

## Workmen's Compensation

### Compensation Benefits For Injured Workers

(This is the fourth in a series of articles on Workmen's Compensation written by Leon Novak, the Union's lawyer.)

In my last article in the Electrical Union News, I pointed out that injured workers are entitled to have their medical expenses paid for by the Company. Such expenses include not only the doctors' bills, but also hospital bills, druggists' bills, and even the cost of traveling to and from the doctor's office.

A worker who is getting medical treatment after an accident, may very often continue to work without a break in his service, even while under a doctor's care, because his condition is not serious enough to require him to stay away from his work. In such cases, the worker continues to get his medical bills paid for by the Company but fortunately, since he does not have to stay away from work, he does not have to fall back on only \$32 a week compensation for time lost from work due to his injury. Other injuries may be more serious and require a worker to stay away from his work for a period of time. Such workers will, after a 7-day waiting period, receive \$32 a week maximum compensation, depending on his previous earnings, while he is forced to stay away from his work.

In addition, however, both types of workers, those who have continued to work after an injury as well as those who have returned to work after some absence from work, may find themselves in a position where they cannot earn as much after the accident as before the accident. Such workers are entitled to receive two-thirds of the reduction in their earnings with a maximum up to \$32 a week while they are working providing they can show that the reduction in their earnings came from their injuries.

Thus, it will be seen that an injured worker is entitled to receive:

1. His medical, hospital and drug bills paid for by the Company, and also
2. Compensation for lost time from work and a part of his reduced earnings, if his lowered earning capacity comes from his injuries.

No worker is entitled under our present law to an additional money settlement or award if he has only a temporary injury from which he has fully recovered. He can get such a settlement if he has a permanent injury resulting from his accident and which cannot, in

## FACTS FOR G. E. WORKERS

The living standards of the American people including General Electric workers are being undermined by soaring prices, increased productivity and speed-up and unfair taxes.

### 1. Wages vs. Profits

Between January 1945 and January 1951 weekly wages of General Electric workers increased 33 percent. The General Electric Company's profit increased 194 percent.

G.E. workers' purchasing power is less than it was in 1945 by approximately 5.15 per week. The G.E. Company's profit for 1950 was \$173,400,000 after taxes.

### 2. Increased Output vs. Profits

Between 1945 and 1950 the output of the average General Electric worker increased 26 percent. This contributed to the huge profits, so at the end of 1950 the Company was making approximately \$2,015 profit a year from each worker.

Even with a 32 cents an hour wage increase for all employees its profit per worker would still be at the annual rate of \$1,542.

### 3. Wages below Minimum Budget

G.E. workers do not possess a minimum adequate standard of living according to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics figures. This Government Bureau claims a family of four needs \$3,888 a year. The average annual earnings for G.E. workers is \$3,500 a year. Based on figures of the more authoritative Heller Committee of the University of California, a family of four requires \$4,263 a year.

### 4. Wages vs. Dividends

In February 1951 after the wage freeze General Electric voted a 25 percent increase in dividends, mainly benefitting the top 3 percent of the Company's stockholders, who hold 62 percent of the stock. Since 1945 dividend payments have increased 163 percent.

### 5. Prices vs. Profits

While wages are frozen, all items purchased by the military departments are exempted from price control until April 1, 1951. Thereafter the exemption will continue to apply to all heavy weapons and equipment.

Economic Stabilizer Johnston states that companies' higher prices charged the Government have already eaten up the 4 1/2 billion dollars tax increase of last fall obtained largely from the pay envelopes of wage earners.

### 6. Workers' Savings vs. Company Reserves

According to the U. S. Federal Reserve Board the average worker in 1950 had savings of only \$150.00 in bank accounts. The average G.E. worker who buys a house is lucky if he can repay the mortgage in 20 years. The G.E. on the other hand has undistributed profits amounting to \$506,000,000 even after the payment of dividends of over 1.4 billion dollars. In addition the Company spent \$500,000,000 after World War II to buy new plants and equipment, \$200,000,000 of which it had to borrow. Although most of this loan was not due until 1966, the Company has repaid all of it out of its huge profits and is planning a further expansion program.

