

## Local's Legal Aid Proves Its Value

UE-Local 301 went to the very considerable expense a few years ago of retaining a lawyer to represent injured workers in Compensation Court.

The reason for this is there are many types of compensation claims which are complicated and technical. Injured workers cannot look for necessary guidance to the the Company since, after all, it is the Company which will have to pay if the worker is successful in his claim to just compensation. Without the help of a lawyer, injured workers in these types of cases stand a good chance of being disabled for life without receiving any compensation for their injuries.

### Lung Injury

Take for example the case of Stanley Tyminski who worked in Bldg. 29 as a mica molder. He had been employed by the General Electric Company for over 40 years when he took sick in 1948 with a lung condition which prevented him from working.

The Union's lawyer filed a compensation claim for him in March, 1949. The case dragged on in Compensation Court until August, 1950. During this period of one and one-half years, many witnesses were brought into court by both sides. The injured worker testified to the work he had done during the 40 years that he had worked for the Company. Doctors testified for and against the injured worker. One of the leading

chemists employed by the General Electric Company was also called in as a witness.

Finally, after one and one-half years of litigation, the case was decided against the worker. At this point, if he did not have the Union's lawyer to represent him the case would have been closed, and the worker would have been unemployed and helpless.

The Union's lawyer, however, was not satisfied. He took an appeal from the decision.

### Wins Appeal

In December, 1950, 1 year and 9 months after the case was started, Mr. Novak, the Union's lawyer, argued the case in Albany before a panel of three judges. Two weeks later these judges reversed the former decision and decided that the worker had a good claim for compensation. They ordered one of the doctors who had previously testified, to be recalled as a witness. This time, Mr. Novak had to travel to New York City for the testimony of this doctor. After the doctor testified, Tyminski won his case. The Company had to pay Tyminski retroactive compensation for the time when the case was being litigated. In addition, Tyminski will receive compensation in the form of weekly benefits and free medical treatment for the rest of his life.

There are many cases of this type which prove what a valuable service is being given by the Union to its members.

## State Releases Shocking Income Figures For Area

The announcement by the New York State Department of Commerce that annual incomes in Schenectady County average \$1,743 per person is shocking even when it is understood that the figure is arrived at by averaging in every man, woman and child.

Even the Bureau of Labor Statistics, no champion of high wages, says a family of four needs \$4,000 a year for a minimum standard of decent living.

The department's figures underline the job that has been done by UE in getting GE wages up to an estimated average of \$3,848 for 52 weeks.

The revelation of the low prevailing wage on a county scale also points up a danger. It is GE policy to press wages down toward the surrounding wage levels. It is its basis for maintaining pay differentials between different regions. It is its argument in refusing wage increases to the skilled crafts locally.

This policy is carried forward by several means—holding down wage increases while taxes and prices take an ever increasing bite out of workers' incomes, cutting rates within plants wherever it can, moving work out to the lowest wage areas.



"You don't need a bank-full of cash to be thankful, be thankful you have what you do. Here's cause for thanksgiving: the fact that you're living where freedom of enterprise reigns." —From Schenectady Works News, Nov. 23, 1951

## White Collar Picket Line Prods Prudential for Dough

The well-dressed picket line in front of the Prudential Insurance company's office at 505 State St. brings home to the passer-by that the man in the white collar needs collective bargaining as much as the man or woman engaged in production.

The 35-state strike of AFL insurance agents against the second richest insurance company in the world is for a guaranteed minimum weekly wage of \$55, company-paid expenses for servicing debts, and a contract.

Prudential is, in theory, a policyholders' cooperative in which every policyholder is supposed to have a voice in the management of its affairs. In actuality, it is a creature of banks whose appetite grows with the farms, businesses and homes they take over.

State legislatures have had frequently to rebuke these so-called insurance cooperatives for their sharp practices in the sale of industrial insurance, also known as "poor man's" or "burial insur-

ance." Pressure is especially severe on insurance agents to handle this type of insurance which has a high rate of cancellation and penalizes the insurance agent as well as the policyholder.

Insurance agents were originally organized by the United Office and Professional Workers union, CIO, now part of the Distributive Processing Office Workers, independent.

It is known that indignant letters from policyholders have an excellent effect on the company's labor relations.

### CIVIL RIGHTS GROUP MEETS

Henry Pratt Fairchild, professor emeritus of New York University, told a Schenectady audience last night that the crisis in civil rights requires vigorous citizen action. The meeting was under the auspices of the Tri-City Civil Liberties Committee.

# ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

THE VOICE OF THE UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO & MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA — LOCAL 301, UE

Vol. 9 — No. 30

SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

Friday, December 14, 1951

## UNION ELECTION TODAY

### Take It From Here . . .

Detroit, Mich.—Because of growing unemployment, Ford Local 600 is campaigning for 30 hours work per week at 40 hours pay.

