

301 Membership Meeting Protests GE Refusal to Raise Pay

Inside and outside views of the Apr. 20 membership meeting of Local 301. After hearing Business Agent Leo Jandreau report on the deadlock in GE contract negotiations, members voted to call for demonstrations at all GE plants.



Back Pay Ordered For Turbine Worker

Through a grievance taken up by Shop Steward William A. Stewart, a turbine erector in Bldg. 60 has received retroactive pay to make up for the fact that the company paid him at too low a rate since his return to the plant last August. He had been away on workmen's compensation since Sept. 22, 1945.

His pay rate was \$1.05 an hour when he had to quit work. On returning, he should have received 30 cents more, covering the 18 1/2 cent raise and the 11 1/2 cent raise obtained meanwhile by the union. Through an error, however, he received only 25 cents more.

Management agreed to pay the extra five cents, retroactive to last August, and an additional five cent raise retroactive to Feb. 26.

Which Master-Mind Thought Up This One?

A World War II veteran living in Gallupville bought three GE appliances, a washing machine, electric stove and refrigerator, this winter at an employees' discount totaling \$183. He is a stock room accumulator at the Schenectady Works and a 301 member.

The young man, because of domestic problems, moved to Middleburg recently to live with an uncle. He took along his new GE household equipment—all paid for.

Two weeks ago Paymaster Benjamin Wilson called him to Bldg. 41 and demanded that he return the \$183 discount. Wilson said the appliances weren't being used in the man's home and accused him of getting the discount under "false pretenses." The veteran explained that his uncle's house is now his home.

Management called him on the carpet again Tuesday, at a meeting with his foreman, general foreman and a representative of the paymaster. They told him to repay the money or lose his job.

Under this threat the veteran signed an authorization for \$10 to

be deducted each week from his pay until the \$183 is paid.

The worker told management that he couldn't afford to buy the GE products without a discount. If he had known he had to pay the full price, he pointed out, he would have bought lower-priced appliances of another company.

Business Agent Leo Jandreau has protested to GE about this case. GE's action was not only arbitrary and unreasonable, but it was illegal, he charged. Workers don't have to report to the company on their domestic relations, he pointed out. An employee is entitled to a discount as long as he is not buying an article to resell or for some one else.

A. C. Stevens, assistant to the works manager, said he would look into the matter.

\$1,000 Recommended For Defense Fund

The 301 Executive Board voted Monday to recommend that the 301 membership contribute \$1,000 to a UE District 3 strike defense fund. It has instructed the Activities Committee to plan money-raising projects to provide additional donations to the fund.

The district fund will be for the use of all UE locals on strike on this territory. At present there are strikes at the Remington Rand plants at Tonawanda and North Tonawanda and at Durez Plastics in Buffalo.

The Board voted another \$100 to the GE strikers at Lexington, Ky., and another \$50 to the GE strikers at Boston.

1,000 New Members

As the 301 membership drive neared the end this week, new applications climbed to a total of 1,032. The final figure will be printed next week.

Paging UE Actors, Musicians, Dancers

Local 301 members who want to take part in plays, skits or other entertainments are invited to another audition from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday at the union hall.

Mrs. Dorothy Perlin, volunteer in charge of the 301 Talent Bureau, is enthusiastic about the results of the first audition last week. Those trying out were a male quartet, a woman singer and pianist, a man folk singer who also played the guitar, and two men who played banjo duets. They have all promised to take part in union shows.

"Now I'm anxious to find some people who are interested in dramatics," Mrs. Perlin said. "But we'll be glad to hear some more musicians too."

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Conference of GE Locals Meeting on Negotiations

Delegates of GE locals of UE all over the country gathered in New York yesterday and today to work out recommendations to the locals for action in the face of the General Electric Company's refusal to budge on wages or on any other major contract issues.

Speaking of Loyalty—How About Forrester?

UE's representation of the GE workers at the Peek Street Atomic Power Laboratory in Schenectady (they are members of Local 301) was mentioned among several unions under discussion in the last of a series of articles by the Associated Press, carried in the Schenectady Union-Star Apr. 30.

