

Facts for GE Workers

Meet the Newest Group of 301 Shop Stewards

GE Price Policy And Propaganda

The General Electric Company's price policy is to charge what the traffic will bear. It has not only increased prices to pile up super profits, but it has made use of prices as a propaganda weapon. It has timed price jumps to follow wage increases in order to argue that wage increases cause price increases.

GE staged a price reduction hoax in December 1947 for propaganda purposes when it made some trifling price cuts in some appliances, with a great publicity spurge. This was intended to cut the ground from under the UE wage campaign.

At the same time GE laid the groundwork for increases of 20 per cent in its most important line,—heavy electrical equipment.

Price Raises

The company raised the price of large motors and generators from 5 to 10 per cent Dec. 27, 1948. The explanation was that increased costs required the price jumps. There were no wage increases at that time. Moreover, increases in costs would have affected all of GE's products. The real reason for the price increases was that there was a backlog of orders for motors and generators. The demand for appliances, on the other hand was weak.

In 1949 GE announced some decreases in appliances and in construction materials. The reductions on appliances were only trifling, except in the case of automatic washers and television sets. These articles were overpriced in relation to GE competitors. For example, the GE automatic washer sold for \$349.75 as compared with others selling for \$50 to \$100 below that price. All in all, the decreases amounted to less than 2½ per cent of the sales.

Too Few Price Cuts

GE claimed it was "passing on to the consumer the cost economies made possible by expanded production. Such cost economies were far greater than the small reductions. And the economies applied to generators, turbines and other products too. But their prices weren't lowered.

Bring the Whole Family
To 301 Field Day

President Frank Kriss, extreme left, swearing in new shop stewards June 7 at 301 Hall; left to right, J. C. Favato, Building 18; Frederick Nikander, 18; C. C. Powell, 40; Ralph Jeffers, 273 and N. J. Prusko, 18.



More Lay-off Notices

Lay-off notices continued to be handed out during the past week in various parts of the plant.

There were 39 notices in Punch Press; 6 in Cabinet and Box; 4 in Bldg. 101; 2 in Aeronautics and Ordnance and a number in Porcelain.

Workers Pick UE

By a vote of 71 to 40 workers at Monroe Calculating Company, Morristown, N. J. recently chose UE as their bargaining agent. County Judge Frank Scarbo supervised the voting. UE lost an election at the plant in 1946.

Lilienthal Must Be Very Much Annoyed

Chairman David E. Lilienthal of the Atomic Energy Commission should be learning by now that a former "liberal" can never become "respectable" in the eyes of reactionary Congressmen no matter how much boot-licking and re-baiting he does.

In spite of conspiring with the General Electric Company to violate the UE contract and deprive atomic workers of their union rights, Lilienthal now finds he is being investigated by Congress.

Maybe Congress will get around to checking a couple of items mentioned by a Washington radio commentator recently. It was reported that Lilienthal paid one firm \$192,000 a year for managing the City of Oak Ridge, Tenn., over and above the salaries and wages of the firm's employees.

It was also reported that the Atomic Energy Commission paid \$90,000 for the management of a bus line, although the commission bought all the buses and paid all upkeep and wages.

Did You Know?

In 1939 GE sold a washer wringer for \$60. During the war and afterwards the company changed the model number, made small changes in style and kept hiking the price up so that early in 1948 the washer sold for \$142.50, a jump of 137 per cent. GE claims it isn't the same washer, so it doesn't include this price jump in its "weighted average" prices.

FIELD DAY PROGRAM

Sunday, June 19

HANS GRELL'S GROVE

2390 ALBANY STREET

- 11:00 a.m. GROVE OPENS.
- 1:00 p.m. CHILDREN'S CONTESTS.
- 2:00 p.m. HORSE SHOE PITCHING. BOCCI BALL AND OTHER SPORTS
- 2:30 p.m. BOB COWARD, Pantomimist
- 3:00 p.m. HAROLD VINE, Magician
- 3:35 p.m. PIE EATING CONTEST
- 3:40 p.m. PRIZE FOR FATHER WITH MOST CHILDREN PRESENT
- 3:45 p.m. AL MOSS, Singer and Guitar player.
- 4:10 p.m. ALBANY FOLK DANCE GROUP
- 4:15 p.m. GIRLS' SOFTBALL GAME, Local 301 vs. Pittsfield UE.
- 6:00 p.m. AWARDING OF STUDEBAKER and other prizes.
- 6:10 p.m. MEN'S SOFTBALL GAME, Holiday Inn vs. Webster's Tavern