### 7. Taxes vs. Profits

Taxation is supposed to be based on ability to pay, but the average worker with two children making \$3,300.00 a year pays over \$700.00 in Federal, State, city and indirect taxes. During World War II corporations like G.E. paid 75% of its profits in Federal taxes. The law at that time was criticized by President Roosevelt as "relief for the greedy and not for the needy". But in 1950 with profits greater than World War II General Electric paid only 53% of its profits in taxes.

### 8. Women Workers vs. Profit

In 1945 a labor board found that exploitation of women existed in G.E. The board recommended a 4c general wage increase for women with certain exceptions plus a fund of 2c an hour as a step in elimination of differentials.

To this day the Company has refused to go along with these minimum recommendations, making only minor adjustments in jobs worked on by women. Some women's rates are 9c an hour below common labor for production jobs in the Schenectady Works.

the opinion of the doctors, improve or get better.

Next week I will discuss the difference between temporary and permanent injuries and give examples to explain them.

It should be remembered that your Union pays for legal representation for union members in compensation cases in order to help the injured worker to get the maximum benefits to which he may be entitled to under the law.

# ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

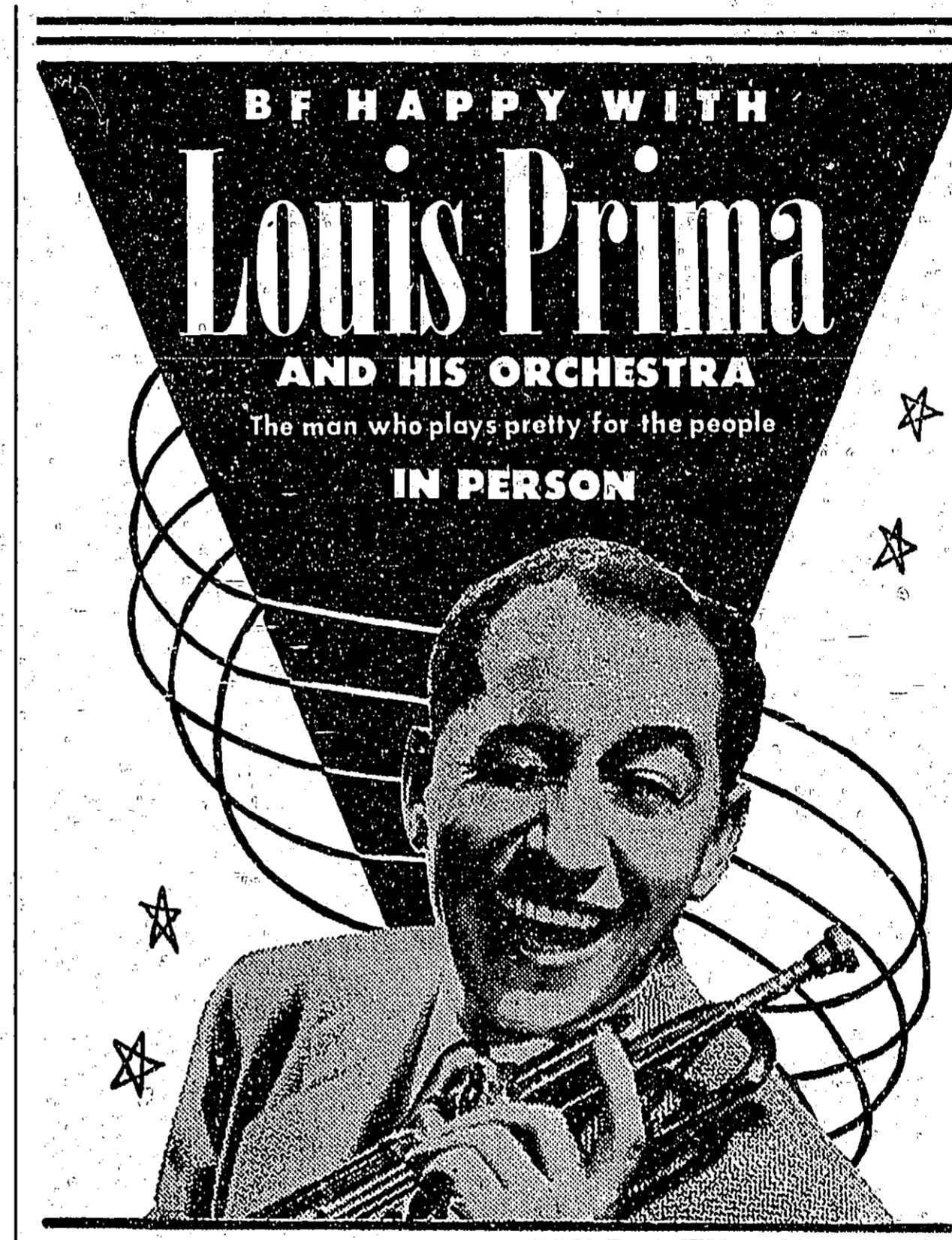
THE VOICE OF THE UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO & MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA — LOCAL 301, U.E.

