

JUSTICE

Official Organ of The International
Ladies' Garment Workers' Union

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Editorial Notes

THE GENERAL STRIKE of 1932 is over—insofar as the three dress associations are concerned.

It is far from ended, however, in the non-union and the independent shops. The great drive begun on February 16 will be continued vigorously all through the season, and no rest will be given to the non-union employers until they, too, are forced to raise earnings and adjust work hours to the union level and to recognize the Union as the representative of the workers in the shops.

The dressmakers' strike was, by general consensus, a drastic, daring move. To call a strike in the midst of a terrible crisis, with unemployment and destitution ravaging the country, at a time when all industries, including the garment industry, are completely upset and out of gear, required, indeed, courage and vision of no mean order. Yet, on the other hand, the strike was prompted not by adventure—it was a vital necessity for the tens of thousands of dressmakers who, for the past three years, had seen their earnings dwindle bit by bit and their work-standards undermined and degraded in the shops. It was to stop this tide of demoralization, to call a halt to the downward drift of earnings and to put up new safeguards that would stand up against the destructive effects of the continued crisis that this general strike movement was launched, and, in this sense, the strike was a real and immensely practical achievement.

* * *

Let us now briefly give an account of what the strike has accomplished:

The response of the dressmakers to the strike call was a pleasant surprise even to the leaders of the Union. All the Affiliated shops and all the shops of the contractors' association came to a standstill, in addition to a large number of independent and scores of heretofore non-union shops. The number of workers involved in the walkout is estimated to have been not less than 24,000—a considerable majority of all the dressmakers in the market. This figure is particularly impressive in view of the fact that when the strike was called a great many dress shops were still idle and many dress workers were not in the shops.

Under the terms of the settlement with the three above-named associations, the following agreement changes were effected:

1) A schedule of uniform piece rate prices was introduced, to become operative within fifteen days from the day of the settlement in all shops, inside or contractor

shops, and all piece rates are hereafter to be settled on the basis of this schedule. This schedule is to provide definite rates for as many parts of the garment as possible, to be fixed on the \$1.10 per hour minimum basis provided for in the agreement.

To understand the importance of this piece rate schedule, we must take into account the method by which piece prices were being settled until now. The industry has no fixed price for any part of the garment of any standard line of merchandise. Each shop would fix its own prices and each price committee had to bargain and haggle with the employer in order to wrest from him the best price possible. The result was that shops working on the same line of merchandise, often for the same jobber, would have different prices for labor, and, in this manner, workers of one shop would compete against workers of another shop.

The purpose of this schedule is to do away with this competition. This schedule will be prepared for the entire trade. Each part of the dress, each operation will have its definite price, and employers will be forbidden to offer to their workers lower prices than those arranged under the schedule.

2) Until now workers in the Affiliated shops, in the case of a dispute about prices, were compelled to work five days on non-settled garments until the matter would finally be adjusted. Under the new agreement, this period is cut down to two days. Only forty-eight hours are given the employer to come to an understanding with his shop committee concerning prices. Should he fail to do so, the workers are entitled under the agreement to stop work on the garments in dispute.

3) Work on Saturdays, which under the old agreement was permitted during the peak of the season, has now been materially modified. The Union demanded, in view of the prevailing unemployment, that Saturday work be entirely abolished. The new clause gives the Union the right to demand the elimination of Saturday work whenever there is "considerable unemployment" in the trade and, in case of a disagreement on the part of the Affiliated Association, to refer the matter to the impartial chairman for decision.

4) The minimum scale of samplemakers is fixed to be \$35 a week in all shops.

5) For the first time the agreement stipulates that the members of the Affiliated and all inside manufacturers shall give preference of work to their "inside" shops.

6) In case a firm fails to comply within twenty-four hours either with a decision of the Union and the Affiliated or with a decision of the Impartial Chairman, such firm shall automatically become suspended from the Affiliated and lose all the rights and privileges of the collective

agreement, and the Union shall be free to take any action necessary to enforce the agreement.

This new clause is a substantial achievement in view of the fact that until now this problem of forcing an employer to comply with decisions, has been a source of considerable trouble and aggravation to the Union. Under the old procedure, an employer had first to be charged with violation of the agreement to the Association. Later on the case would go to the impartial chairman, and, if the firm still persisted in not obeying the order of the chairman, the case would again become the subject of endless litigation, until the season would be over and the basis of the charge against the firm would automatically peter out. The new rule requiring compliance within twenty-four hours will cut down the procedure materially and will make enforcement of contract regulations more effective.

7) Under the old agreement, when a worker would be discharged and later reinstated, the employer would not have to pay the worker in question any compensation for time lost. Under the new agreement, in the event of reinstatement, the impartial chairman has a right to decide the amount of compensation for lost time.

Needless to say that this change will tend to curb the desire on the part of some employers to discharge workers without justification.

8) Both the Affiliated and the Jobbers' association assume full responsibility for the enforcement of the piece-rate schedule and of all other union work standards in their contractor shops.

9) All workers returning to the shops of the Affiliated and of the contractors' association are to settle prices before resuming work. In the event prices are not settled in any shop within twenty-four hours, the workers have a right to strike in that shop.

10) Week-workers in contractor shops, who do not receive the scale, should have their wages speedily adjusted, and in no case shall this adjustment be delayed longer than one week.

11) Instead of the three days of grace heretofore given to jobbers to withdraw work from non-union shops, the time is now limited to one day.

12) The five days of grace heretofore allowed to jobbers to withdraw their work from a union contractor shop in the case of a complaint lodged against it, are now cut down to three days.

When the strike began the treasury of the strike committee was practically empty. It had hardly enough money to cover immediate expenses for the first week of the strike. The International has done all it possibly could to raise money for the strike. Surely, had Local 22 not itself blocked the collection of the \$3.75 tax, which the International levied a few months ago to meet the pressing debts of the Union and to put its credit on a firmer basis, the dress strike would have been more amply financed. Fortunately, the wonderful response of the dressmakers has forced the employers to seek an early peace. The strike was not unduly protracted and the terms of the settlement brought material gains to our workers.

And let it be stated at this point that, while the strike was a comparatively short one, having lasted only a little over two weeks, it was by no means an "easy" strike. Because the Union had little money to spend on it, our committees, all of them without exception volunteer workers, had had to redouble their energies in carrying out the arduous tasks assigned to them.

From President Schlesinger, who despite ill-health stood at the helm of the general strike committee and worked tirelessly in directing the main activities of the conflict—

side by side with General-Secretary Dubinsky, Vice-Presidents Julius Hochman, Luigi Antoini, Joseph Breslaw and Harry Wander, and assisted by Brothers Anthony Crivello, I. Wasilevsky, Philip Oretsky, Samuel Perlmutter, Max Bluestein, Fannia Cohn and all the other vice-chairmen of the committees—down to the last picket on the fighting lines, the machinery of the great walkout has functioned with an inspiring devotion and commendable effectiveness.