After mentioning both CIO and AFL unions in atomic plants, and the fact that the government hasn't permitted recognition of these unions in many places, the article concluded:

"A big reason is that the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission says it isn't sure of the loyalty of all the union officers in the atomic picture."

Nothing was said in the article about the loyalty of the man employed by the U. S. Government to control not only all the atomic bombs, but the army, navy, and air force too — James V. Forrester, Secretary of National Defense.

About Forrester there need be no rumor nor investigation. It's all in the record, public for anyone to check — James V. Forrester was head of Dillon, Read & Co., of Wall Street, New York, when it helped raise the American money for the rearming of Nazi Germany after World War I.

Quite a large number of American GIs were killed or disabled as a result.

Compare These Wages

Average straight time hourly rates for all hourly-rated employees in the "Big Three" of the electrical industry follow:

Westinghouse	\$1.52
General Motors Elec. Div.....	1.38
General Electric	1.28

These figures are before income tax, social security tax, or other weekly deductions from pay checks.

BACK THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH A 100% UE SHOP

The delegates met after two weeks of discussion in their respective locals on the problem created by the company's attitude.

Local 301 stewards Tuesday night voted unanimously to instruct 301 delegates "to work out with the other delegates recommendations to take back to the locals on steps to win a substantial wage increase and a better contract." The 301 stewards will be called to meet in small groups at the union hall next week to discuss the recommendations.

The previous week the Lynn local membership meeting was about to vote for a motion from the floor calling for a national strike vote, but withheld action when General President Albert J. Fitzgerald, who is a member of the local, and local officers urged delay pending further negotiations and the Conference Board meeting.

Session with GE

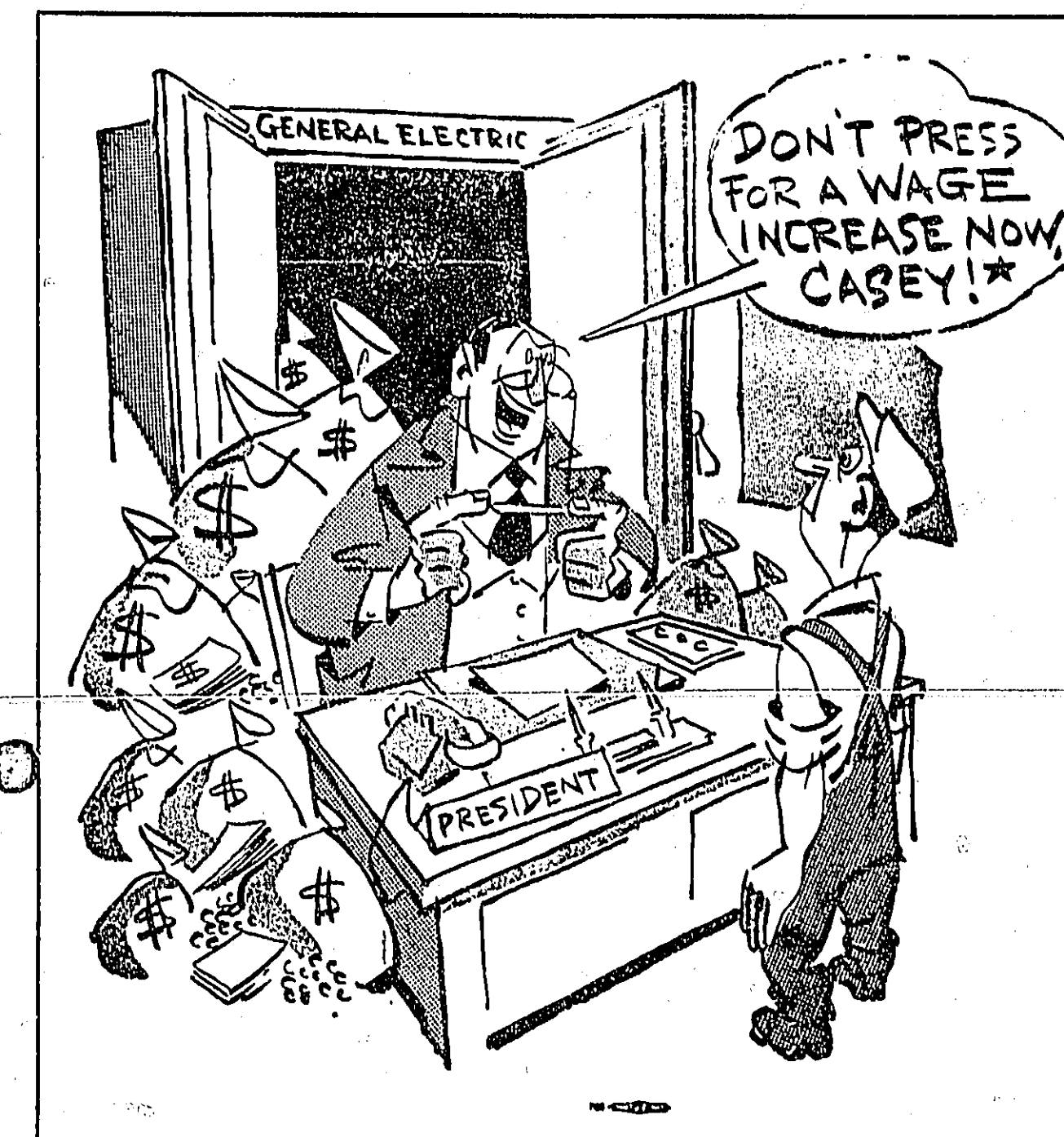
In preparation for the Conference Board meeting, UE negotiators met Wednesday with GE to hear its latest position. (GE's L. R. Boulware issued another misleading statement in advance of the bargaining meeting, and talked nonsense about a UE "ultimatum.") The negotiating committee simply reported GE's position to the Conference Board.

