

The NOT So Glamourous Story They Didn't Tell About GE

The story they're running about GE in the March issue of Glamour is called Profile of Big Business—but talk to the typical woman production worker in GE and she'll tell you it should be called A Fairy Tale of Big Business.

In what is called the first in a series of articles about America's leading employers of women, Glamour readers are lullabied with such pap as "you'll find this huge company (GE) is characterized by a kind of family feeling, a stronger-than-usual sense of belonging," and "you'll probably observe it most clearly" in the Schenectady Works.

Throughout four pages is told the story of how wonderful it is for women in GE. But most women on GE production jobs would tell you that if there is a "family" feeling it's strictly of the "poor relative" variety.

Nothing is mentioned in this fairy tale about an UE expose in 1945 that resulted in a War Labor Board ruling that GE "exploited" its women employees and proposed that GE increase its women employees' rate to eliminate this discrimination.

GE increased rates on some jobs

where discrimination was the worst, but didn't change its discriminatory wage structure. That same 1945 expose revealed that GE hires women at 10 to 15 cents less than men and rates in general were 32.4 cents an hour below men's rates.

What progress has been made was due to UE, which has boosted women's rates from 70.3 percent of men's in 1945 to 78 percent of men's rates by 1951.

The U. S. Department of Labor declared last year: "The payment of equal rates to men and women doing the same work . . . resulted from the union's (UE) activity . . . and the company was initially opposed to equal pay."

GE might fool the public about the idyllic existence of women in its plants, but the women are determined to fight through to secure UE's demand for "elimination of discrimination in women's rates, with no rate below the rate of common labor" in negotiations now going on with GE.

They want no GE fairy tales. Instead they'll take equal work for equal pay—and it's the smart male union member who bucks them up so that GE can no longer use women's rates to undercut men's wages.



IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE. GE, next to General Motors, spent the most money on tax-free ads in magazines last year—a total of \$9,758,272. It pays off in "fairy tales" such as in Glamour magazine above that paints a picture of "pleased and proud" women workers—but skips the facts of life. GE's women workers would trade the story for some of the \$9 million to even up their unequal rates.

'301' Support Pledged To Mica Union Drive

Mica Insulator Co. workers, at a well attended membership meeting at the Local 301 Hall on Sunday, March 16, received pledges of the full support of UE members in District 3 and Local 301 in their efforts to throw off their company union and organize a UE shop with UE wages, hours and working conditions.

The pledges were made by Lewis King, District 3 president and Leo Jandreau, '301' business agent.

Jandreau told of the drive he and others led in 1941 to organize the Mica plant. The company then created fear and disunity with threats of firing and foisted a company union on its workers.

In the 10 years since, Jandreau said, while Mica workers have had a company union the UE members in GE's Schenectady Works have forged ahead to win wage increases averaging 73 cents an hour, guaranteed incentive rates, 10 percent bonus on average earnings for night shift workers, seven paid holidays, time-and-a-half for Saturday work and other benefits.

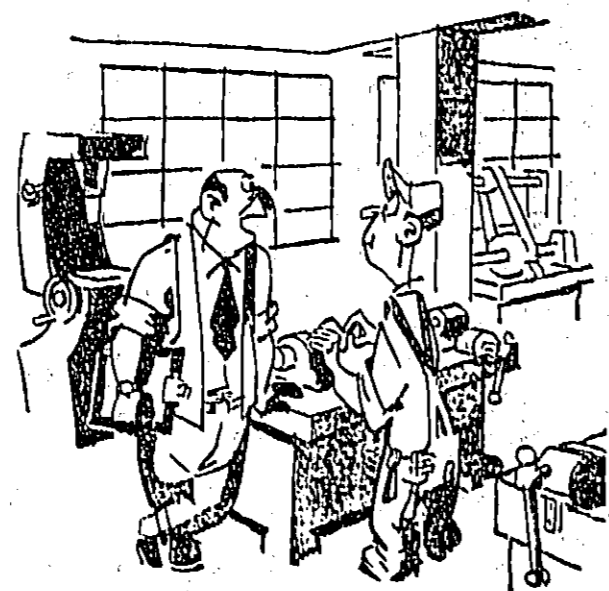
He warned of the new tricks the company would pull now that over 60 percent of its workers have joined UE.

