

Current Events In My Section

Does G.E. Do Right Voluntarily?

by Allen E. Townsend
Asst. to Business Agent

The question as to whether the Company does right voluntarily by its workers is being asked frequently these days by the wives and families of the workers who will draw only three days pay for last week.

Some time ago the Company notified the Union that Washington's Birthday which was falling on Saturday this year would be celebrated on Friday of that week. They stated they were doing this so as to follow the school system of celebrating Washington's Birthday on Friday. At that time strong protests were lodged with the Company, complaining about the day's loss of pay. The Union Office's position was that it was unnecessary to take Friday off since Washington's Birthday fell on a Saturday. These protests fell on deaf ears and the Company remained firm in their position.

Following this, due to the snow storm of last week, the first shift workers were notified not to report to work. At this time the Company was immediately contacted. It was pointed out to them that instead of one day, two days would be lost that week. We requested that due to this, the workers losing Monday be allowed to work on Friday. This request again was turned down by the Company. A grievance was filed and a meeting was held at the step two level last Thursday. The Company stated at this meeting that it was too late now to change their plans. The fact still remains that the Company was contacted on the night of the blizzard and had plenty of time to change the holiday back to Saturday. We feel that this shows a very definite lack of concern by the Company for the welfare of its employees.

IUE-CIO 301 On the Job

IUE Local 301 handles thousands of grievances at all levels each year. These are just a few examples of cases, not settled at steward-foreman level, to be processed at management level.

Bldg. 273: The group under Shop Steward H. Podell feel that if an employee has to lose a day's work because of working Sunday, that day should be a straight time and not a premium day.

Bldg. 273: The group under Shop Steward W. McColl are protesting the layout of exciter bases being moved from its present classification to erection classification.

Bldg. 285: The group under Shop Steward P. Sipone are protesting the Company removing a piece work voucher from a job. They feel that the Company should continue payment for this job as it was done in the past.

Bldg. 60: The group under Shop Steward J. Saccocio request payment for repairing welds. They are producing normal welds and Quality Control demands perfect welds which under shop conditions

neither the men or welding experts can consistently produce.

Bldg. 273: The group under Shop Steward R. Hamilton feel that adequate time has elapsed and the Company now should be ready to establish prices in the Assembly and Connect Group.

Bldg. 273: Anthony R. Rocco who works in Shop Steward J. Sickinger's group is protesting the violation of past practices when he was not offered the new machine which will affect the work which has been assigned to him in the past.

Bldg. 49: The group under Shop Steward R. Bieling are protesting the position taken by Gas Turbine management in designating a certain period of the year as the only time vacations will be allowed. They feel that they should be able to take their vacations as they have in the past.

Bldg. 273: Stanley Jarek who works in Shop Steward J. Nichols' group is requesting a week's extension on break-in as he was not able to receive proper instructions due to a lack of work situation.

Bldg. 273: The group under Shop Steward E. Trzeciak feel that the pricing table for Heald and Blanchard Grinders should be simplified and the table explained to the operators.

Bldg. 49: The group under Shop Steward B. Sharmose feel that the exhaust system is inadequate and the employees are forced to work in an area which has a great deal of metal dust in the air. We request an adequate exhaust system to eliminate this hazard and a joint inspection with the safety engineer from central management present.

Bldg. 49: The group under Shop Steward W. Gage do not agree with Gas Turbine supervision who interpret Article XXVI of the Union-Company Agreement to mean that a man should do anything a foreman asks. They feel that good judgment should prevail and not a blanket statement which the Company applies in all matters.

Bldg. 49: The group under Shop Steward E. Meskutovecz are protesting the farming out of work to outside vendors that could be done in the Schenectady plant as there is a serious lack of work affecting employees with lengthy service.

Bldg. 49: The group under Shop Steward B. Sharmose feel that the Company should live up to the agreement made that the Pratt & Whitney Polishing Machine would go on piece work as soon as possible. They feel that this has not been done and request that this agreement be kept.

IUE-CIO LOCAL 301 NEWS

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF LOCAL 301,
REPRESENTING SCHENECTADY
GE WORKERS

Published by the Editorial Committee

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Vice President John Shambo
Treasurer Gerald O'Brien
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121 ERIE BLVD. SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

LOCAL 301 NEWS

IUE AFL-CIO

Vol. 4 — No. 27

The Voice of GE Workers, Local 301, Schenectady, N. Y.