SAVE JOBS WITH A SHORTER WEEK and HIGHER PAY

ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

THE VOICE OF LOCAL 301

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

C. I. O.

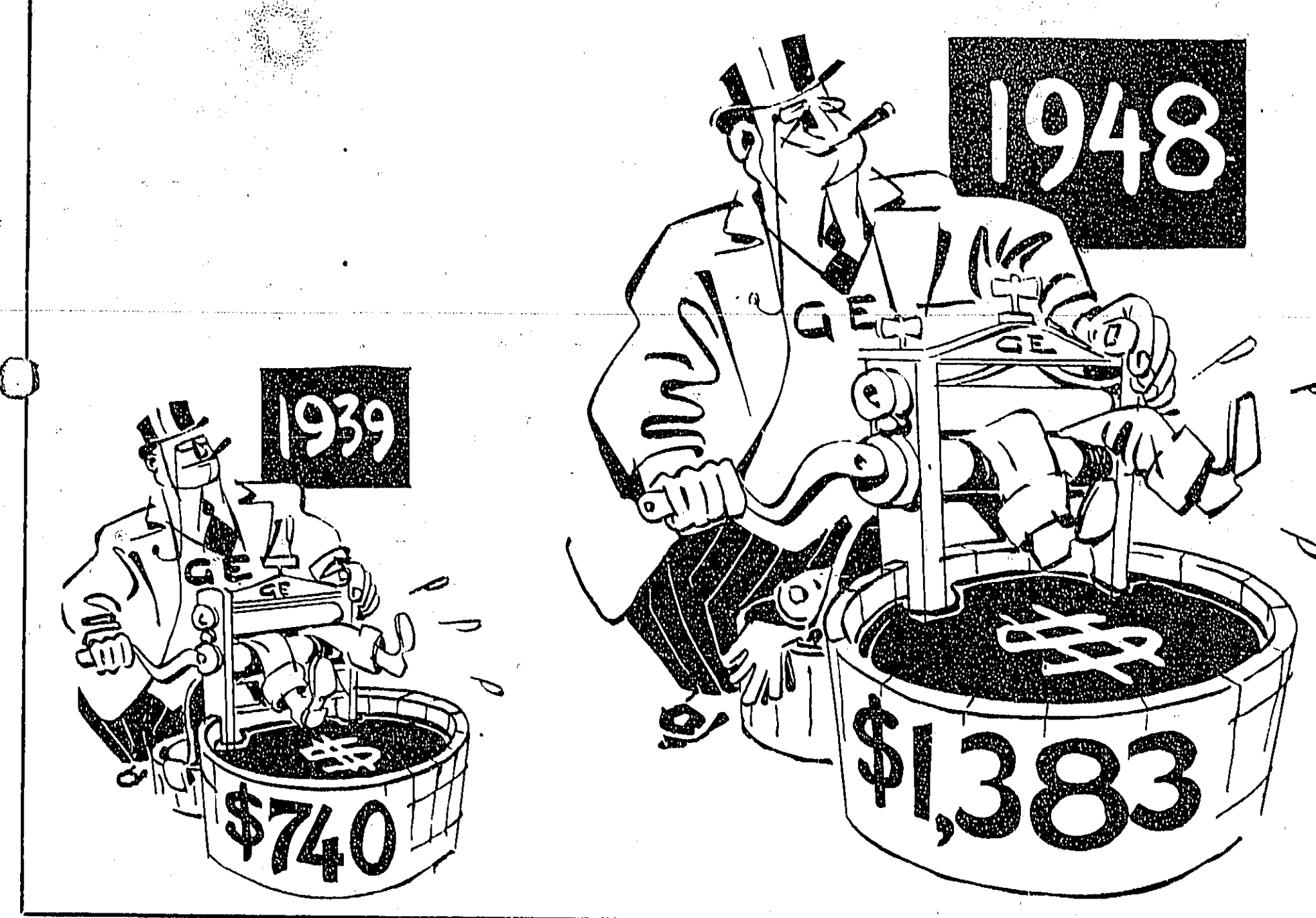
Vol. 7 — No. 24

SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

June 24, 1949

GE Says People Have Too Much Now

Profits Per Worker



It Takes More Than Words

GE Tries to 'Ease' Minds of Workers

As part of a program in all General Electric plants, the Schenectady management this week started holding meetings of workers in large groups, division by division.

