

GE Engineers Asked To Oppose Pay Raise

An effort is being made to organize GE engineers all over the country to support the company in its opposition to a wage increase.

A letter sent to members of GE Engineers Associations by a "Coordinating Committee of G-E Engineers Associations" calls for a vote on a proposed statement to the newspapers entitled "General Electric Engineers Opposed to General Wage Increase in 1948."

Chairman of the "Coordinating Committee" is E. H. Bancker of Schenectady, who during the 1946 strike issued a statement for the local GEEA group urging the non-production workers to go back to work. Other signers of the letter are from Syracuse, Schenectady, Lynn (Mass.) River Works, Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Pittsfield, Mass. The vote is being taken on the back of the letter with the name of the engineer written on it, so that it is not secret.

Repeats Boulware Arguments

The letter starts out by declaring: "There has been considerable agitation in recent years for engineers to become active in civic affairs."

The letter does not state who the "agitation" comes from, but the proposed newspaper statement repeats all the Boulware arguments against a wage increase — that a general wage increase would mean a "loss" to the worker, and that the way to fight inflation and reduce prices is to "increase production", and by using "wage incentives and individual wage adjustments" based on individual performance.

Of course the engineers completely ignore the fact that present high prices have been established through monopoly control of production and completely without relationship to wages, and that the way to fight the present inflation is by paying out more in wages, without raising prices.

Blocks Real Organization

The GE Engineers Association has served mainly to block real organization of the underpaid engineers. At the recent Washington hearings on exclusion of engineers from the overtime provision of the Wage-Hour law, the UE argued for giving more engineers its benefits. The GEEA did not speak for the proposal.

The suggestion has been made that GE production and maintenance workers could effectively talk to the engineers they see, on the basis of their own experiences, as to the need for working with the whole group for and not against higher wages.

BEST IDEA I EVER HAD!



Westinghouse, Sylvania, RCA Agree with UE on Check-off

An agreement has been reached between the national UE and Westinghouse Electric Corporation on a voluntary check-off to be placed in effect as soon as the Taft-Hartley restrictions end the present check-off July 1.

As the contract year ends Apr. 1, the present maintenance of membership clause stops operating as of that date, but the company has agreed that maintenance of membership will be restored "when and to the extent made legally permissible either (1) by any ruling or decision of the National Labor Relations Board or lower court if the parties agree that such ruling or decision has such effect, or (2) by any ruling or decision of the U. S. Supreme Court or (3) by Congress.

Similar understandings have been reached by UE with Sylvania and RCA. These agreements are expected to smooth the course of the approaching contract negotiations considerably.

National UE officers are taking up the same proposals on check-off and maintenance of membership with GE, in advance of contract negotiations.

News of Legislature

Keep up with the news of the state legislature by listening to the broadcast of the Capital District CIO Council at 9:30 p.m. every Monday over WROW.

Seniority Cases Pressed by 301

Local 301 is pressing the case of two assemblers in Bldg. 81, who were forced to take jobs as C machinists in Bldg. 11-A because of lay-offs. These two men had eight and seven years' service. Yet men with less than one year's service were retained in closely-related work in Bldg. 81.

In reply to a written protest from Business Agent Leo Jandreau, J. M. Howell, works manager, claimed this week that the company complied with contract seniority in making the transfers. The union contends that men are entitled to "bump" others with less service in order to stay on similar work. The company apparently considers it has complied with the contract when the transfer is to a job rated about as high, regardless of whether the actual work is similar or not, and whether it is piece work or day work.

The union also is going further into the Personnel department practice of telling laid-off workers that if they do not accept a job the company will "break your service." The union contends this has the effect of a threat and forces men to take unsatisfactory transfers, in violation of the contract. Members who are told this should report it to the union at once.

Two other seniority cases were settled satisfactorily as a result of union protests. A resistor winder in Bldg. 89, with seven years' service, who had been forced to take a punch press job, was brought back to Bldg. 17 and a job similar to his regular work, displacing a new man.

In Bldg. 105, supervision attempted to reclassify a short service bench assembler, so that a longer service man would have been laid-off. After Steward J. A. Pasquarella filed a written grievance and the case was taken up with Bldg. 41, supervision in 105 met again with Pasquarella and reversed the decision. The longer service man stayed on.

Negro History Program

The weekly UE national radio program had a special Negro History Week program Wednesday on the eve of Lincoln's Birthday. The regular Arthur Gaeth news commentary will be resumed next Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. over WSNY and WROW.

301 on Air

The Local 301 broadcast is at 7:30 p.m. every Monday over WSNY.

ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

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The Way Charlie Sees It



Charlie Wilson's recent dividend message to GE stockholders, which took up three columns of the Feb. 6 Works News, boasted of the company's "efforts to combat price rises," and declared that "the wage earner would lose from another round of wage increases," because "the increase in cash" would mean "more spirited bidding for the goods available." Of course the message concealed the fact that GE boosted prices by wide margins before reducing some prices a little to meet competition. It ignored the fact that prices have been pushed up by monopoly control, without relation to wages, and that the real cause of inflation is the all-time high profits obtained by GE and the rest of Big Business through these high prices.

Polio Fund

Incomplete returns on the March of Dimes collection, turned in at the 301 office, had reached \$1,769.04 when this week's issue of EU News went to press.

On Food Committee

Board Member Leland Sisto and Treasurer Marshall White were added to the Food Committee Monday by the Executive Board.

Appeals Day Changed

The 301 Appeals Committee has changed its weekly Hearing Day from Friday to Wednesday for the convenience of union members. Any member dissatisfied with the way a grievance has been handled can appeal to this committee. It meets at 4 p.m. every Wednesday and will hear second shift workers at 1 p.m.

Reports on GE Proposals for 1948 Contract

The General Electric Company's contract proposals, which would seriously weaken the present agreement, were received last week by the UE. Business Agent Leo Jandreau reported them this week to the membership meeting and the Executive Board. The points will be discussed in detail in the EU News as the negotiations proceed.

The UE still is pressing the company to start the negotiations before the March 2 date proposed by GE.

Plans to enlist the active support of the workers in all GE plants in upstate New York behind the union's proposals were made at a District 3 conference of GE locals, held last Saturday in Syracuse.

Emphasis was placed at the meeting on full regular reports to the plant membership on the progress of negotiations. There was agreement on weekly distribution at all plants of union papers or leaflets. These will be supplemented with brief reports to the members over the radio, and advertisements and union speakers will be used to reach the community with the union's side of the bargaining.

Representing Local 301 at the meeting were President Andrew Peterson, Treasurer Marshall White, and Business Agent Leo Jandreau, delegates to the GE Conference Board. Jandreau is president of District 3.

Plenty of Warning

Last December Shop Steward Joseph Holody in Bldg. 69 called the attention of the safety representative to the fact that the air pressure from blowers caused the back doors of Bldg. 73 to bang, and that something should be done to prevent injury to someone who might not be familiar with the operation of the doors. Nothing was done. Last week an expeditor had a wrist smashed by one of the doors, and three days later another man was hurt slightly the same way. Now supervision is taking action to correct the matter.

Election of Stewards Will Be in December

In the future all Local 301 shop stewards are to be elected within a stated period in late December, under the supervision of the 301 Election Committee.

This amendment to the Local 301 constitution was voted by the special-called membership meeting Tuesday night and Wednesday afternoon.

Another change voted was that Executive Board members will be elected early in January, instead of in December.

Several other amendments also were adopted. Most of them are technical changes.

Asks Dewey to Meet On Rem-Rand Crisis

Charles Rivers, UE District 3 executive secretary, has sent a letter to Governor Dewey asking for an interview with him on the Remington Rand crisis.

Rivers pointed out that UE has already asked the Governor to use his influence to induce James H. Rand, Jr. to live up to his signed agreements with the union.

"Surely, Mr. Governor, a major industrial dispute in the state of New York warrants your personal attention and intercession," he said.

Efforts of the State Mediation Board to make any impression on Rem-Rand were unsuccessful, the letter stated.

Holiday Schedule For Third Shift

Where the third shift is on a 6-day week it is scheduled to come in to work Sunday night and stay out Monday night because of Washington's Birthday.

But if the big majority in any third shift group wants to come in Monday night instead of Sunday night they can do so. The union has agreed to allow the time-and-a-half provision to apply the holiday Monday night, instead of Sunday night, in such cases.

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No Sign of Life

A number of inquiries have been received as to the union's case for restoration of the nine-week strike period which the company deducted from the workers' service record.

A trial examiner for the old Wagner Act labor board had ruled that the company was wrong and the nine weeks should be restored. This ruling could be made effective only by the board itself.

Before the board could act, the Taft-Hartley act was passed. The case has been frozen in the files of the Taft-Hartley Board since then. If the Taft-Hartley board ever does act, there is no reason to believe that it would favor the workers' claim.

UE Buttons Featured In Membership Drive

Union buttons started appearing this week in the shops as one of the activities of the organizing drive.

It is urgent for stewards to complete at once making full lists of the workers in their groups, so the union office can check the lists with the membership rolls. After each list is checked, the office gives each steward UE buttons for the union members and the names of the non-members.

Workers joining Local 301 between Feb. 9 and Mar. 15 don't have to pay an initiation fee.

