

Electrical Union News

THE VOICE OF THE UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO & MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA—LOCAL 301 CIO

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GE Won't Arbitrate Longendyke Dispute

Local 301 has renewed its efforts to get GE to let the case of Louis Longendyke be arbitrated.

So far, however, the GE takes the stand that its "No" must be final and can't be reviewed by anyone.

The Longendyke case dates back several years. Longendyke is employed as an electrician in a crane repair group. He wires complete new cranes and maintains the wiring of old cranes.

In 1940 the union protested because he received only a rate of 97 cents an hour although he was doing work comparable to that of a first class electrician. For similar work electricians were then getting \$1.01 an hour.

After long arguments with the union, the company finally agreed in October, 1940, to pay Longendyke the preferential top rate paid to electricians.

Does Electricians' Work

The company went on record officially that "work assigned to Longendyke is (Continued on Page 4)

Grievance Action Obtains Vacation Pay for Worker

Vacation pay was won for a member in Bldg. 46 through union grievance action recently. He gets the pay under the union contract provision that a man going on leave of absence may have the first week or two designated as his vacation and be paid accordingly.

In this case, the man didn't ask for his vacation pay until he returned from leave. His foreman turned down the vacation pay claim on the grounds the man should have applied for it before leaving. Committeeman G. A. Mele pressed the claim through the union office.

The company said the foreman was technically correct, but that in this case the worker had a reasonable excuse for not knowing about the procedure at that time.

Workers qualified for a vacation and granted a leave should be sure to ask for their vacation before they leave, not later.

Building Tradesmen Get Christmas Gifts

Approximately 500 building trades workers at the Schenectady plant received Christmas week gifts, retroactive pay provided in wage adjustments won by Local 301 for them. The back pay, which ran as high as \$50 or more in some cases, was distributed Dec. 26 and 27.

Pay increases were obtained for building trades mechanics except the electricians and steamfitters who received theirs in 1945 through the union's War Labor Board case. Helpers also shared in new adjustments.

Portal-to-Portal Pay Claims Made

Schenectady GE workers required to put in time at the plant outside their regular working hours will be covered by a portal-to-portal pay suit filed on their behalf by the national UE against GE.

The Local 301 office has sent the national office information from the first batch of union questionnaires answered by Schenectady workers and will send additional information as other questionnaires are turned in.

The material sent to the national office included authorizations by individual workers for the union to press their claims for back pay.

Local 301 officers said a sampling of various occupations was taken through the first questionnaires, to find out exactly what typical conditions are in various parts of the plant. Results show that additional thousands of workers should file claims.

Cases have been discovered in Schenectady. (Continued on Page 4)

Local 301 Broadcast

Remember, you can hear accurate, fair news on the Local 301 radio broadcast at 7:15 p.m. every Monday over Station WSNY.

Matles to Speak At 301 Meeting

Local Will Install Officers and Board Jan. 7 at Union Hall

Officers and Executive Board members for 1947 will be installed by Local 301 Tuesday night, Jan. 7, at 301 Hall. They will be sworn in at a combined membership and committeemen's meeting at 7:30 p.m.

James Matles, national UE director of organization, will be speaker.

The 1947 officers will be: president, Andrew Peterson; business agent, Leo Jandreau; vice-president, William Hodges; treasurer, Marshall White, recording secretary, Helen Quirini; assistant recording secretary, Lillian Bliss; chief shop steward, William Mastriani; sergeant-at-arms, Harmon Cartwright; guide, George Walker, and trustees, Albert Davis, James Kelly and Edmund C. Tanski.

Seven of these officers will automatically be on the Executive Board because of their offices; the president, business agent, vice-president, treasurer, recording secretary, assistant recording secretary and chief shop steward.

Elected to Board

Other members of the Executive Board, elected this month, will be: James Cognetta, Alfred J. Pelrah, George Judway, Mary McCartin, Anthony Villano, Anthony Esposito, Dewey Brashear, Leland Sisto, Charles Ferris, A. S. Spears, Henry Busse, Willard Kuschel, Michael Tedisco, Albert Davis, William Stewart and Eugene Le Moine.

On Mayor's Committee

Leo Jandreau, Local 301 business agent, has been named by Mayor Mills Ten Eyck as a member of the steering committee to plan for a Schenectady World War II veterans' memorial.

GE Conference Board Year Gets Off to Bad Start for GE Company; Meets This Weekend Must Appear in U. S. Court Cases in January

The General Electric Conference Board of UE will meet Saturday and Sunday in New York City to draw up proposals for the 1947 GE contract. The Conference Board, representing UE locals throughout the country, will discuss in detail the recommendation of the UE General Executive Board about opening wage negotiations on a new basis.