Top division managers addressed the groups in an obvious effort to offset effects of the widespread lay-offs and to try to divert the growing demand for higher pay and shorter hours to protect jobs. Workers have been expressing increased anger and resentment over the needless lay-offs.

'To Allay Uneasiness'

The talks are "designed to allay any uneasiness workers may feel about the future of their jobs", according to an article in the Schenectady Gazette Tuesday reporting statement by Works Manager Louis J. Male.

But in his statement Male quoted the prediction of GE President Charles E. Wilson that the present industrial decline may continue in-

to the second quarter of next year, and that business may not be back to the 1948 level until 1951.

And on the Same Page!

On the same page of the Gazette appeared a story about GE announcing permanent lay-offs of 350 employees at Syracuse were scheduled for yesterday and today. Actually the Syracuse GE management last week told a UE committee there might be up to 500 permanent lay-offs this week. But when the union announced this fact GE issued the statement about the number being 350. In addition about 200 temporary lay-offs are planned within a few weeks. Syracuse is a plant where production

(Continued on Page 3)

Won't Worry Itself About Unemployed

General Electric's answer to the workers' problems of lay-off and reduced earnings is that General Electric has no responsibility to do anything about it.

The UE negotiating committee, made up of representatives of GE locals, reported on the opening session last week that the company's proposals on meeting the unemployment situation amounted to this:

The unemployed should get along the best they can with the help of neighbors.

More workers should be laid off. Those left on the job should be speeded up further to what the company calls higher productive efficiency.

The company's position in the negotiations was stated mainly by Vice-President L. R. Boulware. He referred to "boom and bust", and blamed the present "bust" on "too much inventory." He not only found too much inventory in warehouses, but added:

Says Homes Are Overstocked "There is too much inventory in the home. People are overstocked on food, clothing, and appliances."

But the company was unable to see that its own profiteering and speed-up had caused its own huge inventory of unsold goods.

The negotiations resumed this week on Wednesday. The union is requesting an over-all increase of \$500 per year per worker. It is laying particular stress on the shorter work week with 40 hours' pay to reduce lay-offs; higher pay to increase purchasing power and slow down the depression; better pensions and health programs.

Union Urges Wage Increase The union took the position that Boulware's theory of "overstocked homes" is nonsense. UE negotiators declared that the way to fight unemployment is to raise the people's standard of living and their

(Continued on Page 2)

Prize Winners At Field Day

Winner of the 1949 Studebaker sedan, the biggest prize at the 301 field day Sunday at Hans Grell's Grove, was George Pratt, 1084 Helderberg Ave., a union member in Building 269.

Mixmasters were won by: Mildred Bahnd, 1307 Rugby Rd.; L. Craly, 2354 Harrison St.; P. Shuchuk, 629 Hamilton St.; R. F. Morse, Amsterdam, and Stewart E. Stanton, R.D. 2, Galway.

Toastmasters were won by: Z. Andryszczyk, 1721 Bernice St.; J. Dillonbeck, Bldg. 52; A. Fusco, 1265 Wing Ave.; Dan Hickey, 155 Lafayette St., and Leopold Morelli, 2029 Neil St.

Winners of radios were W. J. Armstrong, Aqueduct Rd.; F. Brush, 1 Spruce St., Fuller Rd., Albany; Ed Crosby, 1111 Regent St.; Sadie Iovinello, 628 Pennsylvania Ave., and Fred L. Lannert, Delanson.

GE Says People Have Too Much

(Continued from Page 1)

wages, so they can buy. They declared that the company can easily meet the union's proposals and reduce prices out of its enormous profits, which are the highest in the company's history.

The following are a few of Boulware's remarks on the unemployment problem:

"We live in a boom and bust system. In this country the neighbors help out a bit when these troubles come. In other countries a man's neighbors are just looked at as someone to steal from.