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Friday, April 13, 1951

## March 15th Effective Date On Wage Increase



Louis Prima, the gravel-throated thrumpeter, who opens at the Armory on Saturday, April 21, with his swell bunch of music-makers, has built himself up to one of the foremost In Person band favorites in the land by his strictly "on the beam" rhythm, his super-singing of novelties and the all-round entertainment value offered by his organization.

A unique combination of top drawer modern swing idiom and the old style New Orleans jazz has made Louis' music a "must" for dancing feet and for those who just like to listen, as well. Louis' torrid trumpeting adds no little to the enjoyment of both classes.

The Prima band of fine dance music has been featured at many of America's finest clubs and hotels, including the Ho-

tel Astor in New York City, the Meadowbrook in New Jersey, the Hotel Sherman in Chicago and the Park Central in New York City.

On stage, Louis' throaty voice, his growling trumpet and his many shenanigans and the all-round sparkle of his band's show have long made the Prima outfit one of the top box-office draws in the land. At such theatres as the Earle in Philadelphia, the RKO in Boston, the Palace in Cleveland and many others throughout the land, Louis has drawn terrific box-office. At the Strand Theatre in New York in 1945, he broke the all-time attendance and box-office record.

Tickets are \$1.50 per person including tax and are available through any of the shop stewards or Executive Board members.

The National Negotiations Committee of the G.E.-U.E. Conference Board met with the Company again last Wednesday and Thursday, April 4th and 5th.

In response to the Union's demand for a 32 cents per hour increase, the Company indicated their willingness to apply to the War Stabilization Board for approval in granting what they thought looked like 9 cents to 11 cents per hour, effective March 15, 1951. They claimed what ever increase was made would effect all employees. The approval would be sought on the basis that anything over 4 to 5 cents would require approval of the W.S.B. under the present 10 per cent formula.

The U.E. committee notified the Company representatives that the offer was entirely inadequate. They further notified the Company that this offer was merely the I.U.E.-C.I.O. deal made by the Company last year, which tied the hands of that group of workers, preventing them from making a fight for a substantial raise this year. The Union committee pointed out that the I.U.E. had given up the fight for day workers and women's rates last year along with the opportunity for a substantial increase.

