

Union Presses Fight For Unemployment Pay

The Schenectady office of the State Unemployment Insurance Office has brushed aside the mass of factual evidence presented by UE-301 that recent wholesale layoffs in Turbine and Motor and Generator were not made necessary by the AFL Steamfitters strike.

The Schenectady office notified 301 Wednesday that it will not budge from its earlier ruling that about 3,000 workers laid-off following the Steamfitters strike must wait seven weeks for unemployment insurance.

The union is arranging for another conference with Edward A. Corsi, state industrial commissioner, on the matter. At a meeting with Corsi last week it was agreed that specific facts concerning the lay-offs would be presented to the Schenectady Unemployment Insurance office by 301.

These facts were presented Thursday of last week by a 301 committee of Building 273 employees, consisting of President William J. Kelly; Executive Board Members William Stewart, Teddy Wheeler and Joe Alois, Shop Steward Jack Kilmer, Jack Roses and the 301 attorney, Marshall Perlin. GE was not represented, but stood on its earlier statement that the layoffs resulted from the strike.

The union group produced proof that at least 2,500 workers were laid off to suit the company's own production plans and as an excuse to move up the annual shutdown. Job by job, the union showed that groups of workers could have been continued without layoff.

In some cases foremen asked workers to come in, and then reversed orders at the direction of higher-ups. Many half-completed jobs were stopped abruptly.

When these facts were later brought to GE's attention, the company refused to change its stand, that the strike was the cause of the layoffs.

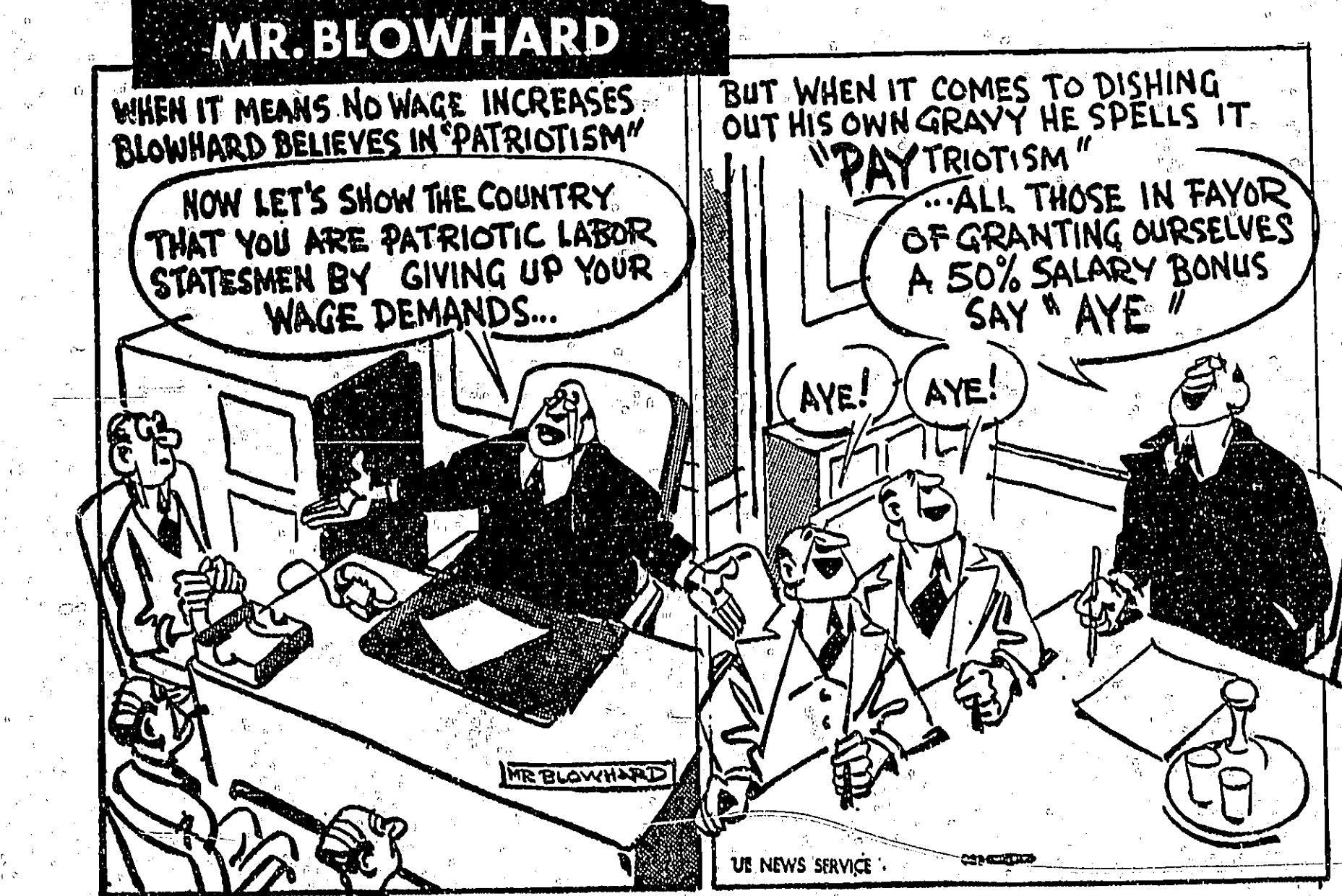
The Unemployment Insurance office chose to side with the company against the workers and to accept the GE statements at face value.

