

Union Wins Raise In Race Track Shop

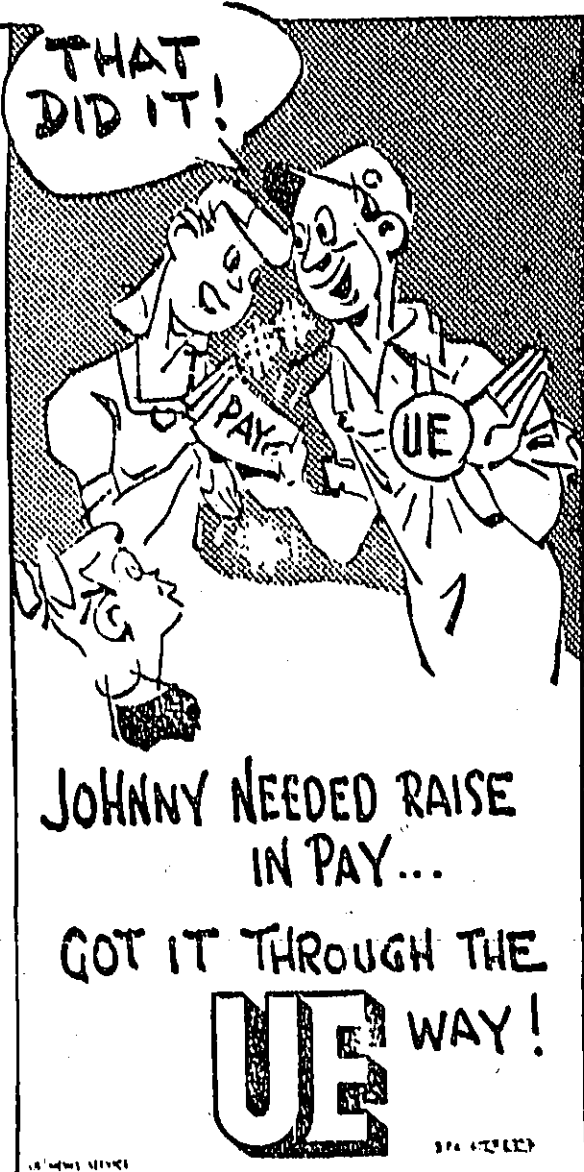
The first grievance processed to the Works Manager's office from the Equipment Development Shop at the Campbell Avenue Race Track building last week brought a 10 1/2-cent raise and \$92.75 back pay to Irving Tenney, electrician there.

The shop is part of the Electronic Tube division, and the new division autonomy policy has been particularly marked in this shop. The shop also has been surrounded by secrecy on the claim that processes must be protected from commercial competition. The men say that as a result Foreman Robinson has disregarded union contract requirements and tried to intimidate workers.

Investigation of Tenney's case showed that Tenney has prior electrical experience, and that when employed as a "handyman," he was doing electrician's helper work. When classed as a helper, he was doing electrician's work.

Donald McWhinnie recently-elected shop steward, brought the facts out, and a joint union-company investigation followed. McWhinnie, Board Members William Templeton and Anthony Villano and Victor Pasche, assistant to the business agent, represented the union.

Frank Schaff of the Works Manager's office agreed that Tenney had been kept behind his proper rate for a long time. While not willing to recognize him immediately as an A man, he agreed that Tenney should be moved from the bottom B to the top B rate now, with adjustments a year back.



Lining Up for Duty as 301 Shop Stewards



President Frank Kriss, extreme left, administering the oath of office to new shop stewards at the Feb. 1 shop stewards' meeting at 301 hall. Left to right, the stewards are William Comstock, Building 9; I. Derkowski, Bldg. 5; George Michaltonis, Bldg. 19; Jere Messitt, Bldg. 17; Julia Mitchell, Bldg. 39; John Hawkins, Bldg. 13 F; Joseph Leguire, Bldg. 73 A, and Paul Ricciardi, Bldg. 23.

