

Results of Conference Between the Union And the Company

(Continued from page 1) should be given information on employees who have been re-engaged after they have been hired.

Company—This subject has been thoroughly discussed by the members of the Manufacturing Committee, and at the present time the Company does not think it advisable to give such information.

5—JOB CLASSIFICATION

Union—Quote—"Before a woman or a minor is placed on the job which a man has done up to the time of such change, without a change in methods, the matter should be brought to the attention of the local executive board by the local management, with the reasons why it should be done."

Company—The Company expects to be free to change jobs to women and minors' operations if the nature of the work permits, but the Company has agreed that when such changes are to be made the shop steward or representative would be notified if there is no change of method involved.

Ed. Note—This matter was presented by the Union to the Company to take care of jobs where by separation, or division of male operations (without change in method) the lesser skilled parts have, in the past, been given to a female operator.

6—EMPLOYMENT

Union—The employment of all former employees laid-off for lack of work, with or without service records, should take place before any new help is hired. This re-employment should be based on the present policies governing rehiring of laid-off employees with service.

Company—The Company agrees that in considering applicants for employment, individuals who have worked previously for the Company will be given preferential consideration over applicants who have not worked for the Company if the Company finds that their qualifications are equal.

7—PROFIT SHARING

Union—In cases where lost service is restored to an employee, retroactive profit-sharing payment shall be made to cover profit sharing distribution based on the employee's service before adjustment.

Company—The Company understands that this refers to groups of individuals at Lynn and Bridgeport whose continuity of service was requested before the end of 1939 but not acted upon until 1940. In these cases the Company has agreed to pay profit sharing on earnings of the last six months of 1939. This agreement does not cover any future cases.

8—NOTIFICATION SLIP FF 575-B

Union—The Union stated that this notification slip is used at Fort Wayne and suggests that similar slip be given out at all of the plants.

Company—The Company has agreed that information of this type will be given out at all of the plants.

For Your Approval or Otherwise The second part of this report deals with matters that have not been presented to the Company, but all of them originated in one or more of the General Electric Locals.

Each matter has been discussed and formulated by a sub-committee and by the committee as a whole, known as the General Electric Locals Conference Board (composed of delegates of all G.E. Locals) and in conjunction with the General Officers of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America.

Time Study and Piece Work Prices

The sub-committee on Time Study and Piece Work reported. The recommendations of the committee were adopted.

1. Prices that have been set by time study and agreed to be satisfactory by both parties shall remain in effect unless there has been changes in methods or tools. The same principles will be followed when setting special prices, and prices estimated by comparison; or from charts, namely to give an experienced operator, working at average speed an opportunity to earn at least the average estimated group earnings. An allowance shall be made on a percentage basis for speed above average as measured by previous earnings.

2. A time study shall be made under standard shop conditions. Standard conditions will be known as those necessary practices that have been agreed upon by the employees and supervisors in each department.

3. Before a job is time studied, a foreman shall satisfy himself the operator is familiar with the details of the particular operation. During the time study the only persons present shall be the operator and the time study man. If time study is disputed as to fairness then the foreman and representative of the employee may be called in. If it is decided to retime the job, the representative shall have the privilege of observing the time study to assure him that fair judgment has been used in setting the price.

4 (A). When an operator is requested to do another job because of production necessity, or engineering developments, etc., and there is work to be done on his job, he shall receive not less than his average earnings.

(B) When a piece work operator is transferred to another piece work job because of lack of work on his own job, he shall receive a day rate of at least 85% of the piece work job value of the new job as a breaking in rate (or its equivalent for these wage systems where the term AER is not used).

(C) When an operator is requested to use defective material that might slow down the normal output of a job, he shall receive his average earnings.

(D)—Piece-work-operators-who have been laid off and re-engaged on the job they formerly worked on, shall receive as a breaking in rate, at least 90% day rate of their former earnings. Day workers and salary workers who are re-engaged shall receive the rate they have at time of lay off (same job) plus an adjustment made in the interim.