Large numbers of Turbine workers were notified to return to work next Monday by GE.

Toolmakers Have Jobs Due to UE Seniority

Three Class C toolmakers in Building 53, who have been rabid IAM supporters, were laid off this week.

They forgot their craft pride and the IAM policy of limiting



IUE's Kelley Rejects Raises for Lynn GE Crafts

That great "labor statesman", Fred Kelley of the IUE, tried to keep craftsmen at Lynn GE from getting the one-step increase of 5 cents or 5½ cents which was put into effect last week at Schenectady.

GE announced at Lynn what it earlier announced at Schenectady, —that it would give the raises to certain craft groups if there was no objection from any union concerned. UE Local 201, like UE Local 301, told the company it could go ahead with this partial correction of rates, and made it clear that the increase is inadequate and is only a step in eliminating inequities.

But Labor Statesman Kelley at Lynn called a few of his boys together and voted to refuse the increase. He told Lynn craftsmen they ought to object to having 5½ cents added to their wages (without strings attached) because the AFL steamfitters in Schenectady are on strike!

Evidently GE didn't take Kelley's grandstand play seriously, for newspapers reported the company as going ahead with the raises anyway.

While Kelley talked in Lynn about refusing the increases because of Schenectady steamfitters, the IUE in Schenectady announced it "accepted" the GE offer.

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Tonawanda Rem-Rand Workers Vote for UE

Workers of the Tonawanda and North Tonawanda Remington Rand plant beat off the raiding attempt of the CIO-IUE in a National Labor Relations Board election June 15, and voted to keep UE as bargaining agent.

The vote was 342 for UE; 295 for CIO-IUE; 37 no union and 3 challenges.

The Taft-Hartley NLRB gave the company union IUE a big break by postponing the election. Originally the election was scheduled for Feb. 28. IUE didn't even have enough members to get on the ballot then and didn't bother to attend the conference Feb. 14 at which election arrangements were made. But at the last minute, after sample ballots were printed and the list of voters agreed on, IUE rushed in with some alleged signatures on cards. The NLRB regional director refused to say how many cards there were or to let UE check on the signatures. He postponed the election at IUE request.

The delay gave IUE time to whip up a pressure campaign featuring the usual list of outsiders, certain clergymen, newspapers and imposed CIO organizers.

