

ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

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

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More Jobs Lost In Past Week

Lay-offs, permanent and temporary, continued to hit small groups in spots in various parts of the plant during the past week.

In the Punch Press department, Buildings 15, 17, and 19, permanent lay-off notices were given to 18 men and five women last Friday. Some "rotation" is continuing, both in Punch Press and in the Tool Room in Building 17.

The company announced Tuesday that it planned to lay off 10 per cent of the 180 workers in Cable (Building 85).

In Building 109, Wire, about 30 men were told to take one week off during the next five weeks. There were lay-offs ranging from one day to a week for about 35 men and women in Buildings 59, 81, 89, and 285.

The company previously had announced it would lay off between 300 and 400 workers, mostly women, when it moves the small appliance control manufacture from Building 53 to a new plant in Morrison, Ill. Works Manager Lewis Male said the move would be made gradually within a year.

At a recent meeting of the 301 executive board with Male, he reviewed the expected employment situation for the next three months, and said he expected about 150 would lose their jobs each month. More recent announcements have made it appear that this figure might be too low. The board is considering another meeting with Male to review the subject.

13 More Stewards Make Honor Roll

Names of 13 shop stewards have been added to the honor roll for 100 per cent UE membership in their groups. They are:

Building 18—John P. Brauneisen, Earl T. Wilkinson, Joseph Kernaghan, W. F. Christman and John C. Myers.

Building 40—Rudy Voehringer, Robert Armstrong, Bernard Fasulo, Medric Guyette, George W. Bullis, William C. Benning, Frank Kania and Vincent Liburdi.

Is Your Shop 100% UE?

No Shadow of a Doubt!



Report on Public Officials' Refusal To Ask Repeal of Taft-Hartley Law

The following report of the Executive Committee, printed in slightly condensed form, was approved by unanimous vote of the Local 301 membership meeting this week.

"In accordance with the unanimous instructions of the last membership meeting, the Executive Board has approached the governing bodies of the County and City of Schenectady where our members live, asking them to memorialize Congress for repeal of the Taft-Hartley Law. This sort of action is in line with the best American tradition, and in doing so, governing bodies would be serving the most vital interests of all the people in their communities. Failure to take a stand, in effect, is supporting Taft-Hartley.

Political Evasions

"It has become crystal clear that the top commands of both major parties in Schenectady County have sent out instructions to all their respective members of the

city, town and county governing bodies that they must not offend the General Electric Company by siding with the people on the Taft-Hartley issue. So far we have met only with evasions on the flimsiest pretext.

"We must take note of the cheap piece of political deceit and evasion pulled by the Buhrmaster-Sherry clique in the statement read by Democratic Leader Hilliard at the City Council meeting Monday night. This statement tried to drag in the Congressional election of last fall as in some way excusing the Council Democrats for their refusal to take a stand now.

"The statement read by Hilliard grossly misrepresented the Com-

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GE Speed-up And Lay-off Plan Stopped

The operation of GE's ideas on piece work, speed-up and lay-offs was given in a nutshell to a group of 16 workers in the Porcelain division, Building 68, this week. It convinced the group to insist on remaining day workers.

Following a grievance meeting this week, the Works Manager's office agreed to drop the piece work plan for the present.

The group is known as the tunnel kiln car loading gang. They have varying day work job rates. They have been loading one car per worker in eight hours on an average.

Since December Porcelain supervision has been making method studies and time studies, and telling the group they would be put on piece work and earn more money.

Attempted Speed-up

Supervision claimed they had worked out "changes of methods and procedures", but the men say this is window-dressing only. Then came the proposed prices. They were based on AER's (anticipated earning rate) of one step (4 to 5 cents) an hour more than the respective day work job rates, even though GE says its AER's include an incentive factor of three steps above the day rate. The prices showed that to make this extra 5 cents an hour the group must load on the average one-and-a-half car per day per worker. Fifty per cent more work for 4 or 5 cents an hour.

Lay-offs Announced

And at the same time as the prices were announced, supervision announced that six men in the group would be laid-off, for 10 would be enough when the new system took effect. Of course, Building 41 claimed the group was too large anyway.

As the result of union action, both the new system and the lay-off notices were held up, and then cancelled entirely. Shop Steward Ernest Costanzo and Board Member Henry Kaminski told the com-

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Report on Officials

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gressional election question. The truth of the matter is that Local 301 leaders made strenuous effort to have the Democratic Party put up a winning candidate against Congressman Kearney. Not just the executive board, but the membership of Local 301, was compelled to put up its own candidate in the Democratic primary and ALP when it became evident that the Buhrmaster-Sherry clique was engaged in a fake fight designed to insure the reelection of Congressman Kearney. The Schenectady Democratic Party clique served General Electric then, as it is serving GE now, by ducking the issue.

