

# ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

THE VOICE OF THE UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO & MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA — LOCAL 301, U.E.

Vol. 9 — No. 6

SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

Friday, March 30, 1951

## Piece Workers' Additional Earnings

Some piece workers may think that the pay roll additions to earnings just grew there out of generosity on the part of the G.E. Company. They happen to be an accumulation of raises won by the U.E. since 1941. For example, for every hour a piece worker has on his or her clock card they receive a substantial wage take out over and above the earnings made on the piece.

If you work on a job rated—

1.20 A.E.R. you receive 66¢ per hour or 26.40 on 40 hrs.

1.50½ A.E.R. you receive 68½¢ per hour or 27.40 on 40 hrs.

1.72 A.E.R. you receive 71¢ per hour or 28.40 on 40 hrs.

1.93½ A.E.R. you receive 72½¢ per hour or 29.00 on 40 hrs.

2.15 A.E.R. you receive 75¢ per hour or 30.00 on 40 hrs.

General Electric refused to put these increases into the A.E.R. rate because the percent of earnings on P.W. prices exceeded the timing rates to such an extent they did not want this pull out to be applied against the raises that were granted. These raises represent a large portion of the present piece workers earnings. We won them through the U.E. and we need the U.E. to protect them.

Day workers received similar increases.

## Stoppage in Turbine

The second shift on the Boring Mills in the Turbine Department stopped work when the foreman claimed a job would have to be finished even though there was no money left to pay the operators.

The price was set by comparison and estimate. The operators accepted the offer in good faith, however, pointing out that it was not enough money on the job. After the money was used up and the job was not finished, the boring mill operators complained. The foreman claimed he did not question the effort of the mill operators, while the job was in process, however, refused to grant more money.

The men refused to work for nothing, and stopped. When other workers heard of the situation, they stopped work to support the fight against the proposed cut in earnings. A Union committee was in the process of negotiating the case when we went to press.

## REPORT OF UE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

### Activities Committee Gets Louis Prima Band

U.E. Local 301 Activities Committee has made final arrangements for bringing Louis Prima and his band to Schenectady on Saturday, April 21st.

Tickets will sell for \$1.50 tax included and may be obtained from shop stewards and Executive Board members.

When you see Louis Prima, the band leader, at the State Armory on April 21st, you're also seeing one of America's top showmen.

The Prima organization, besides offering sizzling song renditions, cut up enough "capers" to keep the audience

On the very first day of national wage negotiations with GE, under the reopening clause of the National UE-GE Contract, the Company indicated that it would be very happy to get rid of the wage demands of its employees by paying out a few cents based on a cost of living escalator. The Company volunteered to seek approval from the Wage Stabilization Board of whatever few cents may "turn up" in order to treat all employees alike."

The National Negotiating Committee of the UE laid before GE a demand for a 32-cent-an-hour increase, out of Company profits, to make up for losses GE workers have suffered from price increases and speedup.

The UE Committee demanded, in addition to the 32-cents, that GE should eliminate rate discrimination against women employees, rate discrimination between plants on an area basis, and wage discrimination against day workers. The Union pointed out that GE has for a long time taken special advantage of these groups of workers.

The Company indicated its belief that collective bargaining for 1951 should be washed out by the escalator deal it made last year with the company union IUE-CIO, and by employer control over Administration wage-freezing machinery. The Company also made it plain that it hopes that its IUE deal and the WSB will eliminate any need to take care of day work rates, women's rates and area differentials as well as disposing of the general wage question.

The Negotiating Committee informed the Company that it must meet the needs of GE employees through collective bargaining, and that it cannot es-

(Continued on Page 2)

playing in the aisles or out among the audience.

Louis Prima likes to keep his audiences happy, too. The result of this heart-felt desire is constantly evident in the work of the organization. They make their audiences forget their roles as spectators to participate in one great, big, good time.

Louis Prima and his orchestra are a terrific musical aggregation plus — they play what the people want to hear and, in addition, they put on a terrific show.

IN PERSON

BE HAPPY WITH...

LOUIS PRIMA

AND HIS ORCHESTRA

The man who plays pretty for the people

laughing and wondering what's coming up next. Louis and the boys are not just a bunch of wooden pegs glued to their seats during a performance, for they're liable to get right up and start

## Stoppage— Bldg. 89

The workers in the Industrial Control Division, Bldg. 89, stopped work last Friday in protest to the answer the Company made on two cases that had been processed through the grievance procedure.