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### Officers and Executive Board Meet with Manager

The officers and Executive Board members of U.E. Local 301 met Wednesday at a specially arranged meeting to talk to Mr. Lewis J. Male, Manager of the Schenectady Works. The issues discussed were:

1. Day workers' rates including craft rates.
2. Women's rates and discrimination.
3. Grievances and procedures.

The Union leadership informed Mr. Male that the increases granted to 4,000 workers last year resulted in discrimination against the 6,000 day workers who did not receive the additional 5c per hour. While the additional increase was originally planned for craft rates, it was applied in the semi-skilled and unskilled brackets. While highly skilled jobs were left out entirely many semi-skilled jobs were increased, while jobs requiring equal skill were left out.

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## I.U.E.-C.I.O. Disturbed By G.M. Story

In the last issue of the E.U. News we gave the results of the cost of living escalator clause in the General Motors, United Auto Workers contract during a period from May 31, 1948 to June 1, 1950, that resulted in a 2c per hour cut in wages over that two year period.

It must have hit a soft spot because the I.U.E.-C.I.O. in their last leaflet spent most of their space trying to apologize for it.

It is true we did not include in our cost of living story the other provision in the G.M. contract affecting wages, and that is the provision giving the General Motors Corporation the right to speed up the workers and in turn will give them what they term a production increase raise of 4c each year during the life of the five year agreement. The G.E. workers received 8 per cent in 1948 and 10c in 1950, over the same period.

The best answer to the I.U.E.-C.I.O. on the General Motors — U.A.W. escalator provision is covered in a statement by Walter Reuther of the U.A.W. Union:

"On July 9, 1949, just before the CIO Convention, Reuther reaffirmed the 'historic opposition' of the union to escalator wage clauses, and said that it was 'an experiment that would not be repeated'. He said that the Union no longer would be willing to accept pay cuts at any time because of decreases in the cost of living." —New York Times, July 10, 1949)

Also, a statement by Reuther and Johnstone on March 6, 1950, taken from the U.A.W. news organ:

"We deeply regret that the General Motors Corporation has taken advantage of the drop in the Bureau of Labor Statistics cost of living index and reduced the wages of its workers by two cents per hour . . . We contend that the profit position of General Motors makes such a reduction morally indefensible. When the contract was signed, it was hardly anticipated that GM would set a world record of more than \$600 million profits after taxes."

## U. E. Local 301 Approves Supplement

An Agreement restoring continuity of service to those members who lost their service because they had withdrawn their pension contributions has been worked out between the Company and the Union, and was approved by the April membership meeting. It is expected that the official signing will take place this week.

In a number of instances, especially during the layoffs in 1949, laid off G.E. workers were compelled by necessity to withdraw the contributions which they had paid into the Pension Fund. The Company took the position that withdrawal of pension contributions was equivalent to quitting.—The Company said that by quitting employees broke their service and had no right to recall in order of length of service. The new Pension plan negotiated by the U.E. and now a part of the contract provides for loans in such future situations.

The approved supplement provides for employment and reinstatement of service for those employees in our bargaining unit covered by the contract who lost

their service between September 1946 and February 1, 1951 as a result of withdrawing their pension money. It further provides for full employee benefits, such as vacations, insurance and pensions, after reinstatement.

The Union considers this Agreement as a move towards the elimination of the injustices in the past of breaking the service records of many employees.