It is the Executive Board's recommendation that instead of placing a definite wage proposal before GE, the GE locals should prove the case for a substantial increase and call upon the company to approach the facts in an open-minded way.

Contract proposals resulting from the weekend meeting will be submitted to all GE locals for approval or change before the final form is placed before the company.

Conference boards of Westinghouse, General Cable and Sylvania locals will also meet this weekend in New York. It is expected that general features of the contract proposals to be submitted to the "Big Four" in the electrical industry will be fundamentally alike.

Discuss Tax On Back Pay

Washington authorities are already figuring out ways of collecting a "wind-fall tax" from workers who receive back wages through portal-to-portal pay suits.

Representative Knutson (R-Minn.) incoming chairman of the House ways and means committee, said plans are now under discussion.

After corporations pay the back-wage claims, he indicated, they would put in claims for refunds of war-paid excess profits taxes to cover part or all of the costs. The government would complete the cycle by special taxes on the workers.

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January is going to be an embarrassing month for the General Electric Co. because of two federal court cases. GE has been charged with domestic and international monopoly.

Final arguments will be heard Jan. 15 in the U. S. Circuit Court in Trenton, N. J., in connection with the Department of Justice's indictment of GE for conspiring monopolistically to set prices of lamps.

A few days later in the U. S. Circuit Court in New York, the trial of GE, under criminal indictment, for its collusive conspiracy with Krupp of Germany to set the price and control distribution of tungsten carbide will begin.

"This is the monopoly cartel action by GE which is widely charged by government officials as having seriously hurt the war production effort," Russ Nixon, UE Washington representative, said.

Other Cases Pending

Brother Nixon also told the EU News: "GE is charged with having violated the U. S. Sherman and Clayton anti-trust acts. These two trials are but part of the several government cases against GE for anti-trust violations. Similar charges are pending against Westinghouse.

"The charges apply to both domestic monopoly and to international cartel arrangements. They spell one thing — monopoly.

"These anti-trust trials are a significant aspect of the CIO fight for decent wages for workers employed by American monopolies. In the current economic argument around the UE-CIO demands, one hears much talk of free competition and the law of supply and demand as factors regulating prices.

"This is phoney talk when it comes from such giant American monopolies as GE, Westinghouse, and General Motors. The whole fabric of organization of these trusts is to prevent competition, to prevent the simple law of supply and demand from working, to set prices artificially.

"The only way these monopolies are interested in free competition is to pay it lip-service as an argument against wage increases.

Electrical Monopoly

"Look at the extent of the concentration of economic power in the field of production of UE. GE and Westinghouse produce around 80% of all the nation's incandescent lamps. GE, Westinghouse, GM and Nash-Kelvinator produced 66% of all refrigerators in the United States in 1941. In 1940 GE made 22% of all the flatirons. GE and Westinghouse produce 51% of all electric water heaters. GE, Westinghouse and General Motors produce 70% of all electric ranges.

"And so it goes.

"Look at monopoly in the UE-CIO

field on the basis of size. Recent official reports describe what they call "the total usable facilities", in 1945 in the fabricated metal products industries. According to this measure, the big five in this field are GM, Ford, GE, Chrysler and Westinghouse. This means they are the biggest outfits in the world.

"Look at electrical machinery where 10 corporations account for two-thirds of the total usable facilities in the industry. The biggest five companies with one-third of all the facilities in order of importance are GE, Westinghouse, American Tel and Tel, RCA and General Cable. This is monopoly. This is big business. This is excessive concentration of economic power. This is the economic opposite of free competition and of free private enterprise."

CIO Radio Program Skipped This Week

The Capital District CIO Council will miss out on its radio broadcast this week because of changes in program hours at Station WTRY. These changes resulted from WTRY shifting Jan. 1 from ABC to CBS.

Speakers on the next CIO Council broadcast will be John French, president of Local 3717, United Steelworkers of America, at the Ilnes and Cox plant in Albany, and James McCoy, financial secretary of the same local. The date will be announced later.

Union Files Protest On Low Lathe Prices

The union has protested against low prices set for small lathe work in Bldg. 60.

About 25 workers in the first balcony of the building suffered sharp drops in their earnings when these prices were established. The prices are based on a new table installed several weeks ago.

At least 75 per cent of the new prices are absolutely wrong, the union claims.

Business Agent Leo Jandreau has arranged with management for shop complaints.

Schenectady Railway, TWU Negotiate Jan. 7

1947 contract negotiations between Local 159, Transport Workers Union, CIO, and the Schenectady Railway Co. ran into another delay when Walter J. McCarter, company president and general manager, quit his job without notice.

