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Letter on Behalf of International Union of Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF
HON. WILLIAM J. GREEN, JR.

OF PENNSYLVANIA
 IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 Monday, January 16, 1950

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, under
 leave to extend my remarks in the REC-
 ORD, I include the following letter:

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ELECTRICAL,
 RADIO AND MACHINE WORKERS,
 Washington, D. C., January 14, 1950.
 Hon. WILLIAM J. GREEN,
 House of Representatives,
 Washington, D. C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN GREEN: I am address-
 ing this letter to you on behalf of the Inter-
 national Union of Electrical, Radio and Ma-
 chine Workers, CIO, a labor organization
 which was chartered by the CIO last Novem-
 ber 2, following expulsion of the Communist-
 dominated United Electrical, Radio and Ma-
 chine Workers.

We wish to bring to your attention an ex-
 ceedingly ominous situation in our industry
 which we believe not only menaces demo-
 cratic American trade unionism, but also in-
 volves grave questions of national security
 and defense.

The IUE-CIO is now engaged in a crucial
 Nation-wide contest with the UE over the
 right to represent more than a half-million
 men and women in our industry. Sometime
 in the near future that contest will culmi-
 nate in a series of representation elections
 conducted by the National Labor Relations
 Board.

We of the IUE-CIO have bent every effort
 toward the earliest possible settlement of
 this representation question through NLRB
 elections, because: (1) We are confident that
 we represent the overwhelming majority of
 workers in the electrical, radio, and ma-
 chine industry; and (2) we are anxious that
 industrial stability be restored in this im-
 portant field of production through the es-
 tablishment of sound collective bargaining
 relations.

There have, however, been numerous ob-
 stacles placed in the way of a swift and ami-
 cable settlement of the representation issue.
 Most of these obstacles have been erected by
 UE in a deliberate and vicious campaign to
 postpone—and even prevent, if possible—
 the holding of elections. And in this cam-
 paign, as we shall show, certain sections of
 management, particularly the General Elec-
 tric Co., have given active assistance to the
 discredited Communist-led minority repre-
 sented by UE.

It would require a small volume to describe
 to you the insidious legal maneuverings and
 harassments employed by UE to block reso-
 lution of the representation question. In

almost every city in the country where the
 electrical, radio, and machine industry is
 organized, UE has filed law suits, petitions for
 injunction and other court actions to pre-
 vent the membership from making their own
 democratic determination of their collective-
 bargaining agent. Suits to tie up union
 funds, suits to prevent use of our union's
 name, suits to prohibit union meetings, suits
 to force solvent local unions into bank-
 ruptcy—all have been commonplace. The
 deluge of disruptive judicial jockeying has
 spared no one; even the NLRB itself was sued
 for \$100,000 by UE. Here again we claim that
 the position taken by management in this dis-
 pute has abetted and encouraged the UE in
 its prolonged legal wrangling.

We would like to emphasize as strongly as
 we can that this is definitely not a common
 jurisdictional squabble between two labor
 groups. This is a fundamental fight—which
 has long since passed from the cold-war to
 the hot-war stage—between two diametri-
 cally opposed concepts that affect the entire
 United States labor movement and, through
 it, the entire economy. It is a fight to the
 finish between democratic American trade
 unionism and the attempts of the Kremlin
 to preserve the UE as a mass base for the ex-
 pression of Soviet foreign policy in this coun-
 try. It is a fight, in one of the Nation's most
 critical industries, between loyalty to tradi-
 tional American ideals and the menace to
 national security represented in a type of
 union leadership whose only loyalty is to a
 totalitarian foreign power. It is for these
 reasons that we have become increasingly
 apprehensive over the role that management
 is playing in offering aid and comfort to these
 implacable enemies of American liberties.

That the UE is Communist-led and Com-
 munist-dominated and that under this
 leadership it represents a direct threat to our
 national security has been recognized time
 and again by congressional committees and
 the Atomic Energy Commission among others.
 The accumulative evidence is overwhelming
 that in this "sensitive" industry, UE's leader-
 ship is more than 90 percent Communist or
 pro-Communist. The irrefutable truth of
 this was attested by the Atomic Energy Com-
 mission when it completely outlawed the UE
 as collective-bargaining representative for
 any workers employed on classified or secret
 atomic energy projects.

A subcommittee of the House Labor Com-
 mittee, headed by Representative Charles J.
 Kersten, made a report on December 14,
 1948, following an intensive investigation
 into UE. The report, which recommended
 contempt citations against 15 UE leaders in-
 cluding Leo Jandreau, the top Communist
 leader of UE in Schenectady and upstate New
 York, proposed several measures for tighten-
 ing security regulations, all of which were
 clearly aimed at the threat to national safety
 represented by UE. The subcommittee de-
 clared that Communists have seized control
 of the UE's "national office, the executive
 board, the paid staff, the union newspaper
 and a number of its districts and locals."

