

Building Trades Demand Adequate Pay for Their Skills



Meeting of the building trades at 301 hall June 2 to press demands for the correction of craft rates. This was the second meeting of the building crafts recently on the problem. (See separate story)

Skilled Crafts Consider Action

Action to persuade the company to correct the craft wage rates is being considered now by the skilled craft groups.

The building trades groups, through their shop stewards, this week polled their members on a proposal to refuse to work any overtime because of the company's refusal to correct the rates. The proposal came from the floor at a large meeting of the building trades the previous Wednesday.

The welders met Tuesday, and set up a committee to plan action in support of their demands. The welders unanimously took the position that the proposals to raise welder's rates, as contained in the union's wage structure proposal, were fully justified. The company has refused to negotiate or arbitrate the wage structure issue.

The toolmakers were scheduled to hold their second meeting on the question Wednesday night. The machinists (non-production) and tool room machine operators also planned to meet that night.

The committee set up by the welders included Donald Romsiewicz, Henry Plourde, and Joseph De Sarbo, of Building 60; Salvatore De Pietro, 49; Mario Bagnato and Charles Doherty, 52; Henry Fazzone and Frank O'Neill, 66; Frank Liberatore, 16; C. R. McGillivray, 278; Edmund Paska, 105; H. F. Goodridge, 28; Howard Earl, 18; Samuel Laspinoso, 5; and Dominick Conti, 73.

Raise Plus Insurance

UE Local 735 at Cleveland has won a 10 cents an hour raise, plus company-paid health insurance, for Wellman Engineering workers.

Membership Meeting To Discuss Contract

GE contract negotiations will be the main business taken up at the monthly membership meeting of Local 301 next week at the union hall.

The meeting will be in two parts, with the first and third shifts meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 15, and the second shift at 1 p.m. Wednesday, June 16.

Court Will Be Asked To Dismiss Injunction

Officers of Local 301, UE District 3 and the national UE will ask in Supreme Court June 19 at Hudson Falls that the temporary injunction obtained by Martin Stanton, Frank Fiorillo and Carmine J. Di Girolamo last November be dismissed. The request will be made on the grounds of the failure of the three men to bring their suit against the union to trial. Notice of this proceeding to dismiss the suit has been served on the attorney for the three men.

The trio, members of the so-called "Democratic Action" group, were expelled last fall by the Local 301 membership for violating the union's constitution. They obtained a temporary injunction from Supreme Court Justice John Alexander ordering the union to reinstate them until the trial of their case against the union. The order also allowed them to run for union office. All three were soundly beaten in the annual election last December.

11 Cent Raise

UE workers at the Louis Allis Company, Milwaukee, have won a general wage increase of 11 cents.

Schools Still Closed To Political Speakers

At the direction of the Executive Board, four officers of Local 301 appeared at a meeting of the Schenectady Board of Education Tuesday to support a request that the city allow public school auditoriums to be used for political meetings.

The union representatives were President Andrew Peterson, Vice-President William Hodges; Assistant Recording Secretary Alfred J. Pelrah, and Chief Shop Steward William Mastriani. They said that in the interest of the widest and most democratic discussion of election issues, people should have the chance to hear candidates of all parties. Few public halls outside the school system are large enough to hold large audiences, they pointed out.

The question came before the school board when the Schenectady Wallace-for-President committee was denied permission to use Mont Pleasant high school auditorium for a speech by U. S. Senator Glenn H. Taylor, candidate for vice-president on the Wallace ticket.

The School Board announced after its meeting that it would not change the rule it adopted in 1945 against allowing school buildings to be used for political meetings.

Labor Intern

For the third year a student from the Labor Relations School of Cornell University will work 10 weeks during the summer in the 301 office. The membership meeting last month approved an Executive Board recommendation that the union again cooperate with the school in allowing a World War II veteran to serve his labor "internship" here.

Prize Auto Here For Field Day

The 1948 Studebaker, which will be the grand prize at the annual Local 301 Field Day July 10 at Columbian Park, arrived this week in Schenectady. The Activities Committee put it on exhibition at once in Erie Blvd. It will be displayed in various sections of the city between now and Field Day.

Several more names were entered this week in the contest for queen; Antoinette Restina, Bldg. 12; Alice Mattice, Bldg. 66; Nellie Saddlemire, Bldg. 60; Thelma Willey, Bldg. 24; and from the second shift, Annie De Celli, Bldg. 53. EU News ran the picture of Jennie Tescione, Bldg. 81, last week and will print the rest as soon as they are available.

