

ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

THE VOICE OF LOCAL 301 - - - U. E. R. & M. W. A. - - - C. I. O.

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SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

October 28, 1949

Continued Short Time Protested by Union

Local 301 is fighting against the loss of time being experienced by workers in some divisions. It appears that in many cases the division supervision gives the steel strike as the cause of lack of work in order to avoid the adjustment of force needed to provide 40 hours of work per week.

The actual effect of the steel shortage on employment at the Schenectady plant, according to information given to the union by GE Thursday of last week, is expected by the company to be as follows:

By next Thursday, Nov. 3, there will be about 300 out of work because of the shortage.

By the middle of November the figure will rise to 800.

By the end of November, if the steel shortage continues, the figure will be 3,000.

These figures represent the company's estimate of the number expected to be out on "rotation" at one time.

Local 301 has protested that in several of the major divisions, including Turbine, many workers have been put on short time while groups continue to work considerable overtime. In parts of the plant some workers are working seven days.

Christmas Party For 301 Children

Plans for the annual 301 Christmas party for children of union members were approved by the membership meeting this week.

The Activities Committee is arranging for entertainment, refreshments and distribution of gifts by Santa Claus Dec. 10 and 11 at Mont Pleasant High School. There will be a party each afternoon and if applications for the free tickets are heavy enough there will be morning parties too.

Donation books were distributed to shop stewards this week for contributions in the shops to finance the Christmas celebration. The more donation books are sold the more fun there will be for Local 301 members' children.



"Now here is a touching message on the good jobs at GE, with a layoff notice printed on the other side."

GEB Calls on All Locals to Assist Striking Steel Workers and Miners

The General Executive Board of UE voted Sunday that a national UE fund be raised to assist the striking steel workers and miners. A statement by the GEB charged the coal and steel trusts with "spearheading the drive of Big Business to destroy unions in the United States."

Telegrams were sent by the GEB to all UE locals and districts calling upon them to give all possible aid to the steel and mine strikes.

"The industrial magnates of the coal and steel trusts are at this moment spearheading the drive of Big Business to destroy unions in the United States," the GEB statement declared.

"What the employers began with the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act they are now trying to accomplish by direct attacks upon the unions and their membership.

"Nearly a million steel workers

and coal miners are striking for their union demands. Their employers are not in the fight only to save the cost of modest benefits to the coal and steel workers, but to starve out the steel workers and the coal miners, to break them up and smash their unions.

"It is vitally important to all labor that the attacks of the employers upon the steel workers and the coal miners be defeated."

Stewards to Meet

The monthly meeting of Local 301 shop stewards will be at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 1, at the union hall.

Pensioners' Meeting

The UE-301 Pension Organization will meet at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 2, at the union hall.

GE Proposal Would Cost About 2 Cents

UE negotiators met at length with the GE committee in New York this week in an effort to get GE to improve upon its 2 and 1/10 cents pension and insurance proposal.

At the time this paper went to press, there was no indication that the company was willing to go beyond its first offer, made after months of bargaining.

The 301 membership met last night to act on the offer and consider what to do. A special issue of this paper summarizing the offer was issued yesterday.

The company's publicity about the offer said that the whole pension and insurance program meant a "current cost far above the total 10c being widely discussed now as a benchmark."

GE Arithmetic

The company arrived at this figure by including all existing plans. The true added cost of the proposed improved plan would amount to two cents per hour per worker for insurance, and 1/10 of a cent for a slight improvement in pensions for those retiring between now and Dec. 31, 1950. There would be an added cost to the worker of about one cent per hour for insurance.

Analysis by UE Negotiators

The national GE negotiating committee of UE told the company the offer was not acceptable. The committee's report to locals brought out that the offer meant:

- No wage increase;
- No reduction in work week;
- An unsatisfactory pension and sickness plan;
- No further negotiation on these or any other issues until Dec. 31, 1950.