In the 301 Stewards' Council discussion of the situation, Business Agent Leo Jandreau, who is also president of District 3, pointed to the recent history of failure by the company to settle grievances and refusal to arbitrate numerous cases from Schenectady. He asked what chance there would be to get grievances settled if the membership took GE's present attitude lying down.

Jandreau said GE workers organized this union on the basis that the company will give nothing unless it believes it will cost something not to give.

There have been no new developments in negotiations, Jandreau said, but lots of activity on the part of the company in attempting to

(Continued on Page 2)



Can GE Really Believe Its Ballyhoo About Prices Beginning to Go Down?

In its current publicity against a wage increase, GE claims to believe that the ballyhoo about "price cuts" by GE, Westinghouse and Steel will bring prices down for the American people. The Works News April 30 bragged that "our own anti-inflation campaign was working," and spoke of "general decreases in prices."

Can GE really believe all this?

Here are a few developments since the U.S. Steel "price cut—no wage raise" announcement:

Ford Motor Company announced an increase of \$300 on Mercury cars. Price rises also were announced by International Shoe Co., Weyerhaeuser Lumber, and Botany, a major woollens company.

The Associated Press reported that at the U. S. Chamber of Commerce dinner in Washington Apr. 28:

"Other speakers told the chamber that the European recovery program and defense spending would sustain the upward push of prices. Joel Dean, business economist of Columbia University, predicted a rise at the same kind of inflationary pace we have averaged since OPA."

"Jay D. Runkle of Detroit, board chairman of the National Retail Dry Goods Association, said the war scare 'discovered by the administration' has given inflation

"another shot in the arm."

A United Press story in the New York Herald Tribune May 2 was entitled "U. S. and Business Chiefs Look for Higher Prices." It said that "business and government leaders see no prospect for lower prices, and may expect inflation to continue . . ." The story pointed out that a Labor Department report showed that "wholesale prices last week edged up for the third week in a row."

If you can't afford food, you can try eating GE's ballyhoo.

3 Girls Reinstated

After a delay of several weeks, GE has reinstated the three girls who were fired last summer at the East Boston lamp plant. An arbitrator ruled the company must give them back their jobs. Before obeying the decision, the company went to court in an unsuccessful effort to have the arbitration award set aside.