Washington, D. C.—Factory hiring for October, according to the U. S. Department of Labor, was the lowest in 10 years, not counting the 1949 recession, with consumer goods manufacture getting the worst of it. Layoffs were 13 per 1000, more than one and one-half times greater than last October. The survey blamed production cut-backs.

New York City—Philip D. Reed, chairman of the board of General Electric, told the National Association of Manufacturers that if we don't cut down arms production the country is in for "serious economic and political disturbances." He said "the evidence indicates Russia will not deliberately precipitate another world war." Reed added that "the dangers associated with another wave of inflation may be as great or greater than the dangers of further warlike moves on the part of Russia."

New York City—Ex-GE boss, Charles E. Wilson, now Defense Mobilizer, speaking at the same NAM meeting said the "pinch is coming". Metal that ordinarily would go into automobiles, washing machines and refrigerators will, he said, be going into guns, shells and tanks. "We are going to have more guns and less butter . . . or guns and margarine . . . or just guns and bread."

Buffalo, N. Y.—Six UE locals in the area, representing 11 shops, are sending 100 delegates to the regional Wage Stabilization Board on December 13 to protest the wage freeze. They're going armed with 40,000 leaflets explaining the issues to the public.

(Continued on Page 4)

## Polls Are Open 'Til 6:00 P. M. Tomorrow Okay to Double-Park Around Union Hall

Balloting for local union officers will begin at noon today at Union Hall, 301 Liberty St., and continue for 30 hours until 6:00 P.M. Friday.

The successful candidates will serve for the coming year in the local's top posts. (See voting machine line-up on back page).

### GE's CHRISTMAS BONUS

## UNEMPLOYMENT

Thousands Laid-off or On Rotation

(See Page 2)

## We Take 3.58 Raise Now; Will Catch Up Next March

With the next wage re-opener less than 12 weeks away, the membership of UE Local 301 upon recommendation of the UE-GE Conference Board has decided to accept at this time the company's 3.58 percent wage increase, three weeks vacation after 15 years and minor contract improvements.

The five to eight cents an hour wage increase is retroactive to September 15, but must be approved by the Wage Stabilization Board. In the event the wage freeze board turns it down, the union and the company can re-enter into wage negotiations.

An important contract change provides for the union to submit its March wage demands on February 25 and enter into talks with the company on March 5. This is intended to head off another IUE-CIO betrayal of the wage fight. It will be remembered that the IUE took what the company offered early in the year without a whimper or the ghost of a fight.

Other contract changes strengthen the union recognition clause and arbitration procedure. Salaried workers share in the wage

increase and the new vacation provision.

### No Xmas Bonus

The company turned down the \$40 Christmas bonus which many employers have granted without the necessity of WSB approval. GE also refused to give three cents an hour cost of living increases immediately as allowed by the wage board. All this strengthens the suspicion that the company made its offer in the hope that it would be disapproved by the wage board.

Far from satisfying GE workers, the company's terms must inevitably lead to a showdown in the Spring. The increase doled out by the company is more than cancelled out by high prices and taxes, with worse to come. There is nothing for day workers, women and skilled crafts in the settlement.

The UE 301 Executive Board has already approved the taking of a strike vote in February before IUE and GE can get together on another deal for splitting the wage front down the middle.

Meanwhile, the union will press for correction of wage inequities in the crafts, among the women and the day workers generally. Shop Stewards have also been advised

(Continued on Page 2)

Every possible arrangement had been made by the Election Committee, headed by Michael Rakvica and John Saccocio, to assure every UE Local 301 member a secret ballot. There will be 10 voting machines supervised by representatives of the city election commission, and 14 authorized watchers. Union Hall will remain open for the 30 voting hours, during which double parking will be permitted around the hall.

"Voting in a union election is at least as much of a civic duty as voting in political elections," President William J. Kelly said today.

### Union Democracy

"Democratic elections, democratic procedures in general," he said, "are what keep this union on the right road. Where the unrestricted right to vote for union officers, strikes and settlements is denied, you have clique control, playing up of religion, nationality, color and company union policies as in the longshore union and IUE-CIO." The rank and file longshoremen recently conducted a bitter strike in protest against a top settlement and the lack of democracy in the union.

Kelly, who has been Local 301 president for two terms, is not running for re-election. The candidates for president are John Green (Row D) and James Cagnetta (Row E). Leo Jandreau, who is running for business agent unopposed, elected to run on the Cagnetta slate. See sample ballot for a complete roster of candidates and position on the voting machine.