UE won the Benton Harbor, Mich., plant of Rem-Rand Feb. 1 in a NLRB election. IUE didn't have enough members to get on the ballot.

Intense religious pressure was brought to bear by IUE in the election at Iliou, N. Y. where IUE defeated UE early in April.

More UE Victories In NLRB Elections

Recent NLRB victories of UE include the vote at Union Switch and Signal, Swissvale, Pa., where UE polled 735 votes to 602 for IUE. This plant is owned by the same company that owns Westinghouse Airbrake and belongs to the same UE Local, 610, that negotiated the Westinghouse Airbrake pension, with its \$125 monthly minimum.

UE beat IUE also at both the Orange, N. J., and Morristown, N. J., plants of Monroe Calculator. The vote at Orange was 554 for UE; 388 for IUE and 16 for neither. At Morristown it was 56 for UE; 34 for IUE and 8 for neither.

UE won at Electric Storage Battery, Detroit, Mich., with 14 votes to 0 and at the San Francisco shop of the same company with 20 votes to 0.

Did You Know?

Consumers' credit as of February, 1950, in the United States stood at the enormous level of \$18.1 billion as compared to \$7.9 billion in 1939 and \$7.6 billion in 1929.

This gives you an idea of the way people are going into debt to buy automobiles, refrigerators, television sets and other things they can't afford to buy out of their current incomes or savings.

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THE VOICE OF LOCAL 301 . . . U. E. R. & M. W. A.

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GE Offers a Little to Take Away a Lot

UE 301 Board Protests New State Rule Making It Harder to Collect Jobless Pay

The UE 301 Executive Board voted Monday to protest a new state regulation which makes it harder for workers to get unemployment insurance.

The Schenectady Unemployment Insurance office notified 301 recently of the rule put into effect by order of Edward A. Corsi, state labor commissioner.

Under this procedure when a worker applies for unemployment insurance the unemployment insurance office immediately writes every employer for whom he has worked during the benefit year and asks the following questions.

1. Do you know of any reason why he shouldn't get unemployment insurance?
2. Do you have any sort of job for him?

The question about eligibility to jobless pay practically invites an employer to think up reasons against the state paying unemployment insurance benefits. The state carefully informs the employer of the deadline for filing objections, so there won't be any slip-up. There's no possible excuse, in any event, for contacting any employer except the last one. It isn't the state's job to egg on the employers into filing objections, rather than leaving it to the company to notify the state if it thinks a worker who was laid off or quit is not entitled to jobless pay.

The inquiry about having a job available will also cause delay, trouble and hardship to the unemployed. It can be used to downgrade them, or to cut them off entirely from jobless pay benefits. If a Class A worker is laid off, for instance, the company may say there is a Class C job available, or a job unrelated to his skills or experience. On the basis of the company's answer, the state might refuse him unemployment insurance.

Corsi's official news release on the regulation admitted it would tighten payment control. Apparently it was designed to appease the state legislators who staged an investigation after a few cases of

Sweeping Victories For UE at Sylvania

UE scored substantial victories over IUE at the two biggest plants of the Sylvania chain in NLRB elections last week.

Sylvania workers at Mill Hall, Pa., cast 918 votes for UE and 488 for IUE. At Emporium, Pa., the vote was 767 for UE and 660 for IUE.

Voting also took place at two small Sylvania plants last week, Kew Gardens, L. I., and Warren, Pa.

There will be a run-off election at Kew Gardens where the results were 67 votes for UE; 69 for IUE, 4 for no union and 2 challenges.

IUE won the election at Warren with 206 votes to 78 for UE. The plant at Warren has been under complete domination of the company-union IUE, and the company called a meeting on company property before the election. UE protested the election even before the voting took place.

Cash Awards

Cash prizes will be awarded to UE 301 members monthly as a feature of the union's dues collection drive. They will be picked by lot at the monthly membership meetings. Only members whose dues have been recorded as paid through the preceding month will be eligible to receive prizes. The plan was voted by the Executive Board Monday.