And now that the strike in all the association shops is at an end, the work of the dressmakers' union, as an organization, and of each and every union dressmaker, as an individual worker, begins. The dressmakers have proved that they are excellent strikers. Now they have to prove that they are loyal and steadfast members of their organization in the shops. The gains of the strike, their earnings, their treatment by the bosses—in short, their entire future depends now upon their own conduct in the shops.

The dressmakers have now a marvelous opportunity to build up a powerful union in the dress industry. It is this opportunity that we consider as the biggest and most important achievement of the general strike of 1932.

THE CLOAKMAKERS of New York have begun to mobilize their forces.

It is not a day too soon, either. Three months remain before the expiration of the collective agreement, and conferences to consider terms of its renewal will soon be under way. The International and the New York Cloak Joint Board have officially notified the three cloak associations in the New York market on February 29 that the Union will "propose changes, modifications and additions" to the contract before it will consent to its renewal.

The first act in this mobilization of the New York cloakmakers was the vote by all the locals affiliated with the Cloak Joint Board to approve of the \$15 Strike Reserve Tax and to begin immediately its collection. The cloakmakers have learned by long experience that a strike movement cannot be sustained by enthusiasm alone, that it requires sinews of war, and they are showing an alert readiness to supply the strike fund without delay. In addition to this, the entire machinery of the Joint Board, even its routine business, is being attuned to and is falling in line with this preparedness activity. Local meetings are being summoned for the special purpose of framing the Union's program and for moulding its attitude with regard to the most salient problems with which our negotiators will be confronted when they sit down at the conference table with the representatives of the employers' associations.

From the men at the top of the organization to the last cloakmaker in the smallest shop—everyone appears to realize that a general strike in the cloak industry next June is unavoidable. It is in the air in the work rooms, in the meeting halls and on the streets in the cloak and suit district. Gradually the issues of the coming conflict are beginning to clear up and to assume form. The Union, of course, will have a number of demands and agreement modifications to put forth to the employers, but, on the whole, the prevalent feeling is that this is going to be a defensive fight—a fight for the preservation of work standards that has taken a generation of effort and sacrifices to establish, a fight in defense of humanized relationships in the shops against the old, outlived forms of cloak production.

In brief, it will be a fight for the retention of week-work against an attempt to reintroduce piece-work and against the degrading bundle-work spirit that is associated with it.

For, whatever arguments the enemies of week-work might advance against it, whatever charges they might prefer with regard to its non-observance in some shops where control of union work conditions is made difficult—one thing cannot be denied: Week-work has been, for the past ten years, the greatest single factor that has given the workers a measure of security with regard to earnings, that has cleared the atmosphere of the cloak shop from the demoralizing influences of bundle-haggling and has served as a stabilizing influence in the industry as a whole.

And we know, too, that piece-work is not the only thing which the employers will demand from the cloakmakers at the conference table. They will ask a cut in wages, greater "reorganization" privileges, restrictions of work control in the shops and many other concessions. They will attempt, in other words, to "go the limit" in taking advantage of the economic crisis to deflate the working and living conditions of the cloakmakers. The employers, however, will not be long in discovering that they cannot coerce the cloakmakers to give up the few precious safeguards of decent livelihood without a fight to a finish.

Crisis or no crisis—once aroused to the realization that this is a fight for their very living, the cloakmakers of New York will enter the battle with the same zeal and vigor that has marked all their former conflicts and will not retreat until their employers will have realized that they have had enough.



THE GREAT SHOP CHAIRMEN'S meeting on February 17 has served a double purpose. It has stiffened the backs of the cloakmakers for the conflict which, with

Shop Chairmen Ruffle Mr. Klein's Temper

there may have existed concerning the unanimity and solidarity of our workers in the cloak industry of New York on the question of week-work.

This clear-cut stand of the 1,200 shop chairmen who crowded Bryant Hall to capacity on that evening apparently has left a disturbing effect on the executive director of the Industrial Council. Mr. Klein's persistent propaganda for the bringing back of piece-work and of all its blessings to the coat and suit industry is, of course, a thing to which most of us, on the Union's side, have become pretty much accustomed. But the director of the Council, until recently, had managed somehow to harness

with each passing day, appears more and more probable, and it has also cleared the air of whatever doubt

his ardor for piece-work within the bounds of civility. In his very latest blast on week-work and on the Union in general, however, Mr. Klein sheds completely all former affability and resorts to name-calling and petty demagoguery of a kind that one would not ordinarily associate with a spokesman for a group of employers which for years has been, and still is, in contractual relations with a labor union.

We shall not attempt here to go into Mr. Klein's hoary stock charge of the "Union's failure to enforce standards in the industry," an accusation which had been time and again very convincingly, we believe, disposed of by the Union. Nor shall we at this moment waste time on that startling bit of information imparted by Mr. Klein that it was he who had in 1930 suggested to the impartial chairman that "an investigation be made to ascertain just how the Brooklyn contractors were able to make garments so cheaply," and "that the head of the Union's joint board evidenced no interest in a survey." It should not be difficult to the "head of the Union's joint board" to prove that such a survey of the Brooklyn shops had been ordered by the Cloak Commission long before that thought occurred to Mr. Klein and that the latter's interest in that investigation and in its after-developments was neither keen nor helpful.

If there is anything at all significant about Mr. Klein's recent tirade it is the temper and spirit in which it is framed. Thus, for instance, the director of the Industrial Council stigmatizes the resolution adopted by the shop chairmen without a dissenting vote to "provide ammunition for the inevitable struggle which will confront the cloakmakers in the coming summer" as a "frantic effort by a political faction of union leaders to divert attention from the adverse effect of the inefficient leadership that has proved so injurious to the rank and file of the workers." This warm concern of the director of the Industrial Council for the "rank and file of the workers" is positively touching and his gratuitous advice extended to the "inefficient leadership" of the Union as to what to do with the defense fund is even more refreshing.

It is difficult to believe that Mr. Klein is naive enough to assume that he could hope to divide the cloakmakers on the subject of week-work by such outbursts of bad temper. Nor is he likely to gain any public support for his piece-work ballyhoo by quarrelsome methods. On the contrary, he runs the very obvious risk of being placed in the category of rank intermeddlers and to be unceremoniously advised to stick to his own last.

The Striking Dressmakers and Tom Mooney

In response to a call issued by the Tom Mooney Pardon Conference of New York, hundreds of men and women boarded on Sunday morning, January 24, a train for Washington, D. C., to attend an afternoon conference in the Hamilton Hotel, and a public meeting in the Friends' House (President Hoover's Church) later in the evening.

Without mincing words, the conference, as well as the speakers at the public meeting, declared that the Mooney case is not merely a miscarriage of the law but that it is a crime committed against an innocent man for no other reason than that he dared to enlighten his fellow workers and urged

them to join the organized labor movement. And because Mooney defied the powers that be they had branded him "an enemy of the people" and jailed him for life.