GE's CHRISTMAS BONUS

# Two Thousand In Layoff In Motor Departments

About two thousand workers in motor departments are to be laid off or put on work rotation by Christmas. People with 25 years service are on the street. Others with less than six months seniority are working. GE's "dreary Christmas" present went into effect this week. Foremen didn't seem to know what it was about. They just said, "you got to go home."

Nearly 1,000 were hit in large M & G and Welded Products. At the beginning of the week, 200 in small and medium motors went on rotation. This is to be increased to 380 next week and to 500 by Christmas week. Two hundred and twenty-five got the bad news in Punch Press.

People were told to go home and not to report back until December 31, thus losing their holiday pay. No "dreary Christmas," Mr. Male?

Meetings between the union and management on departmental levels were scheduled this week to deal with the job crisis.

Men and women with 1951 service have received layoff notices. Workers with longer service have also been hit. All who contribute to the manufacture of motors and generators can expect to suffer.

Caught Lying

In the Saturday Gazette, GE blamed the layoffs on the AFL teamsters' strike. This is an outright lie. A check with Eric where there is no teamsters' strike reveals layoffs affecting 2,000 in motor and generator with the number expected to jump after the first of the year. The company story in Eric is overproduction.

Overproduction is undoubtedly at the bottom of the mess. And many company moves cause it. Faulty inventories. Bad planning. Speed-up.

There are signs of more serious dislocations. GE is building runaway plants all over the country to produce under non-union conditions. This may be a factor in the Schenectady work shortage just as runaway plants in the auto industry are sucking jobs out of Ford's Baton Rouge and other organized places. In fact, many workers in Industrial Control and in Motor & Generator claim that there is work on the floor that they are not allowed to touch.

Still another possible factor was

touched on by GE board chairman, Philip D. Reed, in his NAM speech when he warned of "serious economic disturbances" and "misery" unless the rearmament program is reduced and spread out. He may have in mind that GE is feverishly expanding at a time when purchasing power is falling.

Whatever the reasons behind the present unemployment in Schenectady, Erie and Lynn, the union cannot tolerate expansion at the expense of its members, layoffs without regard to seniority, un-

employment without a serious attempt to place workers at comparable work and earnings in departments now working overtime and even farming out work.

We're paying for it in many departments. More of us will pay even more if we don't step up the fight against speed-up, the wage freeze, unfair taxation and inflation.

As in the Industrial Control layoff, the UE 301 position is no new hiring, a 40-hour week and strict fulfillment of the contract.

## Production Goes The Same Way As Purchasing Power - - - Down

With wages frozen and prices high, working people are finding it increasingly difficult to purchase the volume of goods coming off the production line. As a result, in such products as furniture, appliances, television and clothing, there have been extremely sharp cutbacks in production exceeding the declines in the 1949 recession, and production is close to the low reached at that time. This in turn effects electrical and machine products. The following table compares production in August 1951 with production a year ago:

Percentage Change in Production, August 1950 to August 1951

Major Appliances	down 44%
Radio and Television	down 67%
Furniture	down 22%
Carpets	down 50%
Automobiles	down 34%
Shoes	down 28%
Textile Fabrics	down 20%

(Source: Federal Reserve Bulletin, October 1951)

This decline in the production of consumer goods as a result of falling purchasing power has taken place before the full impact of shortages in materials has been felt. The 70 billion dollar military preparations budget will cut steel, copper and aluminum supplies for consumer goods so sharply that production in these industries at the end of 1951 may be at half of the production rate just prior to the Korean War, and will spell unemployment for hundreds of thousands of workers.

## NEW PAY PATTERN?

The United Mine Workers who won better than 38 cents an hour in wage and welfare benefits since the onset of the wage freeze, is due to come up again at the same time as UE—in March.

John L. Lewis has already made it known that he isn't going to pay any attention to the wage freeze board or to what he calls "bureaucrats" in Washington.

## WAGE SETTLEMENT

(Continued from Page 1)

that the company will undoubtedly try to use its "breather" between now and the next reopener to attack rates and conditions in the plant. Stewards are instructed to re-act swiftly and aggressively and to insist on strict observance of the contract, prompt settlement of grievances, fair treatment by supervisory personnel.

## LACK OF WORK CONTINUES IN CONTROL DEPT.

Following last week's meeting between union representatives and the top brass of Industrial Control, the company rescinded layoff notices of seven Grade A machinists although unemployment in Control continues high.

Top machinists should be kept on, the union pointed out, if full production is to be resumed as promised by the company.

Meanwhile, 1000 workers are on rotation with hundreds laid off. Asked how Industrial Control got into this mess, company representatives were vague and evasive. The union however, placed the situation squarely at the door of bad management and warned that workers must not be expected to pay for administrative blunders.