The first prize will be \$50; the second prize, \$25; the third prize, \$15, and the fourth, \$10.

Joint Membership, Stewards' Meeting

As a summer schedule, UE Local 301 membership meetings and stewards' meetings will be combined in July and in August. The Executive Board voted Monday to have the joint meetings.

The July membership and stewards' session will be at the union hall week after next.

Second shift stewards and members will meet after work Monday night July 10 (12:45 a.m. Tuesday, July 11).

First and third shift stewards and members will meet at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, July 11.

All members attending will be required to show their dues books with stamps showing they are in good standing.

The August meeting will be August 15.

fraudulent claims were discovered. The headlines and ballyhoo about frauds killed all chances of improving the unemployment insurance system this year. And the investigation kept people's attention also from the big fraud,—the huge rebates given to General Electric and other corporations.

\$6,820 Compensation Award for GE Worker

Workmen's compensation awards made recently to injured General Electric workers include \$6,820.80 to Albert Kozlowski. He has lost 65 per cent of the use of his left leg as the result of an accident Sept. 19, 1946.

Other awards made in cases also handled through Local 301 include: \$2,272 to Louis Ciarallo, Building 40 connector, for an injury to his right foot Feb. 8, 1949.

\$955 to Margaret Calkins, Bldg. 69 drill press operator, for an injury to her left index finger last Aug. 18.

\$720 to Arthur Herbert, Bldg. 42 turret lathe operator, for an injury to his right index finger last Sept. 29.

\$480 to Oliver White, Bldg. 273 saw operator, for an injury to his right middle finger last Sept. 14.

\$390 to Albert Hall, Bldg. 273 porter, for an injury to his right hand last Aug. 25.

Attempts to Cash in on IUE Split

General Electric negotiators were scheduled to complete this week the formal written statement of what they want GE workers to give up in return for the pension, insurance and 3 percent wage raise offer made by the company on Tuesday.

George Pfeif, head GE negotiator, on Wednesday delayed submitting proposals on some of the most serious contract changes demanded by the company. But it is clear that GE wants the right to take away from the workers a great deal more than the total value of the offer made Tuesday to the UE national negotiating committee.

Changes requested by the company would undermine the most important provisions won by GE workers in 14 years in UE—the provisions on seniority, piece work prices, wage rate negotiation, holidays, and grievance procedure and union activity. Details of the company's proposed changes on each point are given on page 3.

Many thousands of the workers here listened to Leo Jandreau's report, read by stewards and Executive Board members at lunch hour meetings Monday.

Comment was just about unanimous that the company's demands must be rejected firmly.

The company's offer on wages, pensions, etc., is summarized on page 2 of this paper. GE took full advantage of the sell-out patterns established by the Steel and Auto Workers and other CIO unions. Pfeif's letter to UE declared that the GE offer was "in

(Continued on page three)



Leo Jandreau

What GE Offers to UE

The following are the main provisions of the offer on economic issues handed by the General Electric Company to the UE national negotiating committee on Tuesday:

Wages

A general increase of 3 per cent, but not less than 4 cents per hour. To be added to day work rates. In the case of piece workers the 3 per cent, not less than 4 cents, to be figured on weekly earnings. Raise to be effective upon signing of contract.

Insurance

Group Life Insurance

Amount depending on straight time annual earnings, ranging from \$2,000 up and averaging about \$4,500.

After a man reaches the age of 65, or a woman 60, and has contributed to the old or new plan for 10 years, the amount is reduced down to one-third the average for 10 years. For those contributing for 5 to 10 years, the amount is reduced further, while for those with less than five years' payments the amount will be reduced to nothing.

Additional \$2,000 benefit for accidental death or dismemberment.