Move Develops Here To Downgrade Jobs

To the speed-up drive which has been developing under the divisional autonomy policy, there has now been added, at least in some places, a move to downgrade jobs as workers are replaced.

Two grievances on this issue are pending in the Motor and Generator Division. One involves a stock room job on the second and third shifts which has been classed as A and now is being classed as B. The other involves abolition of the "high tiering" truck classification although high tiering work is still required. Both cases have been sent by the union to the Works Manager's office.

Another downgrading case now on the Male level concerns the company's refusal to pay the Class A rate to a man transferred to the job of material move man in Turbine. For 10 years this job has been known as Class A and five different men have been so classified and paid over this period. Management claims the job has been wrongly evaluated in the past and from now on will be a B job.

Frank Schaff of the Works Manager's office told the union recently there are 17 other such jobs in Turbine. He said the pay of the present material move men will not be cut but if they leave the jobs will be reclassified as B. A shop investigation has been made.

Income Tax Help

Members of Local 301 can obtain help in filing their income tax returns at the union hall tomorrow (Saturday) from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. This free service will be provided every Saturday through Mar. 12.

Weekly 301 Movies To Start Tomorrow

A series of free Saturday night movie programs for Local 301 members will start tomorrow at the union hall. The first show will be at 7-30 p.m. and the second one at 9 p.m.

Tomorrow's program will consist of "Charlie's Aunt" with Jack Benny; "Famous Fights" featuring Joe Louis and "The House I Live In" featuring Frank Sinatra.

On recommendation of the Executive Board, the 301 membership meeting this week voted approval of the movie plans of the 301 Activities Committee. The committee is arranging a varied selection, including revivals of old movies, sports shorts, and comedies.

Gordon Belgrave and Edward J. LaBombard Jr. have again been elected co-chairmen of the Activities Committee. Michael De Celli is the new secretary.

18 Per Cent of Workers Laid Off at Tiffin GE

The General Electric plant at Tiffin, Ohio, has laid off 90 of its 500 workers, the Associated Press reported last Saturday. The company said production at the Tiffin works would be cut 10 per cent, according to the AP.

The AP story didn't explain just what kind of speed-up is planned in order to operate with 18 per cent fewer workers and still have only a 10 per cent drop in production.

The Tiffin plant produces fractional horsepower motors for GE appliances, chiefly refrigerators. George W. Auer, the works manager, said that the demand for the appliances has decreased.

301 Helps Pensioner Obtain \$2,016 Award

Thanks to the reopening of his case through Local 301, Fenton Hines, a GE pensioner, has won a workmen's compensation award of \$2,016 against the company. A state referee, who had earlier disallowed the claim, reversed himself and ruled Feb. 8 that Hines is entitled to this sum for 25 per cent loss of the use of his right leg.

Hines, now 66, was injured in January 1947 while operating a snow-plow truck. He was pensioned off later that year. In February 1948 he appeared alone in Workmen's Compensation court at a hearing on his claim. The referee threw out the claim on the grounds that his injury was not related to the accident. Then Hines took the case to the union.

Marshall Perlin, 301 attorney, obtained a reopening of the case and obtained necessary medical evidence for him. A state medical examiner gave his opinion last June that there was a "causal relation" between the accident and the injury. GE asked for a hearing to cross-examine this state physician. The hearing was conducted in Albany Dec. 22, but didn't do GE any good. The company has been ordered to pay Hines for the injury.

**PITCH IN TODAY — HELP
MAKE YOUR SHOP
100 PER CENT UE**

Gaeth Broadcast

Tune in on the Arthur Gaeth broadcast, sponsored by the national UE, at 10 p.m. every Monday on WXXW, Albany (850 on your dial).

ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

THE VOICE OF LOCAL 301 - - - - U. E. R. & M. W. A. - - - - C. I. O.

Vol. 7 — No. 8

SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

February 25, 1949

Members Get Help on Income Tax at 301 Hall



A typical scene at 301 Hall every Saturday morning now, as union members receive assistance in filing their income tax reports. The free service is provided from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday through Mar. 12.