5. Operators working piece work shall receive vouchers or price, before starting job.

6. Where prices have not been established and operators have been instructed to proceed with job, average earnings shall be paid.

7. All jobs that have been time-studied shall be immediately inspected so as to assure operator that a satisfactory quality has been produced.

8. Table prices and methods of setting prices shall be as plain and understandable as possible and be available to employees at all times.

9. Group Incentive Systems

Employees working under the group incentive system shall have record of price allowed for the portion of work to be done when the job is placed in production based on same principles as outlined in paragraphs 1 and 2.

Community Rate Survey

Motion passed that the sub-committee on Piece Rates and Time Study shall continue and shall make a basic study of the policy of community rates and make recommendations to the conference board.

Relief and Loan Plan

After discussion on the proposal that relief payments be extended to those who qualify from the time of

removal from the payroll until the first week of eligibility under State unemployment compensation, the conference board delegated a sub-committee consisting of Arsenault (Bridgeport), Linehan (Lynn), and Kessler (Bloomfield), to draft an amendment to the relief and loan plan. The report of the sub-committee is as follows:

"It is recommended that the articles covering loans and relief in the various constitutions of the relief and loan plans be amended to include the following: 'All members in good standing laid off for lack of work shall remain eligible, immediately following the day they cease working, for benefits for a period of four weeks or until unemployment compensation payments begin.'"

The report of the sub-committee was adopted with the understanding that the various local representatives on the relief and loan plans would attempt to get this amendment through.

Wage Increases

Considerable discussion took place on the question of wage increases in relation not only to the G.E. locals but to the rest of the industry.

Motion passed that the secretary be instructed to present a concrete proposal to the delegates embodying the ideas put forth in the discussion. The following was presented by the secretary on this question of wages:

"A number of G.E. Locals have proposed that steps be taken to obtain a general increase. After an exchange of views, it was felt that the success of such a move depended on whether the U.E. Locals in other leading companies of the industry were prepared to proceed with a general move of a similar nature. With this in view, the General Officers shall send out a call inviting representatives from the U.E. Locals in the leading companies of the industry for a wage conference.

"In addition to whatever delegates G.E. Locals may desire to send, a committee shall be selected from the conference board to represent the G.E. Locals conference board. The main purpose of the wage conference shall be to determine the advisability of a general move and to work out steps necessary to make it effective.

"The General Office shall compile data on developments in other industries and on conditions in the electrical industry as a whole. This coming conference in no way affects attempts on the part of Locals to improve wages locally whenever possible."

The above was unanimously adopted. Motion passed that the sub-committee of the conference board to the wage conference shall consist of one delegate from each G.E. Local represented at the general wage conference.

Vacations

Motion passed that employees with five years or more of continuous service shall receive two weeks vacation with pay. This is in conformity with the present Westinghouse plan.

Holidays

Motion passed that employees receive pay for legal holidays.

Job Classification

Motion passed that the value of a job shall be set by comparison with jobs requiring similar skill, etc., regardless of the sex or age of the operator.

Transfers Through the Personnel Department

Motion carried that the local union receive lists of employees transferred from one department to another if these transfers take place through the Personnel Department.

Wage Systems

Complicated wage systems that are difficult to understand are regarded by the operators that work under them as devices to confuse them and to reduce their earnings. These com-

plicated systems make it impossible to properly handle questions that arise because accurate information cannot be obtained on the basis of misunderstanding.

The best system is the simplest system that allows an operator to know exactly what his earnings are without recourse to complicated formulas.

The committee believes that the time is appropriate for the establishment of more uniform and simpler wage systems in all G.E. plants. The most intelligible and satisfactory systems, whether group or individual, are those based on a fixed price per piece regardless of number of pieces made or worked on.

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ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS ...NEWS

Schenectady, N. Y.—MARCH 12th, 1940

G.E. Office Workers Want Union

Schenectady Delegates To District Council Report Progress

G. E. OFFICE WORKERS

Many G. E. employees are continually asking us if they may join the Union, and in doing so, are they protected by the Wagner Act.