This Washington conference designated February 24, the day of the fifteenth anniversary of Mooney's sentence to death as a National Mooney Day—to demand on that day from Governor Rolph of California his immediate and unconditional pardon. Various groups in the labor movement, as well as groups of other public-spirited men and women all over the country, answering the call of the Tom Mooney Pardon Conference of New York, held meetings on that day

and a number of publications printed editorials demanding Mooney's pardon. Of the meetings the most impressive were those held, in seventeen halls, by 20,000 striking dress workers, members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Speakers at these dress meetings discussed the Mooney case, adopted resolutions for his freedom, and the spirit of genuine working class solidarity displayed by these men and women in the midst of their own struggle was truly inspiring.

And they solemnly resolved not to relax their efforts on his behalf until Tom Mooney is free.

F. M. COHN

"We Are With You In Your Great Battle!"

You are meeting this evening on the eve of what all of us must regard as a very important industrial battle, and I know that each of us must feel a very deep sense of responsibility.

But I am glad, indeed, to come among a manifestly militant group of working men and women. It is refreshing to note that working men and women who have been under adverse economic conditions are not only ready but willing to fight for the establishment of decent American standards of living. We have been battling now for almost three years with very stern economic forces, and through it all we have borne ourselves with patience and dignity becoming a great organized movement. We have kept the faith. We have stood unflinchingly for the maintenance of decent conditions of employment realizing, as we have, through all this period that we are not battling singly and alone against hostile employers but, in addition, we have been battling against economic conditions, unfavorable in the fullest sense of that word.

I am happy indeed to know, my friends, that the members of this splendid, militant organization, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, are ready to go on the industrial battlefield and fight for decent wages and decent conditions of employment, not only for yourselves but for those who are really indifferent and sometimes not only indifferent but manifest a hostile attitude.

Launching a Great Industrial Battle

You are planning, as I stated just a few moments ago, for a great industrial battle. You are launching a campaign for the preservation of your wage standards, your conditions of employment

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Part of Address Delivered by President Green, of the American Federation of Labor, at a Meeting of the General Strike Committee of the Dress and Waist Joint Board, on February 15, 1932, in Rand School Auditorium, New York City.

By WILLIAM GREEN

and for the organization of the industry. Tomorrow morning you begin your battle. Tomorrow is a very vital day in the history of the Ladies' Garment Workers of New York City. Tomorrow you will determine one question and that is this, —whether the men and women employed in the dress shops of New York are willing to strike and fight for the maintenance of decent standards, for the payment of decent wages and for the protection of decent conditions of employment.

I came tonight for the purpose of showing you, by my presence, how deeply interested I am in your final success. I want you to interpret my presence here tonight as evidence of that fact. I want you to know that the President of the American Federation of Labor and the American Federation of Labor are not not only interested in your success but they are with you in your great enterprise and in your great battle.

Veterans Trained in Conflict

I do not regard the members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers as amateurs, as volunteer soldiers. I regard them as trained veterans, men and women who have been trained to fight in many battles, for your whole record shows that whatever you have done, whatever you have won, whatever benefits you have enjoyed, whatever improvements have come to you along economic and industrial lines—it has all come as a result of your own efforts, the fight that you have made and the way in which you have conducted those fights.

Human selfishness asserts itself when conditions become unfavorable. Selfish employing interests take advantage of it all to impose onerous conditions of employment. They take advantage of the situation by exploiting the workers in

the days of their adversity and so you have not escaped the experience which other workers, the miners, the building trades, the railroad groups and others have gone through during this distressing period of unemployment. But, now, my friends, you are determined that it has gone far enough. You are determined to make a stand right here and now. You know that it was Lord Nelson who said, on the eve of a great battle, "England expects every man this day to do his duty." We may substitute other words for this occasion and say that, "The American Federation of Labor, all decent people, all our friends everywhere, expect the Ladies' Garment Workers of New York to do their duty."

Workers' Power Greatest of All

You know that working men and women possess a great power. It is a power that belongs to them. There is no power greater, if it could be mobilized to its maximum strength and that is the economic power and force of the working men and women of the Nation. You know that the power of money is great. The power represented in the banks and corporations of the country is almost incomprehensible, but I ask you, in all fairness, is there a greater power existing in America than the economic power possessed by the working men and women, the people who do the work of the nation? There is one thing we can control. There is one thing we can give and we can withhold and that is the service we possess. We can refuse to work, and when we refuse to work then the social order is seriously menaced. So you, my friends, are going to withhold the giving of service, the labor of your hearts, your hands and your heads, the power which is inherent within you, the power to work. If all those who work in the dress shops will respond tomorrow to the call, if they will all march with you, if your strike is made practically effective, then there is no power that can interfere and that can deny you the victory to which you are justly entitled.

I hope that it will be shown tomorrow morning that the workers employed in these dress shops, these Ladies' Garment making shops, have responded 100 per cent. I hope that it will be shown that you are unanimous in your efforts for if you are the fight will be short and quick and decisive and your victory will come all the sooner. Remember, you are fighting for yourselves, for your homes and for your firesides, yea, more than that, you are fighting for the mainten-

ance here, in our land, of decent American standards of living.

We Are Not a Cheap Labor Nation

I am glad that you have decided that wage-cutting in the dress industry must stop; that it shall go no further. We are not a cheap nation and never will be. Prosperity and a cheap nation and a cheap industry do not go together hand in hand. If prosperity depended upon low wages in any one industry then the industry with which I have been associated all my life, the mining industry, ought to be the most prosperous industry in America. However, they have ground the poor miners down in Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee until they are compelled to exist on what must be regarded as far below the subsistence level. If cheapness made a nation prosperous, then China and India, the cheapest nations under the sun, ought to be the most prosperous nations under the sun.

The facts are against wage-cutting—all against it. High wages and prosperity go hand in hand and low wages and adversity are twin brothers. We are not going to permit it here in America so long as working men and women are willing to fight to maintain decent standards of living.

Fight As for Life Itself

I want to wish you a full measure of success. I want to do all I can to help you, to assist your splendid leaders and this Committee, leading with them. I want you to fight as you have fought in the past. I want you to go into this struggle determined that the sweat-shops in the Ladies' Garment Industry shall now and henceforth be abolished. I want you to fight as though you were fighting for life itself, and when you are fighting, my friends, let it be known to all the world that the word "defeat," and the other word, "surrender," are not in your vocabulary.