You can get field day tickets from your shop stewards.

More 'Free Press'

The Albany Times Union (Hearst) turned down a paid advertisement against the Mundt bill last week, just as the Knickerbocker News (Gannett) had done. The advertisement was signed by over 50 men and women, including clergymen, teachers, club women and union members. The Rt. Rev. G. Ashton Oldham, Episcopal Bishop of Albany, and Dr. Edward S. Godfrey, former state health commissioner, were in the group. Advertising managers refused to give any reason for refusing the advertisement.

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Movie Operator Needed

Wanted. A volunteer to pinch-hit occasionally for a member of the Activities Committee in running the Local 301 movie machine at entertainments at the union hall.

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Local 301 Ratifies Contract Settlement

Even Crystal Ball Can't Pick 301 Queen Ahead of Field Day

Report Made By Jandreau On GE Offer

The membership of Local 301 voted overwhelmingly in favor of accepting the 1948 GE contract settlement at a two-part meeting Tuesday night and Wednesday afternoon.

With only a few dissenting votes, the members approved the recommendation of the 301 Executive Board to accept the company's offer. The Board's recommendation included a statement that the members are "definitely not satisfied" with the contract and the stipulation that the union will keep up its fight and pressure to maintain its gains and correct wage inequities.

The Tuesday night meeting of first and third shift workers at Mont Pleasant High School voted 778 to 19 to accept the contract offer. Second shift members voted 82 to 3 for acceptance Wednesday afternoon at the union hall. The total vote was 860 to 22.

Jandreau Speaks on Contract "Sure it isn't satisfactory," Business Agent Leo Jandreau, who is president of District 3 and senior member of the UE negotiating committee, told the membership.

"But in view of the attitude GE took against giving anything, in view of its terrific campaign against the union and what's happening to other unions, with the government using the Taft-Hartley law against them, I personally feel that this final settlement is a victory against the biggest reactionary group in the country."

"If GE had its way," Jandreau declared, "you wouldn't have a contract. You wouldn't have a union." Jandreau made it clear that the GE Conference Board of UE locals decided to recommend acceptance of the GE offer because a strike vote was the only alternative. "We either accept it or we consider strike," he said. "There's no more to get there by talk."

Anti-Union Campaign For the first 14 weeks of negotiations GE refused to make any (Continued on Page 2)



These girls will have to wait till the 301 Field Day July 10 to see who is winner of the contest for queen. Left to right, Ann De Celli, Bldg. 53, representing the second shift; Jennie Tescione, Bldg. 81; Nellie Saddlemire, Bldg. 60; Thelma Willey, Bldg. 24, and Antoinette Restina, Bldg. 12. They are all candidates except Nellie Saddlemire, who withdrew, and is replaced by Grace Burns, Bldg. 60. (See story on page 4)

Changes in 1948 GE-UE Contract

A wage increase of 8 percent, beginning June 11, is the main feature of the 1948 contract now awaiting ratification by the GE locals of UE. The company must be notified of ratification by June 25 for the agreement to be binding.

The 8 percent is computed to the nearest one-half cent for day workers and day work job rates, and shall not be less than 9 cents per hour.

For piece workers, the 8 percent is figured on the actual total weekly earnings, and shall not be less than 9 cents per hour.

Reopening

The contract runs for two years, from Apr. 1, 1948, to Apr. 1, 1950. It can be reopened once during that period, but only by the union, on wages and on other economic issues. The time of reopening is any time chosen by the union, between

now and Apr. 1, 1950, on 30 days' notice. The contract specifies that the union has the right to strike on wages, and that the contract continues in effect regardless.

After Apr. 1, 1950, the contract renews itself for one year unless the union or company gives 90 days' notice of cancellation. If it is not cancelled, either side can propose changes, and the union has the right to strike over such changes, and the contract continues in effect.

Continuous Operation

Next to the wage increase, the principal improved condition won

is for the workers on continuous operation, such as the guards and power house men. Instead of the previous straight time for Saturday and time-and-a-half for Sunday falling within their regular schedule, they will be paid time-and-a-half for Saturday and Sunday regardless. This provision is retroactive to Apr. 1.