AFL Union Turns Down 301 Negotiations Offer

In reply to a letter from Local 301, Business Agent Keith Rockwell of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 128, AFL, wrote Local 301 this week that his union will notify 301 before taking any strike action at the GE plant here.

But the letter from Rockwell turned down the 301 offer of coordinating wage negotiations and ignored the 301 offer to consult on the steamfitters' problems.

The AFL union is taking "the last step in negotiations" with GE today (Friday) when there will be a meeting of the union, and the company with a federal conciliator.

"This meeting will either bring our dispute to a peaceful close with satisfactory gains for our members," Rockwell wrote, "or our Executive Board will be forced to set a definite strike date.

"Our union appreciates the offer of your union to jointly negotiate a contract with the General Electric Co., however, Local 128 feels that it is in a position to negotiate a contract with the GE Co. and win its just demands."

The AFL steamfitters represent 350 workers, while Local 301 represents 18,000. The AFL, which used the Taft-Hartley Law to split a group from 301, is now negotiating its first GE contract. UE has had a GE contract here for many years.

Movies Tomorrow At Local 301 Hall

The Local 301 program of free movies tomorrow (Saturday) night at the union hall will be as follows:

Miriam Hopkins in "Becky Sharp".
Football Parade—1948.
"One World or None".

The first show will be at 7:30 p.m. and the second show at 9:30 p.m. The weekly programs, sponsored by the Activities Committee for 301 members and their families, started last Saturday.

Cooperation Needed On Parking Problem

As the result of complaints about conditions in Parking Lot No. 5, the union made a joint investigation with management of the parking problem there.

The overlapping of shifts apparently causes the chief difficulty. In many instances workers park their cars in front of other workers' automobiles, instead of using available space a little further away.

The parking problem will be considerably lessened if all groups refrain from parking in driveways or blocking other cars.

**MAKE YOUR SHOP
100 PER CENT UE**

Boulware Rejects Wage Proposal Not Yet Made

General Electric workers are still trying to figure out how the company can "reject" a wage demand which has not yet been proposed.

Monday's papers gave front page play to a story quoting the New York Times as saying the GE had "turned down" UE "demands for a fourth-round pay increase," and had "rejected demands" for "shorter work hours and liberalized pension plans." The story quoted GE Vice-President Lemuel R. Boulware.

GE Not Approached

The fact is that the recent GE Conference Board meeting of UE locals voted for a campaign to show the need for a wage increase. Proposals for an actual date of reopening the contract, and for specific demands, were postponed to a later conference board meeting after further discussion by the membership of the locals. There has been no approach to the company. Under the contract, the union can reopen once, at a time it chooses.

Conference Board Actions

The conference board meeting declared a raise was needed to "restore purchasing power . . . and to bring back the jobs of those laid-off." (See additional facts brought out by the conference, on page 3). The meeting also stressed the need of correcting the rates for skilled trades and women. It recommended a fight for a shorter work week without reduction in pay, because of unemployment caused by increased productivity and lack of purchasing power on the part of the people. It recommended that the membership insist on improvement of the GE pension plan and the present health and sick benefit plans.

These actions of the union conference board got very little, if any, attention in the papers. But Boulware's "rejection" was considered big news.

Boulware was quoted as repeating his time-worn piece about (Continued on Page 2)

Wilson Thinks Police Too Soft With Pickets

GE President Charles E. Wilson complained to the Senate Labor Committee at Washington last week about the effectiveness of the Local 301 picket lines in the UE strike in 1946.

Wilson appeared before the committee to defend the Taft-Hartley law and to urge further government restrictions on labor.

A special news dispatch in the Schenectady Union-Star quoted Wilson as saying that Schenectady police were unable to cope with the UE pickets. Wilson frankly demanded that the federal government adopt measures to smash picket lines if local police don't do the job to suit the employers.

He praised the Taft-Hartley law and urged that the provisions be retained allowing the government to break strikes by getting injunctions against unions. Although Wilson has been airing his Taft-Hartley propaganda for months, newspapers gave him large front-page headlines, as though his statements were really new.