Go into it with all the courage you possess. Strengthen the men and women who are weak. Appeal to the men and women who may be weakening. Point out that this is a struggle of working men and women fighting for the enjoyment of rights to which they are entitled, and I am sure that as you have won in the past, even in the face of tremendous difficulties you will win in this great struggle and then, when it is over, let us come back together in New York, in some big meeting place, and there we will celebrate the great victory of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

Fine Headway In Philadelphia Dress Shops

By ELIAS REISBERG,
Vice-President

The organization drive to unionize the dress and waist industry in Philadelphia, though only one month old, is already producing achievements far beyond our own expectations. Despite all obstacles that have been confronting us, such as lack of work in the shops and similar drawbacks, our appeal for organization appears to have found a fine response all through the trade.

During this last month we were able to reach, through distribution of literature and calls to shop meetings, nearly every large waist and dress shop in this city. The tireless efforts of our Organization Committee, which pledged itself to the uphill task of building the Union here at all cost, are bearing fruit. We were able to enroll not only a substantial number of individual workers into our locals but also complete shop units. The largest dress shop in Philadelphia, Goldstein & Levin, employing over two hundred people, has joined the Union. And this shop is serving now as an example for all the other shops to join our ranks.

New York Strike Stimulates Activity

As these lines are being written, we are making preparations for a mass-meeting at the Labor Institute on February 25 for both union and non-union dressmakers. The great response of the New York dressmakers to the strike call of the International Union has given fresh courage and new enthusiasm to our local committee workers. A day does not pass now without the Organization Committee, divided into groups, visiting designated shops, standing for hours at the shop doors, and bringing workers to the Union's office. It happens often that our committee people have to stick around these non-union shops for hours until they get a chance to talk to the workers as the work hours in these shops are inhumanely long lasting in some places until 9 in the evening.

This activity is having a splendid effect on the union shops also, in our dealings with the employers, in price making and in all other problems that arise in the shops daily.

The Union has assigned an organizer for the cutters, Bro. Max Wexler, who is well known among the cutters in the dress trade. The organization work

among the cutters is proceeding now with a new impetus and dress cutters are joining daily—in the past two weeks our cutters' branch has doubled its membership.

To sum up: The dress pressers are at present fully organized in Local 71, the cutters are nearly completely in line; and with the other crafts of the trade daily streaming into the Union, our Joint Board is continually growing in influence and strength.

New Cloak Joint Board Installed

The season in the cloak trade has started and the cloak shops are fairly busy.

The Philadelphia Cloak Joint Board recently held elections, and on Saturday last, February 20, all the executive boards of the locals and the new Joint Board delegates were installed in the Labor Institute Hall. Bro. Domsky, veteran officer of the cloakmakers' organization, was accorded the honor of conducting the meeting, which resulted in the reelection of Bro. Benj. Karp as chairman and of Bro. Samuel Rudin as secretary of the Joint Board.

After the officers were elected, the writer was called upon to install the officers. Bro. George Rubin, another officer of the Joint Board, and several members of the outgoing Joint Board were called upon to speak and they all pledged their readiness to continue to work for the Union and for its welfare. The spirit of undivided loyalty to the International Union, always present at gatherings of Philadelphia cloakmakers, was abundantly present at this meeting, too. The New York dressmakers' strike was prominently mentioned by all the speakers, and the International leadership was praised for its courageous stand against wage cuts and the attempted assault upon union work standards in the New York dress shops.

Readers of Justice

In case you move from your present quarters, please notify your local office of your new address. We shall then forthwith put your new address on our mailing list.

In the New York Cloak Organization

By MORRIS J. ASHBES, Secretary
New York Cloak Joint Board

The recent tumult within our Joint Board, which for a number of weeks had been responsible for Bro. Isidor Nagler's reluctance to resume his post as general manager, we are glad to state, has now subsided—settled and forgotten.

And now that it is all over, it may not be amiss, perhaps, to state here that there had been many moments during that uproar when some of us had actually come to believe that the clash would lead to grave consequences, to a complete breakdown of the whole Joint Board machinery, in fact. But the sense of responsibility for the fate of the Union, it appears, had finally overcome the sharp differences of opinion, and the will to avert the demoralizing consequences of a leaderless situation has found a way towards an equitable balancing of forces and influences.

The initiative of the International, which had stepped into the breach and had made its voice heard at the psychological moment, has helped a great deal to guide our course in the right direction. With the spring season on already and with but a few weeks of active work left in the shops no time could further be wasted. Soon the conferences with the cloak employers would have to begin and the Union has to be strengthened against the almost certain attacks. The leaders of the International had made this clear in a letter which they forwarded to the Joint Board on February 5, and that letter found a warm response among the widest circles of our workers.

The letter calls upon Vice-President Nagler in view of the threat of a breakdown of the entire Joint Board "to resume at once his duties as general manager to which office he was unanimously reelected by the Joint Board and approved by all the locals and to begin organizing the machinery of the Joint Board and coordinating all its other activities for the forthcoming negotiations with the cloak associations and the impending general strike in the industry."

This timely action of the International at once cleared up the situation. It was felt on all sides that the emergency fully warranted the step made by the General Officers, and with a feeling of genuine relief, everybody settled down to live up to this decision in letter and spirit.

Bro. Nagler was installed at a special meeting on Saturday, February 6, with President Schlesinger, Secretary Dubinsky and First Vice-President Ninfo (who had so generously given of his time to

the Joint Board while Bro. Nagler was out of office) as the chief speakers.

Bro. Schlesinger in a short speech appealed to the Joint Board delegates to proceed now without further delay with the all-important work confronting it, the preparedness campaign on the eve of agreement expirations. He also congratulated Bro. Nagler upon his return to the helm of the Joint Board.

In his "speech of acceptance" Bro. Nagler emphasized the point that he did not come back as a "dictator" sent by the International but as the sole choice of all the locals. He voiced the hope that all misunderstanding and disagreements which existed until then had been swept aside and that the way has been paved for constructive achievement, to which, he promised, he would dedicate himself wholly and entirely.

The speeches of Schlesinger, Dubinsky and Nagler were received with cheers by the delegates, who also voted thanks to Vice-President Ninfo for services rendered in the absence of Bro. Nagler.

With Nagler's return to the office of general manager, the functioning of the Joint Board has again been placed on a normal basis. The work in all the departments, each under a responsible head, has been systematically arranged and put in readiness to make the most of during the few remaining weeks of the spring season in the cloak shops.

The biggest event of the past month thus far, in connection with our mobilization program, has been the general meeting of the shop chairmen on February 17, in Bryant Hall.

So many shop chairmen came that we had to hire an adjoining hall to accommodate the people, and the enthusiasm and the interest shown in the speeches at that meeting was decidedly unusual. The speakers were: President Benj. Schlesinger, Secretary David Dubinsky, Isidore Nagler, our general manager, Salvatore Ninfo, and Louis Levy, manager of Local 1. Each in his own way, the speakers drew before the assembled chairmen a picture of current conditions in the shops, the status of our relations with the employers, giving a brief outline of the demands which the bosses had already presented to us in a letter sent to the Union early last

November, and, finally, stressing the point that the time for action, nay, for self-defense, has come. "We must accept the challenge of the manufacturers, we must get ready for the battle that is to come," was the slogan of all the speeches.