"We are living here in an economic fairyland. We have boom and bust here. Everywhere else they have bust all the time. Here many people have to go on diets to keep from getting too fat."

Another company negotiator said:

"The standard of living went up during the war. We can't expect to maintain it. We need a breather." It was evident he meant that unemployment is needed to complete GE's "boom and bust" cycle.

Boulware's reasoning apparently was that despite the company's too great inventory, further speed-up would "entice" people who have some money to buy, and this would somehow solve the "bust."

Leo Jandreau, 301 business agent, is on the UE bargaining committee. International officers and representatives also participated. The company had present, in addition to Boulware and George Pfeif, 17 people, including two lawyers and several publicity men.

\$50 for Strikers At Fawick Airflex

The 301 Executive Board last week voted to send \$50 to the UE strikers at the Fawick Airflex plant at Cleveland, Ohio. The strike is now in its sixteenth week.

The company has obtained court orders banning all picketing, forbidding strikers to congregate within 1000 feet of the gate and outlawing the distribution of most leaflets.

ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS
UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO & MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA, CIO
SCHENECTADY GE LOCAL 301

Published by Editorial Committee
Mary McCartin, Chairman
Arthur E. Bertini, Secretary
William Christman, Frank D'Amico, Victor Pasche

Editorial Office
ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS
301 Liberty St., Schenectady, N. Y.
Telephone 3-1380

CONGRESSMAN DRIPP By YOMEN



"WHAT A NIGHTMARE! I DREAMED I HAD TO WORK FOR A LIVING!"

Charlie Wilson Wants Some 'Labor Statesmen'

GE President Charles E. Wilson wants union leaders to show "a little statesmanship" right now and tell the workers they shouldn't ask for higher wages.

"If they are ever going to start being economic statesmen, why not now?" he asked in a recent speech at Atlantic City.

(With GE contract negotiations just starting, Wilson would be very happy indeed if the UE leaders decided to become labor statesmen instead of carrying out the instructions of the GE workers.)

Wilson repeated the usual phony argument that a wage increase would have to mean price increases. He didn't admit that the buying power of the people has dropped so that they can't buy the goods GE and other companies are producing. Instead he claimed GE was "the victim" of its own price reductions and had created a "wait for more" attitude in the market. We suppose those 5,000,000 unemployed workers in the country are just waiting to buy?

Wilson's only solution is a big sales campaign.

He predicted that the production of consumer goods in the electrical industry would drop at least 20 per cent during 1949, as compared to last year (the highest production and profit year on record for GE).

GE Engineers' Leaders Do Usual Parrot Act

The executive council of the Schenectady General Electric Engineers Association did its usual Charlie McCarthy act for the company last week by issuing a statement against a general pay raise.

Echoing Daddy Boulware, they called for increased production through increased individual effort, —speed-up. They claimed that a wage increase would cause higher prices.

Again this year they completely ignored the fact that high prices are caused by monopoly control of production and greed for profit, and have no relationship to wages.

Leaders of the GE Engineers Association have blocked real organization of the underpaid engineers. During the 1946 strike a Schenectady officer of the group urged non-production workers to go back to work.

UE has never heard of leaders of the GE Engineers Association handing back any pay raise that comes their way after the union has won a general increase for its members.

UE Presents
Arthur Gaeth
10 p.m. Monday
WXXW

Meeting on Silicosis Arranged with GE

The GE management was to meet with the union yesterday, after this week's EU News went to press, on the serious health conditions revealed recently by the Local 301's medical check-up of workers in the Porcelain Division.

Seventeen silicosis cases were discovered among the 36 men and women given medical examinations by Dr. Saul Solomon, New York City lung specialist, as a follow-up of X-rays. There were 20 other workers X-rayed, but they did not have the examination later. The X-rays of one of this group show he has a severe case.

The percentage of silicosis among those examined is even higher in Schenectady than at Elmira where UE conducted a similar survey and revealed 90 cases. Dr. Solomon was retained by the union for that health check-up also.

301 has asked management to conduct a joint survey of conditions in Building 68 and other sections of the plant needing investigation, to provide special compensation for workers affected by silicosis and to guarantee them against any loss of earnings through transfers.