## Fitzpatrick and Haley Acquitted

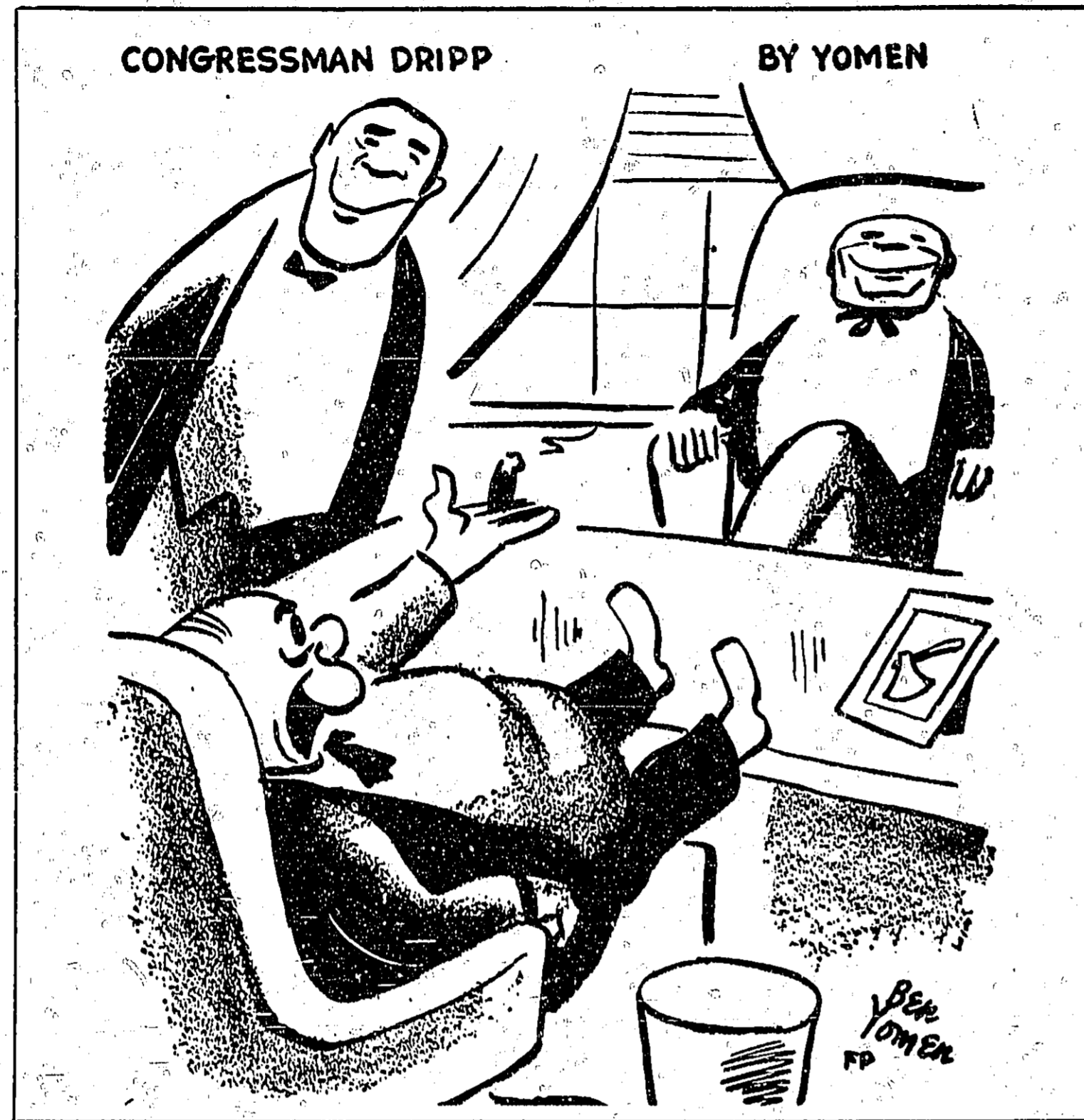
Tom Fitzpatrick of Local 601 and Talmadge Raley of Local 766 were acquitted of the charge of contempt of Congress.

They both appeared before the Un-American Activities Committee and refused to frame other Union members. They asserted their constitutional rights by using the first and fifth amendment.

Seven leaders of U.E. were charged with contempt of Congress by the Un-American Activities Committee. All seven took the same position of asserting their constitutional rights. Five were acquitted. The two remaining cases affecting Fimpak of Local 301 and Tom Quinn of Local 601 are awaiting appeal.

CONGRESSMAN DRIPP

BY YOMEN



"The kind of price control we have now is fine, boys. DiSalle practically orders you to raise prices."