Bro. Freiman, chairman of the shop of Kohn & Weinberg, presented the following resolution, which was adopted without a dissenting vote by the entire audience:

Shop Chairmen's Resolution

"We, the Cloak Shop Chairmen of Greater New York, assembled in Bryant Hall, on February 17, heard the report submitted by the General Officers of our International and Joint Board, in connection with the mobilization plans, which are about to be undertaken, to prepare our Union, as well as our membership, for the inevitable struggle which is confronting us the coming summer. This struggle seems inevitable, because we are determined, once for all, to put a stop to the chaos and demoralization in our industry, which causes thousands of cloakmakers to go idle for many months and subjects those who do work to toil under the most miserable conditions, imposed upon them by the employers.

"We also heard the report of our leaders about the sinister plans of our employers to revive the old enslaving system of piece work, for which purpose they are carrying on pernicious propaganda in the daily press against our organization. In their propaganda, they endeavor to shirk the responsibility for the deplorable conditions prevailing in the industry and to place the blame for it upon the Union. The real object of their propaganda, however, is to demoralize the workers in the hope that this will help them defeat us in the impending general strike.

"Therefore, we, the cloak shop chairmen assembled at this gathering, declare that the cloakmakers always knew that the employers alone are responsible for the existing irresponsibility in our trade and that we will not be misled by their propaganda. Our employers split up their inside shops, throwing many workers out of work, while, at the same time, creating new sweat and bedroom shops daily, through which they undermine constantly the union standards in our industry, depriving our workers of the means of earning a livelihood out of their hard and bitter toil.

"WE RESOLVE THEREFORE to ap-

prove all mobilization plans of our Union, which were submitted to us this evening. We pledge ourselves to help our Union carry through successfully all adopted plans for the benefit of our Union—the plans for an energetic organization campaign during the current spring season, as well as the plans that are being undertaken for the financial and general mobilization to strengthen our Union and prepare it to give our employers a forceful and effective resistance in the coming struggle.

It is our determination that all plans submitted tonight, to wit: to conduct an organization drive during the Spring Season, as a means of preparedness for the coming strike; to formulate our demands to the employers and to start immediately raising the necessary strike fund, which will provide our ammunition in carrying through our just demands in the coming strike, must be carried into life immediately. For this purpose, we call upon our members to vote unanimously for the approval of the STRIKE TAX during the coming referendum, which the locals will arrange shortly.

"To our leaders we say—Be courageous and energetic in all your advances and undertakings. We are with you and will do everything possible to help you, so that when the battle call is sounded—a battle for order in our industry—for responsibility of the employers towards the workers and the security of union standards in our shops, that, at that hour our employers shall find the cloakmakers mobilized, united, powerful and properly prepared to meet our common enemy, as we did in all our previous historic battles."

And before adjourning, the meeting also adopted a resolution of greetings to our sister organization—the Dress Joint Board—which is at this hour involved in a great struggle, a general strike in the dress industry.

The referendum on the \$15 tax for the Defense Fund of 1932 is now being held in all the locals and will soon end. The locals which have already voted on it report that the enthusiasm among the members is widespread and genuine. There is hardly a doubt now that the tax will receive the support of all the organizations affiliated with our Joint Board.

And now we are approaching the other, no less important, phase of the critical situation which is fast developing before us. We have to work out our demands to the employers and get ready for negotiations. This will have to be accomplished within the nearest future.

The Union should find itself, when the zero hour is reached, as fully prepared to defend its positions as it found itself invariably during all its former conflicts, those historic battles which left

their impress on the history of the cloak industry and on the destiny of the tens of thousands of men and women who produce coats and suits for America's womanhood.

Toronto Union News and Events

AB. KIRZNER, Vice-president I.L.G.W.U.

We are passing through eventful happenings here in Toronto, events that are bound to leave a mark on the future of our Union in this market.

The agreement, which we signed with our cloak employers about two years ago, expired officially in January. I say officially because unofficially the agreement was abrogated by these firms last May, when they had dissolved their association. We were forced, therefore, to begin dealing with our manufacturers individually and the shops were conducted since then, more or less, in accordance with the terms of the agreement.

In January the agreement expired, and as there is no association in the trade, the individual firms did not display any great haste to renew the agreement. Our own hands were at that time tied up with two shop strikes, precipitated by lockouts. The cost of these two shop strikes, which occurred during the slack season, was appalling and they resulted unfavorably for the Union. This is no place to enter into a detailed analysis of the causes which brought about these shop strikes. All I want to mention is that they had taught us a lesson not to embark on such risky enterprises during the slack time of the year, even if at times we are compelled to swallow a bitter pill. The time for strikes obviously is during the more favorable busy seasons.

Price Cutting Rampant

As anticipated, the manufacturers took advantage of the depressed state of mind among our members, brought about by these two shop strikes, and began cutting prices to the bone. We found ourselves face to face with the danger of having all our work-conditions wiped out before we could muster sufficient strength to resist. We got together on time, however, and began making preparations for a general strike, first, for the purpose of demonstrating to our employers that our Union is still alive and functioning, but, principally, in order to force them to renew union agreements and, at the same time, to check the epidemic of price cutting.

It is true the time is not very favor-

able for striking. We, however, have no alternative. If we are to let the spring season go by, our most important season in this market, it might be too late to do anything during the fall season. Our membership would become demoralized and the employers would have the field all to themselves.

Our next move was decided upon at a joint meeting of all executive board members and shop chairmen. We voted unanimously for a general strike, and as soon as this news had spread among the cloakmakers, the sentiment in the market underwent a swift change. Our employers, too, apparently felt a change of heart, as instead of continuing their former attitude of ignoring our organization, they began talking about peace.

Getting Ready to Strike

A large organization committee was soon formed to make all the necessary preparations for the general strike. We sent letters to the manufacturers informing them of the forthcoming strike and simultaneously inviting them to reach an understanding with the Union either collectively or individually. Subsequent to this letter, we received a number of replies from individual firms, expressing their readiness to sign with the Union and to avert a strike in their shops. We also received an invitation from a newly formed group of cloak firms to confer with them on a collective agreement. We accepted this invitation without delay and immediately got in touch with President Schlesinger and Secretary Dubinsky, requesting them to come to Toronto and help negotiate a collective agreement with the newly formed association. Neither President Schlesinger nor Secretary Dubinsky were able to come owing to the general dress strike in New York. Instead, Vice-President Kreindler, from Cleveland, was directed to come to Toronto.