"Evidently the Buhrmaster-Sherry clique, not representing the rank-and-file of the Democratic Party, made a political football of the repeal of Taft-Hartley, an issue affecting the entire community and an issue on which all our members agree regardless of their divergent political views."

Two Visits to Common Council

The report pointed-out that Local 301 delegations visited the City Council twice and that both times the Council ducked the issue. In contrast, the Common Council of Buffalo, composed of eight Democrats and seven Republicans, unanimously passed resolutions for Taft-Hartley repeal.

The Rotterdam Board avoided the question by unanimously referring it to the Association of Towns of Schenectady County. The 301 report declared that this "amounts to voting to support Taft-Hartley since the outlying towns are dominated by reactionary machines."

Supervisors Hedge

In the County Board of Supervisors the question was referred to the Ways and Means Committee.

"We regret to say that among the officials who participated in all this evasion were men supported for election by this union, and members of this union," the report stated.

"These members did not speak for the people. They acted in behalf of their own interests."

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CONGRESSMAN DRIPP BY YOMEN



"How can I prove that wages are responsible for high living costs?"

Rotterdam Board Ducks Vote on Taft-Hartley

A committee from Local 301 appeared at the Rotterdam town board meeting April 14 to ask that the body memorialize Congress to repeal the Taft-Hartley law and reinstate the Wagner act. Appearing for the union were William Mastriani, Executive Board member, Shop Stewards Benjamin Gabriele of Building 40, Anthony Campriello, Bldg. 52, and Marshall White, Bldg. 13-A and the 301 attorney, Marshall Perlin.

The town board voted unanimously not to take action on the matter but to take the question before a special meeting of the Schenectady County Towns' association.

Action Program

The report also: Condemned the City Council for "surrendering the interests of the people to the power of General Electric".

Demanded that the Board of Supervisors act promptly for Taft-Hartley repeal and that the Rotterdam Board call a special meeting to support repeal.

Called for notifying the men the union supported for office "that they acted contrary to their campaign pledges."

Called for circulating petitions throughout the city for Taft-Hartley repeal.

573 New Members

A total of 573 new members joined Local 301 from Feb. 15 to Apr. 15.

Step-up Changes For Electricians

A. C. Stevens, assistant to the works manager, offered last week to apply to the electricians and helpers, but not to the other building trades, the one-step change in helper rates negotiated by the AFL steamfitters.

The offer was made in a meeting with the grievance committee headed by Business Agent Leo Jandreau, and a committee of building trades stewards. Stevens said he was willing to apply the changes to the electricians because they and the steamfitters were joined in the War Labor Board decision won by Local 301, raising their rates by 10 cents. The union committee argued that all changes should apply to all building trades alike. The local Executive Board and the membership in the building trades are considering the offer.

The changes obtained by the steamfitters included:

Helpers went to \$1.36 in three months under the UE contract. They now will receive an additional step to \$1.405 one year after reaching the \$1.36 rate.

B journeymen, now starting at \$1.46, will start at \$1.51. Progression in six months to \$1.565. This is the same rate as before, except that previously it was reached on performance.

A journeymen, starting rate \$1.62, as before, and top \$1.73, as before, but progression in two six-month steps instead of in two one-year steps.

There was no change in the method of upgrading from B to A. It remains on performance.

Present for the building trades at the meeting were Board Members Albert Spears and William Templeton, and Shop Stewards Charles Ferris, George Diemer, Lewis Craft, Jr., Richard Boyce, Vincent Palazese, S. A. Pieper, Ernest Johnson, S. A. Matarazzo, John Keeler, Charles Nitsche, and Louis Strenka.

Speed-up Plan Stopped

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pany the men were unanimous in deciding to continue to work at their normal day work speed. They will do without the extra 4 or 5 cents.

This is the way piece work is supposed to operate everywhere in the long run, but usually it is not put so simply and bluntly to the men involved.

\$5,000 for Wage Drive

The Local 301 membership meeting this week unanimously authorized the Executive Board to spend \$5,000 for the union's wage raise campaign. The appropriation was recommended by the Board.

Over 30 Locals Were Once at GE

For over 50 years before UE organized the General Electric plant at Schenectady on an industrial union basis craft unions had been attempting unsuccessfully to make headway there. From time to time they made temporary gains, only to lose them through company opposition and the weaknesses of the craft set-up itself.