March 14, 1958

ACTION TO BE TAKEN

Officers Recommendation Approved by Executive Board

At a meeting held on March 10th, 1958, the Officers of Local 301 expressed grave concern over the position of the Company in threatening Union representatives and members of our Union. The threatening tones of the Company at some recent meetings seem to indicate that department managers are being told to follow a pattern of intimidation.

The recommendation of the Officers which was approved by the Executive Board is as follows:

"That if any Steward, Board Member or Officer of Local 301 is penalized in any way while performing their duties, immediate action will be taken. Any penalty against a member will also be handled in the same manner.

The membership on March 17th, will be asked to approve of this motion. Local management must recognize the fact that their blue letter campaign and daily propaganda will not be swallowed by the members of the Union. The leaders of Local 301 would like to see more good bargaining done in the future on the part of local management. There is grave doubt that true collective bargaining is going on when 41 cases are on the agenda for the N. Y. Level meeting this month.

The membership of Local 301 is faced with some very basic problems created by the managers of three large departments.

A recent case in L.M. & G. refers to a letter received by the Union office which states that the company will discipline members of the union who do not report for work when called even though the group is on weekly rotation schedule. This position of the company is contrary to a long standing practice of working out a rotation schedule of work whereby the employees would receive the benefits of the Unemployment Insurance Law. The letter also stated that the Erectors in this case had gotten some ill-considered advice from their shop steward. This is certainly not the truth. The Erectors feel they do not have to be on a 24-hour notice to return to work whenever the company arbitrarily decides they are needed even if only for one day. This case will be discussed on the N. Y. Level on 3-13-58. The members of Local 301 will be notified of the disposition of this case. At that time full details of this case will be reviewed.

Another case which is going to be discussed on the N. Y. Level on 3-13-58 is the position of Gas Turbine management that their employees must work out of classification if told to by their foreman. There is much more to this case than appears on the surface. On Jan. 30th, a "Dear Fellow Employee" blue letter was issued to the employees in Gas Turbine. On Jan. 31st, another "Dear Fellow Employee" blue letter was issued. Both letters charged union representatives with interfering with a new plan the company was instituting. On Feb. 5th, a third blue letter was given to employees but this time it was not headed with "Dear Fellow Employee". Maybe because this was a letter threatening discharge to employees and therefore the employees were not to be considered "Dear Fellows"? A meeting was held on this problem and the union stated its position as to any pressure from the company against union representatives or members. We hope it is very clear to central management as well as the department managers that the members of Local 301 will not stand for this sort of thing.

Our members as well as the community must be told of these recent moves on the part of Schenectady G.E. to coerce and intimidate both members and representatives of our union. This leads up to the problem created by Steam Turbine Management.

A Board Member in Steam Turbine has been threatened with discharge. The company contends he told a union member not to work overtime. We do not have compulsory overtime in our contract and the G.E. Co. is well aware of this fact. They may think that by threats of this kind they can muzzle our union representatives but they are sadly mistaken. Our union members are doing the company a favor by working overtime for them and it should be appreciated as such. A meeting was held in Steam Turbine and it is hoped that the position the union is taking on this threat is very clear. These three cases seem to be all of the same pattern. If the Schenectady managers are getting their direction from some higher authority the leaders of Local 301 believe they should look things over very clearly before they act.

It must also be pointed out to the membership at this time that 18 cases on placement are to be discussed in N. Y. on 3-13-58. The proper placing of some members is becoming a problem which must be resolved. The membership and community are going to be informed as to the position of New York on these also.

Under our Contract our members have plant wide seniority rights. The company at this point is using every technicality they can, not to allow the longer service employees to replace shorter service people. Our Supplement clearly states how the longer service people should be placed. These cases should be settled at the second level of the grievance procedure. The company is only asking for trouble by forcing the union to go to the third step. The answer to some of the placement problems is that the company has no moral obligation only a contractual one. This the union wholeheartedly disagrees with.

Conference Board Report . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

7. Area and Sex Wage Differentials

This is also a problem which affects the question of security very greatly. Area wage differentials have become a feature of G.E. with differentials in wages amounting to 60c or more between workers in two plants doing the same type of work.

Where such differentials exist there is a tendency of employers to move work from the higher paid to the lower paid plants, therefore promoting employment insecurity in the older plants.

An agreement should be made in these negotiations to make a start in 1958 and to progressively over a reasonable period of time establish the principle that a person will be paid for what he does and not where he does it.

