

Mr. Leyden: I should say that all property on the premises, beginning at the property line, should belong to the customer, with the possible exception of the meter, for this reason, that all fixtures on a property are subject to seizure for debts; anything that is attached to the property is subject to seizure. Of course, as to the meter, you put it on the property and you put it on at your own risk, but even that meter is subject to seizure for debts, as I understand it.

The President: In that connection I should do as was mentioned in an argument I had with a certain gentleman some years ago, have the charter changed, or perhaps better, have the law changed whereby the landlord would not have the right of seizure of the property of the company after they had been notified that the company had property on that building. I may say the charter of the Royal Electric Company was amended in that respect, and all we have to do now is to notify the owner that we have that property there subject to that law.

Mr. Leyden: What do you do in the case of a mortgage on the property?

The President: Send a notice to the mortgagor.

Mr. Gossler: I don't agree with the suggestion of Mr. Wright or Mr. Leyden, because in many cases you install primary installation, and you would hardly charge for primary wiring and transformer; I should suggest all secondary wiring attached to or on the premises.

Mr. Leyden: If you put it on there, you put it on at your own risk.

The President: The suggestion made by Mr. Gossler is one worth thinking about. As our business grows older and more extensive, undoubtedly it will happen that very frequently transformers will be placed in the buildings, and it would be a doubtful question as to whether you would want to sell your customer the transformer, whether you might not wish to retain the transformer in your own hands, and if so you would still have another piece of property on the premises. The danger apprehended by Mr. Wright that you are going to cause damage by your property or accident to life—I am afraid you would hardly be able to avoid that. If there are any conditions arising which would cause danger due to your fault, whether it be in wiring belonging to you or somebody else, you would undoubtedly be responsible for it. Mr. Dion, what would be your views?

Mr. Dion: The company should own, I think, all the primary installation. I do not see how you can avoid that. There is no question that in some cases it may involve you in a suit for damages, especially if the necessity arose for placing transformers inside the premises, as it is, I do not know whether that is being done in this country or not, but I know transformers are being placed in buildings in many places, and still I do not see how you can avoid owning and paying for all the primary installation. I should say that the company's responsibility should cease at the secondary terminals of the transformer.

The President: Still retaining the ownership of the meter?

Mr. Dion: Yes. I would like to sell the meter, but the conditions of meter practice are such, with the necessity of changing meters and that sort of thing, that you cannot very well do it. But, as a matter of principle, we should sell the meter. We should own nothing from the secondary terminals of the transformer inside.

Mr. Woolsey: I might say to the members of this Association that I have been in all the principal cities in the United States, and that the rules over there have been, regardless of where the transformer is placed, (the transformer is generally placed in the scuttle hole in the fore part of the basement, or else above the transom, above the stores or dwellings, or on the side of the dwellings,) that it has always been held as the property of the lighting company, the furnishing of the wires and running them into the building to the point of the meter. They also have a clause in their contract with the companies there that all material used belonging to the company, placed with screws, is always the property of the company furnishing the power; there is also a clause in

their laws which says, that in case anything is placed with screws in the building, that is, not nailed, regardless of whatever may happen, and of how the trouble occurs, it cannot become the property of anybody but the person who put it there.

The President: How about the question Mr. Wright raised of the responsibility to the operative company for damage which may be done on the premises to the property of the company? Mr. Wright is speaking from personal experience on that point, I believe, and undoubtedly has good reason for what he says.

J. J. Wright: It is not only the damage, but the alleged damage. It just occurs to me, I have had an elaborate contract drawn up; it is not one that would scare a customer at all, but it has been very carefully drawn, and as a consequence of the study of several clever legal minds to cover this point of damage; and any member of the Association who has a mind to drop me a post card after I get back, I shall be most happy to send them a copy of it; it covers the point most clearly and as completely as it can be done legally. If I had thought I would have brought a few copies over. (Applause.)

The President: The next questions I have are: "Should rent be charged for meters? If so, what would be a reasonable rate?" "Should rent rates for power and light meters be the same?" "Should a higher rate be charged for larger than for small meters?"

J. J. Wright: We charge meter rent on all watt meters. The only kind of meter we use which we don't charge rent for (because it is only used for our own personal guidance), is the Edison electrolytic meter; but all watt meters and mechanical meters are charged rent for, the smaller meters at the rate of 25 cents per month, and the larger watt meter, direct current, at the rate of 50 cents per month. We find it necessary to do so on account of the large amount of repairs these meters take and the high original first cost. The consumers complain in some cases and say that the gas company does not charge for meters. They are thinking now of charging for them, however.

The President: The fact that you charge for it indicates that you think it should be charged for.

J. J. Wright: Yes.

The President: Do you make any distinction between power and light meters?

J. J. Wright: No, about the same price. There is also the government fee to be taken into account in charging for these meters—the government inspection fee of \$2, which also has to be paid out of this revenue.

Mr. Anderson: Do you charge meter rent on all accounts?

J. J. Wright: On all accounts where meters are used. There is no absolute hard and fast rule; there are exceptional cases, but the rule is to charge on all accounts.

Mr. Anderson: In our case in Windsor, if the account does not run to \$5, I charge 25 cents; as soon as ever it reaches that point I drop the rate; when a meter earns that amount of money I can afford to throw that meter rent off. A meter rent is a very obnoxious charge, as you all know. The customer of course brings up the claim that the gas company makes no charge for meters. We have to meet that with the argument that the electric meter costs about three times what the gas meter does, and is subject to a great many more enemies. But there are a great many cases where it is very hard to charge a meter rent, and where you have accounts running \$5, \$10, \$15, \$20 and \$30, a meter rent is not worth arguing with the customer for. If you get a meter rent on accounts running under \$5 you are getting all that you practically require. The meter rent comes out of the people, I claim, the residential consumers. If you reach those customers by a meter rent, you are practically reaching, I claim, all that is required. Commercial lighting will generally run over \$5, so that for commercial lighting we hardly ever get any meter rent; \$3 a year is perhaps a pretty fair investment to collect on an \$18 or \$20 investment.

The President: Do I understand that \$5, without rental for the meter, is regardless of the number of lights a customer has? If he had 100 lights and