

## Union Building Progressing

The Union's meeting hall now being constructed on Erie Boulevard is progressing to completion. By the time this paper goes to press the walls will have been completed by the general contractor, Pioneer Construction Company of Schenectady, N. Y. The plumbing and electrical work is also going on at the same time. This work is being done by Congress Plumbing & Heating Corp. and Liberty Electric Company.

It is hoped that no delay will take place in the delivery of the luminated trusses which are being made in St. Paul, Minnesota. An increase of orders for such wooden trusses across the country, caused by the well-known steel shortage, has been known to cause delays even in the delivery of wooden trusses. All efforts are being made to get prompt delivery of the trusses.

## Discussions Continue On Electricians Case

Last week there was a meeting with management in Bldg. 41 on the long standing case of the Crane and Elevator Repairmen. It is of special interest that for the first time representatives of the central group of Electricians attended this meeting to give their support to the justified demand of this group for the Class A Electrician's rate.

The Union made two specific proposals to settle this dispute. One proposal was to transfer this whole group into the central group as Class A Electricians thereby increasing the number of men at this top rate by about fifteen. The alternate proposal was to upgrade the better part of the job in their own group thereby giving them room to progress to the Class A rate. In reply to these proposals the Company asked for a week to consider them and as we go to press, we are awaiting management's answer.

## Penalty Should Fit the Crime

Certain foremen in Steam Turbine who evidently have forgotten that a supervisor must have a certain amount of manliness and dignity to command the respect of their employees have advanced to the stage of peeping over wash-room compartment walls.

This concerns a 3rd shift employee, married with three children, who has 17 years of service with G. E. Company. Two foremen (?) alleged that he had been dozing on 9/12/56, this, of course, being at 5:00 a. m., after he had nearly completed a full night's work. The following night the employee was called into his foreman's office and told he was discharged and his last night was to be 9/20/56.

The Company's record on this employee is that he received a warning notice on 8/4/53 for absenteeism, which he corrected, and another on 3/27/56 for sleeping when he was sent home for the balance of the shift. These are the only two marks on his record for 17 years.

The 3rd shift Turbine Board Members, Earl Coons and Elmer Collis, together with Ralph Vitallo, Turbine Coordinator, went to Haneys' office to protest the firing of this employee. Haneys told them the firing stood. The Discharge Committee discussed the facts of the case with the employee and then met with central management in Bldg. 41 where they were also told that the discharge stood. All the Turbine Board Members met with Haneys on 9/18/56 protesting the firing of this employee. After meeting, Haneys' position remained the same — that the firing still stood.

We feel that the penalty given to this man is not just in light of the charges by the Company.

### EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

UNION HEADQUARTERS

MONDAY, SEPT. 24  
7:30 p.m.

### IUE-CIO LOCAL 301 NEWS

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF LOCAL 301,  
REPRESENTING SCHENECTADY  
GE WORKERS

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121 ERIE BLVD. SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

## Campaign For Shorter Work Week is Launched at AFL-CIO Conference

Shorter hours as a key goal of organized labor's program to improve working conditions and the standard of living of American workers received new emphasis at a national conference in Washington sponsored by the AFL-CIO Dept. of Research. Nearly 200 research directors and union officials from the AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions in major industries attended the one-day informational conference.

AFL-CIO Pres. George Meany told the conference at a luncheon meeting, "the overall problem of shorter hours lies at the very heart of our economy," he said, and is concerned with the rate of production and the ability to consume what we produce in sufficient quantity to keep the economy healthy.

Commenting on the vital role organized labor has played historically in the campaign for shorter hours, Meany said that "the pattern of life which we accept today as a matter of course, didn't just happen. It is due to the fact that we have a trade union movement in this country. It came about because a small minority decided to do something about it. The history of shorter working hours is the history of the labor movement itself."

On the subject of automation, Meany told the conference that he did not think it is going to bring about unemployment in the long run but "if we are going to replace labor we must shorten hours

and maintain pay. We can't produce consumers by push buttons."

There is a possibility, however, that some bad results may come from automation, Meany added, and that it might even "turn out to be a curse," if not handled with consideration for the human elements involved. "Labor has the responsibility," he said, "of calling attention to the facts."

The economic aspects of shorter hours was discussed by Nat Goldfinger, economist of the AFL-CIO Research Dept., who pointed out that these have taken on increased importance under current conditions of technological advance and increased production.