Delegates Meet On Negotiations

(Continued from Page 1)

Air up dissension among the members with talk about affidavits and anti-strike petitions.

Emspak Speaks

Julius Emspak, general secretary-treasurer, declared that Big Business had joined together this year as never before to fight the unions, and that the basic fact was not the resistance to wage raises as such. The basic fact, he said, is that Big Business today is out to bust the unions as it did in 1921 and 1922.

"The question," Emspak said, "is whether we are going back to what they called 'the American plan' after World War I, which became our Works Council, in other words a company union."

Emspak pointed to the past year's record of the company in refusing to arbitrate grievances. He said the company knew the whole membership could not be rallied to fight over a grievance involving only a small group, and thereby hoped to cut down confidence in the union.

"If there were a reasonable price level, it would be much better than a cat and dog race trying to have wages catch up to prices," Emspak said, "but we know the chance of that is remote." He pointed out that on the same day that U. S. Steel and Westinghouse announced "price reductions," commodity prices were going up.

The fight of electrical workers is part of the same picture which involves the tough fight which the miners had on pensions, and which the CIO Packinghouse workers and AFL printers are having with their employers. He said there could not be maximum pressure on the big companies because the steel contract wage reopener did not permit an actual fight there, but that this was not true of Auto. Chrysler has voted to strike, and in GM the Auto union has canceled the contract. He said UE had had discussions with the Auto Workers on developing a joint campaign.

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Newspaper Trick Helpful To GE

In answer to a reporter's question last week, James J. Matles, UE national director of organization, said that UE had given the required legal notices, so that if the membership should want to strike, it could do so legally. That was all.

But when this came out in a United Press story in the Schenectady papers, Matles was quoted as "announcing" and as "threatening" to "call" a strike.

This piece of newspaper untruth was picked up by Vice-President L. R. Boulware of GE to attack "top UE-CIO officials" as not consulting the members.

That is the way anti-labor newspaper propaganda is made. Of course, 301 members know that in UE, only the members themselves, by direct vote, can authorize a strike. Get your facts from the union stewards and paper, not from the anti-labor press.

Another Big Melon For GE Executives

GE has dropped its "profit-sharing" for its ordinary workers, but it is keeping its profit-sharing "extra compensation" plan for its top executives.

For 1946, Charles E. Wilson, GE president, received \$48,000 extra pay; Philip D. Reed, chairman of the board, \$32,000, and Ralph J. Cordiner, vice-president, \$20,000. Since profits for 1947 were so high, the amount of extra compensation available for distribution to executives has more than doubled. The board of directors hasn't decided yet just how to divide the melon among the executives.

Maybe It's Stockholders Who Run GE Machines

GE Vice-president L. R. Boulware doesn't think GE workers are of much importance in increasing production at the plants, according to remarks quoted in the New York Times, Mar. 23.

Here is part of the Times story: "While lauding the efforts of employees in increasing their production, Mr. Boulware pointed out that the 'great bulk' of the increase in production is accomplished through 'contributions' made by the stockholder or the customer—the former through investments for improvements and the latter through increased and steady buying of individual items."

GE Workers Get Letter from Boss How Awkward Reasons Printed For 'Price Cuts'

GE workers in Schenectady last week received a letter from J. M. Howell, works manager, defending the company's refusal to offer any wage increase. Apparently the same letter was sent out by the works managers in other plants.

The letter started out by admitting that GE workers are not paid enough to live on—and then went on to offer GE workers the same old song, "eat less, work harder."

Lots of Omissions!

The letter complained that the union members were asking for "more money for the same work." The letter did not mention the fact that the workers are receiving a whole lot less money, in real purchasing power, because of rising prices. Nor did it mention that the company has been getting more and more work out of the workers, through speed-up and "cost improvement." Nor did the letter refer in any way to the ever-increasing profits made for GE by the workers.

The letter did boast of "improving our equipment and methods," which is another way of saying that it has speeded up the workers, while objecting to higher earnings or higher rates.