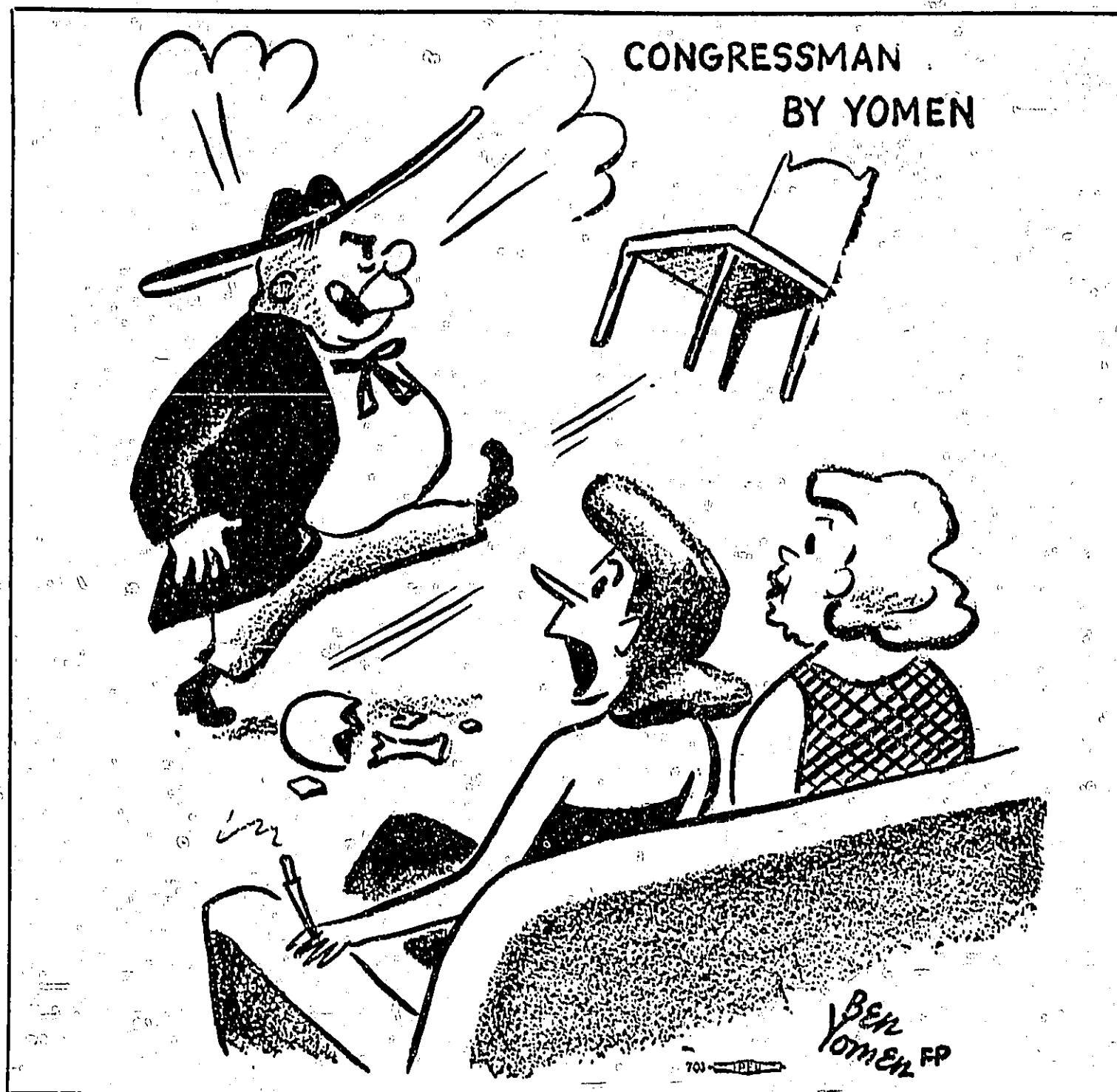
The rheostat wiremen and the developmental coil makers requested a reclassification of their job so it compared with the rates paid on other jobs requiring the same skills. After many discussions with the management on all levels, the request was turned down. The workers involved were completely dissatisfied with the Company's position. To make the situation worse, the Rate Department refused to give an adequate price on coil taping so the operators could make their regular earnings. This case was processed to local management and turned down.

The Stockroom Attendants have been complaining about their working conditions and trying to negotiate some changes during this same period with supervision and have not been able to settle their complaint.

The dissatisfaction created generally in the building through unsettled grievances caused the people involved to stop work.

The Union office notified the management that a Union committee elected by the workers in the shop stood ready to negotiate these differences, and resume work while doing so, whenever the management was ready.

At the time of going to press Tuesday no reply was made by management.



"I introduced a bill outlawing the word profits, but those dopey colleagues of mine said it wouldn't look nice."

## Frank Panzino Acquitted

Washington, D. C.—Another Federal judge threw out a frame-up case against a UE member today when Judge T. Alan Goldsborough of Federal Court acquitted Frank Panzino of UE Local 601, Pittsburgh, of the charge of "contempt of Congress".