Wilson told the committee "the men in the shops" favor the Taft-Hartley law. By petitions, letters, postcards, resolutions and votes GE workers have shown they oppose Taft-Hartley.

UE Job Survey Shows Big Drop

A survey made by UE reveals that in plants which employed 387,000 workers at their peak in 1948 there has been a drop in employment of 60,000. This represents a 16 per cent lay-off. If the same figure applies for the rest of the electrical industry, a total of 80,000 workers have lost their jobs in the industry.

In addition to lay-offs, workers are faced with the problem of "short weeks" in many plants.

New England and upstate New York are among the five areas hardest hit by unemployment, the survey shows. The heaviest lay-offs were in plants producing for the ordinary consumer. Plants working on heavy electrical goods for utilities or the military program have been least affected.

General Electric laid off 2,300 at Bridgeport, Conn., and 2,291 at Fort Wayne, Ind. At Procter Electric, Philadelphia, the 1200 jobs were cut in half. Remington Rand at Ilion has dropped 3,200 and Frigidaire, in Ohio, laid off 3,000. That's just a partial list.

Rejects Proposals Not Yet Presented

(Continued from Page 1)

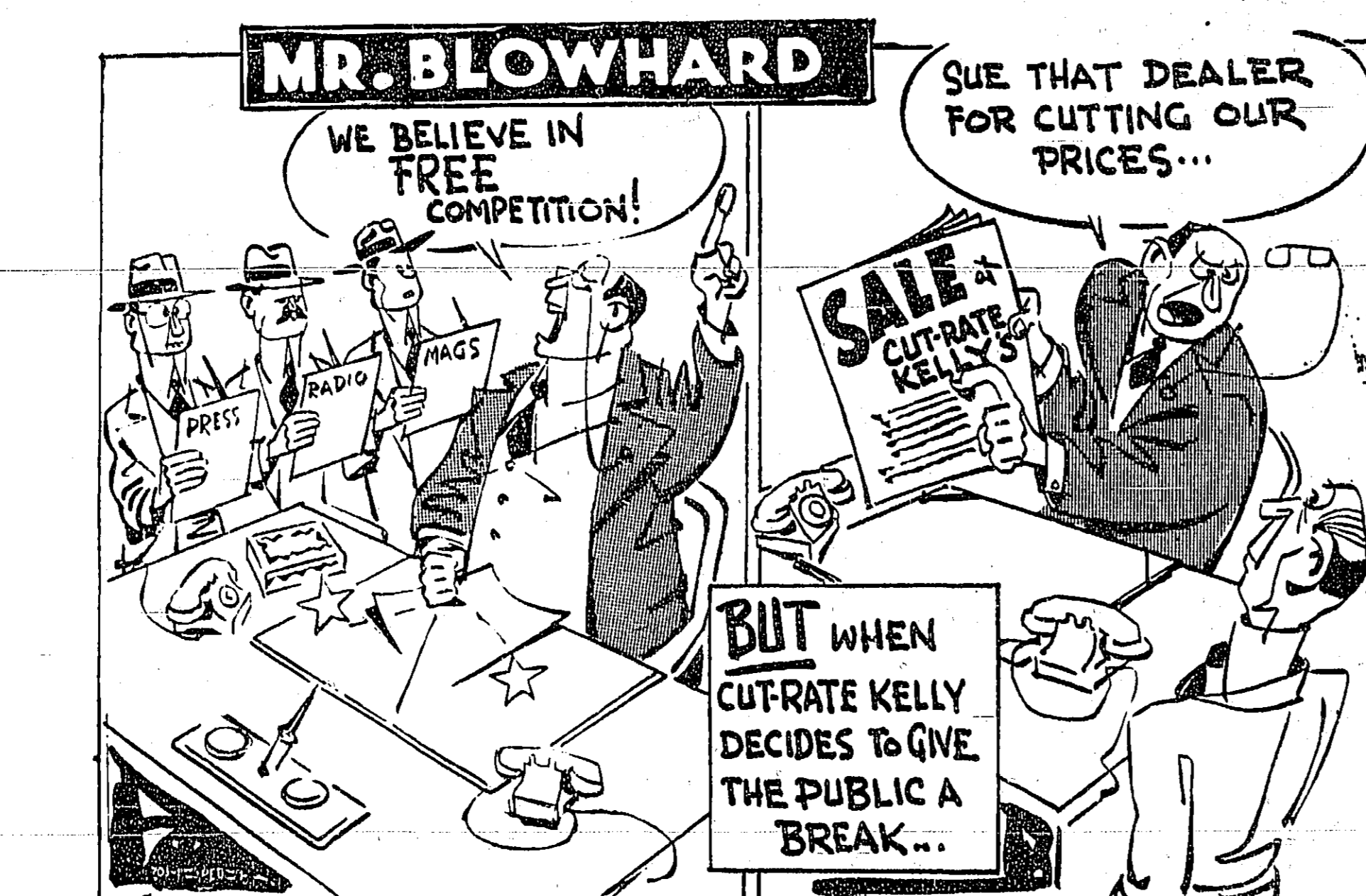
wage increases being responsible for a "wage-price-inflation spiral." Of course he did not mention the real fact. The fact is that GE and the rest of Big Business have brought on inflation through all-time high profiteering and high prices, and past wage raises have been just efforts to keep up with the run-away prices.