Sickness and Accident Insurance

(For illness or accident not caused by the job)—

Weekly benefits up to 26 weeks after the first week, ranging from \$22.50 to \$35 a week, (for the great majority of employees from \$27.50 to \$32.50).

Hospitalization

For employees only, not dependents. Up to \$10 a day, with maximum of \$700 for one illness.

Surgical Benefits

For employees only, not dependents. Maximum benefits fixed by schedule, with a top of \$175.

Hospitalization and surgical benefits to continue after retire-

ment if employee has 15 years' service and has contributed to new plan as long as eligible, but with a top limit of \$500 for ALL hospital and surgical benefits for all illnesses after age 65 for men or 60 for women.

Maternity benefits of \$100, with variations.

Payments by Workers

For the insurance program, both life and sickness, the employee will pay 50 cents a month, plus 60 cents a month for each \$1,000 of life insurance over the first \$1,500, up to age 55 for men or 50 for women. After this age the payment would be doubled, (60 cents more) on each \$1,000 of life insurance above \$1,500.

These add up to the following payments—Before age 55 for men or 50 for women, from 80 cents a month up, with an average of \$2.30. After age 55 for men or 50 for women—from \$1.10 a month up, with an average of \$4.10.

Employees would not have to make payments while ill or disabled, or after age 65 for men or 60 for women.

The company claims that it would have to pay twice as much as the employees for the plan.

The plan would give the company the right to make changes in it as it saw fit, to meet the requirements of state disability laws.

The plan would be administered entirely by the company. No dispute could be taken up as a grievance or to arbitration.

The company would continue MBA arrangements for dependents, but stop such arrangements for employees.

Pension Plan

The offer would continue the present contributory pension plan, with these changes:

Minimum Income

A man retiring at age 65 or a woman at 60, with 25 years or more service, would be guaranteed \$125 a month including Social Security, except that if the employee's average earnings during the last 10 years were less than \$250 a month, his minimum pension would be only one-half that average, but not less than \$100.

The minimum is reduced proportionately for employees with 15

to 25 years' service. There is no minimum under 15 years' service.

The minimum is reduced for employees retiring before the normal age, by 4 per cent for each year ahead of the normal age.

The minimum does not apply to disability pensions.

For employees retiring before age 60 for men or 55 for women, and who have 15 years' service, the additional payment up to age 65 is increased from the present \$30 a month to \$45 a month, but it is taken away entirely for those retiring with less than 15 years' service. Any such payments are figured in the guaranteed minimum, and not added to it.

The pension plan, like the proposed insurance plan, would be administered entirely by the company. No dispute under it could be taken up as a grievance or to arbitration.

Instead of collecting 2 per cent on the first \$3,000 in one year, and then 5 per cent above that, the new plan would apply the 2 per cent to the first \$3,000. This would reduce somewhat the amount of pensions for workers earning over \$3,000 a year.

As a condition of the offer, the company would have the right to negotiate changes in the plan if Social Security is changed otherwise than in the bill now pending in Congress, and if no agreement is reached the company could cancel the whole pension agreement.

Loan Plan

An employee laid-off or out ill could borrow on his pension plan payments up to \$300, using the payments as security, and with repayment by payroll deduction within two years after his return to work. Interest would be about 2 per cent.

Contract

The whole offer would depend on agreement on a five-year contract, reopenable once each year after 1950, by either side.

301 Committee Named To Aid Little League

The following committee to work with the Schenectady Little League was appointed by the UE 301 Executive Board Monday: James Cognetta, George Roode, Joseph Mangino, William Mastriani and Anthony Esposito.

Sale of donation tickets in the shops was recently authorized by the Board for the maintenance of the league's baseball field, used by boys, and future equipment.

Look Who's Talking

James B. Carey, Murray's appointed IUE-CIO chairman, was quoted by the newspapers as saying that GE's wage and pension offer was 18 months too late, that the pension plan was "far below proper standards," and that the five-year feature was bad.

No one will disagree with the criticism. But look who makes it.