Despite the attempt of the prosecution to frame Panzino, long a UE leader in the Pittsburgh Westinghouse plant, the Court upheld the defense put forward by UE General Counsel David Scribner who pointed out that Panzino had availed himself of the protection of the Fifth Amendment in refusing to help the Un-American Committee frame himself and others.

The outpouring of protests from UE locals and members over the jailing of UE Secretary-Treasurer Julius Emspak and Tom Quinn of UE Local 601 a few weeks ago is looked upon as weakening the case of the prosecution. This is the third consecutive acquittal of UE members in recent weeks by three different Federal Court judges. UE Director of Organization James J. Matles was acquitted by Judge Letts on March 8th. Esther Tice of UE Local 757, Cincinnati, was acquitted by Federal Judge Kirkland on March 12.

## Report of Negotiating Committee

(Continued from Page 1)

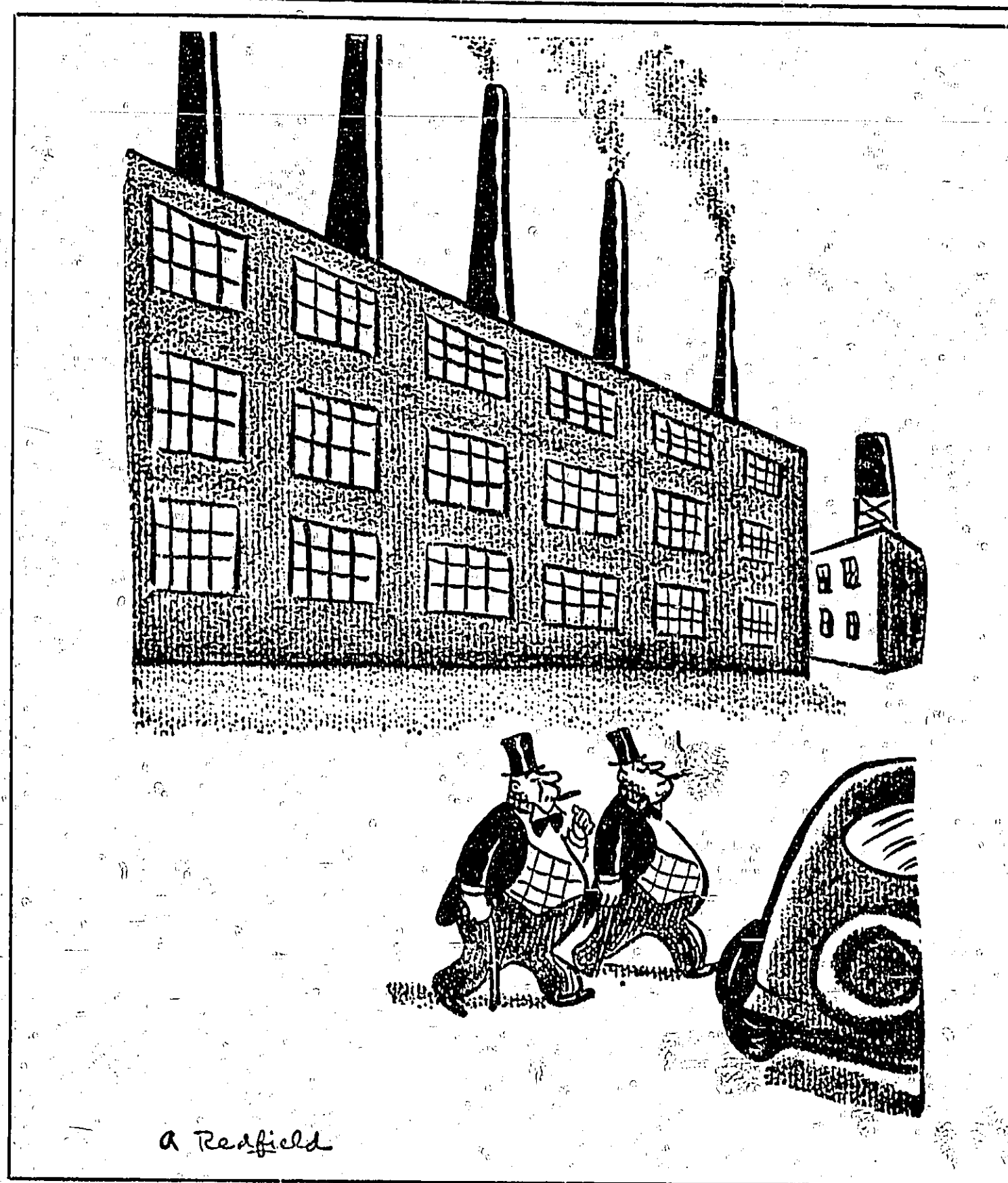
cape that necessity by deals with either company unionists or politicians.

