

## 301 Writes Dewey Over Jobless Pay

Local 301 this week wrote to Governor Dewey protesting against delays in issuing unemployment insurance checks. The union charged that the backlog has accumulated because so many "political hacks" have recently been appointed in the Division of Placement and Unemployment Insurance, solely because they are members of the Republican Party.

301 also protested to Dewey against the state's new policy of refusing unemployment insurance benefits during a vacation shutdown to workers not receiving vacation pay. Similar letters were sent to Industrial Commissioner Edward Corsi and to Milton Loysen, director of the Division of Placement and Unemployment Insurance. Marshall Perlin, 301 attorney, sent the letters under direction of the Executive Board.

### Long Waits for Checks

Schenectady workers have had to wait four, six and even eight weeks to receive their jobless checks, 301 pointed out.

"We believe these delays arise only because there are not a sufficient number of well-trained and competent personnel," the letter stated.

The union declared that in appointing 300 new people to jobs in the Unemployment Insurance Division the state had not picked them for ability or competence "but solely on the fact that they are members of the Republican Party."

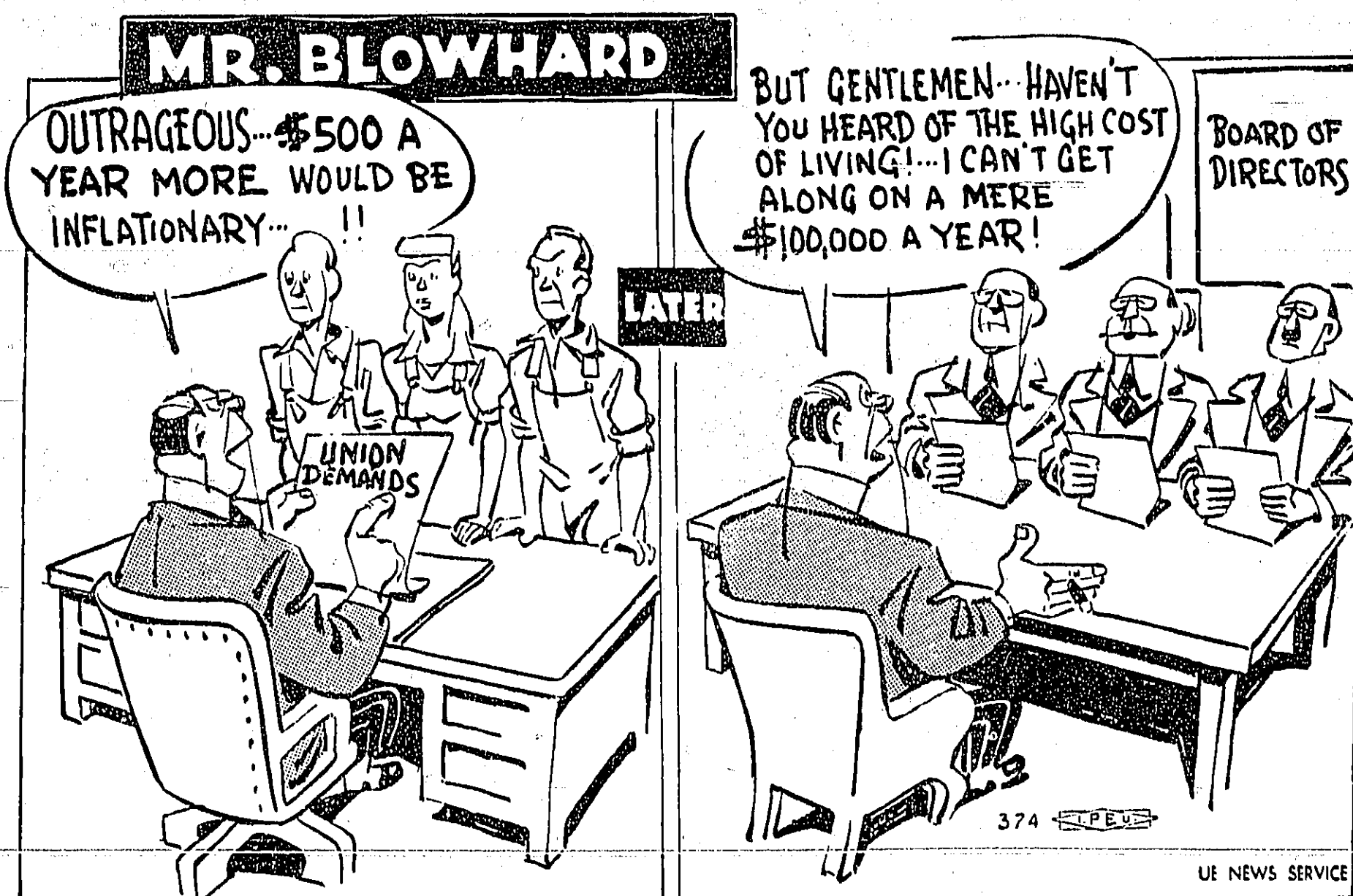
### Petty Politics

The letter said, "We see large-scale appointment of political hacks at a time when the department is failing to live up to its duties of rapidly supplying the benefit checks to unemployed workers. We think this is a shameful exhibition of petty political partisan action on the part of the state administration."

The number of employees in the Division of Unemployment Insurance as of May 31 was as follows: 3,312 permanent (appointed after civil service examinations); 450 temporary (hired for brief intervals only, supposedly) and 2,555 provisional (also hired without examination for jobs which are supposed to be filled from civil service lists within a stated time.)

Since May 31 over 100 provisionals have been added.

As the Division of Unemployment Insurance has 68 local offices, it has particular value for political patronage purposes.



## Still Laying Off But More Slowly

Lay-offs here have continued, but at a slower pace, since July 1. The number out of the plant for lack of work at that time was about 1,100.

Building 40, which is on government work, was hit by the lay-off of 10 general assemblers last week.