Issues Are Economic

The union has pointed out repeatedly that the issues that are preventing a settlement are strictly economic—wages, holidays, pensions, seniority, grievance procedure. Howell's letter tried to conceal this fact by lumping all these issues as Point No. 3. He attacked the one-year check-off, which has been in effect for three years. He wants to be able to organize an anti-union drive at any time. And he red-baited the union over its policy of not going to the Taft-Hartley Board.

Of course Howell's letter said nothing about seniority, grievance procedure, and arbitration, which are sore points in the negotiations because the company will not agree to provisions which are standard with other companies.

The letter's most crude untruth, that there was "nothing accomplished" by the Boston Service Shop strike, when it was a real victory, was answered by 301 in a newspaper advertisement Monday and Tuesday, giving the facts.

Shop Steward Vernon J. Millington of 64 insisted on a meeting with Howell personally Tuesday, and told him he did not like the letter, and the workers wanted a raise.

How Awkward Reasons Printed For 'Price Cuts'

For four months GE has been spreading publicity that its small price reductions on some items (after big price increases) were intended "to fight inflation." But J. A. Livingston, the syndicated business columnist who appears in the Schenectady Union-Star, and whom nobody can call pro-labor, had this to say on Monday:

"A glance at first-quarter corporation earnings reports explains recent decisions of General Electric, United States Steel and Westinghouse to reduce prices. There wasn't much else they could do."

"Industrial profits are running well ahead of a year ago. Consequently, industrial strategy called for some public relations gesture, especially if it could be made an underlying reason for not granting wage increases."

And after the January 1 reductions, GE profits for the first three months still went up 42 per cent over 1947.

GE Actions Threat To Job Security

GE's long-range intentions toward its workers stand out in these actions:

Referring to the company's proposal to base lay-offs of people under five years service on "ability, efficiency, and family status," George Pfeif, chief company spokesman, declared:

"We may not get it now, it may not come in my time, but some time the company is going to have that right."

GE proposed that arbitration be used to settle grievances only when it wants to do so. The company has gone to court to try to throw out an arbitrator's ruling that the justice of a firing is subject to arbitration.

Without the protection of possible arbitration, older men could be dismissed by the company without regard for seniority.

And GE has asked to remove the piece work guarantee of "same earnings" upon change of method.

Gaeth Broadcast

The broadcast by Arthur Gaeth, sponsored by the national UE, is at 10 p.m. every Monday. You can hear it over WOKO, Albany; WKBW, Buffalo; WGLN, Glens Falls; WKIP, Poughkeepsie; WSNY, Schenectady, and WAGE, Syracuse.

Awards Made For Injuries

Here are some of the Workmen's Compensation awards made recently to 301 members represented by the union's attorney Marshall Perlin.

\$150 to Thomas Donato, sand blaster in Bldg. 25, for facial disfigurement suffered Dec. 24, 1945.

\$100 to Randolph Nelson for a facial scar resulting from an accident Feb. 27, 1947 in Bldg. 16.

Two days' additional pay to Elmer Zoerner, Bldg. 59, at \$28 a week for time lost owing to a foot injury suffered last Nov. 3.

\$3,416 to George Reynolds, welder in Bldg. 60, for 50 per cent loss of the use of his left hand, as the result of an accident last July 15.

\$28 a week to Arthur Buehler from Jan. 12 to Jan. 19 and from Feb. 20 to Mar. 8, for a skin irritation incurred in refrigerator repair.

\$22.31 a week to Ernest Dupont from last Oct. 27 to Apr. 26 for an accident Mar. 22, 1941. The referee ordered payment be continued for six months more at the same rate.

\$28 a week to Claude Rizziconi of Bldg. 8 from Feb. 13 to Apr. 12. His left hand was fractured Feb. 11.

\$28 a week to Gerald Salisbury, stock accumulator in Bldg. 60, from last Oct. 28 to last Nov. as the result of an accident Oct. 18.

\$28 a week to Richard Bennett, Bldg. 50, from Mar. 9 to Apr. 13 for an injury to his finger Feb. 9.