The answer is yes. Furthermore, the production and maintenance employees are ready to fully support the Office Workers in their organizational efforts.

There are approximately 3,000 office workers in the Schenectady plant eligible to join our Union.

DO YOU NEED A UNION? Some office workers, believe it or not, honestly wonder if they need a Union. What can a Union do for us? We are not covered by the Contract, so what?

These questions seem strange to factory workers, because they know that office workers' wages and working conditions are governed by the same Company policy and administration as their own.

The success of the factory workers' organizational endeavors have reaped them profitable rewards in the way of wage increases, job protection, betterment of working conditions, and the elimination of favoritism.

The office worker's job is classified, and he or she receives a rating made by supervision relative to ability, which has direct bearing to the pay envelope. Office workers' wages are subject to community rates and paid accordingly.

WAGE CUTS! Factory workers are asking the following questions: Can Office Workers afford wage cuts? Are they satisfied with their present living standards?

Can G. E. Office Workers buy groceries, new clothes, or a home and offer in payment their titles as timekeeper, job record clerk, chief clerk, leader, or what have you, instead of actual cash on the line?

G. E. office employees, skilled and unskilled, as human beings cannot exist on titles, or how many lead pencils they save or the type of ink they use.

PREREQUISITES OF OFFICE WORKERS.

The prerequisites for an average office job are much higher than a factory worker. Are they paid accordingly? If not, is an office worker big enough as an individual to get it adjusted? The answer is definitely NO.

Office Workers in other G. E. Plants are realizing the benefits of Unionism and taking advantage of them.

FACTORY WORKERS NEED OFFICE WORKERS IN UNION?

The factory workers need the help of office workers as well as the office worker needs their help. The fundamental problems affect both groups. Office workers and factory workers can solve their mutual problems more easily and effectively together.

General Electric Office Workers are eligible to join the United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America—the only union that has, or ever has had, a national collective bargaining contract with the General Electric Company.

Every factory union member is ready to give you a hand. Contact the member nearest you and get his views on this question. Or better still, drop in at Union Headquarters any time, sign an application card, and give yourself and your family the security you need on your job. You owe it to yourself and your family.

Your affiliation to the Union will pay you high dividends.

Contract Negotiations Due in April

The Union will meet with the Company again in April to discuss many important matters affecting all G. E. workers. The outcome of these negotiations will depend upon the interest taken by the workers themselves.

If you cannot attend your meetings regularly, you could at least be of some help by wearing the Union Button and see that the fellow next to you is backing the negotiations committee by wearing his.

Dues Payments Increase

The Secretary reports the largest dues payment in the past several months for the month of February. One hundred and sixty new members are initiated for the month of February.

It pays to be honest. It pays even more than it costs.

Curiosity, which is called idle, is always on the job.

Union Representative And the Foreman

Both the Union Representative and the Foreman have equally responsible positions. Their interests are not exactly the same in all respects. As for general harmony and good relationship between the Company and the employees, both have the same problem. However, on other questions the interests are different. For example, we could weigh both jobs as follows (for factors of responsibility):

- Union Representative: Harmony, Adequate wages, Reasonable effort, Equalization of hours and work, Reasonable working conditions, Guarantee prices. Foreman: Harmony, Low cost, Efficient effort, Production necessity, Within legal requirements, Keep earnings within job value, And so many more factors could be listed that every worker is familiar with.

"Company Training"

The company is spending thousands of dollars annually to train their foremen to become experts in conducting their departments efficiently. Efficiency can also over-reach itself. A part of this training is the encouraging of the employees to take up their problems individually with the foreman first, before going to their Union Representative. The average employee individually facing the foreman is more gullible to a lot of smooth talk. Then there are many so-called favors which the foreman can give the individual worker, with no cost to the Company. This eventually leads to mistrust among the workers, and the beginning of the end of the Union and real security.

This training, however, is not being extended to give the foreman more authority to make independent decisions. Contract is becoming more remote and farther away from the realities of the job. This makes it consistently more difficult to adjust grievances.