Building 60 Operators Refuse 1 1/2 Hour Shift

Operators on the erecting floor of Bldg. 60 have turned down a company proposal to work in two shifts of 1 1/2 hours each.

After the company made the proposal, Board Member William Stewart took a poll which showed the majority opposed the overtime arrangement. Their reaction was — if the company wants more work hours, let it give the third shift the eight hour day they have asked.

Wage Rate Corrected

A written grievance by Shop Steward Clifford Leger at Campbell Avenue plant last week brought a wage rate correction, with back pay to January 9, to a battery truck operator under Foreman Al Swanker. The man does high tiering, but supervision would pay him the higher rate for only four days a week. Leger insisted the man was entitled to his rating for the whole week.

Sorry—Uncle Sam Is Short Handed

The Internal Revenue Bureau will not observe its usual practice this year of assigning a man to Local 301 hall to assist members make out their income tax returns.

In reply to a letter by Business Agent Leo Jandreau, Edward J. Connolly, Schenectady division chief, said that "due to the reduction of our field force", the union's request would have to be turned down. Connolly said he has only about half his usual staff. He suggested that the union members drop in at the post office building if they need help.

The federal budget, which proposes billions for armaments and universal military training, cuts down on such services to the public.

FDR's Son Speaks To Rem-Rand Workers

Elliott Roosevelt, son of the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt, attacked the Remington Rand labor policies at a rally of UE workers Feb. 4 at Mohawk.

He called James H. Rand "one of the foremost fighters against workers" and warned the union men and women "if Rand wins out over you, it will be the end of labor, and our country will revert to sweatshop conditions."

Criticizing the weakness of the Truman Administration, Roosevelt said, "During the past three years the country has been under ineffectual leadership."

31st District PAC Program Approved

The proposed PAC program for the 31st Congressional District, drawn up by a committee of officers of CIO unions, was unanimously approved Feb. 2 at Amsterdam with a few minor additions and changes by a larger meeting of representatives of CIO unions in this district.

The officers' committee was authorized to enlarge itself to include key people from AFL, railroad and other unions, farmers, professional groups and people from other walks of life. The Farmers Union is already represented.

The purpose of the PAC program is to elect a Congressman from this district next November who will really represent the people.

Gaeth Program

Don't miss the national UE radio program featuring Arthur Gaeth, news commentator, at 7:30 p.m. every Wednesday over WSNY and WROW.

Meet with Stevens On Control Division

Recent difficulties in the Control Division, including the many temporary lay-offs, were discussed by Local 301 with A. C. Stevens, assistant to the general superintendent, last week. Present were Board Members Stanley Bishop, Dewey Brashear, Anthony Esposito, Samuel Scott, Clarence Groesbeck, and Albert Davis, representing parts of the division, and the union grievance committee.

Stevens said that the temporary lay-offs were caused by difficulties of scheduling work, and that he hoped the situation would improve through improved planning. He said, however, that some difficulties would always be part of control manufacture, because so much of it was in small orders. As to permanent employment, he said there had been about 100 lay-offs and transfers out of the division in the past three months, and that it was likely there would be a slight further reduction in the future, although now there was enough work for the present force.

Board members brought up a number of specific complaints as to work shortage. Stevens said he would check them.

Printers Win \$10 Increase

The Schenectady Typographical Union obtained a \$10 a week pay increase this winter for all union printers in Schenectady.

The raise at the Gazette and the Union-Star, where there is a 37 1/2 hour work-week, comes to over 26 1/2 cents an hour. The new scale is \$80 a week for men working days and \$85.50 nights. It's retroactive to Nov. 1.

The scale in job shops has jumped to \$85 for day workers, on the basis of a 40 hour, five-day week, effective Feb. 1.

Maqua Printing Co., controlled by GE, also put the \$10 raise into effect Feb. 1. The scale is \$85 for the first or day shift; \$89 for second shift and \$93, third shift, 40 hour week.

Board Changes Meeting Dates

The Executive Board has voted to change its regular meetings to the second and fourth Mondays of each month. This will eliminate the need for Board members to attend meetings two nights in a row, twice a month. They have been meeting the night before the Stewards' meeting and the night before the Membership meeting.



The words in white on black blocks above are direct quotations from GE Vice-President L. R. Boulware's solemn advice (Works News of Feb. 6) to GE workers trying to buy enough food at today's prices with last year's wage rates. The strip above is Cartoonist Fred Wright's illustration of the Boulware sermon.

Raise for Cafeteria Workers

Cafeteria employes at the RCA plant at Lancaster, Pa., have obtained a raise of 15 cents an hour in their first UE contract.

New Shop Steward

Walter H. Balbarsus, Bldg. 97, took his oath of office as a shop steward at the Tuesday night section of the membership meeting.