Vacations

For all vacations taken since Jan. 1, 1948, overtime will be considered in figuring vacation pay, to this extent:

The time actually worked in the eight weeks preceding the last week before the vacation will be figured for each worker individually. If the average is less than 42 hours, payment will be for a 40-hour week. If the average is between 42 and 48 hours, payment will be for the nearest number of hours. If the average is 48 hours (Continued on Page 2)

Local Ratifies Contract Terms

(Continued from Page 1)

wage increase offer, Jandreau pointed out. The company staged "the largest campaign ever put on" to keep from sharing "the biggest profits yet" with its employees.

The GE campaign was helped by the Taft-Hartley law, he said. The company drive took the form of letters to employees, attacks and propaganda in the Works News, expensive newspaper advertising and voluntary cooperation from the anti-union press, "anti-inflation" talks by foremen.

"They went out to do a job and the sky was the limit," Jandreau said. "Their program was no wage increase and no improvements in the contract. They set out to take away the things we had negotiated patiently for 12 years—seniority, safeguards for pieceworkers, the right to arbitrate grievances."

Outside Factors

Developments throughout the country strengthened GE's stand, Jandreau pointed out. He cited the government's use of injunctions to break railroad and mine strikes, and the fact that the Steelworkers were tied down by the no-strike clause of their two-year contract with U. S. Steel.

Jandreau said the GE program had an effect on their employees.

"The Engineers Association said, 'We don't want any wage increase. We want to go along with the austerity program.' The Draftsmen said, 'We won't take up this wage question. If UE gets something we'll get it anyway.'"

During negotiations certain workers in the Schenectady shops circulated "We won't strike" petitions and sent them to the press, Jandreau reminded the meeting.

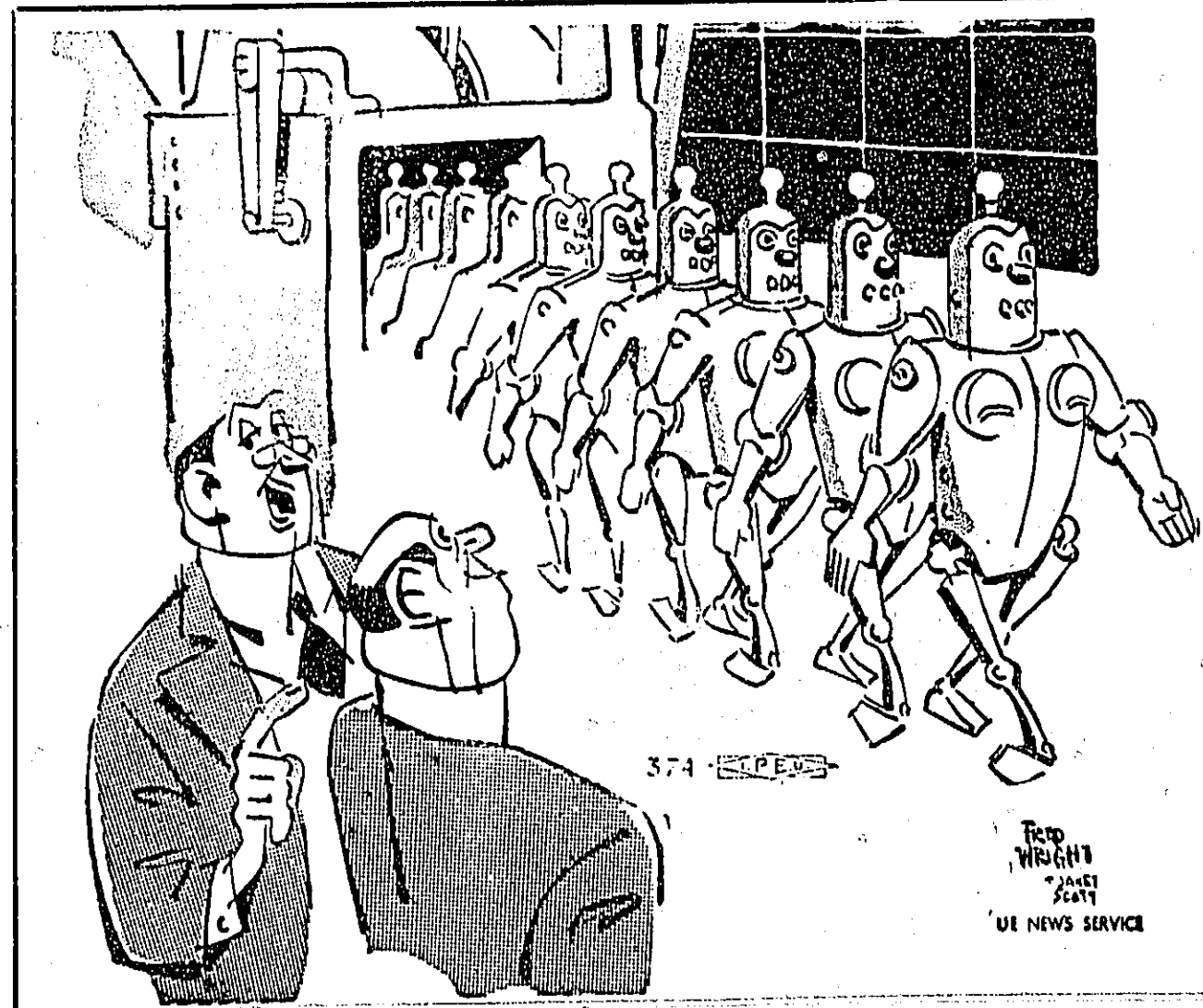
"Of course that didn't help negotiations," he said. "It gave comfort and confidence to GE."