Union Training

The Union is training its representatives to be efficient in representing the workers' interests. The Union members elect the most capable trustworthy fellows to represent them. It is good healthy business for all union members to use their Union Representatives first and always, in attempting to get any matter satisfactorily settled.

No training, however, either on the part of Company Foremen or Union Representatives can do any good in helping Union-Employee relationship if the training does not develop a willingness to approach and settle the problems coming up on the basis of their merits.

Only with this approach can confidence be maintained on the part of the employees towards the Union and the Company Management.

ORIGINAL TORN

... ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS ...

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EDITING BOARD William Turnbull, Thomas Conliffe, Benjamin Geersen, Fred Schoeffler, Seymour Schreier, Sidney Webb, Secretary, Michael Tedisco, Fred Matern, Chairman, Editor - L. Jandreau

Editorial

JUST A MOMENT!

MISLEADING FACTS

The General Electric Company Management is presenting each week in their column of the Works News entitled "Just A Moment", "Timely topics of interest to all readers of the Works News". In March 1st, 1940 issue, the topic was "Long Range Industrial Progress" quoting figures from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, that "in the past forty years employment in industry has increased 63 percent, total factory wages have risen 350 percent and working hours have decreased 34 percent.

Wonders can be done with statistics by a clever manipulation. 1. Certain statistics can be quoted showing increase in industrial employment, and disregard growth of population. 2. Statistics can be given of money-wage increase, and cost of living figures can be forgotten.

3. Statistics can be given of decrease in working hours, and the increase in output per man power can be forgotten. 4. Statistics can be given on G. E. Pensions in millions of dollars but what is the average pension for the G. E. production and maintenance pensioner? 5. Statistics can show where 85% of all industrial earnings of the U. S. goes into the pockets of wage earners, these statistics do include all salaries of high industrial officials and supervisors.

Accurate Statement of Problems of American Industry The temporary National Economic Committee appointed by the President of our country, recently submitted a preliminary report to the President in which is found an accurate statement of the problem of American Industry. We quote: "People who are able and willing to work cannot find employment.

"People who are hungry cannot provide themselves with food." "People who produce what the idle and the hungry need cannot sell it, and, indeed, can find a market for only a small portion of what they are capable of producing.

"Owners of money and owners of machines cannot put their property to sure and certain use.

"The abundance of nature mocks the intelligence of men who seem incapable of distributing it among their own kind either equitably or profitably.

"Everyone seems to agree that a prosperous economy depends not only upon the production and distribution of goods and services but also upon the free participation of all in the work of producing and distributing them and in the profits of the whole activity.

"There is no single element of the population which does not honestly desire to promote production and distribution. The general prosperity for which everyone longs depends upon it. Even more important than that, however, the survival of the system of private property itself depends upon the restimulation of economic activity. Yet, with resources of men and materials altogether adequate to attain the objectives desired by all and to furnish plenty for all, the oppressive fact remains that the economic machine is stalled on dead center. The people are unable to serve their own economic welfare.

"It was while business had a free hand, practically undisturbed by Government-intervention, that the first crashing evidences of the failure of the economic machine appeared. The problem of agricultural surpluses, the problem of mineral surpluses, the railroad problem, the problem of surplus labor, and the appalling problem of deficiencies of food, shelter, and clothing for millions were all symptoms that developed long before Government undertook to prevent the liquidation of business and to provide employment by made-work.

Government acted. But the evidences of the failure of the economic machine have not disappeared. People are still without jobs. Farmers are still without satisfactory markets. Industry is still without sufficient purchasers. We are still enmeshed in an economy the rate of growth of which is decreasing."

Building 37 Sends Items of Interest

George (Doc) Cook, who is confined to the Ellis Hospital, is doing fine, and we hope to have him back in the shop before long.

We doubt whether our "Bob" Robinson has missed a week-end at his camp this winter. Vic Granger didn't put up any ice this year. No doubt an electric refrigerator for his camp.