Further, the subcommittee concluded:
 "The hold of the Communists on America's
 electrical industry is the hold of Communist

Russia. It is communism in action—now
 It is not a historical danger; it is a present
 danger."

This evidence of UE's flagrant subservience
 to Communist Party dictates and Kremlin
 control has, as I say, been documented re-
 peatedly by other congressional and non-
 congressional groups. Consequently this in-
 formation has been fully available to the
 employers in our industry such as General
 Electric.

Therefore, at no time could General Elec-
 tric plead ignorance of the subversive char-
 acter of the organization with which it was
 bargaining.

In my testimony before the Kersten sub-
 committee on September 2, 1948, I charged
 under oath that management in the elec-
 trical, radio, and machine industry has been
 guilty of aiding the Communist forces and
 discriminating against the anti-Communist
 elements among rank-and-file employees. I
 emphasized that "It has been my whole ex-
 perience that the employers find it easier to
 get along with Communists because the
 Communists cannot be aggressive in adjust-
 ment of a grievance." In addition, I pointed
 out—giving the names of individuals—that
 in some instances management has even dis-
 charged known anti-Communists from their
 jobs at the behest of UE.

In the face of such evidence presented to
 the subcommittee, Congressman Kersten,
 not once, but twice, declared that the collu-
 sive arrangements between management and
 the Communist-controlled UE should be in-
 vestigated.

At one point Congressman Kersten as-
 serted, "Certainly if it is true that any man-
 agement is so stupid as to cooperate with
 Communists, the light of day should be
 thrown on that situation as well as on any
 other situation where people are cooperat-
 ing with the Communists. If there is coop-
 eration on the management side, that should
 be brought out, too. I can see where it is
 probably even more dangerous where there
 is cooperation between management and the
 Communists."

On the same theme, Representative CAR-
 ROLL D. KEARNS, who is still a member of the
 House Labor Committee, remarked, "I think
 the industry should be called upon to ex-
 plain that type of action within their own
 industry, regardless of what it may be, if
 they are following procedures of that kind."
 Other members of the committee expressed
 similar sentiments.

I cite these facts for the reason that al-
 though these hearings were held in Septem-
 ber and October 1948, there has been no
 move of any kind to investigate charges of
 collusion between management and the to-
 talitarian left. We in IUE-CIO believe it is
 a fine thing, and important, for Congress to
 be concerned about the Communist occupa-
 tion of China and Formosa, about the con-
 tainment of Soviet expansion in Europe, and
 the necessity of spending billions of dollars
 in Marshall plan funds to repel the threat of
 spreading bolshevism. But we also believe
 that Congress could wisely turn its eyes
 homeward toward the even greater danger

constituted by opportunistic management collaborating with the Communists. It is the clear and immediate duty of Congress to investigate these charges; to ascertain, for example, whether management's patronage of Communist-controlled unions is dictated in any way by advantageous contracts the companies may hold with Amtorg, the Soviet trade agency. National security demands that the whole field of this question be publicly explored and exposed.

In this period of cold war with the world threatened by a new totalitarian wave, there can be no such thing as neutrality, particularly on the part of giant corporations whose functioning determines both the peacetime health and wartime strength of our economy. Yet management, General Electric conspicuously, pretends to a position of impartiality in this struggle which is concretely reflected in the current dispute in its plants between IUE and UE.

There is ample evidence that GE's impartiality is not only a pose and a pretense but that it also disguises a definite pattern of collusion with the Communist UE. Let me offer just one example, a very recent one.

Last week, while IUE was preparing its campaign for the forthcoming NLRB elections in General Electric, more than 10,000 dues check-off cards were circulated through the vast GE plant in Schenectady, N. Y. The circulation and signing of several thousands of these cards was accomplished by UE within the space of a single day. We know that such an enormous undertaking as this could never have been accomplished without flagrant, illegal collusion between GE and UE, between foremen and other management representatives and leaders of the Communist minority.

We know that men were threatened with loss of their jobs, told that they would lose precious seniority, and deceived with the argument that by signing the cards the workers would only be speeding up the date of the NLRB elections. Foremen and other management representatives facilitated the distribution of these cards and actively promoted the threats and lies circulated by the UE representatives.