Why Mind Lay-offs? Servant Problem Solved

The June Industrial Bulletin, the monthly magazine printed by the State Department of Labor, has the cheerful heading, "Household Help Available" over an article stating:

"The shortage of household help which has prevailed since the early days of the war gradually is easing off — despite the fact that women who forsook household employment for war work or other better paying jobs are not voluntarily giving them up."

Undoubtedly Governor Thomas E. Dewey, whose name heads the title page of the Industrial Bulletin, is glad to know there shouldn't be any more servant problem at the Executive Mansion or Pawling. And undoubtedly it's good news to Charles E. Wilson and his circle of friends.

The women who have been laid off in Industrial Control and other parts of the GE works here probably don't have exactly the same reaction!

Don't Be a Free Rider
Join the Union

301 Asks GE Arrange Meeting with MBA

Local 301 has asked Works Manager Louis J. Male to arrange for a meeting of officers of the Mutual Benefit Association with union representatives, with GE management sitting in on the conference. Indications are that the meeting will be arranged.

The union objects to the present set-up under which employees pay all contributions toward MBA benefits and GE pays nothing but has controlling power. It regards proposed amendments to MBA, scheduled to be voted on today by the MBA General Committee, as unsatisfactory. At a meeting of the General Committee June 10 the amendments failed to get the two-thirds vote necessary to pass.

Business Agent Leo Jandreau has notified Male that under the new State Disability Law the MBA plan is clearly subject to collective bargaining between the union and GE.

More Boulware Fairy Stories

Alice in Wonderland had nothing on L. R. Boulware in the Works News.

For two successive issues of the company paper Boulware tried to glorify the "good speed-up." Then in the issue of June 10 he explained that the whole trouble today is "inventories," too much unsold merchandise.

Evidently Boulware doesn't admit that the speed-up caused the huge inventories, and that low-paid or unemployed people cannot buy. No, it seems customers just are not "in such a rush any more."

Nothing about their lacking cash. But don't worry, Daddy Boulware will get you out of it all—not with more jobs and pay, but with "product improvement, price attraction, sales appeal."

Maybe some of us remember 1929 and 1930, when Herbert Hoover told the people to "sell apples," and "prosperity is just around the corner." And things just kept getting worse.

Of course, it's probably un-American to remember 1929.

Senator from UE

A member of UE was elected to the Wisconsin state legislature recently in a special election. He defeated a Milwaukee industrialist who operates a non-union shop. The victorious candidate is Casimir Kendzioriski, a member of UE Local 1181 employed at Louis Allis Company, Milwaukee.

Even the Losers Enjoyed This Race



There was real competition in the pie-eating contest at the 301 field day, it's plain for everybody to see.

Tremendous Jump In Jobless Figure

With the start of the new benefit year the number of jobless men and women registered with the Schenectady Unemployment Insurance office jumped to 3,380. This was the figure reported as of June 10, in contrast to 2,647 June 3. It was an increase of 733, or over 28 per cent.

The Schenectady report bears out the warning of the union that government figures for months have been underestimating the real extent of unemployment. Indications are that there will be another heavy increase in the Schenectady figure for June 17.

Just One Explanation

Prices are shooting up again, as anyone knows who has been doing the family marketing for food or household supplies. And there has been no "new round of wage increases" for Big Business to blame. This time the reason for the price increases can't be disguised. Just plain greed for profits.

AFL Raid Beaten

The AFL teamsters were defeated recently in an effort to raid the UE local at the Harrison Sheet Metal Company, Chicago. The workers voted against the teamsters 191 to 120 in a Taft-Hartley election.

GE Tries to 'Ease' Minds of Workers

(Continued from Page 1)

was expected to increase because of television.

The talks to make GE workers feel more secure started a few days after the Pittsfield GE plant announced that 600 workers in the chemical department had been put on a four-day week.

And the talks started while the situation in Schenectady was growing more serious than ever. Women with six years of service are waiting to be called back after they have been out for several weeks. Additional lay-off notices are being handed out and short-timing is on the increase.

Board Plans Drive Against Sales Tax

The 301 Executive Board recently made plans for an active campaign against the City Planning Commission's proposal for a 2 per cent tax on retail sales of \$1 or more.

Local 301 has gone on record against all such sales taxes, as an unjust burden on the people least able to pay. The union has urged that localities receive larger shares of state taxes and that large corporations and the upper income groups be made to pay their proper share of taxes.