

City Council Refuses to Take Action On Taft-Hartley; Rejects 301 Demand

The Schenectady City Council Monday night listened politely to 10 Local 301 speakers, from a large delegation of Executive Board members, shop stewards and rank-and-filers, urge a clear-cut stand for repeal of Taft-Hartley.

Then the council decided unanimously to do nothing in the matter. (See report adopted by membership, page 1).

Majority Leader Clarence Bradshaw said the Republican councilmen "don't feel it is our prerogative to voice the sentiment of any particular group of citizens on a national issue."

Statement by Hilliard

Democratic Leader Arthur D. Hilliard said it was not proper for the council to appear to speak on behalf of the people of Schenectady on a matter that does not properly fall within the legislative purview of our office." He added an attack on Local 301 because of the candidacy of its former president, Andrew Peterson, for Congress.

Republican Councilman Charles W. Merriam said he had "no proof" that the union delegation present "speaks for the majority of labor."

Mayor Owen M. Begley said "we have not vacillated."

One of the council members, Charles McGann, is a member of 301.

Jandreau Keynote

The union viewpoint was keynoted by Business Agent Leo Jandreau, who said "it is the responsibility of anyone who has any influence to speak out for the repeal of Taft-Hartley."

Pointing out that industry did very well under the Wagner Act, Jandreau declared:

"GE is not settling grievances today the way they did under the Wagner Act. If this leads to labor trouble, the people who had the opportunity to do something about Taft-Hartley will bear a responsibility for it."

Other 301 Speakers

Vice-President William Hodges declared a City Council resolution would carry "a lot of weight."

Steven Borovicka of Building 105 said:

"I am a shop steward. My members sent me. They want to know if the City Council will take a stand."

Other 301 members who spoke were William Downs, treasurer, John Green, assistant recording

Boulware Statements In Need of Debunking

The Works News of April 15 ended its Boulware series on GE's support of Taft-Hartley before the Senate Labor Committee.

The piece declared that under the Wagner Act an employer's right to "free speech was severely curtailed."

This is about as barefaced an untruth as any yet thought up about labor laws. Court decisions under the Wagner Act left employers completely free to express their opinions of unions and working conditions, even with a measure of intimidation.

What the employers looked for and got in the Taft-Hartley law was free license to campaign against unions even during working hours, to spread lies and slander, and verbally to intimidate and coerce workers through foremen and other agents.

Taft-Hartley severely restricts the free speech of workers by limiting picketing and boycotting.

The last Boulware piece also opposed unions for foremen, and declared that "supervisors are management." Local 301 shop stewards can answer that. They have found that foremen have no authority to make decisions, and are mainly messengers and buffers for higher supervision. Foremen need unions just about as badly as the workers they are supposed to direct.

The last paragraph gives away GE's idea of "good" unionism. It declares that encouraging employers to speak up on union matters "would bring genuine comfort to many sincere union leaders." What kind of union leaders want the employer's guidance?

Did You Know?

Industrial engineers estimate that an increase in speed-up of 5 per cent would throw three million workers out of their jobs throughout the nation.

secretary, Board Members James Cognetta, Dewey Brashear, Willard Kuschel, and William Mastriani, and Shop Steward Harold Rollins of Building 19.

Thanks



"And now that we've voted ourselves bonuses, let's discuss why we can't grant any wage boosts to our workers."

GE Starts New Year With Bigger Profit

With fewer workers General Electric profits are continuing to rise, the report to GE stockholders revealed Tuesday at the annual meeting in the new turbine building.

During the first quarter of 1949 GE cleared \$26,702,978 profit after taxes, a gain of more than 5 per cent over the \$25,389,149 profit in the January-through-March period last year.

The company reported there was a 3 per cent drop in employment in the past three months, from 198,554 as of Dec. 1, 1948, to 192,307 as of Mar. 31. This is a net decrease of 6,247 in the over-all figure. This net reduction does not contradict the 14,500 lay-off figure announced by UE. The fact that GE has hired some new workers in new plants opened in low-

Just Another Example Of Gazette Coverage

The workings of the "free" press:

Wednesday's Gazette gave a big play to a statement by Business Agent Keith Rockwell of AFL Steamfitters' Local 128 saying that a member who spoke against Taft-Hartley at the City Council meeting Monday did not represent the local. The man had told the council publicly he spoke for himself only.