James B. Carey must blame himself and his bosses in the top CIO leadership for all the things he complains of. Carey has spent the last 18 months disrupting GE negotiations. GE can hide behind the sell-out patterns established by Philip Murray and Walter Reuther in making its poor offer.

And the papers did not quote Carey as saying anything on the biggest issue, GE's demand that the contract be weakened badly in return for the wage and pension offer.

GE and Steamfitters Resume Bargaining

A meeting was to take place Wednesday (after this week's EU News went to press) between the striking AFL Steamfitters' Local 128 and the General Electric Company. It was expected that GE would give that union the same offer it gave UE Tuesday in New York City.

At a meeting of the Steamfitters, GE and the Davis labor disputes panel of the Atomic Energy Commission Friday of last week on the strike, GE said it was not ready and asked that the session be postponed.

The Steamfitters' membership meeting last Saturday voted to have another membership meeting immediately after the next conference with the company.

The company has called back nearly all Turbine workers, under its plan of shipping without final tests. Only a small group connected with final tests is still laid off.

When this week's EU News went to press, State Labor Commissioner Edward A. Corsi had not yet set a date for a second meeting with UE 301 on unemployment insurance for workers laid off following the steamfitters' strike. The Schenectady Unemployment Insurance office refused to reverse its ruling that the workers must wait seven weeks for jobless pay.

PAY YOUR DUES TO YOUR SHOP STEWARD

What GE Is Trying to Take Away

The following is a summary of the principal changes in the contract proposed by the General Electric Company:

Seniority

GE had not submitted its written proposal when this paper went to press. It has stated to the UE committee that it wants to change seniority (Art. XII) to provide that a laid-off worker may be required to take a job paying three steps less in his own division before he can exercise his seniority rights elsewhere in the works. This would mean, for example, that a Class A toolmaker could be required to take a B job in his division even though there are A men elsewhere with shorter service.

The company also wants to provide that foremen shall have full seniority rights on our jobs.

GE also proposes to rewrite Art. XI to omit entirely Section 1, which provides that when workers are laid-off, "every effort will be made to transfer them to related jobs of equal or higher value."

Wage Rates

GE has proposed that Art. VIII, Section 1, be eliminated entirely.

This section states that the local union can negotiate with the company on "any question which affects hourly rates, piece work rates, or salary rates of individuals or groups."

Removing this clause would take away the union's right to negotiate job rates, such as the craft rates, for example, as grievances.

George Pfeif's letter to UE submitting its economic proposals stated that the company would continue to make a "local check" of wage rates, and to make "such occasional local adjustment as may prove appropriate."

What this means, in the light of the proposed contract change, is that GE intends to consider job rate inequities by itself, without the union having the right to fight for such adjustments as grievances.

Piece Work

The key change demanded by GE is the removal of the last paragraph of Art. VIII, Section 5, paragraph (C). This provision of the old contract requires that upon a change of method "the new price will be set so that the operator's earnings on the new price will be the same as on the old price provided the effort is the same."

Removing this guarantee would

open the way to push piece workers' earnings down from their average earnings to the AER (anticipated earned rate). Most piece workers earn from 10 to 30 per cent above the AER.

The company now proposes to widen the opening for retiming by defining a change of method as including "materials, methods, processes and techniques used in manufacture." Where part of a job is to be retimed because of a change of method, the company wants this rule:

"Such part will be re-timed on the same basis that the original time study was made."

The company has often told us in 41 that the only time study basis is to enable the worker to make the AER, not average earnings. It seeks to establish that idea in the contract.

GE has proposed the following additional changes in piece work provisions to:

Make it more difficult to establish a standard price;

Establish the company's right to change or abolish temporary prices;

Limit the shop steward's right to observe a time study to cases where the price is disputed and is to be re-timed—in other words, only if the company agrees;

Declare that piece workers have no guarantee of piece work, and shall not receive average earnings in case of temporary transfer because "no production is available or needed on his regular job."