The same problem exists with regard to sex differentials. Where a person is paid a smaller wage because of his or her sex, that tends to increase the insecurity of people of the other sex. The problem is especially acute in the lamp plants. In some cases the most skilled female worker gets a wage either lower or barely equal to that of the male laborer. This is contrary to all engineering and job evaluation principles.

We say equal pay for equal work.

8. Reduction in Hours of Work

Employers who had cried out against labor's program for reduction of hours of work are now engaging in that program themselves. However, there is one important difference — the employer program is one of "Share the misery". Millions of workers today are on short work weeks with reduction in their weekly pay. In 26 IUE plants, hours of work are fewer than 40 hours a week.

However, labor wants the reduction of hours of work because there has been a growing surplus of labor, even during periods of prosperity, brought about by increases in productivity. Evidently productivity increased in the G.E. Chain by at least 6%.

The program of G.E. will mean either a stagnant or declining labor force especially in the older plants.

Our program calls for one of a carefully worked out reduction of hours of work without reduction in weekly or yearly pay.

We do not propose here any fixed method for such a reduction. It can come in increases in holidays and vacations, long weekends, and reduction in daily or weekly hours.

Employers have met this program of labor by wild denunciations of "tremendous costs", how it would "bankrupt industries", "promote idleness", "moonlighting" and so on.

However, it should be recalled that the same arguments have been made when the question concerned reduction from 14 to 12 to 8 hours a day.

AS I SEE IT

by CHARLES SCOTT

If there is one thing that can be said for the Schenectady daily papers it is that they don't cry depression and cause one. In fact reading the daily papers, a person would not even realize that there is a lack of work condition in the Schenectady General Electric Plant.

During the month of February, the General Electric laid off for a lack of work 252 employees and using the figures quoted in the G.E. Schenectady News of gross earnings of \$115.00 a week, it means that \$28,980.00 was lost in purchasing power in the Schenectady area.

The employees who work in the plant have been patiently waiting for the elected representatives of the people to raise their voices in their behalf, protesting the shipping out of divisions and the farming out of work done by Schenectady employees.

Perhaps the daily newspapers and our various elected representatives and various community organizations believe that if nothing is said about layoffs or jobs being moved from Schenectady, it will not happen. I am sure that if there had been a work stoppage involving 252 members for a month, there would be banner headlines proclaiming this to the public.

As much as I hate to disillusion anyone who is that naive as to be-

lieve the General Electric propaganda line that whatever jobs are lost by Schenectady General Electric will ultimately be to Schenectady's advantage, the fact is that G.E. is growing steadily larger nationwide while the size of the Schenectady plant is decreasing.

We wish that small businessmen in the Schenectady area and those employees who have lost their jobs due to General Electric's runaway program for higher profits would join forces and start to ask when will the community realize that Schenectady's economy cannot stand many more February 1958 losses of \$28,980.00 in purchasing power and still exist as a solvent community.

NOTICE

Pensioners Meeting

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Wed., March 19, 1958

2:00 P.M.

UNION AUDITORIUM
121 Erie Blvd.

Workers Pay High Price for 'Right-to-Work'

Here are the latest official Labor Department figures showing average hourly factory wages in June 1957 in different "pairs" of neighbor States:

WAGES IN 'RIGHT-TO-WORK' STATES WITH NO UNION SHOP		WAGES IN NEIGHBOR STATES PERMITTING FREE UNIONISM	
Virginia, \$1.61	West Virginia, \$2.10	Tennessee, \$1.65	Kentucky, \$1.98
Mississippi, \$1.40	Louisiana, \$1.94	Arkansas, \$1.46	Missouri, \$1.98
Texas, \$2.04	New Mexico, \$2.19	Iowa, \$2.05	Illinois, \$2.19
Nebraska, \$1.87	Kansas, \$2.08	South Dakota, \$1.79	Minnesota, \$2.08
North Dakota, \$1.82	Montana, \$2.21	Utah, \$2.25	Wyoming, \$2.40
Nevada, \$2.53	Idaho, \$2.10	Arizona, \$2.25	California, \$2.33

Of these 12 pairs of States, only one "right-to-work" State—Nevada—has higher average wages than its neighboring free union State. Why should that be? Unionists know the answer well: Where unions are free and strong, wages rise. Where unions are hampered and weak, wages lag. Six States with "right-to-work" laws have been omitted from these

comparisons. Five of them—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina—have no free unionism neighbor States. In all of these States, average wages are low, ranging from \$1.44 to \$1.77 last June. The sixth omitted State, Indiana, passed its wreck law only last year. There hasn't yet been time to measure that law's effect on Indiana wages.