But the same Gazette did not find room for the report on the City Council action adopted unanimously by the 301 membership meeting Tuesday night. It was given to the Gazette Tuesday night in ample time to handle.

wage areas can't change the lay-off figures for other GE plants. And it doesn't remove those laid-off workers from the jobless rolls.

ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

THE VOICE OF LOCAL 301

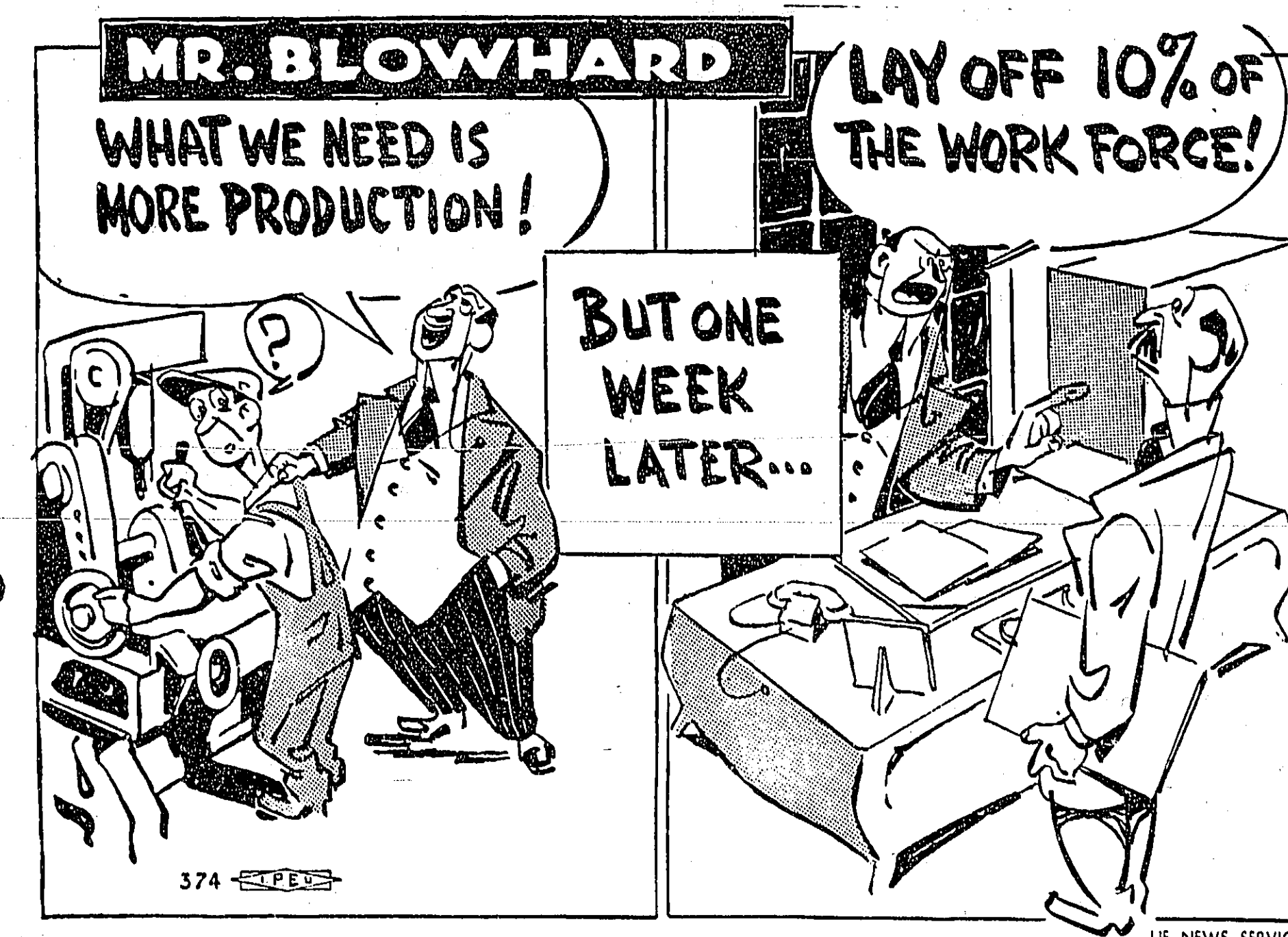
U. E. R. & M. W. A.

C. I. O.

Vol. 7—No. 17

SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

April 29, 1949



Control Division Lay-offs Pending

Between 200 and 250 workers in the Control Division will be given lay-off notices in the next four weeks, A. C. Stevens, assistant to the works manager, advised Local 301 this week.