These questions will be the subject of considerable discussion in shop stewards' and membership meetings. In the meantime, Boulware's rush to "reject" a wage raise shows the importance of the current organizing drive, to make GE realize that GE workers need a raise.

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In Fact Subscriptions

The Local 301 membership meeting last week voted to continue the union's subscriptions to In Fact for shop stewards, but voted against incurring the new expense of subscribing to the CIO News for the stewards. In Fact is a weekly news-sheet issued by George Seldes, formerly a famous newspaper correspondent, to expose the lies and distortions of the Big Business press.

Strike Wins Raise

Pressure of a three-week strike against a pressure cooker factory brought a 10 cents an hour raise for members of UE-Local 419. The agreement settling the strike at Eastern Metal Products Company at Tuckahoe also improved classification and vacation pay.

Accidents at Work

More than 2,000,000 workers are injured on their jobs every year in the United States. About 18,000 of these lose their lives and nearly 100,000 are maimed for life.

UE News Features

Tomorrow's issue of the national UE News will feature the General Electric Company's campaign to make the Taft-Hartley law even worse. There will also be a report on the Westinghouse Conference Board meeting of UE.

Pensioners' Meeting

The UE-301 Pension Organization will meet at 2 p.m. Wednesday at the union hall.

Don't Be a Slacker
Join the Union

GE Must Submit To Arbitration

A New York Supreme Court decision recently stated that the GE-UE dispute about the company's refusal to credit time spent on union activities toward the pension plan is subject to arbitration.

The union claims that GE is discriminating against union members by refusing to credit time spent on union business. GE has insisted that the question was not subject to arbitration.

Unemployed Dues

The Executive Board has decided that hereafter unemployed dues will be collected in strict accordance with the constitutional provision that any member employed less than 10 days in any given month will pay 10 cents for an unemployed stamp.

Since it is not convenient for unemployed members to bring their unemployed dues each month to the union office, they may pay them in a lump sum when they return to work.

Stewards Meet Tuesday

The 301 shop stewards will meet at 7.30 p.m. Tuesday at the union hall.

Taft-Hartley Results Praised by Boulware

When the Taft-Hartley law was passed, UE and other unions charged that the real purpose of the non-Communist affidavit provision was to cause trouble and splits in labor unions.

GE Vice-President L. R. Boulware boasted of the success of this scheme in his testimony last week praising the Taft-Hartley law before the Senate Labor Committee at Washington. He declared that the affidavit question has caused battles within UE and has influenced the election of officers in a number of locals.