Follow your committee and you'll follow the crowd. Francis Renkawitz, chairlady; Leola Gage, Theresa Basile, Helen Rector, George Wiltz, David Otten and Wilson Snyder. We found out that they are not only in the electrical field but can also tell us who is the best dressed girl in No. 37.

Department password for girls: 40c per hour.

Boys, make the wife union minded. Have her join the Ladies' Auxiliary.

Mary O'Marra spent a week down at the big city and did she have a good time? Ask Mary.

Why not pay a visit or drop a card to our old shop mates who are on the sick list:

Fred Abruzzo—Ellis Hospital Anna Kochenbach—Home Irene Raczowski—Glenridge Paul Zimmermann made a comeback by doing some ice fishing this winter.

If it's eggs you want, see Howard Anthony.

—F. J. Schoeffler.

Real Bargaining Leads to Pact. U. S. Court Rules

NEW YORK, Mar. 2. — Genuine collective bargaining requires the reaching of a signed contract, the federal circuit court of appeals decided here in a case that will probably reach the U. S. Supreme Court.

"No one can dispute that a permanent memorial of any negotiation which results in a bargain is not only appropriate but practically necessary to its preservation," Judge Learned Hand wrote in the majority opinion.

"The freedom reserved to the employer is freedom to refuse concessions in working conditions to his employees, or exact concessions from them; it is not the freedom once they have in fact agreed upon these conditions to compromise the whole proceeding and probably make it nugatory."

By its action, the New York circuit court sided with the view of the Pittsburgh circuit court in the Heinz case, and disagreed with a recent Chicago ruling that the Inland Steel Co. was not required to sign a contract with the CIO Steel Workers Organizing Committee.

Industrial production 28% above that of the 1923-25 average does not begin to guarantee a living standard equal to that which prevailed in the years 1923-25, because since then, our population has increased by several millions. This increase in population has been accompanied by a greater increase in the number of unemployed. American industry, regardless of its accomplishments, has failed to provide employment for approximately 10,000,000 people who are able and willing to work. In March 1933, this number was close to 15 million.

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Slash Wages, N.A.M. Leader Urges

LAFAYETTE, Ind., Mar. 2. — A wealthy corporation executive today offered American workers the choice of being "willing to work or starve—root, hog or die—count it a privilege to die, if need be."

The suggestion, which brought immediate protests from mid-west union leaders, was made by B. C. Heacock, head of the Caterpillar Tractor Co. and chairman of the agricultural co-operation committee of the National Association of Manufacturers.

Speaking at a Purdue University farm conference, Heacock presented the unique theory that high wages for the industrial workers would ruin the farmers. The only way to solve the nation's farm problem, he said, is to slash the wages of workers.

"There is nothing sacred or good in high dollar wages," the N.A.M. leader proclaimed. An unnamed manufacturer who boasts of high daily wages has done more harm to American industry than any other man," he added.

At Peoria, Ill., leaders of the CIO Farm Equipment Workers Organizing Committee warned Caterpillar employees to stand on guard against possible efforts by Heacock to translate his theories into wage cuts.

"Workers know," the statement said, "that mass unemployment, starvation farm prices, low wages and war are brought about by the policies of the Heacocks, the hungry Hoovers and the fat Wall Street gang of coupon clippers."

The Motion Seconder

I'll second that motion; Hobbins is the name. I'm the best motion seconder left in the game.

They say I'm getting old, that I'm beginning to fade, But I still can second motions, even before they are made.

It doesn't make any difference what the motion is about, You can depend on me to second it without the slightest doubt.

When there is a motion to be seconded, I'm sure to speak— Hobbins is the name—the spring hot-tom antique.

Everybody is ignorant, only on different subjects.

The average man is like a match. If he gets lit up he loses his head.

WASHINGTON (FP).— Adoption of a \$10,000,000 program to "save lives and improve health in those parts of the nation which need this most and can afford it least" was asked of Congress by President Roosevelt in a special message.

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