In the meantime, 900 workers will lose a day a week, almost all on Mondays, for up to four weeks, Stevens said, while the lay-off lists are being made up. He said the workers involved were on "contributing operations," mainly machine, punch press, and coil winding.

Stevens said final assembly was behind and would not be affected now. The people affected are in Buildings 53, 69, 73, 89, and 285.

Stevens said there had been cancellations and a general let-down in orders for Control products, and that warehouses were "bulging" with these products. Production has been running ahead on the preliminary operations going into the assembly of these products, he said.

A meeting with the union will be arranged shortly to review the whole employment picture, Stevens

UE Board Statement on CIO Policies

A statement vigorously criticizing national CIO officials for departing from the original CIO policies was adopted by the UE General Executive Board Sunday. The UE Board declared that the CIO must return "to organizing the unorganized and advancing the interest of its members." (The full statement will be in the national UE News May 2.)

The UE Board stated that: "UE will fight against the arbitrary abolition of CIO unions by order from the top and against all efforts to infringe upon the autonomous rights of affiliated CIO International Unions."

"UE will fight against red-baiting, raiding and disruption of CIO unions carried on by CIO officials and by officials of other CIO unions."

Want Rank-and-File Control "UE will fight for democratic, rank and file unionism based upon the interests of the membership and free from outside interference from government, employers, political parties, religious groups, or said."

Earlier in the week 17 men and women were given lay-off notices in Building 69, seven in Building 10C, two in 10, 12 in 85 and six in 109. Temporary lost time involved groups in 10, 10C, 109, and 285.

UE Campaign For Increased Wages Urged

The UE General Executive Board has voted to recommend to all UE conference boards and locals "that they work out their demands for the coming negotiations within the framework of an increase of \$500 per year per employee in wages and salaries, pension improvements and health programs and other economic benefits."

The proposal will be brought before a special meeting of the GE Conference Board of UE locals within the next two weeks.

Must Increase Buying Power

In a statement adopted Sunday in New York City, the General Executive Board said UE members need "an immediate increase in their purchasing power, an improved standard of living and a reduction of the hours of work in order to halt the present trend of mounting lay-offs, part-time employment and falling weekly earnings."

The statement declared:

"The payment of \$500 per year per employee in the form of increased wages and other economic benefits from the hoarded and growing wealth of the corporations to the 600,000 men and women of the industry will serve as the greatest contribution not only to the welfare of the people in this industry, but to the economy of the country as a whole." (The full text of the statement will be printed in the national UE News of May 2.)

Many Lay-Offs in Industry

The statement pointed out that 16 per cent of the union's members have been laid off and that 18 per cent of those still working are working only part-time. Net profits of the electrical manufacturing and machine industry for 1948 were 543 million dollars for the first quarter of 1949 shows at least as high a profit rate. These high profits resulted from increased productivity of the workers, speed-up, exorbitant high prices, and

(Continued on Page 2)

INCREASED BUYING POWER MEANS MORE JOBS

Facts for GE Workers

Lay-offs Result From GE Program

In campaigning against wage increases and social legislation the General Electric Company's attitude is "Don't Rock the Boat."

Lay-offs by the company, in the face of the enormous GE profits, are unanswerable proof that the GE program is faulty. Company spokesmen, therefore, are playing down the lay-off figures and insisting that overall employment at GE has fallen only slightly.

The facts are that six GE plants were shut down in recent months; approximately 14,500 workers have

After the story on GE lay-offs was written news came that 1200 workers will be "furloughed" (laid off) from the Erie, Pa. plant by the end of the month and that 55 will be laid off when the phenol plant of the Pittsfield, Mass. GE Works shuts down next month.

An Associated Press story quoted Bertram Miller, Erie GE works manager, as saying the lay-offs there result from the fact that the company had met "the peak of the post-war demand." The plant makes refrigerators.

H. Arthur Howe, Pittsfield manager, was quoted by newspapers as explaining the Pittsfield situation by "high inventories and a decline in demand." Howe also announced that temporary short work weeks may be put into effect at Pittsfield.

been laid off and many workers are on part-time.

Plants closed down are: Meriden, Conn.; Kokomo, Ind.; Boundary St. plant at York, Pa.; plastic plant at Scranton, Pa.; Millerton and Clyde, both in New York state.

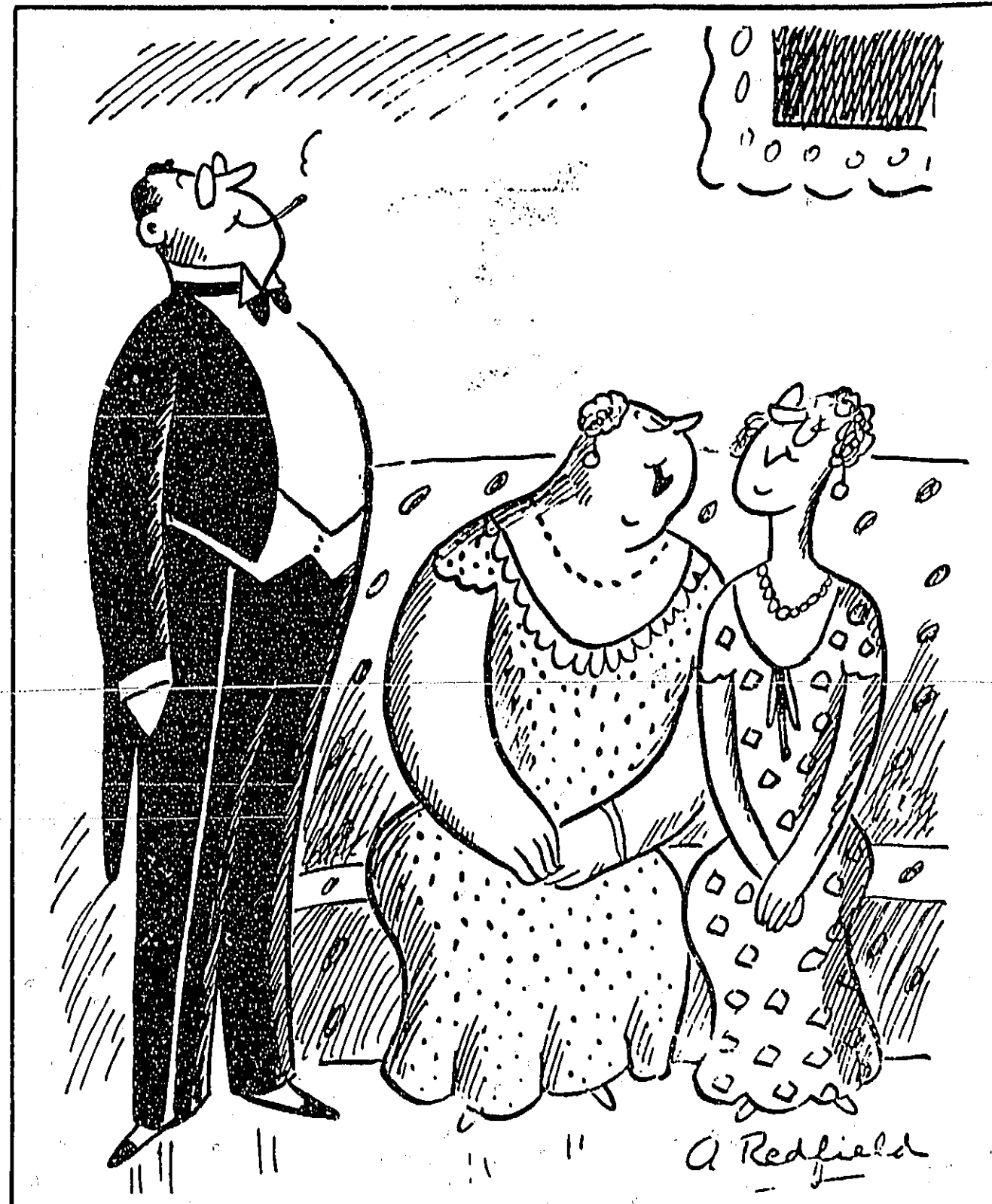
Lay-offs have occurred at Danville, Ill.; Philadelphia, Scranton Appliance, Pa.; Somersworth, N. H.; Bridgeport, Conn.; West Lynn and Taunton, Mass.; De Kalb, Ill.;

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

Published by Editorial Committee
Mary McCartin, Chairman
Arthur B. Bertini, Secretary
William Christman, Frank D'Amico,
Victor Pasche

Editorial Office
ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS
301 Liberty St., Schenectady, N. Y.
Telephone 3-1380

Success



"He's just been voted the man most likely to annoy union negotiators"

Jobless Figures

There were 2,643 jobless workers registered with the Schenectady County office of the Unemployment Insurance Division for the week ended April 8. The figure announced for April 15 was 2,813. The Schenectady office gave no explanation of the reported decrease.