McCarter, who came to Schenectady Dec. 16 as company president, entered the contract negotiations next day with a "get tough with the union" attitude.

McCarter Suggests Pay Cut

His first action was to hand the union 11 proposals which would cut their take-home pay and lower working conditions. He wanted to take away two paid holidays and reduce the guaranteed work-week, which would in turn reduce the amount of overtime pay collected.

The union unanimously rejected the company proposals and demanded that McCarter start bargaining in good faith. Two days before Christmas, McCarter met again with the union, and said he would not have a final answer until after a meeting with the board of directors Dec. 30.

McCarter said any wage increase would be retroactive to Jan. 1.

Quits Company Job

McCarter went to Cleveland for the Christmas holiday. A Cleveland newspaper announced Monday, Dec. 30, that he had quit the Schenectady job. The Schenectady Railway Co. officials declared the newspaper announcement was their first knowledge of his leaving the presidency.

J. Leslie Schoolcraft, chairman of the Schenectady County Republican Committee, was named president a few hours later. He met the next day, Tuesday, with Lewis Benedict, president of Local 159, and Alton Petseys, secretary-treasurer of the local. They set Jan. 7 for the next negotiating meeting in New York City, at the office of Harry Sacher, general counsel for the Transport Workers.

Schoolcraft and the union officials signed a written agreement extending the contract to Jan. 15 and guaranteeing that pay raises would be retroactive to Jan. 1.

Join CIO Council

Another union has joined the Capital District CIO Council. Local 15, United Brewery Workers, sent delegates to the Dec. 18 meeting at Local 301 Hall. The local represents members in Albany, Troy and Schenectady.

Important Point on Portal-to-Portal Pay

In order to be covered by the portal-to-portal pay suit which the national UE has started against GE, a worker must file his individual authorization with the union office.

If you want to be covered, get an authorization form from your shop committeeman and fill it out immediately.

The case involves no individual legal expense for any member of the union.

To Protect Seniority Check Service Record

Protect your service record. Seniority is your job protection. Every so often a case is reported to the union where a member's service record has been broken and it is too late to correct the situation.

When you come back to work after a lay-off, illness, or other long absence, be sure to check with your foreman to see that your service record has been maintained. If you are told the company has broken your service, whether upon return after an absence, or while you are out on lay-off, take the matter up with your committeeman or the union office.

If your service is broken while you are on lay-off, you not only lose your job rights, but the State Unemployment Insurance office is likely to cut off your insurance payments.

Ever See Wages Jump Like This?

A 301 committeeman last week received a GE vacuum cleaner which he had ordered several months ago. It was \$40.40 on delivery, compared with \$26.50 when ordered.

That was just a plain vacuum cleaner. The committeeman reported that a de luxe model, \$30.50 a few months ago, has jumped to \$52.50.

Wasn't it President Charlie Wilson who was boasting recently about GE holding down prices?

CIO Council Backs Murray Unity Plan

The Capital District CIO Council recently voted unanimous approval of CIO President Philip Murray's effort to achieve unity of CIO, AFL and railroad unions in "a common program of economic and legislative measures."

Delegates decided to support the Murray unity plan on a local level by assisting AFL and railroad unions to take part in a Capital District legislative conference early in 1947.

Murray Letter

President Murray, in a recent letter to heads of the other branches of the labor movement, said:

"It has become self-evident that there is a deliberate and monstrous movement under way to cripple, if not destroy, the labor movement of this country."

He pointed out that large corporations are responsible for heading the country toward inflation, but have put the blame on the "American" workers. Their agents in Congress killed vital legislation last session and passed bills "to shackle labor and weaken its ability to cope with increasing enemy attacks."

Election Misinterpreted

"The election results of Nov. 5 have been deliberately misinterpreted by these very same predatory interests as a stamp of approval upon their evil design and have obviously encouraged them to deepen their attack upon organized labor," he wrote.

"The stage is set for the 80th Congress to be met by national hysteria deliberately fomented and inspired. In essence, the attempt is to divert the attention of the American people from those interests which are actually causing national hardships for the common people through inflation."

Unity Vital

Unity of action on the part of the CIO, AFL and railroad unions "is imperative and of vital importance," President Murray stated.

State CIO Calls Regional Meeting

Local 301 and UE District 3 will be represented in Albany Monday, Jan. 6, at a regional conference on wages and legislation called by the New York State CIO Council. The meeting will be at 4 p.m. at the De Witt Clinton Hotel.

The Capital District CIO Council has notified all affiliated locals of the conference.