Difficulties are continuing in the process of getting longer service laid-off workers called back. The company insists they are being called back fast, but the union has cited the cases of a number of women with over six years' service who are out though women with as low as two years' service are retained. Several such cases involving men also are being pushed.

## Claim Your Rights

Any one on a vacation shutdown, who is not paid for part of the period, should register for unemployment benefits. If the Unemployment Insurance office turns him down he should report at once to the union office. The union will fight his case for him.

## Did You Know?

The word "fink", meaning strike breaker and labor spy, comes from the name Pinkerton. The hated Pinkerton agents used to be called Pinks, and the name was mispronounced into "finks." Notice that the General Electric Company hired Pinkerton agents recently for its job of spying on an injured woman worker, to try to avoid paying for a hernia operation for her.

## GE Refuses to Make Joint Study Of Silicosis Hazards With Union

In the face of repeated pleas by shop representatives of the porcelain and foundry workers, Charles G. Marcy, personnel director, last week stubbornly refused to agree to joint study of silicosis hazards by the union and the company.

The case was moved to the Male level after Marcy had argued at great length that the union's aim in seeking joint action could be achieved without joint action.

Board Members Henry Kaminski and Joseph Mangino asked Marcy what the company had to hide. He insisted there was nothing to hide. He said that the company was getting both the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and the state division of industrial hygiene to make further studies of the silicosis danger. He said they would check the foundries and dust in Mica as well as Porcelain.

### Doctors Are An Issue

Union representatives pointed out that in view of the high rate of silicosis shown by the union study, the workers wanted an investigation by an expert with a union viewpoint, and a study of company X-rays by a union doctor. Marcy insisted the men must be satisfied with the word of company doctors.

Shop stewards repeated that the workers were not satisfied with the word of company doctors.

Marcy also said the company was trying to improve conditions in the Building 57 foundry. Steward John Jablonski declared that recent changes there only made things worse, because more machinery had been brought in to produce more, but it was increasing the dust.