In 1919, Goldfinger stated, some 34 million people, working an average 55-hour work week, produced a national output of goods and services of \$36.7 billion, while in 1955, 63.2 million people working an average 40-hour week — with paid vacations and holidays — produced a national output of \$390.9 billion.



# LOCAL 301 NEWS

IUE AFL-CIO

Vol. 2 — No. 31

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

October 5, 1956

## 'Entire Chain Supports Local 301 To Combat GE's Attacks' - - - Carey

On Monday, Oct. 1, the General Electric Company was put on notice by IUE President James B. Carey that its attacks on the wages, the conditions and the jobs of Schenectady GE workers is "an attack on the entire IUE-AFL-CIO". And Carey warned GE that a continuation of the attacks will be met by the resistance of the entire Union.

The IUE President issued his warning to Virgil Day, GE's Manager of Union Relations, at a meeting between the IUE Negotiating Committee and top company officials in the company's offices in New York. IUE leaders from locals throughout the country had requested the meeting for the purpose of "letting GE know where we stand".

At a meeting of IUE Negotiating Committee members earlier Monday morning, Local 301 Business Agent Leo Jandreau reported thoroughly on the Schenectady situation and just how vicious the company has been in its assault against the people.

Particularly, Mr. Jandreau reported on these phases of GE's attacks in Schenectady:

1. The continuation of the policy of "running away to the community that is the lowest bidder on performing work." He cited the recent announcement by GE that it is moving out A & O to Johnson City and Burlington, Vt.; the disclosure that GE had let its lease on the Campbell Avenue plant expire; and the disastrous effects on the entire community as a result of movement of Industrial Control and Industrial Heating to Roanoke and Waynesboro, Virginia, and Shelbyville, Indiana.
2. Wage cuts "wherever they can get away with it".
3. Speed-up "clear down the line."
4. The stubborn refusal of the company to work out any kind of agreement that will live up to the contract and protect the employees' piece-work prices.
5. The "day-in-day-out attack on the union, particularly through the newspapers", that was capped by the announcement by Mr. Stevens on Sept. 20 that GE would try to "fire" union leaders for their militancy in protecting the people.

The leaders from the other big GE locals were quick to agree with Mr. Jandreau that "Schenectady is the focal point" of GE's nation-wide program to put over a 100% increase in production without adding a single employee to its work force.

Accordingly, they agreed that this attack must be met by a national campaign of resistance.

Carey analyzed the GE program as "a resurgence of Boulwarism in its ugliest form."

"GE has to be shown," Carey declared, "that it can't get away with its program of running rough-shod over the rights of the people and of their Union."

It was in response to this expression of anger by the GE locals that Carey put GE on notice that a continuation of its policy will have to face the united opposition of the entire IUE.

Business Agent Jandreau pointed out how "GE never talks about what it is doing to the people. All it harps about," he said, "is so-called 'illegal stoppages'."

"But GE never says what causes the stoppages", he declared.

Back in Local 301 Headquarters Wednesday morning, the business agent said "the Union wants to make it very clear, that IUE does not say that we will try to force GE 'out of business', or that it will even try to put it in a position where it is not competitive."

"We realize the facts of business just as well as GE, and we would never even suggest anything of the kind", he said. Then he made this point:

The City Council last week ordered the formation of a Citizens Committee to help adjust the differences between the Union and GE. This is an important action. Be sure to read the story on Page 2.

"But we want to make it very clear that we also realize that GE is making plenty of money. Its profit reports are published every three months, and exhaustive financial statements are published every year. These statements show beyond any question of doubt that GE is making more money than at any other time in history."

"So, far from sending GE to the poorhouse, we are sending its top officials to the biggest mansions on Nob Hill. All we ask in return is our fair measure of justice. But GE wants to reduce our measure of justice at the same time that it increases its own."

The situation in Schenectady today calls for a reasonable approach to work these things out by both sides. IUE Local 301 stands ready to do that now, as it has in the past. Indeed, the whole history of our Union is constructive in that respect. When there is a stoppage, we go in, get the facts, get the people to work, and try to reach a settlement.

But GE's attitude is entirely different.

It is Boulwarism at its worst. That was clearly displayed on the second anniversary of our Contract, when GE came forth with a completely one-sided story on the new wage increases that went into effect. It was also displayed by GE's lumping "stoppages" in with "strikes" and trying to make mice look like elephants.

IUE stands ready to work these things out. But GE's new and more vicious form of Boulwarism is opposed to any kind of constructive settlements. It is for this reason that the National Negotiating Committee has taken the stand it has.