Such seemingly eccentric behavior by management becomes much more understandable when it is viewed against the background of the company's policies in the past. L. M. Boulware, GE's vice president in charge of labor relations, has for example, inserted full-page ads in daily newspapers titled "A Plague On Both Your Houses." This truly amazing statement by a major American corporation professed to find no difference between democratic American unionism and the revolutionary arm of the Kremlin in the United States which is dedicated to the overthrow of our form of government.

These advertisements, read by millions of Americans, expressed as GE's opinion:

"While frequently the leader and his associates on one side are termed left-wingers, and the leader and his associates are—wrongfully in our opinion, regarded as right wingers, we believe they have in the end the same objectives. We believe that what each side advocates would result in the long run in substantially the same thing for our employees, our company, and our country. In our opinion, whether they realize it or not, both are collectivists—believers in government being big and in people being little."

GE's attitude toward communistic control of its employees in wartime was disclosed when GE President Charles E. Wilson remarked during a session of the War Labor Board, "Maties and Emspak may be Communists but they are very easy to work with. It's just like having a company union and having the workers pay for it."

Time and again it has been indicated that GE would like to see the left and the right destroy each other or else bleed each other

to such a point of weakness that collective bargaining would be reduced to the level of company unionism.

When we learned last week of GE's complicity with the Communist-led UE in the circulation of the 10,000 check-off cards through the Schenectady plant, we promptly sent the following telegram to GE President Wilson:

"The International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, CIO, has learned that General Electric Company has entered into a collusive deal with Leo Jandreau of Local 301, UE, at Schenectady, N. Y., under which that local would be paid over check-off monies in return for turning in new signed check-off cards.

"This was done right in the plants, with UE working with the aid and abettance of management.

"This came at a time when an application for an election was pending with the National Labor Relations Board and at a time when GE has a suit pending in the Federal court of New York covering the Schenectady plant seeking a determination as to whether the dues should go to IUE-CIO or to the UE, and when GE has been proclaiming that it is impartial.

"This action by GE is a clear act of favoritism and a flagrant violation of the law. Such violation can be cleared only if GE extends the same privilege to IUE.

"Will GE agree to provide IUE-CIO with the same consideration in similar situations as with UE in Schenectady regarding the check-off or is this agreement confined to financing the Communist-controlled UE 301?

"We demand an explanation and an answer."

As of this date we have received no reply. If and when we do receive a reply we will be glad to forward a copy to you for your information. Possibly, however, you may wish to obtain a direct answer from General Electric to our charges of favoritism and violation of the law on behalf of UE-CP.

No objective observer of the labor scene in America today can escape the compelling fact that it is to management's temporary advantage to deal with Communist-led unions. Because they are the objects of public antipathy, because they have lost retrievable ground numerically and financially, Communist "union leaders" today are willing to make any sort of deal, any sort of concessions to maintain their dwindling power over sections of American labor. We are prepared to show the extent to which management has found this situation immensely to its liking because the contracts it has been able to impose are frequently spineless and regressive. In some instances Communist "union leaders," to the intense satisfaction of management, have agreed to accept wage cuts for their members. But in nearly every case pay raises, pension plans, and other contract improvements have been measurably weaker where the union has had Communist leadership. An instance in point is UE's negotiations with General Electric over the entire year of 1949. UE's absurdly vague proposal of a "\$500 package" increase, unprecedented in the history of American labor's contract demands, was borne out of the weakness, confusion, and disunity that has corrupted UE's strength in recent years. Management, of course, has simply laughed at the "\$500 package" idea, and as a result workers in the electrical, radio, and machine industry have gone without any wage increase, pension plan, or other benefits while hundreds of thousands of auto and steel workers have won new and precedent-setting contract improvements.

When these facts are considered coolly and calmly, it can surprise none that GE publicly proclaims a policy of "plague on both your houses." It is to GE's very substantial advantage to give surreptitious aid to the Com-

munist-led minority, to facilitate the circulation of dues check-off cards, and to compound the confusion of representation as much as possible.

But we in IUE-CIO hold the conviction that the masters of great corporate wealth and power in this country have a sacred responsibility to the American people and to American democratic principles. They must not be permitted, for purposes of financial expediency, to assume a fake pose of "impartiality" to cloak a policy which nourishes a fifth column in America.

The Nation has been exceedingly generous to the managers of this industry. Their profits have been enormous, their return on investments huge. They have benefited greatly by large tax rebates and through cost-plus contracts during the war. In numerous instances where companies, such as General Electric, have been found guilty of international cartel conspiracies or violation of the Sherman anti-trust law, they have escaped with astonishingly light penalties.

