotel, Van Ness Ave.
A. Sabella's Fisherman's Wharf.
H. Salt Fish and Chips, all locations.
Col. Saunders Kentucky Fried Chicken, all locations.
Schroeder's, 240 Front St.
Tia Margarita, 19th Ave. and Clement St.
Trinity Suites, Eighth and Market Streets.
Vanessi's, 1177 California St.
Victorian Hotel, 54 Fourth St.
Villa Florence Hotel, 225 Powell St.
Vintage Court Hotel, 650 Bush St.

Santa Clara County

DeAnza Hotel, 233 W. Santa Clara St., San Jose
House of Genji/Cathay Restaurant, 1335 N. First St., San Jose.
Holiday Inn-Palo Alto, 625 El Camino Real, Palo Alto.
Mariani's Inn and Restaurant, 2500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara.
Red Lion Inn at Gateway Place.

Santa Barbara Area

El Encanto Hotel and Garden Villas.

Santa Cruz Area

Seaside Co. properties including **Santa Cruz Holiday Inn, and Boardwalk and Coconut Grove**, Santa Cruz.

Sonoma and Marin

Hodge Food Service and all food service facilities owned and/or operated by them, including **La Cantina and Cal Asia.**

Stockton Area

Carmen's Mexican Restaurant, Lincoln Center.
Hilton Hotel, 2323 Grand Canal Blvd.
Stockton Inn Motel and Restaurants, 4219 Waterloo Rd. at Hwy. 99.

Las Vegas, Nev.

Frontier Hotel and Casino
Landmark Hotel and Casino.

Sparks, Nevada

John Ascuaga's Nugget.

Manufacturing

Chir-Hit Displays, Santa Clara County.
Color & Design Exhibits, San Jose
Diamond Walnut Co., Stockton: all products
Gaffers & Sattler products.
Goehring Meat Co., Lodi.
Ito-Cariani Sausage Co., San Francisco: Cariani and Pocino brands.
Louisiana-Pacific Corp.: all products.

Printing

Petaluma Argus Courier.
San Francisco Bay Guardian.
Vallejo Times-Herald.
New York Times (Northwestern Edition).

Theaters

Santa Cruz Area

Twin I & II Theaters, Aptos.

San Francisco

Alexandria, Balboa, Coronet, Coliseum, Metro, Stonestown Twin and Vogue (all United Artists) and **Cinema 21 and Empire** (Syufy)

Sacramento Area

Capitol Theater; Century 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 Theaters (Syufy); **State Theater; Sacramento 6 Drive-In.**

Orange County

All United Artists Theaters in Orange County.
All Freedman Forum Theaters in Anaheim; **Cinemaland Theater**, Anaheim; **Brookhurst-Loge Theater**, Anaheim.
Valley View Twin Cinemas, Cypress; **Family Four Cinemas**, Fountain Valley; **Fox Fullerton**, Fullerton.
Syufy Cinedome, Stadium Drive-In and City Cinemas, all in Orange; **Villa Theater**, Orange; **Miramar Theater**, San Clemente; **Broadway Theater**, Santa Ana; **Stanton Theater**, Stanton.

Others

Armstrong Painting & Waterproofing of San Francisco and its entities, including **Armstrong Kitchens, Armstrong Construction, Armstrong Painting, and Armstrong Roofing.**

Automotive, Sacramento area:
Mel Rapton Honda.
All Paul Snider dealerships.
Swift Auto World.

Automotive, San Francisco area:
British Motor Car Distributors, Ltd., 901 Van Ness Ave.
European Motors, 950 Van Ness Ave.
German Motors Corp., 1765 California St.
Royal Motor Sales, 280 South Van Ness Ave.
San Francisco Auto Center, 2300 16th St.
San Francisco Honda, 10 South Van Ness.

Automotive, San Jose area:
Stevens Creek Acura.

Automotive, Sonoma area:
Bob Nobles Chevrolet.

Bank of America: all branches and services.

Circuit City stores at 4080 Stevens Creek Blvd., San Jose; 1825 Hillsdale Ave., San Jose, and 1250 Grant Rd. Mountain View.

Concrete, Sacramento area:
Dixon Ready Mix, Dixon; **Livingston's Concrete**, 5416 Roseville Rd., North Highlands; **Trinco Ready Mix**, 2700 Athens Ave., Lincoln.

Costco Wholesale Warehouse grocery outlets at 1600 Coleman Ave., Santa Clara, and 1900 South 10th St. San Jose.
Dick's Rancho, Rancho Cordova.

Glass, Sacramento area:
Arrow Glass, Country Club Glass, Del Paso Glass, Fine Glass, Golden West Glass, all locations; **Kinzel's Glass**, Carmichael; **Sam's Auto Glass, River City Glass, Victor Glass.**
Grand Auto stores and service centers along with PACCAR, Inc., the parent company, throughout Northern California.
Hertzka and Knowles, San Francisco, architects.
K-Mart, statewide.
Keystone Company restaurant supply, San Jose.
Montgomery Ward in Redding.
Mervyn's in Ventura.
Norbert Cronin & Co., insurance agents, San Francisco.
Non-union Iceberg Lettuce.
Raley's Food Market, Oakhurst, Madera County.
Sam's Club warehouse outlet stores along with all **Wal-Mart** stores.
Sears Roebuck, all California outlets.
Shoreline South Convalescent Hospital, Alameda.

Signs, Sacramento area:
Ellis Signage-Graphics, Fleming Silk Screen, House of Signs, and **River City Signs**, all in Sacramento; **Young Electric Sign Co.**, West Sacramento.
State Farm Mutual Auto Insurance Co., statewide.
SuperCuts: all SuperCuts salons in California.
Wal-Mart: all stores in California, along with all **Sam's Club** warehouse outlets owned by the same corporations.
Whole Food Market, 200 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley.