

16 Steel Workers Operate Big Plant

The factory of the future is in operation at the Lukens Steel Corporation in Coatsville, Pa. This alloy plate finishing plant was financed by the U. S. Navy and cost \$10.5 million.

The \$10.5 million plant requires only 16 men for its operation. These men work in operating pulpits, surrounded by levers, dials, red, green, and orange lights and two television receivers.

"A visitor to the finishing plant has to look carefully to see signs of life, although production proceeds at full speed. The 16-man working force, in operating pulpits, is mostly out of sight, while a huge transfer table rumbles from one side of the building to another. The heat treatment line stretches through 600 feet of the 1000 foot-long building. Beyond it are a roller lever, a shear, and a cutting device," a Wall Street Journal account reported in describing the operation.

Trial Committee Reports

(Continued from Page 1)

Herbert acted as chairman of the committee and John Smith secretary.

The Committee's finding and recommendations were approved at both the second shift meeting and first and third shift meeting.

Building 85 Incentive Plan

The Incentive Plan that was negotiated for Bldg. 85, has had two weeks of experience as we go to press.

The Plan was put into effect Monday, July 2nd, the first week, a four day week because of the holiday, resulted in slightly over a 3% increase in rates or approximately 7c an hour, average increase.

The second week the bonus was lower when hours increased and production was less, however, the plan paid an average increase of approximately 5c an hour.

The Plan is new and will require a number of changes before it will be satisfactory. One of the major problems at present is to make allowances for down time, that is beyond the control of the employees covered by the plan.

Meetings with department management will be held to resolve these difficulties as they arise.

Vacation pay will be figured on the new earnings for the production employees.

The incentive bonus is over and above the 15% negotiated by the union last year.

Activities Committee Report

The Activities Committee reported a net income of \$2,108.10, resulting from the Spring Give-away ticket sale.

The committee is in the process of making arrangements for the second raffle this year. The prizes are expected to be a 1956 Plymouth with push button drive, heater, radio, and etc., also a portable GE Television and a third prize, a GE roll-away vacuum cleaner.

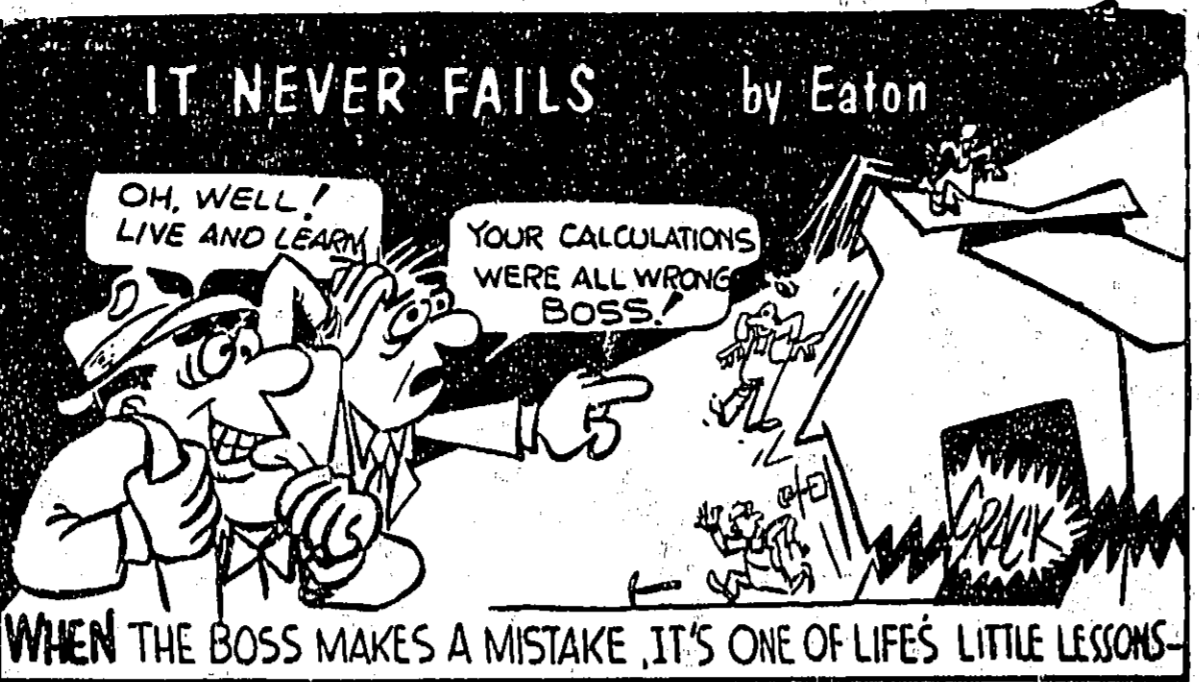
The committee plans the drawing of prizes to be held at the November membership meeting.

The proceeds of these raffles will be used to finance the Children's Christmas party to be held in the new Union hall, in December of this year.

UNION DUES IS JOB INSURANCE

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.....Joseph Alois
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Recording Secretary.....Loren Cobo
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Chief Shop Steward.....William Mastriani
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121 ERIE BLVD. SCHENECTADY, N. Y.



Arbitration Hearing

An arbitration hearing scheduled for last Wednesday at the Van Curler hotel to determine the outcome of a Local 301 grievance, was in dispute as we went to press on the question of whether the Schenectady case should be handled as a national matter or a local grievance.

The company lawyer claimed they wanted an interpretation from the arbitration that would apply to all GE plants.

The representatives of Local 301 said the arbitration was requested by the local union as per contract and national officers of the company had agreed to arbitrate the local grievance at a meeting on January 12, 1956.

The company representatives refused to allow pertinent local evidence that has an important bearing on the case to go into the records. They wanted a hypothetical set of facts that could be universally applied to all plants.

At press time the company requested a recess.

Rate Adjusted in Bldg. 24

As a result of a grievance presented through the Union effecting a rate paid for Electro-Plating in Bldg. 24, an increase was agreed upon, raising the rate from 1.84 to 1.98½, retroactive to June 11.

The operator affected was Walter Ramsey. The Union committee that handled the case was Joseph Drozdowski, Frank Sisto and William Mastriani.

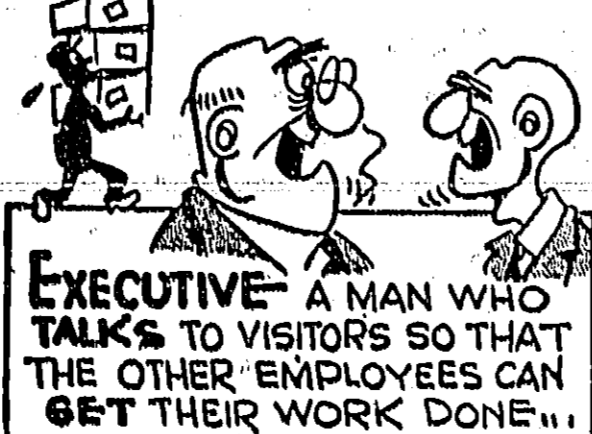
Must Prices Rise When Wages Rise?

(Continued from Page 2)

operating under the ancient theory of "what the market will bear" on an item, these leaders, with automation now at their command, can mass product commodities within the price range of all. They can still derive respectable profits by operating on an increased volume basis rather than an individual unit basis.

One thing for sure: this present "pay and pass on" technique used by the companies cannot go on forever. The customer, who at present, has no voice in the price he pays, will finally rebel. At a point where it really hurts his pocket-book he will refuse to buy and no amount of long term credit financing schemes will change his mind.

That day will be a sad one for all of us.



LOCAL 301 NEWS

IUE AFL-CIO

Vol. 2 — No. 27

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

August 10, 1956

Stevens Demands Union Statement on Stoppages

At a meeting last Tuesday called by A. C. Stevens, Manager of Community Relations, the officers of IUE-CIO Local 301 were notified by the company representatives that they demanded a statement from the union, to the effect that all resistance to any changes made by the company would not be opposed by the members or the leaders of the union, in an effort whereby the company could compete with the new General Electric plants in other parts of the country.

Mr. Stevens, speaking for the local management, said the Schenectady plant's position is not good compared to the operating advantages of the new plants and this would discourage the top officials of the company to invest more money in the Schenectady location.

He went on to say the North Eastern part of the U. S. was a tough area for competition, particularly New York state with taxes on employers being so high and, of course, the wage levels are the highest in the nation.

Stevens specifically noted:

1. Earnings are a problem in old plants such as Schenectady. Incentive workers on lower skilled jobs make more than is justified compared to higher skilled jobs. Our P.W. system is outmoded.
2. We have controlled output in Schenectady. He was asked what the meaning of this was. He explained that 8 hours pay was earned in 5 hours.
3. Resistance to any changes in methods, pricing, job assignment.
4. Union shop stewards are raising so much hell the foremen are afraid to do their jobs properly.
5. Noon time meetings are not informative, they are inflammatory and designed to stir up trouble.
6. Efforts to settle disputes at foreman's level is hopeless.
7. Stoppages are condoned by union representatives because shop stewards, executive board members and officers participate.

Stevens said this can not continue much longer, because the plant was not making any progress. He was taking a new approach by informing the community and public about the company's problems.

The union representatives advised Mr. Stevens that they completely disagreed with the facts presented in his 6 point program, and moreover, the union representatives said they were surprised to hear such a complete change of attitude on the part of local management and such a change must be the result of Mr. Stevens and other key management people attending the new General Electric school at Croton, New York.

Leo Jandreau, Business agent, pointed out to Mr. Stevens that the responsibility of good labor relations was not a one way street, the management had equal responsibility with the union. He went on to say that representatives of management, foremen, wage rate and department heads would have to be taught to respect the right and wages of the employees in order to accomplish a mutual respect for one another.

Mr. Stevens was asked whether he expected Schenectady to compete with new and unorganized shops such as Roanoke, Va., Shelbyville, Ind., Waynesboro, Va., and Jonesboro, Ark. where General Electric has deliberately located new plants

(Continued on Page 2)

Good Labor Relations Call for Equal Responsibility

As a result of the stoppage in the Turbine Department last week, the local G.E. management charged the Union leadership with being irresponsible. Mr. A. C. Stevens, who is Manager of Community Relations, lashed out in paid ads in the public press as well as in letters to the professional and business people of Schenectady, claiming the Union and its leadership were threatening the welfare of our community by causing stoppages.

The Facts On Turbine Stoppage

On July 23rd, a new employee was hired and placed on Large Layout which carries a job rate of \$2.69½ per hour—day work. He was hired through the Employment Office as a Boring Mill Operator; however, the department claimed there were no openings on Boring Mill and he was given the layout job.

The Contract requires the Company to pay an experienced man on a given occupation a starting rate of not less than two steps below the job rate and the job rate to be paid within 6 months. Therefore, the new man received a starting rate of \$2.55 per hour even though he was hired as a Boring Mill hand.

On July 23, Executive Board Member Coons, third shift, presented a complaint to Night Superintendent Mollicone saying there were employees with service who could qualify for the higher rated job. On July 24, Supt. Mollicone notified Executive Board Member Coons that nothing could be done about it. On July 30th, at a committee meeting between Board Members from Turbine and representatives of Turbine management the Union protested the filling of the high rated job by a few employee. The management representatives notified the Union

(Continued on Page 3)

The responsibility of stoppages belongs to the Union, says Mr. Stevens. In fact, says Stevens, the Union is planning to pull a plant-wide strike and the Company and the community will be the victims. This propaganda may have its designed effects upon people in our community who do not work for General Electric and it is intended to mould public opinion in an anti-Union fashion in order that the public will be conditioned for future actions by General Electric management that cause labor trouble.

The cause of any local labor dispute arises from a disagreement between a G.E. employee and a G.E. foreman. The Union in Schenectady is composed of all G.E. factory employees and their leaders whom they elect to negotiate these disputes under a set of rules provided for in our National Agreement. The responsibilities of both sides are tested when a grievance comes before these representatives. Waving the rules at one another does not settle the case. Mr. Stevens, who has been relieved of the authority to settle disputes in a department, is not making any contribution towards good labor relations by paying lip service through the local G.E. propaganda machine by letting his imagination influence his statement as to what caused the trouble. If a loyal G.E. employee with service and a good record, who has not exhausted his potential ability to do a higher class of work which will give him a better standard of living, is denied this opportunity and it is given to outside people who have

(Continued on Page 4)

THE LEGAL CORNER

(A Column Written by LEON NOVAK of Novak & Diamond, Attorneys)

Important Changes in Social Security Law Affect Many Workers

The new amendments to the Social Security Law have been signed by the President and will take effect on the dates set for the changes by the Congress.

The most important of these changes gives women the right to retire at age 62 instead of waiting until they are 65. However, not all women who retire at age 62 instead of 65 will receive maximum benefits at the earlier retirement age. Widows at age 62 will be able to receive full benefits but working women and the wives of retired men will collect only a reduced amount. For example, working women will receive only 80% of the maximum and the wives of retired men will receive 75% of the maximum.

Working women and the wives of retired men, who continue to work after age 62 can still retire before reaching 65 and will receive an increased percentage upon retirement for every month worked after 62.

Payments for women who retire under age 65 cannot begin before November 1, 1956. These women can make application at any time without loss of benefits right up to November 1, 1957 and their payments will be due them retroactively to November 1st, 1956.

Another important class of worker brought under the benefits of the Social Security Law is the disabled worker. His benefits as a disabled worker will start after July 1, 1957 and, if he is substantially disabled he can receive such payments starting at age 50. Applications for these benefits which will start in 1957, can be made after October 1st of this year.

Another class affected by the new changes, includes certain dependent mothers. Up to now, a dependent mother, under 65 years of age, was entitled to benefits until the youngest child reached 18, at which time her benefits came to a stop. Today, a mother who has a disabled child over 18 years of age will continue to receive benefits. Application for these payments can be made starting in October.

Other changes in the Social Security Law will be discussed in future articles.

It Pays to Belong to the Union

GE's Progress Proposes Wage Reductions

"Progress is Our Most Important Product", says G.E. — even when it results in price cuts and lower wages, says Turbine Department heads.

This is the case affecting Field and Armature Winders in Bldg. 273. The Company introduced a new insulation called "Polyester" which replaced Mica insulation. The actual time required in using the new material is exactly the same as the old. A job that formerly paid \$142.00 to make came out with a price of \$67.00, with the foreman saying take it or leave it.

The group is composed of mostly long service people while the job is a highly skilled one carrying an A.E.R. of \$2.56 per hour with earnings averaging approximately \$3.79 per hour. The Turbine management says it is a change of method which entitles them to a change in price. They propose to time study the whole job and take advantage of the efficiency the Winders have obtained over the years which compensates them over and above the normal incentive job rates. The Winders stopped work in protest to the proposed wage cut which was ordered to go into effect on Monday, July 30th. The Union leaders prevailed on the men to return to work and a meeting was arranged with average earnings paid to the Winders while discussions continue on the grievance.

This is another example of why there are work stoppages. The cause of the trouble is quite obvious — a greed for more profit at the expense of the workers. G.E. management then creates a smoke screen to hide these tactics from the public by charging the Union leadership with fomenting labor trouble. With tricky slogans, such as "Progress is Our Most Important Product".



Stevens Demands Union Statement On Stoppages

(Continued from Page 1.)

and where the community wage rates are among the lowest in the country.

The management's reply to this question was neither clear nor specific. Mr. Stevens continued to press for a statement from the union on its responsibilities.

Leo Jandreau replied that such a statement must include joint responsibility. Stevens said he would send a letter to the union, covering the company's position.

Jandreau replied he would consider an exchange of letters and would parallel the responsibilities that were committed in such letter by management.

It was the opinion of the officers that the company is setting out to take advantage of the community by threatening to move work out of Schenectady, and to charge the union as the cause of it. This is being done in hopes that the program of reduction of cost for the purpose of "more profit" will be a success.

The setting up of the lowest standards of living in our country as a goal for GE management to compare rates and cost of production is certainly moving the clock backwards. It proves the lie behind the trickery and well publicized stories of General Electric such as: "Progress is our most important product", "What is good for GE is good for our country".

If the program outlined by Mr. Stevens succeeds, it will curtail the purchasing power of our community and damage the prosperity that Schenectady and the surrounding areas have enjoyed over the years. True progress must bring with it greater security to the working people and an increasing standard of living.