### Refuses Special Compensation

On the union's request for special compensation for silicosis victims because of the weaknesses of the Workmen's Compensation law with respect to silicosis, Marcy said the company's answer had already been given by George Pfeif of top management in the Elmira foundry case. The answer there was "No."

The grievance was filed after an examination made for the union by a New York lung specialist had shown that out of 36 men and women from Building 68 who were examined, seven had severe cases of silicosis and 17 had cases ranging from mild to moderate.

Appearing for the union were Kaminski, Mangino, Jablonski, Shop Stewards Arthur Bertini, Ernest Costanzo, and Edwin Pendl of 68, Steward Hans Schott of 95, and Victor Pasche, assistant to the business agent.

## 12 Cent Package

UE workers at the Korfa plant, New York City, have won a 12 cent wage package in a new contract.

# ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

THE VOICE OF LOCAL 301

U. E. R. &amp; M. W. A.

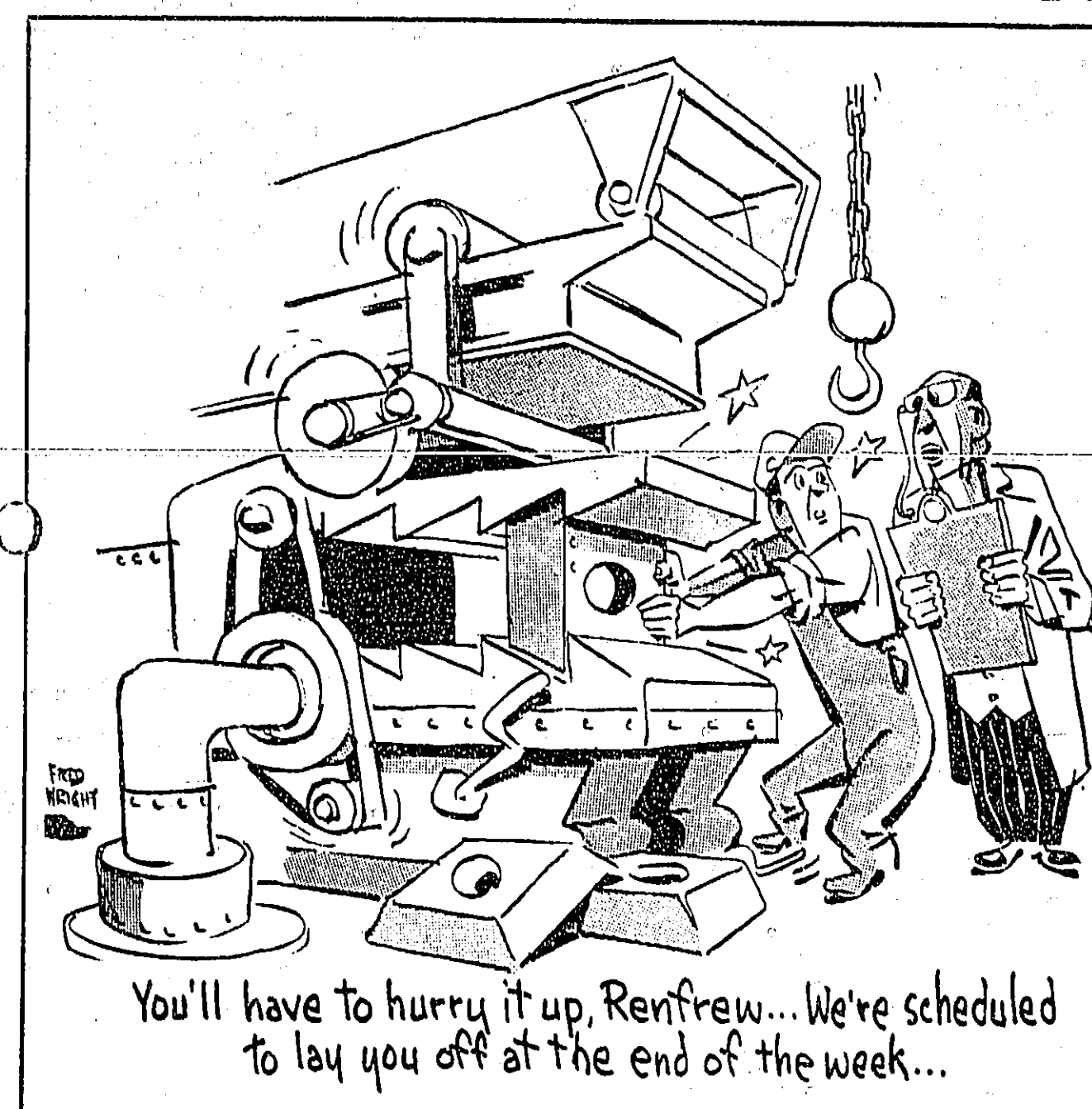
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SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

July 29, 1949

## Contract Crisis in Hands of Members



## 301 Joins Other GE Locals Calling Plant Gate Meetings

The General Electric Company's refusal to yield an inch on any of the union's proposals was placed directly before the GE workers all over the United States this week.

On call of the GE Conference Board of UE locals noonday plant gate meetings were scheduled to be held yesterday (Thursday) at all plants not closed by vacation shutdowns.

At the plant here, Business Agent Leo Jandreau was scheduled to report to the membership over a public address system from a building across from the main gate, at 11:30 a. m. for the first shift and 6:30 p. m. for the second shift.

In a preliminary meeting of shop stewards Tuesday, Jandreau warned that if the company is successful in saying "No" to the workers now, it will give notice of cancellation of the contract next January. He said GE still wants to get rid of seniority and piece work safeguards.

again after the vacation shutdown (meaning after August 14), to take further steps if GE has not changed its position in response to the workers' pressure in the meantime. Local delegates are asked to come to the meeting authorized by their locals to vote to recommend a strike vote if the company still says "No."

It was pointed out that if a strike vote should be found necessary, it will be taken by secret ballot of the membership.

The Conference Board statement stressed the refusal of the company to accept any responsibility for the hardships of its employees, despite its tremendous profits which have brought on the lay-offs, short time, and downgrading.

### Shorter Work Week Vital

Jandreau stressed the need of winning the union's demands as a means of stopping lay-offs.

"Shorter hours with the same pay may not prevent a depression," he declared, "but it's a step in that direction." He pointed out that a shorter work week would mean rehiring of thousands now laid off, and would help prevent further lay-offs later on of members still employed. Local 301 has taken the stand that the shorter work week is the central question in the negotiations.

Jandreau also told how GE negotiators offered nothing but "sorry," when a pensioner told how his wife deliberately chose to go blind rather than use their meager pension for treatment and then go on public relief.

### Conference Board Statement

A statement adopted unanimously by the GE Conference Board last week, and approved unanimously by the 301 stewards Tuesday, called for stepping up of activities to inform the membership and the public, and put pressure upon GE.

The statement also calls for having the Conference Board meet

## Same Old Slander Circulated Again

Every year when the negotiations with the General Electric Company appear to be deadlocked, the same untrue story goes around, in gossip around the shop and in unsigned letters to the newspapers, namely that "the union leaders want a strike, it doesn't cost them anything."

This slander must be spiked, for the unity of the union, regardless of whether or not members favor or oppose a strike or whether a strike is even being considered.

The practice in UE locals is that when the members decide to strike, the paid officials go without salary for the duration of the strike, just like the members. That was done in the 1946 strike here.

## Big-Hearted Charlie

## Wilson Not Calling For Wage Cuts Yet

Charles E. Wilson, GE president, is not calling for a wage cut for GE workers just yet.

He told the stockholders in his latest quarterly message that he was not favoring lower wages "at this time". The message went through the current GE hocus-nocus about today's troubles being caused by the customer wanting to "wait" for a lower price, and by the "adverse psychology" of "this market". Wilson did not favor a wage cut "so long as there is a fighting chance" to overcome this "psychology."

