

New Shop Stewards Line Up to Take Over Their Union Duties



George Walker, at extreme left, Local 301 guide, administers the oath of office to newly elected shop stewards. Arthur Gaeth, national UE radio commentator, is seated at the table. Front row, left to right, George Farr, Bldg. 273; Lewis Scott, Jr., 95; Adam Boruch, 12; Daniel

Albanese, 68; William Christman, 18; Joseph Klein, 60; Earl Lucas, 13, and Matthew Dockal, 3F. Rear row left to right, Francis Etzel, Bldg. 273; William Blich, 60; Lyman Scherer, 73; Kenneth Douglas, C.A.P. Patrol; Richard Hines, 60; William Forsythe, 49; Salvatore DePietro, 49.

128 Join Union Within a Week

Local 301 signed up 128 new members in the week which ended Wednesday, the day EU News went to press. The organizing drive will continue until May 1. During that period new members don't have to pay any initiation fee.

Board Member William Stewart's section still heads the list with a total of 170 new members.

There are a total of 71 new members in Bldg. 49. Lawrence Schilling is Board member for most of the building, but some of the new members are in the 49 Annex, represented by James Cognetta, and 49 Patrol, represented by Charles Ferris. In addition, Cognetta has turned in 34 application cards from other parts of his section and Ferris has turned in 11.

Board Member Willard Kusche's section has signed up 55 people; Michael Tedisco, 53, and John P. Brauneisen's, 44.

GE Keeps Informed

George Pfeif, chief company spokesman, let Business Agent Leo Jandreau know in the negotiations this week that he had been given a copy of the letter on blue paper which Jandreau sent the 301 shop stewards last week giving pertinent facts on the issues in the negotiations.

It Proved Expensive To Stay Out of Union

By now someone in Bldg. 53 must have helped a maintenance and repair leader there figure out how much it cost him in wages to save \$1.50 a month in union dues.

The man joined 301 recently and told Shop Steward D. Rogers Pitman that he had really been working as a leader for three years, but had only been paid as a Class A man. Investigation showed the claim was substantially true.

The 301 grievance committee took the case to Bldg. 41, and the man got his leader classification and a 10-cent raise. The company would grant back pay only to Feb. 20, the date the grievance was taken up.

Party for Pensioners

All GE pensioners and their wives and husbands are invited to the party which Local 301 will give at 7:30 p.m. tomorrow (Saturday) at the union hall for the UE-CIO 301 Pension Organization.

Opens His Own Business

Adam Boss, who resigned in January as Local 301 bookkeeper, has bought King's Liquor Store, 330 State St.

No Union Is Safe Under T-H Law

Two of the first unions to rush to file affidavits with the anti-union Taft-Hartley Board were the Carpenters and the Teamsters, both AFL. But the first two court injunctions obtained under the Taft-Hartley law were against those two unions.

Another interesting angle. Bill Hutchinson, president of the Carpenters Union, is labor chairman of the Republican National Committee and Daniel Tobin, Teamsters' president, is labor chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

Unusual Business Man Explains High Prices

Here's what Jay D. Runkle, chairman of the National Retail Dry Goods Association, has to say about responsibility for high prices.

"Manufacturers frankly admit in many cases they are not going to reduce prices until they have to, and that they would rather curtail production if necessary to maintain the present high price levels.

"There is little evidence that many manufacturers are trying seriously to reduce costs or prices. This is the stuff out of which booms and busts are made."

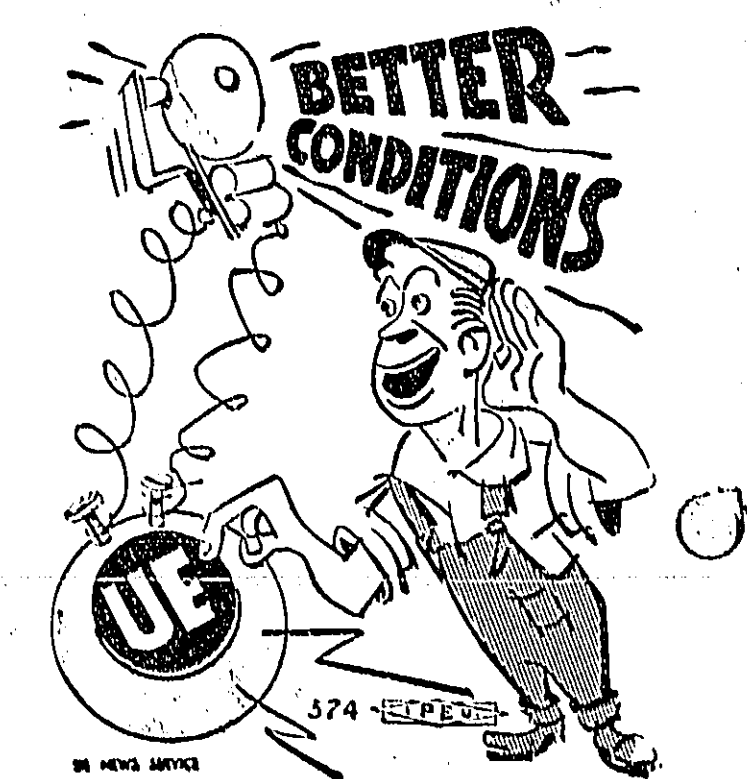
Runkle made these remarks at the recent national marketing conference at St. Louis. They confirm charges labor has been making right along.