In brief, on every piece work issue which has come up in recent years, GE wants to revise the contract to make it impossible for the union to win, and to help the company cut earnings down.

Holidays

GE offers no improvement whatever, but wants an additional string on holiday pay, (Art. VI); namely that an employee will not receive holiday pay if he is told to work on a holiday, and does not come to work on that holiday.

Union Activity

To the present Art. IV on Discrimination and Coercion, GE proposes to add a provision that union membership or position "shall not

exempt such employees from Company rules, policies, and practices applicable to other employees performing similar work."

This opens the door to the making of rules to stop union activity, and give the company the chance to fire or otherwise punish any worker, whether leader or rank and filer, who engages in the slightest union activity other than on an immediate grievance.

Overtime

When this paper went to press, the company had not yet submitted its written proposal. But Pfeif said the company wants the right to compel a worker to work overtime whether he likes it or not.

Transfers

In Art. XI, GE wants to define a "related job," to cover experience only on the "immediately preceding job." This would mean that instead of a transferred worker's starting rate being based on all his past experience, only his very last job would count.

Grievances

This is one of the clauses on which GE delayed giving its complete proposal. But it already has asked for the following:

Set time limits on the union's filing of grievances;

Forbid arbitration of unsettled grievances if the company objects;

Limit shop stewards to one for every foreman, or 50 members, and limit Executive Board members in a Bldg. 41 meeting to 10 at one time. Local 301 has often found it desirable to have two shop stewards on different lines of work under one foreman. We have often found it necessary to bring the whole Executive Board into Bldg. 41 on important issues.

The company's proposals on this point show the intention to restrict the work of shop stewards and the operation of the union in representing GE workers.

Bldg. 85 "Section Night"

Workers of Building 85 will have a "Section Night" party tonight at 301 hall. Tickets are 50 cents.

10 Cent Increase

A 10 cent wage increase was negotiated by UE Local 406 for all employees of the Universal Corrugate Company at Linden, N. J.

Good News

In addition to the Sylvania victories (see separate story), UE has been winning recent NLRB elections in various parts of the country.

IUE-CIO was badly beaten at an election covering workers of the Meisner Manufacturing Company at Mt. Carmel, Ill. and Albion, Ill. UE Local 1110 polled 150 votes and IUE got 3 votes. The only reason IUE could even get on the ballot was that the company petitioned for an election, the way GE did.

UE trounced IUE at Waterman Waterbury in Minneapolis. The vote was 77 for UE and 2 for IUE.

Both in Detroit and in San Francisco, Exide depot workers voted unanimously for UE in spite of tremendous IUE-CIO pressure.

At Detroit the NLRB postponed the election in hopes that IUE could dig up the two cards needed to get on the ballot. Not a single worker would join IUE, however, so the Board finally had to drop it from the ballot. All 14 workers voted for UE.

In San Francisco all 20 employees voted UE. Again IUE couldn't get a single card signed, and failed to get on the ballot.

GE Negotiations

(Continued from page one) many important respects superior to current patterns elsewhere." Unquestionably the pension and insurance plan looks good alongside what the Auto and Steel unions accepted. But the offer is much too low to cover two years' negotiations, particularly in view of the company's continually climbing record profits.

The GE offer also contains very serious flaws. The company wants the right to cancel the pension plan in the event of future changes in the Social Security law. It wants the right to run the pension and insurance plans by itself, with the union having no right to take up grievances under the plan or take disputes to arbitration.

And the whole offer is conditioned on negotiation of a five-year contract, which could be opened once a year, but on wages only. It would destroy a big part of the old contract gains.

Jandreau's report pointed out that "the company intends to take full advantage of the split in GE workers' ranks achieved by the IUE-CIO. It is clear that GE workers are going to have to fight to preserve our contract gains and win the additional benefits to which we are entitled."

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