Only Temporary Guarantee

The company made it clear that it would guarantee its plan only until Dec. 31, 1950, after which it would consider how it would relate it to any new Social Security law. This raises the question whether the company

(Continued on Page 2)

301 Protests Rules Under Disability Law

Marshall Perlin, 301 attorney, protested in behalf of UE Oct. 20 at a hearing at the Capitol, Albany, against rules proposed for administering the state's new disability benefits law. He also repeated the union's criticisms of the law itself as "a grab for the insurance companies" and an injustice to workers.

Until the law can be repealed and replaced by real disability benefits legislation, he declared, the state should at least interpret the law, as far as possible, to protect the interests of workers. He pointed out ways in which the regulations overlook unions and encourage workers to make individual agreements with their employers.

The Amalgamated Clothing Workers was the only other CIO union which protested the regulations at the hearing. The name of Harold Garno, State CIO secretary-treasurer, was on the list of scheduled speakers but Garno did not appear.

AFL speakers were Harold Hanover, state secretary-treasurer, and representatives of the International Longshoremen's Association and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

The state AFL had approved the Dewey bill but objected to some of the proposed rules.

The advisory board which drew up the regulations did not contain a representative of any CIO union. But on the board which proposed rules for insurance plans at various plants is A. D. Marshall, secretary of the General Electric Company and an officer, named by the company, of the Mutual Benefit Association at the Schenectady plant.

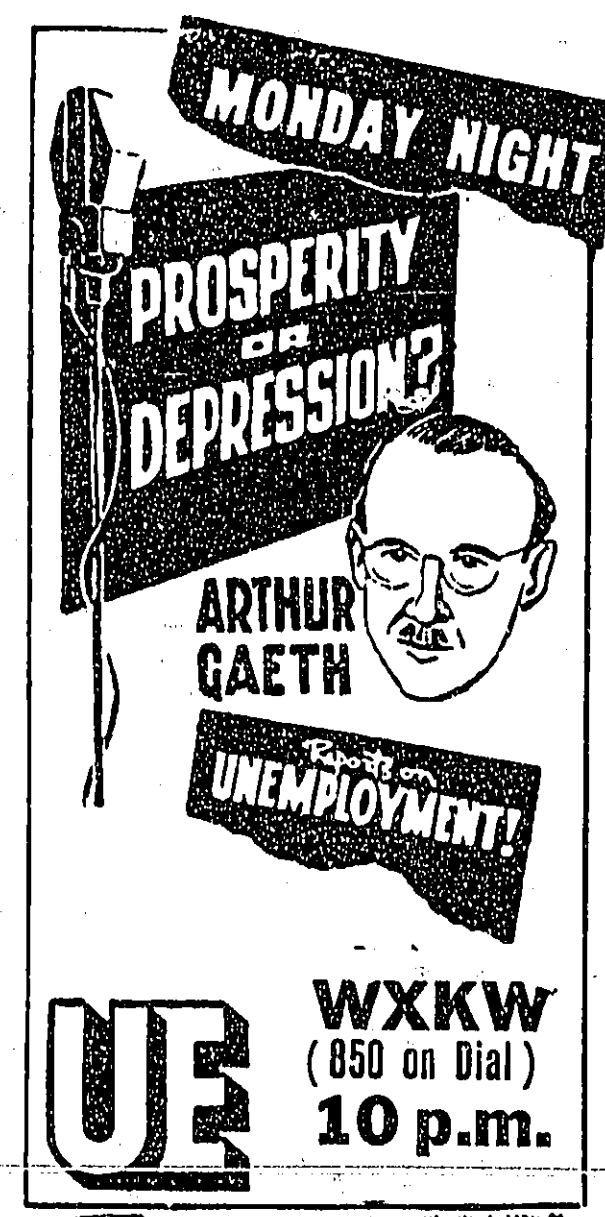
Win 10 Cent Raise

Victory in a two-week strike brought a wage increase of ten cents an hour to workers at Rheem Co., members of UE Local 520 in Hamilton, Canada. They also won two more paid holidays, bringing the total to eight, and group insurance.

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Cooperation Needed On Parking Problems

Many complaints have been made to the union office by workers who can't find places to park their cars at the GE plant.

A check-up made by the company, when the union took up these complaints about parking conditions, showed that many workers are making it hard for others to park by leaving their cars in lots where they weren't assigned.