Shop at 301 Hall Today, Tomorrow!

Members of Local 301 and their immediate families can buy stock left over from the 301 Food Center from noon until 9 p.m. today (Friday) and from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. tomorrow at the union headquarters at reduced prices.

Here are some of the bargains: grated tuna, 35 cents a can; fancy light meat tuna, 39 cts. a can; Chase and Sanborn coffee, 50 cts. a pound; sliced peaches, 15 cts. a can; Swerl, 23 cts. a package; Fels Naptha soap, two bars for 17 cts.; Mazola oil, 79 cts. a quart; canned corn beef, 27 cts. a can; Maine sardines, 10 cts. a can, and table napkins, two packages for 23 cts.

The Food Committee is still looking for a building to rent in order to reopen the Food Center.



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Strikes Develop At New GE Plants

GE workers in shops in Lexington, Kentucky, and Boston, Mass., recently organized by UE, are on strike against the low rates which the company pays in its newer plants. They are demanding inclusion in the national contract, and a correction of the wide "geographic differentials."

The company has refused to negotiate, and in Lexington it has obtained a court injunction limiting pickets to two at each gate. Eleven pickets were arrested by Mar. 24, second day of the strike. The first four tried were given suspended sentences.

The Lexington strike involves a new lamp plant, employing about 300, mostly girls. Rates paid in the lower skills are 27 cents an hour lower than in the lamp plant in Cleveland, in the neighboring state of Ohio. In the machine jobs the differences is 34 cents or greater.

'Decentralization' Policy

During the past year employment at the Cleveland plant has dropped by 600. The Lexington fight is a key fight in the company's "decentralization" program of moving work to new shops in low-wage areas, at the expense of wage standards and jobs in the older plants. The fancy name of "decentralization" is more often called a "run-away" shop policy.

The Boston shop is the Boston Appliance Service Center, employing 23 mechanics averaging \$1.10 an hour, no more than sweepers' pay in the nearby Lynn plant.

The Local 301 Executive Board Monday voted immediate donations of \$100 to the Lexington strikers and \$50 to Boston, and to recommend that the membership approve a weekly contribution from 301. Other steps to support the fellow-GE workers on strike will be taken up with the shop stewards.

UE Wins Elections

Elections at both plants were conducted by the Honest Ballot Association, a nationally-recognized organization. The Lexington workers voted UE by better than 10 to one. Only three workers voted for the AFL. The Boston group voted UE by 22 to zero. The company is trying to use the Taft-Hartley law as an excuse for not bargaining. There is nothing in that law to



A wage increase is out of the question... Let's issue another comic book instead...

More Than Six Holidays

There are 230 plants under UE contracts providing for more than six holidays. Among them are eight Canadian GE plants, though the American GE has turned down the UE demand for additional holidays.

Several GE competitors still give only six paid holidays like GE, but they don't disqualify workers from holiday pay if they are absent the day before or after the holiday.

prevent its bargaining like the employees in other newly-organized plants.

The situation is similar to that in Waterford, N. Y., to which the silicone work has been moved from Schenectady, at 10 cents per hour lower rates. An Honest Ballot Association election will be held there Apr. 14.

The Local 301 Executive Board also voted to send a wire of support to the UE local in Memphis, which is considering strike action. Rates at the lamp plant there are lower than Cleveland by 27 cents an hour and more.

Contract Talks Center on Pay And Pensions

The major issue of wages was again argued in UE-GE negotiations Tuesday, with the UE demanding to know how the company reconciled the granting of widespread raises to foremen with its claim that a general raise for the workers would be "inflationary."

Leo Jandreau, Local 301 business agent and District 3 president, declared the members were glad to see the foremen get raises, and that the truth was that raises were not inflationary at all.

Conference Board to Meet

With no progress made on the principal contract issues, the GE Conference Board of UE local delegates has been called to meet in New York Monday, April 5, to discuss the situation. Local 301 shop stewards from all shifts will meet the next night.

The other principal subject of discussion Tuesday was pensions, with the UE bringing in four pensioners from Schenectady, Lynn, Erie, and Pittsfield, to present their problems.

