

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 71483

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The Customers of Southern Calif.
Edison Co., The People.

Complainant,

vs.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON CO.

Defendant.

Case No. 8427
(Filed May 23, 1966)
(Answered June 23, 1966)

George H. Nelson, in propria persona and
for Mrs. Lena Davis, complainants.
H. Clinton Tinker, for defendant.
Norman R. Johnson, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

George Nelson and Lena Davis, his wife, primary complainants, and 31 other customer-signatories of this complaint alleged that their bills for electric service are too high and that some of their electric meters have been, and are being, incorrectly read. They are residents of Glenn or Mead Valley in the vicinity of Old Elsinore Road and Cajalco Road in unincorporated territory of Riverside County northwest of Perris.

Public hearing was held before Examiner Warner on August 3, 1966, at Perris.

In addition to the primary complainants, Iry Kennard, Joseph Pickett, Anna Mae Edwards, Mattie B. Duncan, and Ambretto Porter testified. The sum of their testimony was that they felt that their bimonthly bills for electric service to their modest

homes with minimum connected load, such as no washing machine, no electric water heater, few lights, and in some instances, only intermittent residence, were too high. In two or three instances, they complained that they had formerly had a water pump in operation, but upon the introduction and connection of Eastern Municipal Water District water system facilities in March, 1963, the pumps had been disconnected and have since been out of use, but electric bills have continued to rise. Complainant Nelson, a tavern owner and operator, testified that this was true in his case and also, that the tavern was closed at sundown, except on Friday and Saturday nights. Although he mentioned a lighting load, deep freeze, frigidaire, and a beer box, he failed to state that he had an air conditioning unit; when this was installed or put into use, or whether it is in use, is not shown on the record, but its use would in some measure account for his alleged increases in bimonthly bills.

Complainant Kennard complained that when he built a house in 1963, he chose to construct it for all-electric service and one of his first bills for an electric stove, refrigerator, hot water heater, air conditioner, and heating system was \$245.60. Whether this included unpaid balances, or was a bimonthly bill is not clear on the record, but he testified that at the present time, his bills were running about \$85 or \$90 a month. Although the record shows that his bimonthly bills were \$37.32 for the period March 16 to May 16, 1966, and \$59.68 for the period from January 14, 1966, to March 16, 1966, he acknowledged that they were now running about \$30 to \$35 for each bimonthly period.

Exhibit 1, submitted by defendant, in addition to showing complainant Kennard's bills for the last year, shows the

same information available for each of the complainant customers' accounts.

Defendant's rate research engineer testified that a reduction in rates applicable to complainants was effected in July, 1965, when defendant acquired California Electric Power Company and placed complainants on defendant's Schedule D-6. He further testified that said schedule contains the highest rates for domestic electric service on defendant's system; its applicability is determined by a study of customer-line density; defendant's system-wide average is about 55 customers per mile of electric distribution line; complainants' area density is 0.29 percent of defendant's systemwide average; and to qualify for the application of defendant's next lower domestic rate schedule, D-5, the meeting of a customer-line density criterion of 0.9 percent of defendant's systemwide average would be required.

The record shows that defendant's Schedule D-6 is applicable to all sparsely settled unincorporated territories of defendant's service area in Southern California, including such areas as Bodfish and Lake Isabella in Kern County; Morongo Valley, Baker and Arrowbear in San Bernardino County; Bridgeport in Mono County; Big Pine and Lone Pine in Inyo County; Wrightwood in Los Angeles County; Goleta in Santa Barbara County; Alberhill and Glen Ivy in Riverside County; and many others, most of which were enumerated on the record.

Defendant's supervisor of its Eastern Division Test Section testified that all of complainants' electric meters had been line-tested during the month of July, 1966, and all meters had been found to be recording accurately within the limits set forth in the Rules authorized by this Commission.

We find no evidence supporting the complaint. It may be true that occasionally electric bills have been higher than complainants anticipated according to what they believed their electric usage and load demands to be. Their charges for electric service are not unreasonable for the sparse territory where such service is rendered and received. We find no evidence of incorrect meter readings or billing, except one billing error that had been corrected by defendant in 1964 when the customer questioned her bill for service to a rest home which she operated.

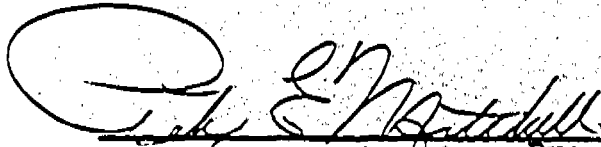
We conclude that the complaint should be dismissed.

O R D E R

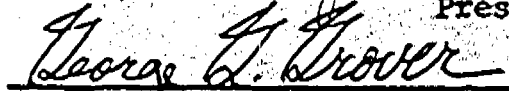
IT IS ORDERED that this complaint is dismissed.

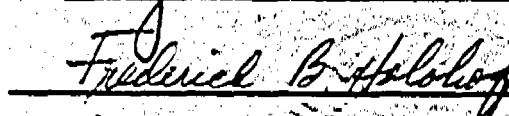
The effective date of this order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 1st day of November, 1966.




President









Commissioners