And when the entire IUE General Electric Conference Board meets in Louisville on Oct. 11 and 12, it will get a full report and take action to further mobilize the Union to combat this resurgence of Boulwarism.



# GE Aims 'Iron Fist' At YOU!

Under orders from New York, General Electric management in Schenectady is moving to wield the "iron fist" against GE workers.

This was made clear in A.C. Stevens' letter of Sept. 20 in which he warned that "disciplinary action will be taken in the case of employees who participate in or instigate any stoppage in violation of our union contract."

Well if GE really wants to punish people who violate the contract, it should start with the GE managers who refuse to live up to the contract and go around cutting prices before it has even carried through the grievance procedure!

Mr. Stevens said GE has adopted this policy in order to guarantee that "all of us work together to meet competition". Of course, what Stevens means is that we must "meet the competition" of the new GE plants in the South where GE is getting work done (work that used to be done here in Schenectady) at rock-bottom prices.

IUE Local 301 does not participate in illegal work stoppages and Mr. Stevens knows it. Mr. Stevens merely labels stoppages "illegal" in accordance with GE's Boulware policy of smearing the union and trying to discredit it in the eyes of the community.

Well if Mr. Stevens tries to carry through with that kind of illegal invocation of the English language for the purpose of punishing union officials, he will suffer the most dire consequences.

And we repeat again, IF GE

## Current Events In My Section

by ALLEN E. TOWNSEND

Several things have happened in my part of the plant during the last two weeks. Some of the cases and their disposition are as follows:

Docket #6269-56—This case concerned a Class C Stockkeeper in Bldg. 18. This man had several extra duties added to his job making it, in his opinion, a Class B Stockkeeper's job. He contacted his steward, R. Green, who, after checking with Board Member Korkin and Coordinator Christman, filed a grievance asking for the Class B Stockkeeper's rate. The Company realized that the Union was right and gave him the Class B upgrading back to the time that the additional duties were added.

Docket #6304-56—This case was filed by Steward R. De Marco in the Works Cafeteria under Board Member De Masseo.

It seems that in this particular spot the Company takes the position that seniority doesn't mean a thing. Here the Company laid off a woman with 1943 service, saying at the same time that a leader over cleaning women with 1944 service would still stay on the job. The woman with 1943 service had formerly been a leader.

At a Step Two meeting in Bldg. 41 with Pres. Cognetta, Chief Shop Steward Mastriani and Steward R. De Marco present, the Company took the ridiculous position that they would wait until what they considered a proper candidate for the leader's job came along, ignor-

REALLY WANTS TO HAVE HARMONIOUS RELATIONS, IT SHOULD START BY PUNISHING ITS OWN UNDERLINGS WHO HAVE ILLEGALLY VIOLATED OUR CONTRACT, AND QUIT TRYING TO BLAME THE UNION TO COVER UP ITS GREEDY, PROFIT-INSPIRED RUN-AWAY TO THE SOUTH!

ing the fact that they already had in the group people qualified with much more service than the 1944 service woman.

This is another classic example of the Company's violation of the Seniority Supplement of the Contract.

Dockets #5854-67 & #5855-56—These are the long standing cases of the Crane and Elevator Electricians asking to be given the same rate as Class A Electricians throughout the plant. On Sept. 11, 1956, the Union made two specific proposals for settling these cases. On Sept. 24, 1956, the Company reiterated its long-standing position on these grievances, saying that it would not give these men their deserved increases.

Docket #6211-56—RE: Docket #5721-56—A case was originally filed on May 9, 1956, for Elmer J. Carter, a Class B Electrician in Bldg. 67 asking for a Class R rate. This case was filed by Board Member Mastriani and Shop Steward Wilkinson. The Union contended at that time that Mr. Carter was in fact doing Class A work and should be upgraded to Class A.

The Company's answer at that time was that the Dept. could only support one Class A man. About three months following this, the one Class A Electrician left the Dept., making an opening for a Class A Electrician.

The Company immediately upgraded another man in violation of an agreement between the Union and Company on the upgrading of "B" Electricians to Class A.

The Company gave as its reason for not upgrading Mr. Carter that he was not qualified for the job even though he has been working

## Bloomfield IUE Fighting To Win Back GE Jobs

NEWARK, N. J.—District 4 and Local 442, International Union of Electrical Workers have announced a public campaign to "return jobs to the Bloomfield General Electric plant."

District President Milton Weirauch announced that 10,000 leaflets will be distributed in the Bloomfield area to "spotlight GE's job-slashing program in the Bloomfield plant and to urge public and official action to force GE to carry out its promise of high employment."