Reports from Erie were that most of the foremen received raises, while in Schenectady raises ranging from \$6 to \$10 a week (Continued on Page 2)

Pro and Con

From the report of Joseph Dermody, secretary of the GE Conference Board of UE, on negotiations up to Mar. 26:

"The company continued its arguments that a wage increase would be inflationary; that present high prices were caused by previous wage increases; that the government has created too much money. . . .

"In reply, the union cited the company's record-breaking profits for the year 1947; that the price spiral began climbing before wage increases were granted, and that past general increases only represented efforts to catch up with the rising spiral of prices; that if too much money had been created, it was not in the hands of the working people — savings of lower-income groups have been growing smaller since the end of the war."



GE Vice-President L. R. Boulware recently boasted "We said it in 1920," — speaking of his current "Eat less" campaign. Fred Wright's cartoon may help Boulware re-

Lay-offs Show Need Of Guaranteed Pay

Recent lay-offs at GE plants in this area point up the importance of UE contract proposals for a guaranteed weekly wage and for equalizing rates in different plants. The company again resisted these proposals in recent days of bargaining.

Within the past few weeks in the Schenectady-Works, Local 301 has been notified of indefinite lay-offs of 58 men and 66 women in Porcelain and Industrial Control, and of lost time, ranging from one day to a week, for 236 women and 86 men, in those departments and Wire. In the Fort Edward plant 78 were laid-off recently, with the expectation of more to come.

Three hundred will be out of jobs in Utica when the Tube works closes finally at the end of April.

In opposing a weekly wage guarantee, George Pfeif, company spokesman, said the company tries to maintain steady jobs, but that it is not possible to give any guarantee.

The union pointed out that there is no company policy to assure steady jobs, and that on the contrary the "decentralization plan" of moving to low-wage areas has the effect of making jobs unstable. The company's only consideration is one of cost, not job stability, the union said.

Asked if GE would consider a guarantee of a percentage of year-

ly earnings, Pfeif said he did not see how it could be financed. The union pointed out that when a GE customer cancels a contract, he is subject to penalties. GE talks about wanting to stabilize the nation's economy, the committee declared, but it is unwilling to do anything to insure that stability.

GE Rewrites History In Article on Prices

American history as written by GE in its March 5 Works News piece on the contract negotiations: January 1945 prices "were only theoretically as low as the OPA prices indicated," and furthermore the "public finally insisted" that price controls be removed "to get the supply of goods moving up again."

We don't know what prices GE top shots paid for food during the war, but we know GE workers bought their food under OPA controls. And most of us still believe it was not the public, but the National Association of Manufacturers, through Congress, which killed price control to get the supply of Big Business profits moving up to new records.

GE's Financial Stake In Italian Election

In a speech in Congress Mar. 24, Representative Vito Marcantonio (ALP) named General Electric as one of the American industries with a big stake in the outcome of the April election in Italy. He said GE is developing water power in the Turin financial interests.

America's big trusts have increased their Italian holdings by over \$200,000,000 since the end of the war, he charged, and now control the important Italian industries.

12 Cent Increase

UE Local 134 won a general 12 cent wage increase at the Barker and Williamson plant, Bristol, Pa.

Contract Talks Center On Pay and Pensions

(Continued from Page 1)

were reported all over the Industrial Control, Aeronautics and Marine, and Punch Press divisions.

Discuss Foremen's Raises

George Pfeif, head management negotiator, claimed the raises were not given to all the foremen, but were part of the annual review of foremen's wages. The union spokesmen declared they obviously were so widespread as to be nearly general. Jandreau pointed out one case where a raise was given a foreman who had long since reached his normal maximum. Pfeif said the company had had to re-evaluate job rates of some foremen. He did not reply when Jandreau asked why he objected to the Schenectady proposal to do this for other workers.

Employers Grab Benefits Of Increased Production

The corporations claim that wages can increase only as workers' production increases. Industries are producing three times more per hour now than they did in 1914.

But the real wages of workers have only doubled. Weekly wages at the present time could have bought only \$22 worth of goods in 1914. In 1914 actual wages were \$11 per week.

For workers to have received the benefits of their increased production over the years, their present actual weekly wage should be \$78 instead of \$52.

Instead of increasing workers' wages, the corporations pocketed most of the benefits of increased productivity. Between 1914 and 1947 their profit take increased 15 times.

Vacation Provisions

Electrical companies which have contracts with UE providing for three weeks vacations after 10 years service include Brown Instrument, International Resistance, Belmont Radio and Minneapolis Honeywell. A number provide three weeks vacation after 15 years and some give four weeks after 25 years.

WEAR YOUR UNION BUTTON

the community to train such journeymen. Pfeif said the company did not see any advantage to itself in the proposal.