The GE patrol department is conducting a drive against people who violate the parking rules or use the wrong lots. Some severe penalties have been handed out. The way to avoid penalties and to cooperate with other workers in solving the parking problems is to observe the parking rules and to park where assigned.

GE Proposal

(Continued from Page 1)

wants to do again what it did in 1936, when it reduced pension benefits by the amount of old age benefits under the first Social Security laws.

The Local 301 Executive Board Monday unanimously voted to send a wire to George H. Pfeif, head GE negotiator, telling him the offer was ridiculous and unacceptable, and calling on him to bargain in good faith.

The GE offer stands in sharp contrast to the offer made by RCA after a strike vote and reported in last week's paper. That offer carried substantial gains and provided for a reopening on economic issues after April 1, 1950.

Heavy Strike Vote At Canada GE Plant

Workers at the Peterboro GE plant, Ontario, Canada, voted last week overwhelmingly in favor of striking unless the Canadian GE changes its "arrogant and disinterested attitude" and starts genuine bargaining in contract negotiations. There were 1,746 votes in favor of authorizing the strike action and 289 against.

Results of strike votes at other Canadian GE plants had not been reported when this week's EU News went to press.

In their strike vote, the Peterboro workers served notice the union will no longer stand for "speed-up, price and wage cutting, discriminatory transfers and layoffs."

Fund Being Collected For Seriously Ill Boy

A collection is being made in Building 85 to help provide necessary medical treatment at the Lahey Clinic in Boston for Melvin Matthews, 18 year old son of Everett Matthews, a 301 member and former shop steward in the building. The boy has been bed-ridden since last spring and suffers from a serious liver ailment. A younger brother has been at Sunnyview Hospital for four years recovering from infantile paralysis.

Anyone wishing to donate to the fund for Melvin Matthews should contact Shop Steward Thomas J. Callahan in 85.

Remarkable Reasoning

The first and major demand of the United Steelworkers was for a general wage increase in 1949.

President Truman's Fact Finding Board turned this down 100 per cent, and brushed aside the fact that the steel companies' current profit rate (after taxes) is nearly \$800,000,000 a year.

This is the way the Fact Finding Board passed off the profit question:

"Their extraordinary reported profits of recent years have to be materially discounted."

Wage Increase

American Optical workers at Belleville, Canada, won a general wage increase of eight cents an hour in the settlement negotiated by UE Local 533 after a seven-month company stall. The increase is retroactive to February, bringing around \$100 in back pay to each worker. Classification increases brought the raise as high as 13 cents for some workers.

UE Request Renewed For Murray Meeting

The national UE leadership this week again asked CIO President Philip Murray for a meeting, before the national CIO convention, on the matters of CIO raids against UE and interference in the internal affairs of the union.

In a letter Oct. 12, Murray expressed unwillingness to meet with general officers of UE on these problems, as they had suggested.

The General Executive Board of UE replied to Murray Monday, declaring that the best interests of the CIO require that the questions be cleared up at the earliest possible date. The questions should be settled, the GEB pointed out, "so that the attention of the CIO convention can be directed toward finding the best means of achieving jobs, security and a better standard of living for the members of all CIO unions."

As Murray was to be in Cleveland all this week, preceding the opening of the national CIO convention there next Monday, the GEB asked him to set any time during the week for a conference in Cleveland with a special committee of the GEB.

Leo Jandreau of Local 301 will be one of the national UE delegates at the convention.

The 301 Executive Board on Monday voted to recommend that the membership meeting Thursday of this week elect three shop stewards to go to the Cleveland convention to observe the proceedings and report back to the membership. The Board recommended that the observers include a woman and that none of the observers be a member of the Executive Board.

The Board directed that mimeographed "extras" of the EU News be distributed at the plant next Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday to give 301 members day-to-day coverage of the convention.

Reclassification Won For Bldg. 16 Moveman

A material-moveman in Building 16, who was improperly classified as a truck driver, will get a one-step raise and about \$57 back pay through a grievance case initiated by Shop Steward Lauren Wilkins.

When Foreman H. A. Schneider resisted reclassifying the man, the case was taken to Building 41. The company referred the case back to Schneider and admitted that the worker had been classified wrong since February.