### Seniority Violations

Management was also taken to task for violations of seniority. One Board Member cited the case of a woman with 10 years' service who was laid off in favor of a woman with six months' seniority. Management said it wanted to abide "100 percent by the contract" and would cancel the layoff notice to the high seniority woman.

The job outlook is grim despite management promises of full production after the first of the year. Overloaded inventories, the company's excuse for the cut-back in Industrial Control, can mean that industries which use Industrial Control products are also cutting back production and are likely to slacken off even more as frozen wages and high prices reduce purchasing power.

### A "Mistake"?

The company does not admit that these are factors behind the pre-Christmas dislocation of more than 1000 family budgets as a result of the Industrial Control work shortage. It acts as though it is all a "mistake" which will be straightened out after January 1.

The least the company can do is to respect seniority protection of its employees and agree to 40-hour week which would cause less hardship than the present rotation and layoff schedule.

At the same time, we must continue to tackle the wage freeze, inflation and an economy which seems to be leading us to unemployment and lower living standards.

# His Vines Have Tender Grapes

GE is holding open house in the Schenectady Works News for those employees who might feel the urge to bring their problems to its generous bosom.

The idea behind the "grapevine" is, of course, that GE employees don't need a union. They just have to write a letter to "Mother" Male.

Take the first letter in last week's issue. A salaried worker with 20 years service writes that he has been trying to get a merit increase from his supervisor for 12 months. "Mother" Male says the writer may now after 12 months "take a step" further. All by himself?

The next letter is from a worker who finds that the Works Cafeteria has "the poorest meals and the sandwiches are a disgrace." "Mother" Males answer: "it may be the atmosphere . . ."

### The GE Line

Why a union when one can get such answers from the Works Manager? A fellow plant manager, apparently not as seductive as our plant manager, put the company line very plainly in a letter to GE Employees in Taunton, Mass.

Said G. S. Berge in a letter dated November 17, 1951, "if you should consider joining the 40 percent of General Electric's employees who are not represented by any union you may want to keep in mind that

this 40 percent has paid no dues, yet has received all the benefits and all the pay increases."

FACT:

GE never gave a general wage increase until UE came along. It hired and fired at will. It paid no time and a half or double-time, no night shift bonus. There were no job classifications or uniform rates. It held back on paid holidays until 1947. It took a long and bitter fight, led by UE, to get what we got. Let's not forget that.

Returning to the "grapevine", "Mother" Male answers a correspondent who is upset about "queer looking insects in the plant" as follows:

" . . . there are, no doubt, other insects which appear from time to time in various spots favoring their growth. These should be killed as soon as seen."

May we add, that there have always been a few who favor the company soil of a company grapevine, a very few who would like to cultivate favor at the expense of those who work alongside them. There may even be a few who would like to return to the days of the company union when the company conducted the elections to the Works Council.

"Mother" Male's advice on the treatment of "queer insects" should not be applied to these people. Explain the score to them. They'll learn.



COME ON A MY HOUSE

## DEFENSE FUND IS SET UP

The UE 301 Executive Board voted to establish a local defense fund at its meeting last Monday. The fund is to be built by voluntary contributions of union members for the purpose of fighting the wage freeze, inflation, unfair taxation. It will be used to protect the union and the membership from raids and finance strike action when, and if, necessary.

The Local is seeking \$5 per member which can be paid in one dollar installments. The money will be collected by authorized stewards who will issue receipts.

All donations are to be kept in a separate bank account, a financial report will be issued each month.

## BIGGER THAN THE NATIONAL DEBT

Insurance companies deal in sums nearly as large as the Federal debt. Yet, the second largest of them all, Prudential, refuses to guarantee its striking insurance agents a minimum weekly wage of \$55.

(The amount of insurance in force is 234 billion dollars. The Federal debt is 257 billions.)

The AFL insurance agents union has charged Prudential with setting aside 5 million dollars to break the agents' strike. Yet, policyholders, according to the Prudential charter and the laws of the state, are supposed to have a voice and vote in how insurance funds are spent. Many will want to write what they think of using policy holders' funds for strike-breaking. The Schenectady address is 505 State St.

## UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO & MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA, LOCAL 301

— NOTICE —

# Election of Shop Stewards

In accordance with the Constitution, Art. XVI, Section B, election of Shop Stewards will be conducted in all groups.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1951**

The elections will be conducted during the lunch hour on all three shifts, beginning Tuesday morning, December 18, and concluding 7 o'clock Wednesday morning, December 19th, (except where a group may be notified of special arrangements)

### REQUIREMENTS FOR VOTING:

● Presentation of either the check stub showing December check-off or dues book with December dues paid.

The above is notice to all members to be ready for the election during their lunch hour on December 18th.

ELECTION COMMITTEE, LOCAL 301  
JOHN SACOCCIO, Chairman  
MICHAEL RAKVICA, Secretary