UE's national wage negotiations with GE this spring are being conducted on behalf of all GE employees. The IUE-CIO, by the terms of its escalator deal last year, barred itself from negotiations with GE until late 1951. UE is thus carrying the wage fight for all GE plants. Support for this fight is developing everywhere in the GE chain.

After this first meeting with the Company, GE issued a press release terming the UE's 32-cent and other demands "unrealistic".

The fact is, however, that GE's profit report for the first quarter of 1951 proves that GE could pay a 32-cent-an-hour wage increase out of profits, and show a profit at the end of 1951 some twenty million dollars higher than the record-breaking \$173,000,000 it reported for 1950.

The negotiations were recessed to allow the Committee to report back to the membership. The Union is to arrange with the Company next week on a suitable date for resuming negotiations.



A Redfield

"We can always get the government to pay for expanding the plant. They wouldn't want to be called unpatriotic, would they?"

## Cost of Living Escalator Clauses

The main objective of any Union which puts the welfare of its members first is to improve the standard of living of its membership. Militant trade unions have, therefore, opposed tying workers' wages to so-called cost of living or escalator clauses. These clauses keep workers on a treadmill which prevents any improvement in their standard of living. Moreover because these cost of living clauses measure the increased cost of living by means of the extremely inadequate B.L.S. consumers price index, wages tied to these clauses actually lag far behind the true cost of living.

C.I.O. condemned cost of living formulas at the C.I.O. 1939 convention and a resolution was passed unanimously, saying: "The C.I.O. hereby condemns as pernicious and inadequate the principle that wage increases must be related to increases in cost of living as simply a way to chain labor forever to its present inadequate share in the wealth of this country".

John L. Lewis said: "I think it is well that our people should be constantly on guard, and without apology, at all times decline to accept that status that is given labor by those who say—'Oh, yes, I am perfectly willing that if the price of milk goes up in a community, wages shall be increased so that the worker can still get exactly the same amount of milk for his children'."

During World War II the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. including the U.E. cooperated on a study which showed that, while living costs had actually increased 45% between January 1941 and March 1944, the B.L.S. consumer price index showed an increase of only 22.8%. In other words a cost of living escalator clause would have given workers with a \$1.00 an hour wage an increase of 22.8 cents an hour while in order to keep up with prices, they would need to have 45 cents increase.

During the company union days the General Electric Company gave the workers a cost of living plan which was eliminated in 1941 by demand of the G.E. workers through their Union, the U.E., after years of bitter experience. (See other column on G.M. escalator.)

## Experiences at G.M. with Escalator

During the two year period from June 1948 to August 1950, under the escalator clause in the G.M.-C.I.O. auto workers' contract, the G.M. workers received a wage cut of two cents an hour from the richest corporation in the world. During that period of time decreases of 5 cents per hour cancelled out increases of 3 cents an hour based on cost of living.

Between the start of the Korean War and the end of 1950 inflation has been so great as to result in cost of living adjustments amounting to 6 cents an hour. What the G.M. workers can expect to happen under this escalator clause under their 5 year contract is shown by what happened during the past two years.

Comparison of Wages under General Motors Cost-of-Living Escalator Clause and Company Profits		
Cost of Living Quarterly Adjustment Dates	Cost of Living Quarterly Adjustments	GM Quarterly Profits
Contract signed May 29, 1948		
May 31 to Sept. 1, 1948	+3c increase	\$ 219,152,550
Sept. 1 to Dec. 1, 1948	None	213,980,878
Dec. 1, 1948 to Mar. 1, 1949	-2c cut	232,252,338
Mar. 1 to June 1, 1949	-1c cut	292,081,305
June 1 to Sept. 1, 1949	None	344,602,386
Sept. 1 to Dec. 1, 1949	None	256,041,643
Dec. 1, 1949 to Mar. 1, 1950	-2c cut	361,358,765
Mar. 1 to June 1, 1950	None	469,314,624
Total — 2-year period		\$2,388,734,489
		\$2,388,734,489
Profits per Worker for 2 years		\$5,159
Profits per Worker per Hour		\$1.29

The open charter closes  
March 31st.  
Last day to join  
free.

BE HAPPY WITH  
**Louis Prima**  
AND HIS ORCHESTRA  
The man who plays pretty for the people  
IN PERSON

**ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS**  
UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO & MACHINE  
WORKERS OF AMERICA  
SCHENECTADY GE LOCAL 301 UE

Published by the Editorial Committee  
President.....WILLIAM J. KELLY  
Vice-President.....JOSEPH MANGINO  
Recording Secretary.....JOHN P. GREEN  
Ass't Recording Secretary.....FRANK D'AMICO  
Treasurer.....HENRY KAMINSKI  
Chief Shop Steward.....JAMES COGNETTA  
Business Agent.....LEO JANDREAU  
301 LIBERTY ST. SCHENECTADY, N. Y.