Unfinished Business



Board Asks Local 201 To Print Corrections

The 301 Executive Board has written to UE Local 201 at the GE plant at Lynn, Mass., protesting articles in the 201 newspaper slandering not only the officers of 301 but the board, shop stewards and membership. The 201 paper is edited by its business agent, Frederick M. Kelley, the Carey faction's unsuccessful candidate for national UE president.

The 301 board pointed out that the 201 paper printed "gross falsehoods" in connection with the 301 election and instruction of delegates to the national UE convention. The board asked that its letter correcting those falsehoods be printed prominently in the 201 paper.

The 301 letter stressed the importance of unity among GE locals during contract negotiations.

The vote approving the letter to Lynn was 25 to 3. Voting "Yes" were Hodges, Green, White, Jandreau, Brashear, Joseph Kernaghan for Brauneisen, Cognetta, Craft, Davis, Esposito, Friedlander, Kaminski, Kelly, Kuschel, La Bombard, Mangino, Mastriani, Pacelli, Phillips, Quirini, Scott, Sisto, Spears, Stewart and Villano. Voting "No" were Fiorillo, Watts and Bishop. Flanigan was absent because of illness. President Kriss, who presided, did not vote but asked to be recorded against the letter.

Savings of Workers Vanishing Quickly

The latest study of the distribution of liquid savings among families in the United States by the Federal Reserve Board shows that the savings of working people continue to dwindle while the wealthy add enormously to their wealth.

The average savings of skilled and semi-skilled workers' families fell from \$400 in 1947 to \$250 in 1948 and \$200 in 1949. The average savings of unskilled workers fell from \$50 in 1947 to nothing at all at present.

In 1947 it was reported that the wealthiest 10 per cent of the families held 77 per cent of all savings. It is estimated that in 1949 the wealthiest 10 per cent holds 85 per cent of all savings.

Win at Hertner

One hundred per cent solidarity of UE Local 785 members on the Hertner picket-line at Cleveland convinced the company to settle after only nine days of strike and also helped workers in four other Local 785 shops to break through for pay increases. Hertner workers won a five cent wage increase with a wage reopening and strengthened seniority provisions.

Unemployed Members

If you are laid off for lack of work, protect your unemployment insurance rights and your job rights at GE by coming to the Local 301 office, corner of Liberty St. and Erie Blvd., immediately.

Be sure to apply for unemployment insurance the day after you leave work.

Keep your union membership by paying 10 cents a month dues.

If your unemployment insurance checks are delayed,

If you have any grievance regarding your unemployment insurance,

If you have any relief or eviction problem,

Or if you have any problem due to being laid off,

Come to the union hall. The union will do its best to help you.

No Penny Pinching

Some of the large lobby outfits at Washington and their expenditure for the first three months of 1949 are as follows:

Committee for Constitution Government (pro-Taft-Hartley, etc) —\$149,066.

National Association of Electrical Companies—\$136,509.

General Electric Company—\$91,075.

National Association of Manufacturers—\$80,019.

U. S. Chamber of Commerce—\$28,000.

Awards for Injuries Obtained Through 301

Workmen's compensation awards won recently through the union for members against the General Electric Company include:

\$608 to Carmello Ferrara, sand blaster in Building 73, for a toe injury suffered last Dec. 21.

\$350 to Angelo Iacomini, boring mill helper in Bldg. 16, for a facial scar resulting from an accident in 1943.

\$300 to Alvin Houghton, Bldg. 49 milling machine operator, for a facial disfigurement suffered Jan. 14, 1948.

\$230 to Jesse Croxton for a facial scar resulting from an accident Jan. 4.

\$144 to Edward Harder, machinist helper in Bldg. 60, for an injury to his left middle finger last Dec. 9.

\$150 to Milton Van Vranken Bldg. 97, for a facial disfigurement incurred Dec. 11, 1936.

\$125 to Anthony Vernacchio, Bldg. 75 varnish maker, for a facial scar resulting from an accident Mar. 10.

Marshall Perlin, 301 attorney, handled the cases.

Monopolizing Freedom