As I write these lines we have already had two meetings with the new association. We have reached no understanding with them yet, but there is hope that we may come to an agreement shortly. At this moment, we are not in a position even to say how big the new association is, but it seems that it is gaining strength daily and is likely to be

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Human Cost of Economic Crisis

Our Human Resources

Already the serious human consequences of unemployment are apparent in American families: Loss of courage, initiative, responsibility; bitterness and disrespect for law and religion, desperation sometimes to the point of stealing, murder, suicide; mental disorders. These human catastrophes will last long after depression is over; we have no records to show the situation in the country as a whole, but reports from different states sound the warning and show trends.

Twenty-nine percent of all school children are undernourished in Pennsylvania, and undernourishment is increasing in all counties (State Department of Health). Patients in New York hospitals increased 20 percent from January, 1929, to May, 1931, and there is every evidence of neglected illness because people cannot afford medical care (United Hospital Fund). Reports of practically all contagious diseases show definitely increasing trends in Pennsylvania; at tuberculosis clinics, new patients admitted monthly have nearly doubled since 1929, and the tuberculosis death rate will show the first increase in years (Pennsylvania Secretary of Public Health). Mental breakdowns are more numerous; over 7,500 cases were admitted to New Jersey institutions in 1930-1, showing an increase nearly four times the normal rate. Family life is being destroyed; nearly 10,000 dependent children were admitted to New Jersey institutions in 1930-1, an increase over 27 times the rate in normal years. (State Department of Institutions.)

This startling evidence of human wreckage came out in the Senate Committee hearings on unemployment relief. Apart from the suffering involved, it shows that our human resources are being seriously impaired. This is of the greatest importance to business and to our entire national life, for it means a less vigorous citizenship to carry on our activities and a greater public expense to care for those who have broken down.

Relief Too Meager

Are relief funds adequate to prevent further disaster? Our own figures show that about 8,300,000 persons were out of work at the first of January; counting their families, and those suffering from part time work and low wages, we estimate that well over 40,000,000 American citizens are living below minimum standards for health today. Some 3-

A. F. of L. Monthly Survey

000,000 families (12,000,000 persons) are in immediate need of relief; only 1 to 1.5 million families are receiving help from either public or private agencies (estimate of Family Welfare Association) and the relief given averages only \$4 to \$5 a week for a family of five—not even enough to buy adequate food. Welfare agencies are overwhelmed and admit that adequate relief is totally impossible. The majority of the unemployed are being supported by relatives, friends, neighbors, dragging down the living standards of the poor.

Even the meager resources cities have raised by private subscription will be gone in many cases before the year is half over. For instance: Chicago raised \$10,000,000 to last till October; it will be gone before March. Philadelphia raised \$5,000,000 to provide for the unemployed till November; it will be gone by May. In the country generally public funds furnish 70 percent of all relief; but this year municipal and state funds in many cases will not be ready or adequate; local tax returns have fallen off, and laws in many states prevent the use of state funds.

Federal Relief Only Hope

Federal funds alone could check this human catastrophe. The \$500,000,000 for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation was appropriated to bring relief by speeding business recovery, but it will be more than a year before business improvement can help the majority of those out of work. The LaFollette-Costigan bill appropriated \$375,000,000 for immediate relief during the interval. This would be a direct use of Federal funds for relief, compared to the indirect method of stimulating business. The bill was much debated in the Senate and was finally defeated on February 16 by a vote of 48 to 35.

American wage earners want work. To keep men steadily at work, creating wealth and receiving wages, is basic to human welfare and economic prosperity in the years to come. Although depression has lasted two years, little has actually been done to make the fundamental economic adjustments which alone can provide work. Comparatively few firms have shortened their standard work week.

From 1920 to 1929 1,000,000 jobs were discarded by the introduction of new

machinery and efficiency measures in industry. Work hours were not adjusted so that the million workers laid off could be reabsorbed into productive work. In the present depression, efficiency measures have been adopted widely to reduce the increased unit cost of operation; failures and mergers have also eliminated jobs. We shall come out of depression with more permanent unemployment than ever. The only possible means of providing jobs for all is to shorten work hours.

Although the average work week in the United States at present is between 48 and 49 hours, we estimate that if all those out of work had jobs, there would be only 35 hours a week for each wage earner. Figures from The National Industrial Conference Board show that part time has already cut hours far below the standard 48 hour week. For those at work in manufacturing in October (not counting unemployed) the average worker had only 38 hours a week; in Pennsylvania factories the average was 37 hours.

Idleness Huge Social Waste

The cost of keeping men idle is huge. In December, 1931, more than twice as many were out of work as in December 1929; the 8,800,000 workers in manufacturing industries were receiving only a little over half (56%) of their December 1929 income. (Unemployment rose from 10.3 percent to 21.8 percent; workers' buying power fell from an index of 99.1 to 55.8.) This huge decline in workers' income represents: 1. Loss of the wealth these idle workers might have created; 2. Deterioration of human resources; 3. Loss of buying power on which industry depends. The Journal of Commerce estimates that even in normal years the loss of buying power (wages and salaries) from unemployment is over four billion dollars.

To bring these workers back into productive activity by establishing a shorter standard work week, is an urgent business problem. Up to the present, however, trade unions are the only organized group which has realized this essential point and made a drive for it. For example, union building tradesmen reduced their average work week by two hours from 1929 to 1931; in 1929, 25 percent had the five day week, in 1931, 69 percent. Union work hours average less than 44 per week in 1931, 5 hours below the general average.

Montreal Cloakmakers Renew Agreement

As readers of JUSTICE already know, our contract with the Montreal Cloak Manufacturers' Association expired in January. Prior to its expiration, the employers informed us that the old contract would not be renewed but that they were willing to negotiate a new agreement.

Upon receipt of this advice from the manufacturers, we called meetings of our local executive boards, of the Joint Council and also of shop chairmen and active workers. At these meetings we decided, in view of the generally bad economic situation, not to ask of our employers any drastic changes of working conditions. We had an idea that our employers would recognize the reasonable and conciliatory attitude we had taken and would act accordingly. But when we got together with them at a conference, we discovered that they had confronted us with demands for several concessions, and bad ones at that. They, for instance, wanted the right of discharge of workers without review, the right of reduction of working personnel in the shops amounting to 10 per cent every season, the abolition of the working card system, and also a 10 per cent reduction in wages.

They Wanted to Destroy Union

It did not take us long to realize that what our employers really wanted was to destroy the workers' organization in the shops. So we bluntly told them that, while we were not opposed to discuss with them any problem resulting directly from the prevailing depression, we would not listen to any such demands as arbitrary discharge, reductions of working forces, etc. We immediately summoned a meeting of the entire membership and laid before it the result of our discussions with the employers. The meeting intelligently took up the situation, and instructed the leaders of the Joint Council not to recede from their position on the discharge and the wage reduction questions and authorized them to call a general strike in the event no other solution was possible.