Westinghouse Strikers Vindicated by Arbitrator

The final issue of the 156-day strike by the Electrical Workers against Westinghouse has just been resolved by an arbitrator who set aside or modified penalties imposed by the firm on 35 strikers.

The arbitrator, William E. Simkin of Philadelphia, ordered 20 out of 25 discharged workers restored to their jobs and either completely eliminated or reduced suspension periods for six out of 10 others.

IUE Pres. James B. Carey described Simkin's action as "a severe rebuke to the company's attitude of vindictiveness toward strikers."

The question of 97 discharges loomed important in settling the strike which ran from Oct. 17, 1955, to Mar. 20. When the strike was ended the company had backed down on 61 discharges and agreed to arbitrate the remainder after reclassifying them as indefinite suspensions.

Simkin held Westinghouse responsible for much of the strike trouble through its back-to-work movements which failed. He said in part:

"It is almost a maxim of labor relations that a real threat to a union's continued existence will bring forth all possible legal counter-measures on the part of the union and its most active members.

"Moreover, it can be predicted with almost equal certainty that most acts will 'flop over' the borderline of legality if the threat persists over a period of time."

National IUE Reports Gains In New Members

Secretary-Treasurer Al Hartnett reported to the General Executive Board at its last meeting held on July 15, that in the past 3 months 15,200 new members have joined the IUE. The total new members involve 191 new bargaining units.

Eighteen of the victories were won through Labor Board elections while 173 of the units came into the IUE through the process of

(Continued on Page 4)



Record of Hospital Cost Needed

The Union will be obliged by the first of the year to notify the Company as to whether the Comprehensive or Corridor Insurance Plans will be the one plan that covers each bargaining unit.

We have provided forms to the Shop Stewards for the purpose of having the members who have used the hospital insurance give us information on how much of the cost they were obliged to pay themselves and what portion of the expense was paid by the Insurance Company.

Recently we found out that anesthesia was not included in hospital services. This was a separate bill given to the patient by a doctor to be paid to him directly. This charge falls definitely within the allowances provided for in both plans as hospital charges and should not be considered as part of the Type B expenses or medical expense.

Families that have other group coverage are another problem which has not been satisfactorily cleared up. As it stands at present, if the wife or husband has insurance through employment with another employer, they will not be paid by G.E. Insurance until all other benefits have been exhausted. In this instance the Union should be consulted inasmuch as the cost of dual coverage is high for the benefits you are entitled to.

If the Union receives this information, we will be in a position to advise the members on what changes to make; likewise, we will be in a position to recommend the best plan based on experience by the end of the year. The Insurance Plans are new and information received from the members may lead to necessary changes in the plan.

BE UNION — BUY UNION — Demand the Union Label

Executive Board MEETING

Monday, Aug. 13th
7:30 P.M.

UNION HEADQUARTERS
121 Erie Blvd.

MIM Payroll Fouled Up

Joe Koral says, "What's going on in Payroll, I have been short in my pay for the last 5 weeks. I'm standing in line each week trying to get my wages paid properly".

Joe said there are plenty of other MIM employees in the same boat. He said he was notified two weeks in advance what his vacation pay would be, but, when he received his pay the week he was to get his vacation pay, it was not there.

This has caused a lot of lost time with MIM employees standing around to get the record straightened out and then going to Bldg. 41 for a cash advance. Joe said he noticed the Company did not mention the stoppage of work and lost time involved over this situation in their extended publicity program to the community. Some workers have been forced to go over the weekend without pay.

As I See It

by CHARLES SCOTT
Asst. Business Agent

In reviewing a few of the many cases that are referred to me for the purpose of arranging negotiation meetings on the management level of the grievance procedure, I can see the reasons why individuals and groups of workers lose their patience with Company representatives while in the process of settling complaints on the job.