Not content with interference in the election of union officers, Boulware demanded that Taft-Hartley affidavit requirements be extended to shop stewards too and to all paid union representatives. Moreover, he wants employers to be expressly excused from dealing with representatives of a union which has not filed Taft-Hartley affidavits.

If Boulware gets his way employers won't have to worry about wage increases, contracts or grievances.

Seats for Observers

By direction of the Executive Board, members who attend shop stewards' meetings as observers, not as stewards or stewards' alternates, are asked to sit in the rear row of the hall. This separation will enable the chairman to distinguish stewards from observers in counting votes.

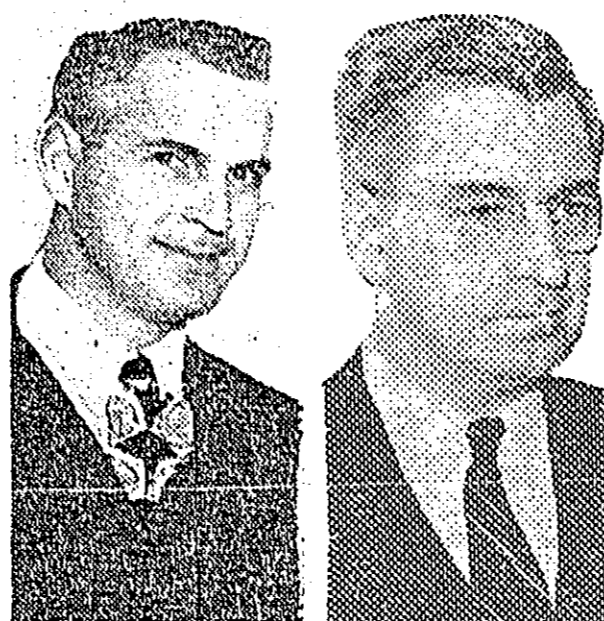
List Stewards On Honor Roll



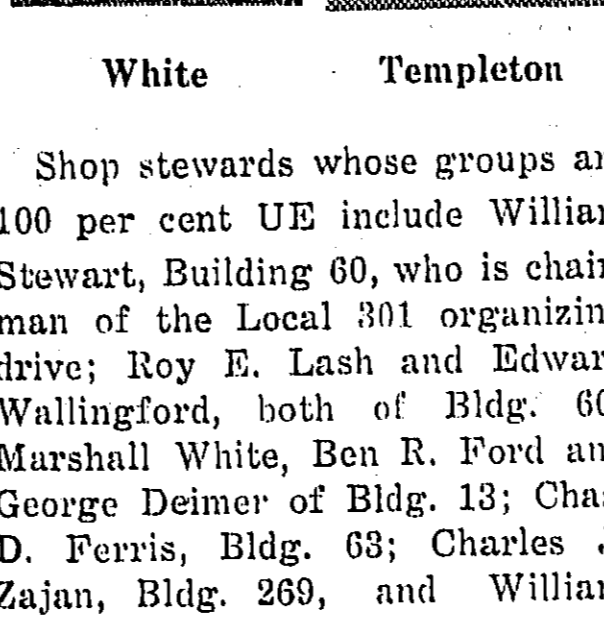
Stewart



Lash



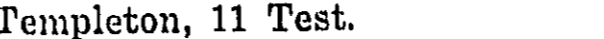
Wallingford



Ferris



White



Templeton

Shop stewards whose groups are 100 per cent UE include William Stewart, Building 60, who is chairman of the Local 301 organizing drive; Roy E. Lash and Edward Wallingford, both of Bldg. 60; Marshall White, Ben R. Ford and George Deimer of Bldg. 13; Chas. D. Ferris, Bldg. 63; Charles J. Zajan, Bldg. 269, and William Templeton, 11 Test.

Additions to this honor roll will be printed in the EU News throughout the organizing campaign. The Board member must certify to the 100 per cent organization of any group in his section, before it is included in the list. Pictures of the stewards will be used when available.

The organizing drive opened last week and continues until Apr. 15.