Decatur and Fort Wayne, Ind.; Hanford Atomic Works, Wash.; Tiffin, Ohio; Bloomfield, N.J.; and Elmira, White Plains and Schenectady.

At the same time GE has been shifting work to new plants in low wage areas, in callous disregard for workers at the old locations or for the communities in which they live. GE announced March 31 it was leasing a plant at Morrison, Ill., to manufacture electric appliance control devices now made at Schenectady. It has opened plants at Johnson City and Brockport, N. Y., and Lockland, Ohio.

GE's actions contradict its claim that its retained profits are an investment in more jobs. Its policy of high price and speed-up means more production with fewer workers for a declining market.

Rotterdam Board Again Refuses Action on T-H

The town board of Rotterdam Monday night again turned down the request of a 301 delegation to take action against the Taft-Hartley Law instead of passing along the question to the Schenectady County Towns' Association.

The 301 delegation consisted of Board Member William Mastriani and four Rotterdam residents, Board Member William Templeton, chief spokesman; Shop Steward Benjamin Gabriele, Building 40; Shop Steward Dominick Gabriele, Bldg. 73, and Dominick Nero, Bldg. 17.

The four Democratic members of the town board were present, Michael Della Rocca, GE foreman; and three members of Local 301, Shop Steward Roy E. Minton, Bldg. 60, who was acting chairman of the meeting; Shop Steward Neil J. Dube, Bldg. 24, and John Horvath. The fifth member, Supervisor William Alheim, Republican, also a 301 member, was absent because of illness.

Templeton declared that in refusing to take a stand for Taft-Hartley repeal the Democratic members of the board were not supporting the 1948 Democratic platform. He warned that members of 301 will look at their records on Taft-Hartley when the next election comes.

The Town Board members insisted on sticking to their decision of April 14, to leave the issue to the towns' association. The union delegation pointed out that Alheim, president of the association, has stated that undoubtedly the association will refuse to take a stand on this issue, as not within its scope.

Both Della Rocca and Horvath attacked the 301 delegation and claimed they were threatened by the union representatives.

Hamilton stated he is personally against the Taft-Hartley law but as a councilman "couldn't take a position representing only part of the people."

Appeal for Blood

The union has been asked to secure blood donors to repay Ellis Hospital for six pints of blood used in transfusions for Frank Hummel, GE pensioner, who died at the hospital Tuesday. He was father-in-law of George Schiff, 301 member in Building 42.

Hummel has been on a \$24 a month pension for 16 years. His widow is faced with a \$500 hospital bill, it was reported. Blood donor volunteers should contact the union office.

Statement on CIO

(Continued from Page 1)
worker a job. It won't even appropriate the \$25,000,000 needed to help the workers get their unemployment compensation checks on time. But it is appropriating billions for war preparations, for carrying the military budgets of half the world, for bolstering the profits and tightening the monopolies of bankers and industrialists at home and abroad.

The statement charged that some labor officials "have subordinated the interests of the membership of their unions to the dictates of the administration on domestic and foreign policy. This perverts the purpose for which unions were organized."

Wage Campaign Urged

(Continued from Page 1)
scrapping of the excess profits tax. Since the first of the year UE has negotiated 123 contracts with smaller companies, the statement pointed out. The gains made in these preliminary contracts "point up the greater responsibility that the larger and wealthy companies in our industry have to meet the needs of our people in a more substantial way."

Vosburg Asks Higher Old Age Grants; 301 Pension Head Also Makes Plea

Present social security grants are "totally inadequate to keep our old folks off the relief rolls", Leo H. Vosburg, Schenectady County welfare commissioner, declared in a statement filed with the House Ways and Means Committee at Washington.

Commissioner Vosburg went to Washington to testify Apr. 14 with Business Agent Leo Jandreau of 301 and two members of the UE-301 Pension Organization, Albert C. Van Der Zee, president and Fred Hemboldt. However the hearing was recessed before they were reached. Jandreau was scheduled to testify this week and statements by Vosburg and Van Der Zee were filed.