## March 15th Effective Date On Pay Increase

(Continued from Page 1)

The U.E. committee claimed they were not going to make such settlement for our membership.

The employees of the G.E. Company are composed of 57½ per cent day workers and approximately 31 per cent are women. In the Schenectady Works 10,000 are day workers, and 6,000 incentive workers. These workers have felt the increased cost of living as well as the increased output of production and must be considered by a substantial raise.

The committee called upon the Company to examine these problems in more detail before the next meeting. Insofar as the W.S.B. 10 per cent formula is concerned, first it was conveniently adjusted upwards to allow John Lewis' miners to get their raise. Likewise, a million railroad workers have negotiated a raise that exceeds the 10 per cent formula. The thousands of workers represented by the Packing House Workers' Union, the Shipyard Workers' Union, and the Textile Workers' Union have negotiated increases that exceeded the 10 per cent formula and have not been approved as yet.

The U.E. also has negotiated increases for over 20,000 members that are waiting for approval. Without any doubt something will be done about the present formula of the W.S.B. The G.E. Company knows this better than anyone else.

The wage meetings were recessed until a later date to continue discussions.

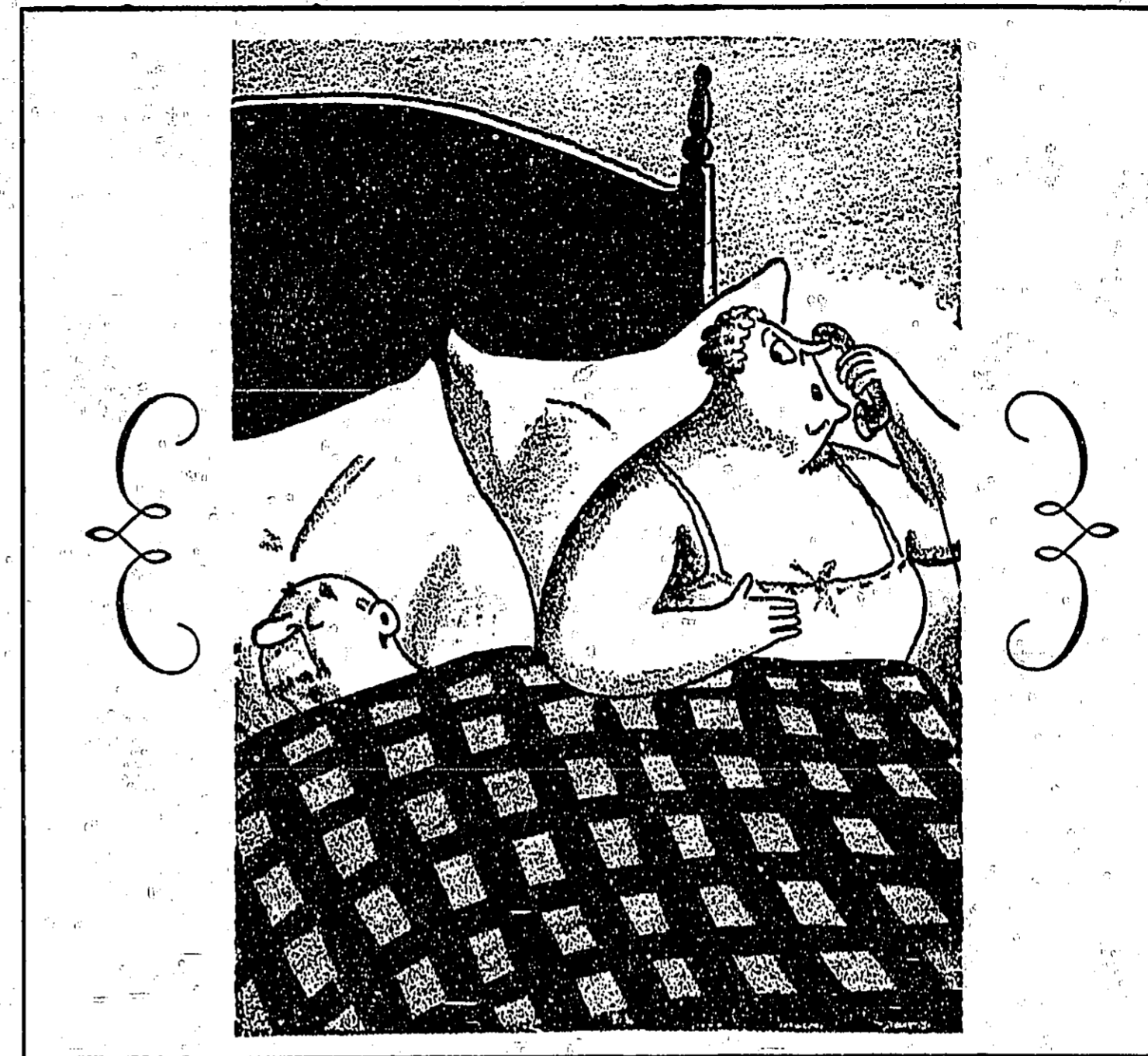
## Officers and Executive Board Meet with Manager