Their new weapon, he pointed out, will be red-baiting and trying to import another company union with a new label into the plant—the IUE-CIO. This use of red-baiting was tried by the company and IUE-CIO twice in the last two years in the Schenectady Works and was rejected by UE members in two NLRB elections.

Speed-up of Porter, Moveman Halted

Equal overtime will be distributed among workers in Bldg. 69 working under Foreman J. Stinson because of grievance action by the group. They charged that Stinson on Feb. 15 requested five stock-room employees for Saturday work and excluded two material handlers. All employees perform the same type of work.

Management instructed the division, which instructed the foreman, to distribute overtime equally. Steward P. Sgambati handled the grievance.



As long as you can't afford to eat, Dillingsby . . . We can dispense with your lunch hour . . .

Reporting Time Won For 13 Workers

Thirteen workers in Bldg. 273, who were sent home because of lack of work and were not paid for reporting in, have been paid report time as a result of action by the Union.

Eleven came in on a Sunday. The contract provides there must be a minimum pay of three hours. GE paid them an hour and a half at double-time. '301' pointed out this wasn't three hours pay, since Sunday work is paid at double time and they were entitled to three hours pay at double time. GE agreed to pay.

Two inspectors on Feb. 9 were not allowed to punch in by their foreman because of lack of work. The Union won three hours pay.

Mica Rate Beefs Won in Bldg. 29

Four old jobs will be made standard, with piece work, day work minimized, five jobs will be time studied on 18 inch machines within two months (and no later than May 1) and a foreman's wrong attitudes will be corrected, as a result of grievance action by a group of workers in mica in Bldg. 29.

The workers claimed they could not make more than AER of their job and were paid piece work, day work on the average of three or four days a week—with the foreman basing his arguments on the fact he couldn't get an 18 inch machine time studied.

The settlement also included instructions to the foreman to halt slowing and speeding up machines during voids in the mica tape, due to bad mica. Steward E. Rossi handled the grievance.

GE's Wage Freeze

Continued from page 1 —unless the men fight with the women now to establish equal pay for equal work on all jobs.

There's a fight ahead—and every worker should quickly let GE and Wilson know they're in no mood to tolerate frozen wages while prices and profits and taxes continue to skyrocket.

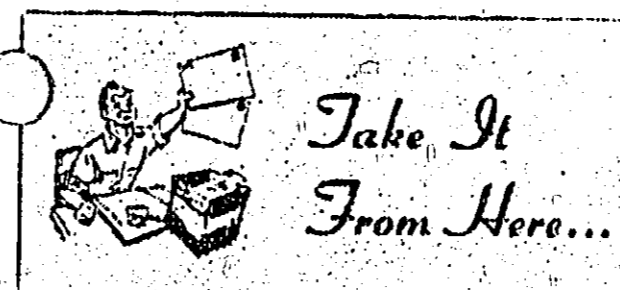
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Hamilton, Canada—A wage boost of 16 cents an hour with retroactive pay to Dec. 22, 1951 has been won by UE members at the Hoover Co. An eighth paid holiday was also won.

Providence, R. I.—Most of this city's 66 public schools were shut down March 10 when 800 members of the AFL Federation of Teachers went on strike to secure an adequate cost of living allowance.

Louisville, Ky.—UE Local 236 changed International Harvester's mind about firing a steward and four grievance committeemen after a week's strike by 3,000 members. The first of the grievancemen returned to work the day after members approved a reinstatement agreement.

Cleveland, Ohio — A two day policy meeting of 200 CIO United Rubber Workers leaders last week called for wage increases and improved working conditions for 200,000 rubber workers. It's reported the figure will call for 10 percent boosts, which would mean raises of 18 to 21 cents an hour.

New York — A charge that the Pentagon brass is favoring low pay, open shop areas in handing out contracts and thereby turning established clothing, cotton garment and textile communities into ghost towns was made here by Pres. Jacob S. Potofsky, of the CIO Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

Portland, Ore. — Over 50,000 members of the CIO Woodworkers Union, in five northwest states, are taking part in a strike vote, called after contract talks hit a dead end. The union is asking for a 20 cent hourly wage boost.