There's just one question an employer is interested in during negotiations, Jandreau declared.

"How much will it cost us to say no?"

"General Electric took advantage of all the weaknesses and disunity that exists in the ranks of the people."

Look, Bradbury—Our Wage problem is solved!



age of all the weaknesses and disunity that exists in the ranks of the people."

GE Makes Offer

Jandreau pointed out that the first break in negotiations came after strike votes by auto and electrical workers won the General Motors settlement. Then the Chrysler strike was settled for 13 cents.

"That changed the whole atmosphere as far as negotiations were concerned," he reported. "The UE committee demanded at least what Chrysler gave."

The GE Conference Board of UE discussed the GE offer for hours, Jandreau said, and sent the negotiating committee back with counter proposals.

"We told the company that we think an across-the-board increase is the fair way," he said.

"We reminded them that it costs as much money for people in the lower income brackets to buy a loaf of bread as people in the higher, that it's even harder for them because of the high cost of living."

The committee asked GE to raise the minimum to 11 cents, instead of 9.

Jandreau said the negotiators accused GE of "trying to take the 11 cents cost that you have to meet and pay a little on some of the inequities in higher skilled jobs."

"We pointed out they were doing nothing about the inequities of the lower paid jobs and women's jobs."

GE refused to change its offer in any respect.

Strike Was Alternative

In recommending that the

offer be accepted, Jandreau said, the Conference Board realized "there is nothing we could do short of strike but accept it," and that the strike issue would have to be raising the 9 cent minimum to 11 cents. He said the Board had to take into consideration that there hadn't been "a fighting spirit" in the locals about the negotiations.

Jandreau warned that the union must be more vigorous than ever about taking up grievances and fighting for adjustment of rates. He said there is nothing in the contract to prevent negotiating wage adjustments for various occupations. And he emphasized that the union is free to strike when wages and other economic issues are reopened.

A question was asked Jandreau from the floor as to whether GE has guaranteed 4½ hours of Sunday night work at time-and-a-half to the third shift.

"They don't guarantee anything," Jandreau answered. "Your only guarantee is right here in this room—the union."

One rank-and-file member said, "Your committee did an excellent job for the support you gave them. Your committee did an excellent job for the support you gave them. Remember they asked everyone to turn out for a meeting, and only about 500 showed up. What do you expect the committee to do? We have to do some fighting for ourselves."

The meeting gave a rising vote of thanks and appreciation for the work of the negotiating committee.

Approves Contract

Local 320 at Syracuse voted Monday to approve the 1948 GE contract settlement.

Changes in 1948 GE-UE Contract

(Continued from Page 1)

or more, payment will be for 48 hours. Absences due to union time and observed holidays count as time worked. Payment for a vacation week above 40 hours will be at straight time rate, with no over-time premium.

Group Leader Clause

An addition to the group leader clause provides that an hourly paid group leader leading piece workers will be paid at least two steps above the highest AER (anticipated earning rate) of any of the employees he leads, with rates in excess of this to be negotiated locally.

'Portal-to-Portal' Feature

A new clause in the hours provision reads:

"In cases where the company instructs employees to report ahead of schedule and/or remain after the regular schedule to change clothes, march to posts, etc., etc., employees involved will be paid for such additional time."