Our 1958 Negotiations

As one condition for signing the agreement with G.E. in 1955, we insisted that provision be made for full negotiations on the question of Employment Security.

The present contract provides that: Upon written notice from the Union to the Company not more than 60 days and not less than 30 days prior to Sept. 30, 1958, collective bargaining negotiations shall commence between the parties on Sept. 1, 1958, for the purpose of considering proposals for contracting with regards to employment security which may be submitted by either the Union or the Company. If no agreement is reached thereon by Oct. 1, 1958, the Union and its Locals shall have the right to strike.

This language is perfectly clear. Contrary to the impression that G.E. steadily tries to create, this contract deals with "collective bargaining negotiations". It says nothing about "conversations", "discussions", or a "review".

Further, the contract refers to "Any Question directly relating to employment security". It does not limit negotiations to the guaranteed annual wage or SUB in their various forms.

Finally, the contract provides for the right to strike "if no agreement is reached by Oct. 1, 1958".

At the time that we made the demand for this type of negotiations, we were informed by G.E. officials that the only problem of unemployment was some queer fears in the minds of a few members of the Negotiating Committee, and in reality there was nothing to be concerned about.

In view of the present recurrence of unemployment, we see how right we were to insist that provisions be made to deal with the problem by full negotiations.

NOTICE

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Monday, Mar. 17, 1958

2nd Shift—1:00 p.m.
1st and 3rd Shifts—7:30 p.m.

Report of Committees
Regular Order of Business

Union Auditorium
121 Erie Blvd.

Violation of Seniority by Tube Management

The following case shows that Tube Management not only disregards seniority but also that they think they can break agreement as well. Docket #7798 points out these facts. A class "A" Tube Assembler was bumped on 4/30/57; at that time a release date of September 15th, was given as the Company said it would require some time to train a woman to replace her. On September 16th, a grievance was filed, pointing out that the Company was not living up to their release date and furthermore were not properly instructing her replacement. In answering, the foreman said her replacement was not showing progress and he was moving her to a new job.

After a meeting in the department, the Company agreed to upgrade three Class "B" Assemblers to Class "A" and gave a new release date of 12/31/57. Needless to say, the Company did not live up to this release date either.

On January 15th, a N. Y. case was filed, and after reaching N. Y., it was brought back to the department to see if it could be resolved. At that time the department would only give a new release date of July 11th, 1958. Union representatives again talked this case in the department, pointing out that this date was unsatisfactory and should be changed. The Union pointed out that the department was in violation by trying to keep this woman on the job while longer service women had left. The Company used the excuse that this woman was on a job which would not be completed for months and they needed her. If this job and some of the other jobs that this department manager says are so highly scientific and involved that it takes months and months of breaking in, maybe an evaluating committee should look over the whole department and pay the proper rates for this work.

The Union and the people of the Tube Department are tired of trying to negotiate this case. The case is being sent to N. Y. on a violation by this department. It will not be brought back without being a legally cleared case. The Union will notify the people involved when this case has been to the third step and what the disposition is.

We are offering our condolences to the family of Herbert Dietz of Central Bridge who recently met with a fatal accident while working on his job in Bldg. 16.

IUE Local 301 Files Compliance Data

The non-Communist affidavits of all IUE Local 301 officers and a financial statement as required by Taft-Hartley have been forwarded to the National Labor Relations Board this month.

The financial statement follows:

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ELECTRICAL, RADIO AND MACHINE WORKERS
AFL-CIO, LOCAL 301

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR YEAR
JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 1957

INCOME:	
Dues and Initiation Fees	\$560,962.58
Administrative Income for Services to wholly owned building Corp.	9,719.77
Interest Income	259.34
Miscellaneous	535.23
	\$571,476.92
Less:	
National Per Capita	\$240,393.00
District No. 3 Per Capita	24,033.75
State CIO	3,204.50
Schenectady Per Capita	3,204.50
	270,835.75
Income Available for Administration	\$300,641.17
Administrative Expenses	
Reimbursement from Time Lost from Work in Union Activities	\$134,643.52
Salaries, Supplies, etc. for Union Grievance Dept.	32,465.34
Salaries, Supplies, etc. for Union Business Office	23,911.97
Rent, Janitor Services, Supplies, Machinery, Repairs, Maintenance and Other General Expenses	53,963.11
Attorney's Fees, Secretarial and Supplies for Aid to injured employees	16,107.14
Locals Union Newspaper (Printing)	7,599.60
Payroll Taxes	7,744.79
Insurance	5,313.60
Cost of Pension Plan for Employees of the Union	24,560.32
Convention & Conferences	4,659.33
Donations	1,844.50
Special Events Expense	4,460.15
Total	\$317,273.37
Net Loss for Year	\$(—16,632.20)
General Fund Deficit for 1956	96.04
Deficit for 1957—	
This Year	\$16,632.20
Prior Year Unemploy. Ins. Adjustment	1,101.62
	17,733.82
	\$(—17,829.86)
Total Assets as of Dec. 31, 1957.	
Bldg. & Defense Fund*	\$313,938.63
Less General Fund Deficit	17,829.86
	\$296,108.77