San Francisco — Western states led a new bus drivers walkout when 264 drivers on Sante Fe Trailways, members of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, walked out in protest over contract violation charges brought against them by the company because they refused to load buses in excess of a California 18,000 pound limit.



GOOD TIME HAD BY ALL. The happy scene above was snapped at a party held at Ferro's restaurant on Sunday, March 23, by '301' members in chemical, Bldgs. 77, 67, 71, 75 and 79 and control, Bldgs. 73, 73A and 69. '301' Chief Shop Steward William Mastrianni was presented with a handsome travelling bag for his services over the last 16 years as a steward and officer.

'301' Calls Stewards Wage Conference for March 31

With a national wage conference of all UE locals throughout the country called for April 5 and 6 in Buffalo, N. Y., UE Local 301 has issued a call to its over 600 stewards to attend a dress rehearsal on "where do we go from here" for Monday evening, March 31, 7:30 p.m., at the Union Hall.

This Stewards Wage Conference will review GE's position to date in negotiations and map out a program to change GE's position of not giving a cent more than its former boss Charles Wilson has decreed—a 1.36 percent increase.

It will also deal with the threatened attacks on UE by Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D, Minn.)

Underlining the importance of this conference by UE's largest local is the invitation Local 301's executive board has extended to UE's three top officers, Pres. Albert J. Fitzgerald, Secy-Treas. Julius Emspak and Director of Organization James J. Matles, to attend and participate in the conference's deliberations. They have been requested to place before the stewards the national union's program and recommendations for action.

All second shift stewards will be compensated for lost time to attend this important conference.

The conference will elect Local 301's delegates to the national UE conference in Buffalo.

Support Elmira Rate Cut Strike

A pledge of assistance in whatever manner is necessary and that Schenectady GE foundry workers will not handle scab work was sent to striking GE Elmira foundry workers by the '301' executive board last Monday.

Elmira molders struck March 18 against a cut in price on a standard job. A UE Local 310 meeting on March 23 voted that the rest of plant would join the 130 workers on the picketline if GE didn't settle the beef by midnight, March 24. GE's refusal provoked a general strike on March 25.

GE cut the price because of a minor change on castings, adding four small holes and cutting the job from \$5.76 per hundred to \$5, adding up to a 25 to 30 cent hourly cut. The moldings are sent to the GE Fort Wayne plant to machine and drill the four holes. Fort Wayne clean up men were also cut, from 18 to 14 cents per hundred.

Considered a part of a general GE attempt to slash rates, the grievance was handled all the way to the national level before the stoppage. UE members at Erie and Ft. Edward GE plants have also promised full support.

Craftsmen's Rally Spurs Wage Fight

The demonstration held by toolmakers and building trades crafts on Wednesday, March 19, is one that will be remembered for a long time—but to these workers it was just the beginning of a fight to secure rates which they deserve.

There were meetings at Campbell Ave. and Knolls but the big one was outside the Works manager's offices at Building 41—and their determination to fight was clearly shown when they held an hour-long meeting in a driving snowstorm.

They heard '301' Pres. James J. Cagnetta and Chief Shop Steward William Mastrianni tell them they were the Union and it was up to them to convince GE they wouldn't accept its arrogant attitude that nothing will be done on their rates.

When GE photographers set up cameras to take pictures they raised a sea of hands in a vote to strike, if necessary, to win their demands.

Speaker after speaker, Frank Diehsner, tinsmiths; George F. Griffin, iron workers; Charles Ferris, electricians; Henry Caputo, masons and Anthony Esposito, toolmakers, expressed their burning resentment over the narrowing gap between their wages and others, with the margin now less than three percent in a comparison with 52 shops in the area.

GE was blasted for hiring contractors who pay outside building trades workers 40 to 50 cents more an hour for work they can do, and buying and building plants in small communities, paid by their taxes, to set a low wage pattern for many jobs now performed in the Schenectady Works.

The meetings set the pace for the kind of fight that will be needed against GE in negotiations to secure their demand for a 45 cent an hour increase—the amount recommended by the government wage freeze board last fall and killed by pressure of employer members of the Board, as Charles Wilson is now trying to kill the recommendations for steel workers.