General Electric, for example, increased its net profits from \$40,900,000 in 1939 to \$131,600,000 in 1948, an increase of 222 percent. Profits after taxes rose from 3.5 percent in 1943 to 5.7 percent in 1946, to 7.6 percent in 1947, and 8.1 percent in 1948. GE's annual dividend rate of \$1.40 per share in 1945 jumped to \$2 in the third quarter of 1948 and to \$2.50 in the fourth quarter of 1949. All other financial statistics involving this company provide proof of GE's growing power and profitability.

These facts offer additional reasons why GE's employees and the American public have a right to expect a degree of responsibility and devotion to democratic ideals that is not reflected in the company's policy of cooperation with a totalitarian "labor" organization.

It has long been established that UE's leaders are interested only in the proposition of proving that democracy cannot work. If in that undertaking they are given haven and sustenance by General Electric and other companies, the crime is an outrageous offense against American principles and national security.

For our part, we in IUE-CIO are wholly convinced that the employees of General Electric and the rest of the industry do not want to remain in a Communist-led union. Within the short space of 2½ months, more than 250,000 workers in the electrical, radio, and machine industry have given their blunt answer to the Communist control of UE by taking membership in 150 chartered local unions of the IUE-CIO. The UE will not win the right to represent the GE workers in Schenectady or in any other plant through default by the IUE. To retain control over the economic lives of thousands of workers in this industry, the Communists need the support of inaction or reaction on the part of management.

For these and other reasons we strongly urge you to propose an immediate investigation by the proper committee of Congress into the activities and policies of some sections of industrial management in providing collusive support and encouragement to totalitarian and anti-democratic elements that have infiltrated into American trade-unionism.

We cannot, of course, speak for GE or other corporations. We ask for your assistance in requiring them to speak for themselves on this grave question.

Please accept our assurance that the IUE-CIO, its leaders and representatives, will give the utmost cooperation to any congressional inquiry into this question, and will gladly make available the evidence accumulated over many years of painful experience with this problem.

Sincerely yours,
JAMES B. CAREY,
Chairman, Administrative Committee.

IUE-CIO

"IN UNION THERE IS STRENGTH"

ASKS

A QUESTION OF UE

ARE YOU, OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN, A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY ?

This is the question Congressional investigation committees are asking in hearings throughout the country.

THE BEST ANSWER IS THE TRUTH !

But the business agent of UE Local 301 has advised his Executive Board members to use their constitutional right and refuse to answer on the grounds that they might incriminate themselves. Such advise was given at a secret session of the board not to long ago. It was given because Congress has announced that an investigation of Communism in Schenectady has been planned.

ONLY THOSE WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY - - WHO HAVE PLEDGED THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO A FOREIGN WAY OF THINKING - - NEED TO REFUSE TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION.

Right-thinking Americans have no fear of such investigation. Right-thinking Americans can answer honestly without fear of incriminating themselves.

Honest union leaders are convinced that they owe it to their members to answer such questions truthfully. Union members have the right to know whether their leaders have any affiliation with the Communist movement.

BUT THE BUSINESS AGENT OF UE LOCAL 301 HAS GIVEN DIFFERENT ADVISE TO MEMBERS OF HIS EXECUTIVE BOARD !

Now each member of the board must decide for himself whether or not to answer the question. Those who are members of the Communist Party will refuse to answer the question as all Communists do.

But those who are not members of the Communist Party should think twice before refusing to answer . . .

REFUSAL TO ANSWER IS AN ADMISSION OF GUILT !

GE WORKERS WANT NO PART OF AN ORGANIZATION THAT CARRIES THE RED MARK OF COMMUNISM. UE MANAGED TO FOOL SCHENECTADY GE WORKERS BEFORE - - BUT THIS TIME UE HAS GONE TOO FAR. GE WORKERS WANT A UNION THAT NEGOTIATES WAGE INCREASES - - A UNION LIKE IUE-CIO . . . NOT AN ORGANIZATION THAT SPENDS ITS TIME NEGOTIATING WAYS TO AVOID ANSWERING QUESTIONS WHICH EVERY GOOD AMERICAN SHOULD WANT TO ANSWER !

UE HAS FOOLED US LONG ENOUGH - - BUT ITS RECORD CONDEMNS UE !

SIGN YOUR IUE-CIO APPLICATION CARD TODAY FOR AN EARLY NLRB ELECTION !

ATTACHED TO TODAY'S BULLETIN IS A COPY OF THE BULLETIN IUE-CIO DISTRIBUTED LAST THURSDAY, WHEN GE MANAGEMENT REFUSED IUE-CIO THE RIGHT TO DISTRIBUTE LITERATURE ON COMPANY PROPERTY. WE URGE THAT YOU READ IT, IF YOU DID NOT SEE A COPY LAST WEEK.