The leaflet points out that GE pledged more jobs and more buying power when IUE criticized its proposed transfer of jobs in 1954. The leaflet reveals that, despite GE's pledges, employment has dropped from 1,500 in 1954 to 600 when 400 planned layoffs take place this month.

## Membership And Stewards Meeting

A joint membership and stewards meeting will be held Monday, Oct. 15, at the Union Hall, 121 Erie Blvd.

The first and third shifts will meet at 7:30 p.m. Second shift will meet at 1 p.m. (before work).

Agenda includes election of District 3 delegates, report of committees, and the regular order of business.

on Class A work for a long period of time and doing the full job. The Company maintained this position at a Step two meeting on 9/27/56.

# IUE Protests GE's Harassment Of Schenectady To Gov. Harriman

The profit-glutted General Electric Company is pursuing a policy of cutting rates, speeding-up jobs, and moving work out of Schenectady. This is being carried out under orders from the big bankers who own and run GE.

But in order to cover up its dirty work, GE is provoking trouble—and then blaming everything on "the union".

This is a most serious problem. And Local 301 is fighting it.

Last week IUE carried the fight to the highest authority in New York State — Governor Averell Harriman.

On Sept. 27 IUE met with Gov. Harriman and his Commissioner of Industry and Labor, Isador Lubin, for an hour and five minutes on this issue.

Representing the union were Local 301 President Jim Cognetta, Executive Board Member Bill Stewart, and IUE District 3 President Jack Suarez.

During that hour and five minutes, these union leaders made it very clear that GE's never-ending greed for more and more profits was responsible for the trouble. And they made it clear that GE—and GE alone — must bear the blame!

Cognetta kicked off the discussion with a full review of the history of the relationship between GE and Local 301 over the last 19 years. He declared that in the whole history of the union at Schenectady, there had been only one strike.

That was, Cognetta said, in 1946 when all the big corporations forced the unions out for nine weeks so that the companies could juggle their war tax reports and make several million dollars without turning out a lick of production.

Cognetta then gave the Governor a photostatic copy of the entire meeting that took place in Schenectady in April, 1954. It was in that top-level meeting that GE disclosed to its plant managers its blueprint for doubling production in the next 10 years without increasing its work force by a single man!

The Local 301 President explained in detail GE's decentralization program and what it was doing to Schenectady.

He said that before the Company put its decentralization program into effect, the relationship between the company and the union was fruitful for all concerned. "But since that new policy has

gone into effect," Cognetta declared, "things have worsened steadily."

He pointed out that in the past, the Plant Manager had authority to reach a settlement with the union. But under the new policy, the Plant Manager is little more than a figurehead.

For the old authority of the plant manager, the company has substituted the "departmental managers". And they, Cognetta said, are inexperienced in labor relations, are unfamiliar with past practices, and they give the impression that they "couldn't care less".

As for the union, Cognetta said it has maintained continuity of leadership; it has maintained experience and responsibility at the bargaining table; and it does not condone illegal "work stoppages".

Bill Stewart reviewed the recent work stoppages in Turbine and he made it very clear how GE has been violating the IUE Contract as it applies to changes of prices on piece-work jobs. He also discussed the way GE hired a man off the street to work the boring mill job, while it callously ignored long-service men who were qualified to do the job.

District 3 President Suarez told the Governor that GE's "Ten-Year

Plan" is "a blueprint for run-aways, wage cuts and sped-up."

He informed the Governor that GE's high-powered newspaper and publicity campaign is nothing but a smoke-screen to cover up its disgraceful "run-away shop movements".

Suarez protested that the state's listing of work-stoppages under the heading of "strikes" was a misrepresentation brought about by the assumption that anything GE reported was "factual".

The State Labor Commissioner, Dr. Lubin, agreed with this and further pointed out that "work stoppages" are caused by companies just as much as by unions! He asked IUE what could be done to help this situation, and the IUE leaders said "a public clarification" was in order.

The Governor also asked what could be done to help the people in this situation, and he wanted to know who could be contacted. IUE referred him to Mr. Stevens.

Reporting on their meeting, the IUE leaders noted that both the Governor and the Industrial Commissioner were extremely cordial and attentive, and showed sincere interest in the grave problems that are harassing Schenectady GE workers.

## THE LEGAL CORNER—

### BACK INJURIES AND WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION

By Leon Novak, of Novak and Diamond, Attorneys

The greatest single cause for the filing of claims for Workmen's Compensation benefits is an injury to a worker's back arising out of the course of his employment.

