

# The Plasma Column

## The Materials Witness

August 1996

### POLICE INVESTIGATE DEATH OF WELDING INSPECTOR

Event Called "Not Surprising" by Herrick Supervisor after Inspector Rejected "One Weld Too Many"

*Associated Press*

San Bernardino, California – A Quality Laboratory Welding inspector at Herrick Steel was found dead inside a box column after an angry mob of Herrick welders wrapped him in pre-heat blankets and baked him at 1200°F.

He was then welded into a 20 ton box column destined for the San Diego Airport. The Coroner has been unable to determine from the charred remains if the inspector expired from suffocation, heat or excessive nit picking.

Witnesses have stated that the Inspector seems to have asked the welders to grind out welds "once too often". "He just pissed them off; I think their actions were

Justified," stated one of the witnesses.



Police are working with the District Attorney to determine if charges should be filed. A spokesman for the DA's office said that "currently there are no laws protecting the safety of welding inspectors. Besides who really gives a shit!"

"We are fair game" says Weldon January, the supervisor of the ill-fated inspector. "Right now it's just one of those things that comes with the exciting world of weld inspection.

Sometimes the welders feel better after they take out an inspector and things smooth out for a while. But we will have another guy rejecting welds as soon as the funeral services are over".

The incident appears to have been discovered by chance, as nobody missed the inspector after he disappeared over a week ago. An ultrasonic inspector performing shear wave inspection with a longitudinal transducer picked up an unusual sound wave pattern from inside the box column. "It looked to me like a big pocket of slag, or lack of fusion, or a crack or lack of penetration or something" stated the UT inspector. This ultrasonic stuff still baffles me but this goes to show you that we can find stuff even if it's only by luck and chance.

The grieving widow could only wonder what happened and more importantly if he was still being paid. "After all he was still at work", said his voluptuous wife who was warmly comforted by anyone she could find. "I'll never forget what's his name" were the words this writer will always remember.

Funeral services are pending, but it was widely know that the deceased wanted to be buried with the tools of the trade: fillet gauges, magnifying glass, penthouse magazines and an unused copy of the AWS Structural Welding Code.

