

Worker killed by cop car as 20,000 strike GE

BY PAUL PEDERSON

A cop car struck and killed a picketing worker in Louisville, Kentucky, on January 14, the first day of a nationwide strike by workers at General Electric.

The woman, a member of Local 761 of the International Union of Electrical Workers-Communication Workers of America (IUE-CWA), was one of 20,000 unionists--some of whom are organized by the United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers--who launched the two-day stoppage to oppose the company's move to hike their health-care co-payments.

Justifying the increase, GE official William Conaty said that the workers should pay more because "it is difficult for businesses to stay globally competitive" while health costs rise.

The world's ninth-largest corporation, GE boasts that 13 of its divisions, if ranked independently, would be on the Fortune 500 list. The company recently announced an 18 percent increase in annual net profits to more than \$12 billion.

The death occurred at 5:00 a.m. outside the Appliance Park Plant. Dave Riddle, who was walking the picket line with the woman at the time, said, "The lady was out here doing something she believed in. Rising health care in America is putting the crunch on everybody and it cost her her life. In her honor we are going to be out here picking up for what she was doing."