Schenectady Figures

Commissioner Vosburg stated that in Schenectady County a total of 85 people on the relief rolls receive Social Security benefits, with an average grant of \$17.18 monthly. Their average age is 74 years. He reported that in the county home there are 11 residents, with an average age of 63½ years, receiving Social Security benefits. These pensions range from \$27.24 monthly to the minimum of \$10.

He said there also are 18 residents of the county home who are receiving pensions from industry, from a high of \$49.24 per month to a low of \$19.50, with an average of \$34.73. The average age of these people is 74½ years.

Asks \$150 Pension

President Van Der Zee urged a minimum government pension of \$150 a month.

"Wages in industry are not such as to permit savings on which over-age workers are expected to live," he said.

"The General Electric Company, like most big companies, forces older workers to retire whether they want to or not. They are not willing to establish a pension system which will take care of our problems."

He said he is 68 and his wife is nearly 65. When he retired in 1943 because of a serious disability, with 25 years continuous service, his GE pension was \$12 a month.

Cites His Own Case

"Since then, as a result of continuous demands by the union," he said, "it has been raised to \$25.80 a month."

In addition he now gets \$23.02 a month social security and his wife will soon get \$11.51.

"When I die, my meager GE pension will end," he pointed out, "and under the present Social Security law my widow's total income will be limited to a miserable three-quarters of the \$23.02 which I now obtain as an old age benefit."

Pensioners Read Over Statement for Congress

President Albert C. Van Der Zee, left, and Fred Hemboldt, right, of the UE-301 Pension Organization, confer on statement on need for increased Social Security pensions.



Union Saves Group From Downgrading

As the result of union grievance action, the company rescinded an order that a dozen Class B stockroom keepers would be downgraded to accumulators as of April 18. The change would have meant a pay cut of 8½ cents an hour. The workers involved are in the Induction Motors Division, Buildings 11 and 18 and Campbell Ave.

A union committee met with Frank Schaaff in Building 41 on the matter last week. The outcome was that the workers keep their classification as B stockroom keepers. Management gave assurance that if lack of work develops the worker affected, in accordance with the seniority provisions, will be sent to Building 1 to exercise his right of bumping to obtain another job.

On the union committee were Shop Stewards Leon Chase, CAP; Earl Wilkinson, Building 11, and Andrew F. Lorenzo and Thomas J. Morrissey, both of Building 18; Board Member John Brauneisen and William Kelly, assistant to the business agent.

Auto Workers Ready To Strike Over Speed-up

Workers at the Ford plant at Detroit, Mich., members of the United Auto Workers, CIO, last week voted 82,290 to 4,400 in favor of striking over the speedup issue. There are about 60,000 workers at the plant. Similar action had been voted earlier at the Lincoln plant.

The 9,000 workers at the Packard Motor Car Company, Detroit, were ready to walk out Monday morning over grievances, but agreement was reached before the midnight deadline, according to the Associated Press. Last week 3,500 were laid off at Packard.

301 Determined to End GE Delay on Grievances

A procedure aimed at meeting the current company stalling on grievances has been adopted by the Local 301 Executive Board, on recommendation of Business Agent Leo Jandreau.

Jandreau pointed out that at each step in the grievance procedure the company representatives either said "no" to legitimate grievances, or took long periods to "look at it again," finally saying "no" in most cases anyway.

The board therefore instructed the grievance committee to insist on the union's right to prompt answers. When the answer is negative and the grievance has merit, it will be moved promptly through the successive steps. At the end of the procedure, the union will insist on its right to arbitration under the contract.

The company has consistently refused to abide by the arbitration provision of the contract. If it continues to do so on a wide range of grievances from all over the works, its position will be clear to the members as well as the public. Under the contract, once arbitration has been refused, the membership can take any action it sees fit.

Speed-up Trouble At Lynn GE, Too

Difficulties here over speed-up and grievances are part of a general General Electric pattern. This is evident from developments in Lynn, Mass. Lynn and Schenectady are the largest two groups of GE workers in the vast national GE set-up.

A banner head over the Electrical Union News published by Lynn Local 301, for April 15, proclaims:

"GE continues to say no in grievances at top level."

The story reports that Local 201 negotiators "were told bluntly by Burnison of GE at New York level that GE employees who were dissatisfied should work elsewhere," and that he said "the company intended to reserve the right to time study any job in the plant, when in THEIR opinion the price was loose."

Another story in the same paper told of group meetings to protest the speed-up. It declared that "unrest among GE employees in the Lynn and Everett plants continues to grow as company attempts at unreasonable speed-ups are introduced into various divisions."