The company still opposed improving the holiday provision, and elimination of reducing differentials in wage rates between plants. Pfeif refused to agree to any retroactive date for a possible wage raise, on the ground there was no agreement on a raise. He was to give further study to the questions of pay during machine break down, and guaranteed piece work rates.

Union Wins Increases For Bldg. 285 Workers

Grievances filed for turret lathe operators, milling machine operators and boring mill operators in Bldg. 285 resulted in reclassification of jobs and adjustment in rates last week. About 20 workers received immediate increases of 10 cents an hour, and the others now have a chance of advancement not open to them before.

Shop Stewards Francis Bohan and Owen B. Phillips and Executive Board Member Sam Scott took part in the grievance sessions in Bldg. 41.

\$100 for Strikers

The 301 Executive Board Monday night voted \$100 for the strike of the CIO United Packing House Workers.

Many Jobless Because of Age

A good deal of the present unemployment is caused by the reluctance of employers to hire workers they consider "old", State Industrial Commissioner Edward Corsi announced recently. He pointed out also that in the desired age brackets there are few people possessing a specialized skill or training needed in the vacant jobs.

A survey made by the State Employment Service and unemployment insurance office showed that in Schenectady nearly 2,400 persons were registered as job seekers at the end of November. Of these 49 per cent were 55 years old or older, and another 8.1 per cent were under 21 years of age.

Only about 1,000 remained in the wanted age brackets, and in the main they could not qualify for the jobs that were open. There was heavy demand, for example, for husky men for unskilled work in Schenectady, chiefly construction, but an intensive recruiting effort failed to produce enough qualified workers, within commuting distance. It was impossible to bring people to Schenectady from further away because of housing conditions.

Schenectady had the highest percentage of job-seekers in the "55 and over" and the "under 21" age bracket of the cities listed with GE plants. In contrast to the total of 57.1 per cent in those unwanted age brackets in Schenectady, there were 40.5 per cent in Elmira; 30.3 per cent in Syracuse and 29.6 per cent in Utica.

During the last half of 1947 the State Employment Service was able to fill only 60 per cent of the vacant jobs listed in seven key cities.

301 Gives Dance for Garry Waldron Fund

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This picture was made at the dance which Local 301 gave Mar. 20 at Stanford Heights Fire Department hall for the benefit of Garry Waldron, union member disabled in World War II. More than \$200 was raised at the affair for the fund to build Waldron a house. The Activities Committee ran the dance.

National Economists Don't Agree with GE

Even President Truman's very conservative Council of Economic Advisers doesn't see eye-to-eye with GE about increased production being the cure-all of today's economic troubles.

In its second annual report, the Council asks: "Will our present economic problems — inflation, high cost of living, threatened recession, and all the rest — be solved merely by 'production, more production, and still more production?' Or may full production, in catching up with market demand, force disastrous price breaks, result in production cut-backs and thus prove to be its own undoing?"

The Council states that "in the broader and longer-run sense," stepping up production will "not alone solve the problem of how to maintain a maximum level of production." "It will simply advance the time when we shall have to face the problem of what price, income and property value adjustments have to be made —".

301 Broadcast

The weekly 301 radio program will be at 7:30 p.m. Monday on WSNY. Milo Lathrop will interview a shop worker on the GE wage situation.

BUILD THE UNION
MAKE YOUR SHOP 100% UE

Why Prices Go Up

Some 1300 of the largest corporations in the country have been indicted by the U. S. Government and are now awaiting trial. These companies are charged with fixing prices, forming international cartels and restricting production.

Are you paying too much for food? Swift & Co., American Meat



Institute, Cudahy Packing, A & P Stores and National Cheese Institute are among those indicted for fixing prices.

Are you paying too much for your radio, electric bulbs and appliances or are you paying too much for electricity because utilities have to pay too much for their equipment? There are six indictments outstanding against General Electric, two against

GE Price Reduction — With Strings Attached

Before the much ballyhooed GE price reduction on certain products, a foreman in Bldg. 28 bought a GE electric range for \$271. A union member saw and admired it. After the price reduction was announced, the union member went to the store where the foreman had purchased his range and asked for the same model.

The salesman told him there was a 7 per cent reduction — or about \$19 off. The 301 member was about to buy it when he noticed something.

"Where is the warming oven that was on the one I saw?" he asked.

"Oh, they don't put that in any more," explained the salesman.

Westinghouse and one against Bendix Home Appliance for price fixing, restraint of trade and international cartels.

Steel companies, International Nickel, Rubber Manufacturers' Association and the N. Y. Central Railroad are charged with price fixing and restraint of trade.

The National Association of Manufacturers said that if OPA were killed competition would bring prices down. The Board of Directors of the NAM is heavily weighted with officials of these indicted companies which are charged with price fixing, restraint of trade and monopoly practices.

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