* Includes wholly owned building corporation (E.U.H. Inc.)

IS YOUR FELLOW WORKER A UNION MEMBER?

IT PAYS TO BELONG TO THE UNION

New Republican Unemployment Bill Still Contains Same Built-In Strike-Breaking Weapon and Same Penalties

Through the efforts of the State and Local 301 Legislative Committee, the Republicans have come up with a compromised unemployment bill. This bill accepts labor's proposal that benefits be \$45 for earnings of \$90 or more—the 50% principle—instead of \$100 or more as in the most recently vetoed G.O.P. bill.

The new bill also reduces slightly the increase in tax rates in seasonal industries, but could still be reduced a great deal more.

The built-in strike breaking weapon still remains. Here is how it would work. Under the present law, an employer must post \$10 for each benefit claim he challenges, and, if he wants to appeal further, he must post the sum of \$25 for each appeal. In some cases, unions and employers have agreed to permit a single case decision to cover other similar cases, but these cases were all voluntary on the part of the Union.

The bill would permit an employer—without consulting or getting the union's agreement, to block payment of benefits for months by posting one \$10 bill to protest any number of claims, and one sum of \$25 to appeal any number of cases. Thus after work-

ers locked out or on strike had waited the required seven weeks before getting Unemployment Insurance benefits, they could be blocked for many months by an employer for only \$35.

The harsher penalty provisions still remain. Here is how they would work: Under the present law, a worker who quits a job voluntarily or is fired for cause or refuses what the state agency calls "a suitable job offer", has to serve a waiting period penalty for six or seven weeks, but he can wipe out that penalty by getting bona fide employment. Under the bill such bona fide employment would not wipe out the penalty once the worker applied for benefits. Regardless of why he later lost his job, he would have to serve the penalty. This harsh provision must be stricken out of the present Bill.

ACTION! ACTION!

Write or telegraph without delay to your Assemblymen, Senators, to the leaders of the Republican majority and to the Governor—stating the reasons for your opposition to this bill and urging their support of your position—Urge them to back any bill to provide increased benefits without Crippling Amendments to the law.

PENSIONERS' NEWS

Some very important issues pertaining to people on a fixed income and people close to being pensioned are to be discussed at the next pensioners' gathering. These people involved should realize that words alone never resolve everything. A concerted effort on everybody's part is extremely necessary.

Here is what one I.U.E. official had to say in Pittsfield, Mass., at a meeting of the newly organized I.U.E. Retired Workers of America Assn. The official of the I.U.E. stated that G.E. has failed to follow thru on a 1955 promise to voluntarily hike pensions for retired G.E. workers.

Joseph Swire of Washington, D. C., Director of I.U.E.'s Pension, Health and Welfare Dept., told a meeting of G.E. pensioners that the promise was made orally to J. H. Callahan, Chairman of the I.U.E.'s G.E. Conference Board and a former Business Agent of I.U.E. Local 255.

Swire said the alleged promise on pension increases was not written into the contract. The I.U.E.

economist substituted for Callahan as the main speaker and verified the statement by rectifying it with Callahan.

Charging G.E. with a breach of faith, Swire said "they haven't done it yet". G.E., he said, has 700 million dollars in its pension fund and can afford better health and welfare coverage and can afford larger pensions for retired workers.

Another important point that should be brought forth is the fact that Pres. of G.E. Cordiner did not personally answer a letter sent to him by G.E.R.W.A. delegates requesting him to meet with them to discuss the inadequate pension and hospitalization plan of the G.E. Co., and also for ignoring the request for a meeting.

It was also agreed that no more letters be sent to Mr. Cordiner at this time but that all I.U.E. Locals would expose the snub given to the pensioners.

Incidentally, the Mayor of Pittsfield, a Mr. Raymond Haughey, is a member of Local 255, IUE-CIO.