We resumed negotiations with the employers and placed before them our stand on the matters in dispute. The manufacturers, by this time, must have realized that we meant business, for they withdrew at once their free discharge demand, but on the question of a wage reduction they argued, through their attorney, that since every other industry had reduced wages, they in the cloak

By ISRAEL FEINBERG, Vice-President
Manager Montreal Joint Council

industry were also entitled to get "some relief." We again took up this matter at meetings, and we reached the conclusion that in view of present conditions it would not be advisable to enter at this time into a serious conflict with the employers and we agreed to take a reduction of 10 per cent. We felt in reaching that decision, as we feel today, that, while there is no justification for wage reductions generally and more so in our seasonal industry, if we are able to maintain a rigid control of work conditions in our shops, we shall be in a position not only to get back this reduction but to place the living and work conditions of our members on a more secure and solid basis in the future.

Two-Day Stoppage Carried Out

We reached an understanding that, in order to bring about a stronger control over the smaller shops in the local market, it was necessary to stop off the industry for a certain time. It is probably known to all of you that here, in Montreal, we are suffering as much from the sub-standard, uncontrollable shop, as cloakmakers are suffering from it everywhere. And like everywhere, the employers are not alone to blame for this situation; the workers contribute a good deal towards it them selves.

Accordingly, we stopped off all the cloak shops in this city on Thursday, February 18, and, at a great meeting of workers, presented to them the tentative terms reached with the manufacturers and asked for a secret vote on it. The result of that vote was: 747 for the agreement, 235 against, and 47 blank. The overwhelming ratification of the new contract terminated the stoppage, and by Monday, February 22, nearly all the workers were back at the machines, except, of course, in the illegitimate shops, on which we are now directing our full attack, as these shops, though small in size and number, can still do a lot of harm, and every cloakmaker in Montreal should realize this and help the Union in the fight against them. I may say, while at this point, that some of the union employers realize, too, the peril of this bootleg element in the local cloak trade and they have promised to take on as many workers in their shops as they possibly can in order to eliminate the outside sub-standard shops and to establish better order in the industry.

A Few Words to the Workers

I wish to say to our Montreal cloakmakers that they should make it their business, in every shop without exception, not to work overtime as long as we have people here without work. The number of our jobless, it is true, is small, but that does not make any difference: each and every worker is entitled to work and those who work overtime are thereby committing a grave injustice.

And let me now give due recognition and appreciation to those of our loyal and active members who have given the Union their undivided support during recent weeks and who, we all hope, will continue to be active in the future as well. I wish to cite here some names: Brothers Shulovitch, J. Freedman, J. Berman, M. Feigelson, S. Point, Aizer, Zelger, S. Seifert, M. Seifert, A. Arfin, D. Goodman, H. Hoffman, S. Cherniak, M. Feldt, H. Rosenfeldt, I. Abramson, J. Rosenberg, Geo. Goldstein, L. Dashefsky, B. Millman, L. Besner, Zatz, Leibowich, Shalinsky, Jacobs, Gefin, Lederman, M. Shurvil, Durocher, Mrs. Durocher, Miss Daudoin, Mrs. Ehrlich, Miss Paquette, Miss Charbonneau, E. Boudrias, Ed. Gadous, Robitaille, Kayser and Eaton.

In summing it up, I may say that, on the whole, we have no cause to kick. We have practically cleaned up the local situation, with the exception of two firms where we are making a fight against the "open shop," but I am confident that they, too, will learn pretty soon that it does not pay to fight the Union.

Toronto News

(Continued from page 7)

come an influential factor in the local cloak industry.

At the same time we are going on with our preparations for the strike, and it is quite likely that by the time these lines will be read by our workers, the strike will be a matter of history and our members will have returned to the shops to work under union conditions.

In conclusion I wish to convey, on behalf of the Toronto workers, greetings and good wishes to the dress strikers in New York, hoping that their battle will be a short and a decisive one and that when it is over the New York dressmakers will find themselves immensely strengthened in every way and their working and living conditions greatly improved.

From the Boston Dress and Cloak Strike Lines

By JACOB HALPERIN, Vice-President
Manager Boston Joint Board

We, here in Boston, certainly know that all readers of JUSTICE are keenly interested in our strike, and I only wish that I had the time to write to you all the details about it. Under the circumstances, I am glad that I am able to send you these few lines containing a brief account of what we have succeeded in achieving until this day.

A few months ago, when I first got here by the order of the General Office, I found the situation quite gloomy. Even our active workers here felt downhearted and were very pessimistic about our chances for building up a strong and influential union in Boston. You must bear in mind that Boston, more than any other of our markets, has for the past few years been cursed with a gang of pestiferous so-called Communists, rather I should call them union-breakers of the lowest type, who, although few in numbers, have gone around day in and out discouraging cloakmakers and dressmakers, smearing up our leadership and casting blame upon our Union.

Lifting the Fighting Morale

Our first job, therefore, was to counteract and to fight against this pernicious, soul-destroying Communist influence among the workers, and we proceeded to do that by shop meetings, mass meetings and by a wide distribution of circulars and other literature. And I believe that I do not exaggerate when I state that we have by these legitimate trade unions means succeeded in changing the morale of the Boston workers and prospects for a successful strike considerably. And so, for three months we have been carrying on a steady agitation for unionism and for a strike, until finally on Tuesday evening, February 23, a big meeting of cloakmakers and dressmakers, held in Franklin Hall voted unanimously for a strike.

It was one of the finest meetings of ladies' garment workers ever held in this city. Edward F. McGrady, speaking for the American Federation of Labor, assured the workers that the Labor movement is fully behind the Boston dressmakers and cloakmakers in their efforts to stave off chaos, wage cuts and degradation of labor standards in the cloak and dress shops of Boston. Among the other speakers who addressed the meeting were George E. Roewer, counsel for the Union, James T. Moriarity, president of the Massachusetts Federation of Labor, Joseph Salerno, formerly with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Mrs. Lois B. Rantoul, of the Women's Trade

Union League, John J. Kearney, business agent of Waiters' Union, No. 34, Jacob Halperin and Philip Kramer, who opened the meeting.

As we anticipated, we had at that meeting, as we had at nearly all our previous meetings, a few Communist disturbers, who attempted to break it up, but they were unceremoniously ejected from the hall and the meeting was carried through in accordance with our plans.

Strike Call Meets with Fine Response

The strike was declared on Wednesday, February 24, in the morning, and the response of the workers was astounding. Not less than 2,500 workers from 60 shops—the first general strike in the Boston garment industry in fifteen years—came down at the call of the Union, in protest against the stubborn refusal of the local manufacturers to confer with the Union on renewal of agreements which expired on February 15.

Now let me say a few words on the developments of the strike which at this writing is one week old. The strike is growing by leaps and bounds; shops which never had any dealings with the Union, like Matthews-Kadetsky and Tuttle's and several others, have joined the strikers' lines. The strikers show an excellent spirit, and the entire local labor movement, is supporting us wholeheartedly. The police is treating our people rather roughly, and during the first five days of the strike we have already had 36 arrests of our pickets despite the fact that our workers are behaving peacefully and are within their legal rights. We have complained to Police Commissioner Hultman of this discrimination by the police but have so far had little ease-up.