(Continued from Page 1)

The committee pointed out that women's jobs have increased by placing women on jobs formerly done by men and setting up lower job values. Women are being used on highly complicated work and are not being paid on an equal basis with the men.

The officers and Board members complained about the disposition of grievances processed to management. They informed the plant manager that the shop foreman has no authority to settle a grievance. His authority on labor relations has been completely removed. The foreman now acts as a go-between the department labor relations head and the shop steward. If the issue is prices or job rate, the Rate Dept. takes over and makes decisions.

The Union officials served notice to management that the day work rates must be adjusted satisfactorily before a final settlement could be reached nationally on wages.



"The poor darling is simply exhausted. He stayed up nearly all night figuring out ways for his workers to sacrifice."

## Veteran Requests Co-Workers to Write

John J. Delaney, a veteran of World War II, is in the U. S. Veterans Hospital at Castle Point, N. Y. John formerly worked in Bldg. 273 as a boring mill Operator. He went out sick back in 1949, and has a compensation case pending proving his present condition resulted from his employment.

He is the father of three children. His wife and the children are living at Greenfield Ave., Ballston Spa.

John wants to know about what is going on in the shop and requests his former co-workers to drop him a line at the hospital.

## Turbine Grievance Settled

In the last issue of the E.U. News we reported a stoppage in the Turbine Department, affecting a price on the Boring Mills.

The money had run out and the foreman requested the operators to complete the job for nothing. When we went to press, the case was in the process of negotiation.

A shop committee reported the case was settled satisfactorily. The Boring Mill Operators were asking for \$400.00 on the job; it was settled for \$399.50. We compromised.

## It Does Not Pay To Tell A Lie

In the last issue of the I.U.E.-C.I.O. leaflet they stated that U.E. Local 506 in Erie G.E. had only 2,500 dues paying members. Well, that is a wopper of the usual size.

We don't know the actual strength of the Local 506 membership, but we are informed that the I.U.E. was only quoting the Apparatus Department in Erie, which employs approximately 2,700 people. The 2,500 members check-off against the 2,700 in this department.

While these lies spread about us irk us no end, it also calls upon us to call their bluff. We are not the gambling type, we assure you, because if we were, the Kefauver Committee would not have missed us we can assure you again. But in this wild statement the Editors of this paper are willing to make a wager of any amount of money, giving the I.U.E. the odds at the rate of 10 to 1, that the U.E. Local 506 in Erie, Pa., represents more than the alleged 2,500 dues paying members. In fact, we will up that alleged membership double and make the same wager on 5,000 dues paying members. The winnings to go to some worthy, charity organization.

What do you say, I.U.E.? It may pay to tell a lie!

### ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

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