If Wilson relies on psychology instead of mass purchasing power, means that the workers had better get set to fight a wage cut proposal. Of course Wilson's message said nothing about the disastrous effect which GE's policy of low wages, high prices and record prof-

its has had upon purchasing power.

On the contrary, Wilson again said that "any increase in wage levels" would have "disastrous results," because it would "force prices up."

How many different ways can GE argue at the same time?

Only on June 17 L. R. Boulware said in the Works News that at present "employers not only cannot include in their prices the whole of any wage-cost increase, but they cannot pass on any part of it."

In simple English, Boulware said that "any cost increase would have to come out of profits, not higher prices. And that's just what the country needs. It would be "disastrous" only to those who feel GE profits must forever go up and up.

## Blood Donors Needed

Blood donors are needed for Charles Petrice, former Turbine Division worker and 301 member. He has had six blood transfusions at Ellis Hospital and must have more. Volunteers should contact the union office.

# HIGHER PAY — SHORTER HOURS — STOP LAY-OFFS



## Turbine Procedure Protested by 301

Local 301 has protested against the action of the supervision in Turbine in placing about 75 hot booth welders in the new building on 11½-hour shifts only a few weeks after laying off about 20 welders. The union pointed out that this showed more were laid off than was justified, and also that the laid-off men should have been given a chance to do the extra work.

The works manager's office said that the overtime was caused by a real emergency, because of bad castings, and was not expected to last over three weeks.

Third shift welders point out that the company's placing of both second and third shifts on one special shift of 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. shows that it would be possible to overlap the two shifts and give the third shift the eight-hour schedule they have been demanding. They work regularly six and a half hours a night.

## Collections Started To Aid Singer Strike

Shop stewards this week started taking weekly collections in their groups for the UE strikers against the Singer Sewing Machine Company. Each steward has a sheet on which members sign their names and the amount they are donating.

Singer workers have been out for three months now in their fight for the same things GE workers are demanding, shorter hours, higher pay, and the end of speed-up and of lay-offs.

The 301 membership and stewards' meeting this month, which voted unanimously to make the shop collections, recognized that the Singer strike is closely tied to the struggle with GE. Victory in the Singer strike will help break the united front of the large corporations against labor.

"We are just supporting our own fight when we support the Singer strikers," a number of speakers pointed out.

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## Civil Liberties Reports Postponed Until August

Reports are to be made at the August membership meeting by observers sent by the 301 Executive Board to two recent conferences in New York City on civil liberties. The reports were postponed from the July meeting because of lack of time. The observers were instructed by the Board merely to gather information at the conferences and not to participate in any voting.

Board Members Dewey Brashear and Sidney Friedlander will report on the Bill of Rights Conference July 16 and 17. It was called by a group of individual sponsors including the Rt. Rev. Arthur W. Moulton, retired Episcopal bishop; Paul J. Kern, former New York City Civil Service Commissioner, and Robert W. Kenny, former attorney general of California. Its program covered violations of the rights of labor unions, teachers, government workers, and Negroes, activities of the FBI, the Mundt, Hobbs and Taft-Hartley bills and the trial of the Communist Party leaders.

Treasurer William Downs and Board Member Joseph Kelly will report on the Conference of Civil and Human Rights June 25, called by the Civil Rights Congress of New York. It also took up a wide range of civil liberties violations.

## Look at the Record

The difference that strong trade unions make in the wages of workers is strikingly shown in a recent article by Victor Perlo, a leading economist employed for years by government agencies.

"In the decade from 1919 to 1929 production per man-hour increased 73 per cent. Real hourly earnings increased only 20 per cent.

"In the decade from 1929 to 1939 production per man-hour increased 22 per cent, but real hourly earnings increased 38 per cent, or almost twice as much as productivity.

"In the first decade labor got only a small fraction of the extra work it put in. In the second decade labor received relatively more than the extra work it put in.

"Why this difference? Here is the answer in a nutshell:

"Between 1919 and 1929 trade union membership declined 10 per cent.

"Between 1929 and 1939 trade union membership increased 150 per cent."

Perlo's article, "Wages, Price and Depression", appeared in the first issue of a new monthly magazine, "March of Labor".

## Pity the Profiteer



## GE Profits Are Huge Despite Wilson's Wail

Newspaper announcements by President Charles E. Wilson last Friday declared mournfully that GE's total net profit after taxes for the first six months of 1949 was only \$46,552,842, a drop of 15 per cent from the first six months of 1948.

However, in case anyone should be moved to take up a collection or speed himself up further to help push up the profits, there is just one fact to remember, though it's not in Friday's stories:

The January to June 1949 net profit was still \$8,700,000 more than the first six months of 1947. And 1947 set an all-time profit record until 1948 came along and topped that.

## 301 Broadcast Will Be Monday

The 301 radio program on problems of pensioners will be at 7:15 p.m. Monday, Aug. 1, on WSNY, instead of Tuesday. The date had to be advanced because of a conflict with a baseball broadcast.

Last night two unemployed GE workers were to be interviewed on the union program, Mrs. Lucy De Carlo, laid off from her job as a coil winder in Building 89, and Steve Narodki, who was an index punch press operator in Building 17.

## What GE Really Has in its Mind

GE gave away its real approach to its employees in its page 1 box in the last Works News, entitled "Every Workman is a Miniature Corporation." It seems, according to GE's profound thinking, that if you earn any more than "enough to keep body and soul together," you are making a profit.

It is a matter of economics, and of simple English, that profit means a return on investment, and that industry makes its profits out of the work of its employees. But, according to GE, if you have anything left over "for savings, a car, a better home," you are making a "profit."

All this, of course, is intended to cover up certain simple facts — that real wages have been going down, that the working people's share of the total national income has been going down while corporation profits have skyrocketed — leading to depression and lay-offs.

And in case you point out the truth, says GE's piece, you're a "soap-box orator."

Undoubtedly GE would consider you "loyal" if you were in favor of working for just "enough to keep body and soul together" while GE reaped all the benefits of constantly increasing productivity.

## CIO Board's Action On Unemployed Pay

Leo Jandreau recently asked the State CIO Executive Board to protest against New York state's new policy of refusing unemployment insurance benefits during a vacation shutdown to workers not receiving vacation pay.

State CIO President Louis Hollander of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers said he could understand why such a ruling might be made by the state Unemployment Insurance Division. He said that in the clothing industry the employers and the union have agreed that shops would be shut down during a specified period.

## UE Position Given

Jandreau pointed out that the position of UE is very different.

"Our union feels that vacation schedules should be on an optional basis worked out between the employee and the employer through the union whereby the most satisfactory time can be arrived at," he said.

In the case of GE, he pointed out, the company has arbitrarily set the dates of vacation in some departments and the union is on record opposing this practice. Therefore UE feels that such a decision on the part of the State Unemployment Insurance Division is not only unfair, but contrary to the basic principle of the law. The law was intended to give employees who are laid off through no fault of their own unemployment compensation if they are ready and able to work.

## UE Stand Supported

The CIO Board agreed with UE's position that workers under these circumstances should be entitled to jobless pay. The Board offered to lend assistance if UE needs it.

The General Electric Company took the lead in putting across merit rating, Jandreau reminded the meeting. Under this arrangement GE and other large corporations have received millions of dollars in rebates from the unemployment insurance fund. This money should have been used to increase and broaden the benefits for jobless workers. Now the state is again in collusion with GE in making this new ruling to deprive workers of their rights during vacation shutdowns.

The CIO Board also went on record protesting delays in paying unemployment insurance checks and criticizing the use of jobs in the Unemployment Insurance Division for political patronage.

## Lining Up for Duty as Shop Stewards



Newly elected shop stewards taking oath of office at the 301 membership meeting July 19: left to right, Frank J. Banker, Building 273; Sylvester Chiofalo, 26; Robert Pelfer, 10; Frank Dichsner, 52; J. J. Clark, 61; William Hood, CAP; Petronella Melsert, 17, and Michael Della Villa, CAP.

## Jobless Checks Still Delayed

The Schenectady Unemployment Insurance office claims that it is catching up on the backlog of delayed unemployment insurance checks. But a few days ago a woman complained to the union office that her check was already nine weeks overdue. And many other complaints are still coming in.

The Local 301 committee on unemployment met recently with officials of the Schenectady office to protest against delays.

The union representatives also urged that unemployment insurance benefits be allowed to any worker who isn't paid for part of a vacation shutdown. Make the decision in favor of the worker, the committee asked, and place the burden of appealing on the company.

## Banker's Viewpoint On Unemployment

Our unemployment gives no worry at all to William Gage Brady, Jr., chairman of the board of the National City Bank of New York, now touring that bank's branches in Europe. A story from Paris in the New York Herald Tribune financial pages recently quoted him as saying:

"You will probably ask about the unemployment situation in America. Now it is about 3,800,000. That is not serious for America. We have had nearly that amount of unemployment as a normal thing. Some won't work, and others are on vacation or transferring from one job to another."

Now that ought to settle things just dandy for the 1,200 men and women out for lack of work at GE here. Most of them probably never wanted to work any way. They never had a chance to do their work on a trip to Paris.

## Penny Pinching On Vacation Pay

Split hair figuring by supervision in the Turbine division over a worker's nine-minute lateness deprived the man of two hours' pay each week of his vacation recently.

The man had 16 hours of overtime during the eight weeks on which his average for vacation purposes is figured under last year's contract. But the nine minutes deduction for the one day he came late brought his average to one minute under 42 hours. That permitted the company to credit him with only 40 hours' vacation pay. It did so.

## Everything Is Rosy According to Shreve

If you worry about lay-offs you'll annoy Earl O. Shreve, former GE vice-president and former president of the United States Chamber of Commerce. He will think you are trying to talk the country into a depression.

Right now the nation is going through a "natural readjustment period," Shreve told the Schenectady Gazette in an interview recently. He isn't worried about the "current dip in business activity". The purchasing power of the people is still intact but they are just waiting to make some purchases, according to Shreve. He didn't mention how long the thousands of laid-off GE workers would have to wait.

If workers have any complaints to make, according to Shreve, they ought to blame their own leaders and not Big Business. He said labor is "being exploited more by its own leaders than by employers."

Shreve thinks it would be fine if "good leaders could be put at the head of labor organizations". Undoubtedly he would like to do the putting.

## It's Still a Problem To Pay Grocery Bill

A story on the front page of the second section of the Gazette of July 29 reported that the Westinghouse Electric Corporation had refused a wage increase to UE, on the ground that "the trend in the cost of living" did not justify a raise.

Two pages away, on an inside page of the same paper, was a story:

"Food Prices Again Show Slight Rise."

It stated that the New York financial reporting firm of Dun and Bradstreet found food prices had risen to the highest point since June 7.

## Truman's 'Fact-Finder' Decided Case for GE

The three-man "fact-finding" commission appointed by President Truman in the steel bargaining deadlock includes David L. Cole, who ruled against UE in favor of GE in an arbitration case some years ago.

Contrary to evidence presented by Local 301 and other GE locals, Cole decided that GE had not adopted any bonus system for workers. Cole is a lawyer and labor relations advisor of Paterson, N. J.

## Auto Delegates Barred at Border

Seven delegates from Canada to the United Auto Workers' convention this month were barred at the border by United States immigration authorities.

This was the same experience which UE had some time ago. It makes no difference whether the union opposes red-baiting, like UE, or favors red-baiting, like UAW. Their Canadian delegates still are not welcomed by the government.