For example —
BLDG. 66

Observing the type of cases that provoke the most trouble among our members, I find that they are not those that are of national importance but more personal in nature. In the Welded Products Sub-Section of the LM&G Division, Docket #6095-56 has caused unrest among the employees of Bldg. 66. This is a case of an assembly price that came out originally for \$32.90. After a complaint by an Assembler, it was raised to \$35.90. He did the job under protest. The next time the job was to be assembled, a different man was given the job and he and his steward went over a breakdown of the job and supervision raised the price to \$39.90. The Assembler protested and said a fair price would be \$43.90. Three meetings were then held between the Assembler, Shop Steward, Board Member and supervision, with our members asking for either the price adjustment or a time study to prove to supervision that the \$39.90 was low. To date, supervision has refused to either raise the price to the amount asked or time study the Stator Frame involved even though there is no Piece Rate Table to cover this type of Stator Frame.

Current Events From My Section

by ALLEN TOWNSEND
Asst. Business Agent

In the local press during the past week G.E. has spent large sums of money trying to convince the people that there is a conspiracy afoot to strike the plant.

However, the trouble in the plant is caused invariably by the Company as in the following case in which the Company took a position so ridiculous that it would seem that they are deliberately trying to foment trouble.

I will cite as an example Docket #5859-56 filed by Board Member McLean of CART. This case requested that a test job be raised to a higher rate due to the skill required on the job. After much discussion the Company agreed to split up this job and upgrade the better part of it with a two step increase. There were two men working on the job: Berniege with fifteen years of service, who signed the original docket asking for the increase in rate, and another man with one and a half years of service. Berniege has every qualification to do the better part of the job which he had been doing up until the time the docket was filed; however, the Company, true to their attitude of making trouble, upgraded the man with one and a half years of service. When the Union Committee protested to Foreman Honan and asked him why the shorter service man was upgraded, he replied that service did not mean a thing to him in upgrading and that all he was interested in was ability. This is a colossal example of the Company deliberately making trouble.

BLDG. 273

In the Steam Turbine Division, Bldg. #273, there is a problem of pricing welding in Shop Steward Thomas' group that is of long standing. This case has been filed under Docket #5950-56. The pricing method used on the welding of the Brackets, Elbows, Valves, etc., is .08 a cubic inch for all welds. Our position is that if a job has much overhead and vertical welding, the .08 a cubic inch price is very inadequate. There is no special compensation for difficult welding, such as vertical volumetrics where there are only inches between the supports to be welded. We do not believe that a flat rate can be used for pricing of All Position and including Contour Welding. The Stewards and Welders have been meeting periodically with supervision to try to obtain a fair pricing table which will enable the men to maintain their rate of earnings. To date, there has not been a satisfactory solution to this problem.

Cost of Living Index Pays Off

More than 100,000 G.E. workers covered by the National IUE Contract will receive increases ranging from 1½¢ to 2½¢ per hour as the result of the Cost of Living Provision in the Contract. This cost of living increase is over and above a wage increase of 3% which employees will receive on September 15, next month, which is also provided for in the Contract.

Under the August 1955 Agreement, for each half percent that the Bureau of Labor Statistics Cost of Living Index rises over a base figure of 114.9 G.E. employees would receive a half percent increase in wages. The July index by the U. S. Labor Department was 116.2. The Contract also provides that if the cost of living falls below the base figure of 114.9, the employees would lose only the cost of living increases which they previously received.

The 5-year Agreement provides 3% increase in rates but not less than 4½¢ per hour next month on September 15, and also next year, September 15, 1957. The following two years the percentage increase goes up to 3.48% and 3.46% respectively, but not less than 5¢ per hour.

The Facts On Turbine Stoppage

(Continued from Page 1)

at this time they would hire new people from the gate at any time they thought they needed them. The third shift stopped work spontaneously that night; the following two days the Turbine employees refused to work. Work was resumed on Thursday, August 2, as a result of the Union leadership insisting they start work.

On August 2, a Union committee met with management in an attempt to resolve the dispute. A management representative claimed that if they can obtain people with the necessary skills from the outside, they would hire them. In the past it was a practice to upgrade employees from lagging and small layout jobs. Approximately three long service day shift workers were offered the chance to fill the opening on 3rd shift; however, no 2nd or 3rd shift employees were approached. The case was referred to the New York level of the grievance procedure.

The Local Union has notified the Company of their willingness to meet to resolve the dispute.

Similar cases, affecting Boring Mills had been processed weeks prior to this latest incident; therefore, the issue involved was not a new one.