The hours provision was cleared up to provide that a worker gets time-and-a-half for time in excess of eight hours in any 24-hour period, beginning from the start of his shift, even though this overtime may run into his next day.

As previously announced, instead of the maintenance of membership and compulsory dues check-off, which the Taft-Hartley law forbids, the contract provides for check-off on individual authorizations.

The step rates on which day work job rates are based have been increased by the 8 per cent formula, and the figures are listed.

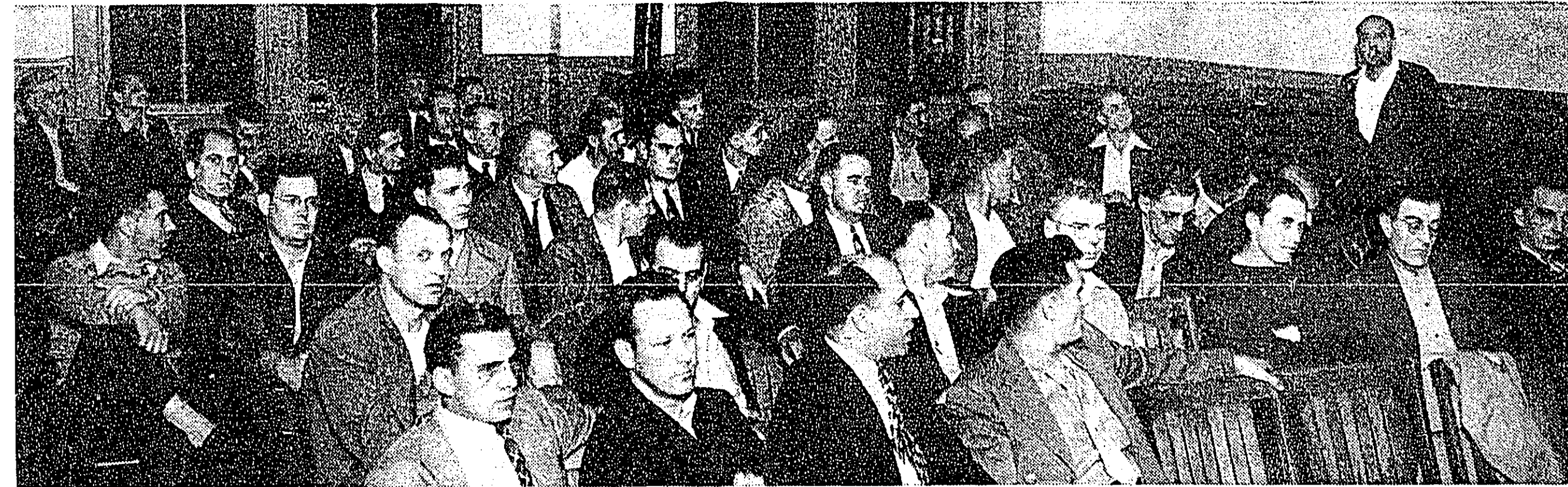
GE Proposals Out

All company proposals for changes in its favor were dropped as part of the settlement. The worst features of the company's proposals were the virtual elimination of seniority under five years of service, and removal of the guarantee of a piece worker's right to make the same earnings after a change of method on a standard price. The company pushed these points hard, but dropped them in the final settlement.

District Coverage Ends

This week's issue of EU News is the last one which will be distributed to other GE locals in the district. During the UE-GE contract negotiations pages 1 and 2 were reprinted for the other locals.

Machinists Press Demands for Higher Pay for Their Skill



A session of machinists June 9 discussing plans for joint action with other skilled crafts in pressing for pay adjustments. See story on page 4.

301 Board's Vote On '48 Contract

The 301 Executive Board June 14 voted that the result of its roll-call vote on recommending acceptance of the 1948 contract be reported to the membership meeting and be printed in the EU News.

Business Agent Leo Jandreau, senior member of the UE negotiating committee, and President Andrew Peterson reported that the GE Conference Board of UE locals recommended acceptance of the company's offer. In the opinion of the Conference Board, they said, the only alternative would be to strike.

The 301 Board voted 19 to 7 in favor of recommending accepting the company's offer with the stipulation that "we are definitely not satisfied with it" and with the recommendation that the membership keep up their fight and pressure to maintain gains and correct wage inequities. Two members were absent and President Peterson did not vote because he was presiding.