Since a back injury often results in prolonged discomfort and pains, cases involving back injuries often take years to complete and hence require the most of the lawyer's time. Very often, the worker who has a bad back cannot understand why his case should drag along for so long a time. Such workers should understand what legal problems are faced which cause such delays.

In the first place, when we are asking for benefits for a back injury it is up to the injured worker to prove in court, through medical testimony, that the injured back is disabling the worker and required medical treatment or is reducing the worker's earning power.

Secondly, often the Company challenges the worker's rights to benefits even if he is known to have

a bad back because an examining physician has demonstrated through X-rays or physical examination, that the bad back existed before the accident.

Thirdly, often the bad back is claimed by an injured worker to have resulted from heavy work rather than from a single accident and in such instances the Company almost always challenges a worker's claim until he can prove, with his lawyer's help, that the Company is legally responsible based upon the testimony of witnesses to the heavy work and medical testimony from doctors.

These situations, and many more present all kinds of pitfalls to a worker who is making an honest claim but who does not understand the Court room procedures.

## Labor's Help Is Required To Cut Accident Losses

Every day in the state of New York, there are approximately 3,200 injuries suffered by working men and women. This means that every nine seconds—as long as it took you to read from the first word in this story to right here—a working man or woman is injured.

These injuries result in an annual toll of \$750,000,000 to the people of New York state.

These injuries cause financial loss not just to the workman involved and the company. They have a serious harmful effect on the entire community.

To help reduce the number of accidents and the staggering financial loss, Governor Averell Harriman called a special Worker Safety Conference. It was held in Albany Sept. 27-28. Representatives were present from labor, industry, insurance organizations, and the government.

To lend the greatest significance to the Conference, Governor Harriman himself attended. IUE Local 301 was represented by President James Cognetta and Executive Board Member Bill Stewart.

Reports from both Brothers indicate that the Conference was

highly successful.

They report that speaker after speaker—especially from the Government—laid it on the line with the companies: Safety can no longer be the sole responsibility of management!

Because management has been letting things slip by the way it has in the past, has, in great measure, been responsible for the large number of accidents.

The agreement was that in order to materially reduce the number of accidents, joint committees must be set up to handle the problems. Both labor and government must be represented on these committees, as well as industries.

Always in the past, IUE Local 301 has sought to carry out these objectives of safety.

## City Council Acts; IUE Pledges To Cooperate

The General Electric Company's policy of run-aways, speed-up and wage cuts has finally become so dangerous to the people of Schenectady that the City Council has taken action.

On Sept. 24 the Council unanimously passed a resolution directing Manager Arthur Blessing to appoint an independent Citizens Committee "to examine the facts concerning this grave problem". The purpose is to use its "good offices" to help "bring about a solution" to the problem.

The resolution was introduced by Councilman Sheldon.

In his discussion of the situation, Mr. Sheldon declared: "When the regular avenues of negotiation are

unable to effect a solution, and when a continuance of the controversy would affect the well-being of every person in the community, it becomes the duty of this Council to take affirmative action to protect the interests of all the people."

IUE Local 301 is glad that some responsible officials are concerned about these problems and want to do something constructive to settle them—for clearly GE does not.

Such a Citizens Committee can get down to the real core of the trouble. An impartial summary can develop the facts and lay them on the table for everyone to see.

An independent investigation can cut through the smoke-screen of anti-union propaganda that GE has

thrown up to hide its vicious policy of running-away with whole departments to low-wage areas, its wage-cutting and its speed-up.

GE realizes that such an impartial investigation will put it on the spot.

That is why management thumbed its nose at the idea. GE's statement to the press said that GE "would not accept" the Citizens Committee as either a third-party mediator or even an observer. GE refused on grounds that "the procedure of settlement of grievances is provided in the company-union contract."

That is true. But GE also refuses to live up to the contract!

So here you have the height of hypocrisy: GE refuses to agree

to the Citizens Committee on grounds that it has a contract providing ways of settling disputes. But at the same time GE refuses to abide by the contract.

Clearly, GE doesn't want an agreement now!

In spite of GE, IUE Local 301 pledges to cooperate to the fullest possible degree, in hopes that common sense and decency will prevail and GE will see the light.

The stakes in these difficulties are too high for the union to permit personal feelings to interfere. The future welfare of our entire community is at stake and IUE Local 301 pledges to do everything within its power to advance and promote the welfare of the community in which we live.