In 1911 more than 30 locals in the Schenectady area, largely representing the 14,000 workers at GE, formed the Electrical Industry Trades Alliance. Three years later the Alliance was chartered by the Metal Trades Department of the AFL and became known as the Metal Trades Council.

Wartime Gains

During World War I the Council and its member unions were able, through collective bargaining, to get hours reduced, wages raised and conditions improved. There were no written agreements, however.

Weaknesses of the Council are described as follows in the book "How Collective Bargaining Works", published by the Twentieth Century Fund, an impartial private research organization.

Council Weaknesses

"Although the Council brought some cohesiveness to the crafts and lessened jurisdictional disputes, it had a double weakness. It could not stop its autonomous locals from taking individual action that might harm the entire body. This resulted in non-uniformity of procedure for settling grievances, differences in working rules and isolated craft stoppages. Also it could not extend what unifying power it had to other plants of the company."

GE Workers Obtain Awards for Injuries

Latest awards obtained for workers through workmen's compensation claims against GE, handled by the union, include \$3,625 to Antonette Balletti, Building 37 office cleaner, for injuries to her right leg in an accident Nov. 25, 1947.

For injuries to his left index finger Clifford Pierce, sheet metal worker in Bldg. 60, was awarded \$855. He was hurt last June 7.

For total loss of the use of his right little finger Kazmir Czynzewski, screw machine operator in Bldg. 69, was awarded \$480. The accident was Jan. 11.

An award of \$150 was made to Walter J. Stepnowski for a facial scar resulting from an accident Aug. 23.

Plans for Bowling League Are Rolling Along



The first meeting of the Local 301 Bowling League April 6 elected the arrangements committee pictured above: standing, left to right, Nancy Tiscione, Building 53; Clara Sornecky, Bldg. 53; Mary Izzo, Bldg. 53; Harold Simpson, Bldg. 25; Bob Innes, Bldg. 60; Leonard Pouck, Bldg. 28; Angie Santore, Bldg. 53; Louis Lezzi, Bldg. 11, and Jennie Tiscione, Bldg. 81. Holding the ball, Bob Grass, Bldg. 11. The 45 people at the meeting decided to wait till later to elect officers. They went on record as preferring Friday or Wednesday nights for bowling and wanting to use the Mont Pleasant, Woodlawn or Broadway alleys. They decided there should be 16 men's teams in one league; 10 teams in a mixed league and six teams in the women's league.

Brazilian Brass Hats Welcomed at GE Plant

A collection of brass hats and gold braid from the Brazilian Army inspected the new research laboratory at the Knolls and other parts of the GE plant this month. Of course they didn't have to be "cleared", for there was no chance in the world there would be a union man in the group. The Brazilian government has an outstanding record of union busting.

Here are a few of the recent developments.

Workers of the electric light corporation at Rio de Janeiro asked a wage increase. The Brazilian Labor Ministry, after studying their demands, recommended a slight pay raise, along with an increase in rates. At the same time the Brazilian security police filed a brief in court demanding that the Light Workers Unity committee, which started the move for a raise, be outlawed.

The Brazilian railwaymen's strike for higher wages was broken in January by the government's special anti-labor armed force, with the aid of regular troops. The police arrested many labor leaders, including two Batucatu County councilmen elected by labor's vote.

In March Brazilian police machine-gunned a delegation of strikers at San Amaro, Bahia province,

Consumers Can't Buy What Is Produced

To an increasing extent the capacity of American industry to produce has not been matched by the ability of American workers to consume at present day prices. During 1949 workers' purchasing power fell approximately 23.5 billion dollars short of production.

This gap was met by an increase in inventories of \$6 billion to stock up distribution outlets, by an increase in consumer debt of \$2.5 billion and by workers drawing on some 15 billion dollars of savings. These expenditures were not able to stop lay-offs at the end of 1948.

In 1949 the situation will be aggravated. Companies are cutting down on their already overloaded stocks, not increasing them. Savings are exhausted in the lower income groups. Workers already in debt can't afford to increase their indebtedness to buy any goods other than absolute necessities.

In 1949 an additional \$7.5 billion in consumers' demand will be needed to meet the increased production which will result from increased productivity during the year.

To the extent that wage increases will supply the purchasing power needed to absorb the deficit between production and spending, to that extent will employment levels be maintained.

UE ON THE AIR
Presents
Arthur Gaeth
radio news reporter
10 P. M. Monday
W X K W
Albany
UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO AND MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA

Full Pay for Jurors

The UE contract recently negotiated with Monroe Calculating Company, at Orange, N. J., provides that anyone called for jury duty gets full pay.

killing three men. Twelve strikers were wounded in a clash with police during a recent longshoremen's strike at Pernambuco.