\$28 for two weeks in March to George Furness of Bldg. 273.

\$26.38 a week to Freda Bessette from Jan. 9 to Apr. 23 for a leg fracture Jan. 5. The case will remain open for a month to see if there is any further disability.

\$147 to Raymond Wagner, lathe worker in Bldg. 28, for 35 per cent loss of his left finger in an accident last July 14.

\$44.80 to Andrew F. Lorenzo for 10 per cent loss of his left ring finger in an accident last Aug. 18.

\$28 a week to Laurence Selke from last Aug. 19 to Sept. 10, and costs of an operation for a hernia suffered July 31.

\$315 to Anthony Lezzi, Bldg. 107, for 25 per cent loss of his right index finger in an accident last Aug. 27.

\$336 to Andrew Bullis for 20 per cent loss of an index finger and 10 per cent loss of a middle finger in an accident Apr. 3, 1947, in Bldg. 40.

Shop Stewards Attending Section Meeting



One of the section meetings for shop stewards, called around the table: V. E. Holmes, Bldg. 46; M. F. Lewis, 46; Joseph Riggi, 48; E. P. Riley, 46; L. P. Grethen, 42 (practically hidden); Frank Emspak, 46; Rossiter Lighthall, 46; Wilbur Germain, 46; John Rej, 42; Morton Milkins, 42, and Lawrence Campbell, 42.

301 Blood Bank Plans in Motion

Members of Local 301 have been called on with increasing frequency lately for blood donations for fellow members or their families. Each appeal has been handled as a separate emergency.

The Local 301 Blood Bank Committee is taking steps to establish a permanent 301 Blood Bank for the use of members of the union and their families free of charge.

As the first step, the committee sent a letter to every shop steward Monday asking him to solicit the names of all the workers in his group willing to donate blood. After these volunteers sign up, they will be given cards on which to write necessary information, including the hours when they will be available to give blood donations. Arrangements will be made with Ellis Hospital or the Works Hospital for their blood to be typed. This information will be added to their cards.

When donations are needed to replace blood used in transfusions for a 301 member or his family, the union committee will notify volunteers. The hospital will examine the donors and will limit the frequency with which they can give blood. On identifying himself, any member of the union or any member of his family will receive a blood donation.

Members of the Blood Bank Committee are Jack Mele, chairman; Helen Quirini, secretary; William Stewart and Albert Davis. The Blood Bank will be set up when enough volunteers are obtained to guarantee it will function.

Children's Movies

There will be another movie party for children of Local 301 members at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow (Saturday) at the union hall. The Activities Committee will serve ice cream.

Smoking Violation

Violations of smoking regulations by a few workers are causing difficulty with the fire insurance inspectors and endangering present smoking rights, the company notified Local 301 last week. The company said it was trying to get the smoking permit for Building 12 restored, after a man had been found smoking under a "No Smoking" sign next to a vat of thinner.

Artificial Shoe Shortage

Time magazine, a spokesman for Big Business, admitted in a recent issue that shoe manufacturers "cut production in hopes that shortages would make prices more palatable."

301 Field Day Date Changed to June 26

The date for the annual 301 Field Day has been changed to Saturday, June 26, instead of Sunday, June 27. The Activities Committee decided to make the shift because the Schenectady Union-Star's model air derby will be June 27.

This is the second year that the Union-Star has picked for its air derby the date already announced for the 301 Field Day.

The major Field Day prize will be a 1948 Studebaker. Originally the committee planned to give two other large prizes, but instead there will be 50 smaller ones, including such items as an alarm clock, kitchen clock, electric toaster and electric iron.

Tickets will be 50 cents each and will be distributed to shop stewards next week.

The traditional contest for Field Day queen will be featured. Each section is entitled to enter a candidate.

VOLUNTEER BLOOD DONOR

I am willing to donate blood for fellow members of Local 301 and their families.

Name _____ Check No. _____

Home Address _____ Bldg. No. _____

Are you willing to be a blood donor? Then sign the form above and give it to your shop steward or send it to the Blood Bank Committee at the union office.