Why GE Workers Need Pay Increase

The program of the GE Conference Board of UE locals, unanimously approved by the Local 301 membership meeting last week, centers on the need for a wage increase "to restore the purchasing power of our members and to bring back the jobs of those laid off."

As the EU News stated last week, the Conference Board summarized the facts which make a pay raise necessary and which must be made clear to the membership and to the public. Here are high spots of the summary.

Conditions of GE Workers

The facts show that the condition of General Electric employees is one of increasing difficulty and hardship. We find the following:

Lay-Offs

For the first time in nine years, several thousand of our members have been laid off. Thousands more are working only part time.

Wages

The weekly purchasing power today of GE workers who still have full time employment is \$11.09 less than in January 1945.

Cost of Living

The cost of living, which has risen 35 1/2 per cent since January 1945 is now only 2 per cent below its highest peak, notwithstanding all the propaganda about reductions.

Productivity

The productivity of GE employees has increased more than 25 per cent since the end of the war.

Rate Cutting

The individual wage rates of our members are constantly being cut by means of speedup, and by transfers to lower rated jobs as a result of layoffs, changes in manufacturing methods and by the breakdown of manufacturing operations.

Unemployment Compensation

Members thrown out of work because of consumers' inability to buy, increased productivity and direct speedup receive no severance pay, or compensation adequate to sustain themselves and their families, either from the company or from agencies of government.

Pensions

Our old members are being forced into retirement at an average GE pension of \$89 a month.

Medical Care

Our members and families who become sick do not receive essential medical care and cannot afford to pay for it.

Taxes

In addition to the other burdens they must bear, our members are forced to pay heavy taxes, from which they receive no proportionate benefit.

Help the Organizing Drive
Make Your Shop
100 Per Cent UE

Good and Bad News

The 301 men's basketball team recently beat the Walters team 51 to 50 but was defeated 45 to 39 by the Arrows. Both games were at Oneida High School.

At the end of the City League

season the team may enter some tournaments. Players interested in signing up for these later games should notify Don Restifo, Building 73. He can be reached through the union office.

WEAR YOUR UNION BUTTON

Conditions of GE Company

The circumstances which impose hardship upon our members result in great benefit to the General Electric Company. The circumstances of the company are as follows:

Profits

GE profits in 1948 are the highest in history. The company confesses to a profit rate of \$112,000,000 annually. This is 18 per cent higher than the profit of the previous year, which was then the highest in company history.

Lay-Offs

Instead of reducing prices, GE lays off workers. The wages they were paid the company now keeps as profit.

Productivity

GE has kept for its own profit all the benefit of increased productivity per worker without passing on the benefits to consumers in lower prices or to workers in better wages. In 1939 GE made \$739 profit per worker, in 1948 GE made \$1,089 profit per worker.

Wages, Prices and Profits

While our own weekly earnings have increased 14 per cent since the first quarter of 1945, GE prices during the same period have risen 35 1/2 per cent and company profits 133 per cent.

Compensation Rebates

While today unemployment compensation is too little to sustain our laid off members, GE has received tremendous kickbacks from state compensation funds under the "merit" system.

Executive Pensions

In addition to enormous salaries and bonuses, GE officers and executives receive luxurious pensions. While the average GE pensioner receives \$89 a month, the president of the company will receive \$5,500 a month and lesser executives \$1,000 a month.

Tax Rebates

GE has profited by huge tax rebates, and by tremendous reductions in corporation taxes, while the tax burden has been shifted to the backs of those who find it hard to make ends meet.

Profit Sharing

In 1947 the company arbitrarily abolished its so-called "profit sharing plan" that had existed for production and salaried employees. The company took away the few dollars a year that the plan gave its employees, but retained the profit-sharing plan that will add millions of dollars in 1948 to the already large salaries and benefits of GE officers and executives.

All of these great benefits enjoyed by the General Electric Co. have been achieved at the expense of its employees and the public.

UE Radio Program

The Arthur Gaeth broadcast, sponsored by the national UE, is at 10 p.m. every Monday over WNKW, Albany (850 on your dial).