Voting "Yes" on this motion to recommend acceptance were Hodges, Quirini, Pelrah, Mastriani, Jandreau, Davis, Villano, Kuschel Stewart, Cognetta, Esposito, Busse, Brashear, La Bombard, Sisto, Ferris, McCartin, Pacelli and Spears. Voting "No" were Tedisco, Braunelsen, Flanigan, Bishop, Mangino, Kriss and Scott. Absent, White and Groesbeck.

Earlier the Board defeated a motion to recommend that the company's offer be rejected. The result was 6 yes votes; 19 no votes; 1 not voting and 2 absent.

MAKE YOUR SHOP
100 PER CENT UE

1899 Strike Story Is Good Reading

George B. Kingsley of Bldg. 273 let the EU News editorial committee look at an interesting copy of the Saturday Globe (Utica, N. Y.) for Aug. 5, 1899 which he found in his attic.

There was a big front page story about a street car strike in Cleveland, Ohio. The support for the strike was so strong that anyone who used the street cars was boycotted. According to the paper, car riders found they couldn't get a barber to shave them, couldn't get deliveries from milkmen, ice men or bakers, and couldn't even buy a beer.

The front page also featured a colored cartoon, urging that labor disputes be settled by arbitration. GE still fights against arbitration nearly 50 years later.

\$500 for Durez Strike

The Local 301 membership meeting this week voted \$500 to the UE strikers at the Durez Plastics and Chemicals Inc., N. Tonawanda. The 450 strikers have been picketing for over six weeks and the plant is completely shut down. The workers want a 15 cents an hour general wage increase, time-and-a-half for Saturday work, double time for Sunday, and other improvements. The donation was recommended by the 301 Executive Board.

Gaeth Broadcast

The Arthur Gaeth broadcast, sponsored by UE, is at 10 p.m. every Monday over WOKO, Albany; WKBW, Buffalo; WGLN, Glens Falls; WKIP, Poughkeepsie; WSNY, Schenectady, and WAGE, Syracuse.

Prices Continue To Climb Higher

Latest U. S. government figures on prices show that the cost-of-living in April reached a new all-time high, and the Federal Reserve Board has warned that further price increases may be expected through the rest of 1948.

GE workers in Schenectady should keep these facts in mind when prices continue to rise and GE propaganda tries to make you believe that your wage increase caused the rise.

The Department of Commerce reported that prices are climbing steadily and that prospects of lower prices disappeared after the foreign aid and arms programs began to take shape in March.

According to the national Bureau of Labor Statistics index, food prices increased by 2.8 per cent and all retail prices increased by 1.4 per cent between Mar. 15 and Apr. 15, hitting a new all-time high.

Indicating still further price increases in May, the latest wholesale price index released on May 15 had climbed above the mid-April level.

The Federal Reserve Board's monthly bulletin confirmed recent Wall Street predictions that a new price spiral—entirely unrelated to the question of wage increases—is on its way.

Increased government spending for military purposes may force prices still higher, the Federal Reserve Board said. It urged that the inflationary pressures which would be increased by the armament program should be controlled.

All retail prices have now increased 8.4 per cent above a year ago, 28.5 per cent over June, 1946, when OPA was killed, and 71.9

Stewards Send Message To Automobile Workers

Shop stewards of Local 301 have sent a message to the United Auto Workers "on the occasion of the wage offer won from General Motors by both our unions, the UAW and UE, breaching the united front of Big Business against wage increases."

The letter stated that "all-out cooperation between our unions in collective bargaining as well as in organizing the unorganized will result in wage and contract victories more in line with what the working people have every right to expect in this period."

Chief Shop Steward William Mastriani and Recording Secretary Helen Quirini sent the letter at the direction of the stewards' meeting this month.

Local 301 to Reopen Sound Truck Question

Officers of Local 301 have been instructed by the Executive Board to ask the City Council to revoke the anti-sound truck ordinance, in keeping with a recent decision of the United States Supreme Court.

The highest court held that a Lockport, N. Y. "nuisance" ordinance forbidding the use of sound trucks except by permission of the police commissioner was unconstitutional. The decision said the ordinance violated the free speech guarantee.

per cent over 1939. Food prices have now increased 45.8 per cent since OPA was killed.

The major food increases in the national price index were on necessities affecting every working family. Prices on fresh fruits and vegetables rose 6.6 per cent in the month, meats rose 5.2 per cent and dairy products rose 2.3 per cent.

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