Employers Are Still Stubborn

What concerns the employers, they are still maintaining a stubborn attitude. Before the strike was called they ignored an invitation by Acting Mayor Gallagher to come to a meeting to settle their difference with the Union and they have pursued this policy of "nothing to negotiate" all along the line. This, however, has not dampened the strikers' spirit in the least. We have known right along that we would have to fight it out with our bosses on the picket lines and our

people are ready for it, no matter how long that lasts. Needless to say, that the Communist union-breakers are doing their utmost to help out our bosses. To confuse things they have declared a Communist "strike" at the same time our people went out last week, but this has not taken them anywhere, of course, except that it is satisfying their feeling for mischief and revenge. To clear up this confusion, we have instructed our pickets to wear arm bands with the inscription "A. F. of L." in order to distinguish them from the "left" scabs.

The strike has developed a lot of new life in the not so long ago dormant Boston locals, notably in Local No. 80, the Italian local, which was completely demoralized on account of internal strife. Their ranks are now solidified, and Brothers Morabito and Scola of that local and the rest of their active workers are doing their bit nicely. It is needless for me to say that Vice-President Philip Kramer is doing all he possibly can do to see the strike situation through.

We are fighting with our backs to the wall, we are short of funds, and we are not ashamed to admit it, but we have made up our minds here, every one of us, not to quit the fight until we win. And win we shall.

Thomas and Nearing Debate

On Monday evening, March 23, at 8 p.m., those who are interested in learning when and how the depression will end, will have an opportunity to hear Scott Nearing and Norman Thomas discuss "The World Outlook in Europe and America."

Mr. Nearing has just returned from a year in Europe and is in a position to speak with authority concerning the profound political and economic upheavals, which threaten the fabric of society as it exists today. Mr. Thomas' outstanding position in the United States renders his viewpoint in the political and economic outlook significant and well worth hearing.

Roger Baldwin, of the American Civil Liberties Union, will act as chairman. The symposium will be held at the Star Casino, 107th Street and Park Avenue, New York City, under the auspices of the Parent-Teachers Association of the Manumit School, Pawling, Dutchess County, New York.

Guarantee Cost No Tax on Cleveland Industry

Cleveland's pioneer experiment with job security and unemployment insurance in the women's garment industry cost the manufacturers only .00217 per cent of the value of the products made by the workers during the first 10 years of its operation.

This fact was revealed by an investigation of the local plan, which now is in its 12th year. It means that, if the manufacturers had found it necessary to pass along to the consumer the cost of guaranteeing the workers in the industry from 38 to 41 weeks work a year, it would have added only 21 cents to the cost of a \$100 coat, 5 cents to a \$25 garment, 2 cents to a \$10 dress.

But it has not been necessary to pass the cost on to the consumer, because the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union has accepted lower scales and has made other adjustments in the working agreement in order to produce garments at the lowest possible cost, in return for the benefits accruing from and employment security under the plan.

The plan has cost labor from 15 to 20 per cent in hour wages each year it has been in effect. In 1919, before the inception of the guarantee, New York and Cleveland had the same scale of \$44 a week for operators. The accompanying table, which shows the relative wages of Cleveland and competitive markets for 1931, gives a good idea of the sacrifice in the hour scale made by the workers to get their guarantee of a fixed amount of work each year.

Cost to Workers?

The actual monetary cost to the workers has not been computed, because it has been difficult to figure what they would have earned under the higher scale without the guarantee of 38 to 40 weeks' work, and the benefit they have gained by the payment of half of their minimum scale by manufacturers who have been unable to furnish the minimum amount of work in a year.

The figures reveal that each year on the average more than a third of the manufacturers maintain the guarantee without any monetary cost and the 10 per cent of their payroll which is put into escrow each year to guarantee the minimum work and to cover the amount of forfeiture is paid back to them. Many manufacturers year after year have had nothing to pay to maintain the guarantee because they have been able to budget their work to insure their force the work minimum, and many others pay only \$25 to \$50 a year.

Survey of Unemployment Insurance Plan Covering 10 Years Shows Result of Guaranteeing Operators From 38 to 41 Weeks' Work a Year

By LLOYD WHITE
Labor Editor, The Cleveland Press

Each year as the time for new wage agreements has come up, some of the manufacturers have tried to remove the work guarantee clause. They told Dr. Paul Douglas of the University of Chicago, who made a survey of the Cleveland industry in 1930, that the actual monetary cost of maintaining the guarantee has been slight but they pointed out other objections.

Say Burden Too Great

Objections raised each year at agreement time are:

THAT the burden is too great where the market is not totally organized, and where competitive markets do not carry the same burden.

THAT they have had to make up stock to sell at a loss to prevent paying the insurance benefit.

THAT they are unable to handle their work in peak times without having to take on a large force for more than a month and under such conditions they would have to guarantee all of these extras the minimum number of weeks.

THAT short time deliveries are pre-

vented because they cannot put on the extras to handle rush work, and goods are returned because of late deliveries.

The experiment in the local woman's garment industry was the outgrowth of the war-time strike in 1918. At that time Newton D. Baker, then secretary of war, appointed a board of referees to settle the strike and to serve as arbiters in future disputes between the workers and the manufacturers.

The original board was composed of Dean I. M. Hopkins of Dartmouth College, Maj. Samuel J. Rosenson, New York attorney, and John R. McLane, Manchester (N.H.) attorney.

Barter for Pay Cut

Disputes arose in 1920 over a reduction of wages. Manufacturers claimed that if wages were reduced they probably could increase employment.

The referees decided that a 15 per cent cut in wages was all right if employment increased as the manufacturers predicted; but that the workers should have some guarantee that they would get more work if they took smaller pay.

To give this assurance to the workers, they decided that the manufacturers would have to deposit in escrow half the amount of money taken off the wages to guarantee the workers 41 weeks work a year. If the garment companies failed to furnish the 41 weeks' work they would pay each man half the minimum scale for the weeks lacking, the total liability of the manufacturers to be limited to

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Operation of the Work Guarantee in the Cleveland Women's Garment Industry Over a 10-Year Period

Year	Firms Participating	Approximate Total of Wages	Amount Deposited in Fund	Amount Paid to Workers	Number of Firms Paying Guarantee	Per Cent of Deposit Paid	Per Cent of Total Wages Paid
1921	34	\$1,038,890	\$86,574.18	\$28,181.91	26	32.5	.0293
1922	36	1,951,747	277,174.72	34,611.10	20	12.5	.0125
1923	34	1,908,633	190,963.27	28,347.77	30	14.9	.0149
1924	25	1,578,786	157,878.62	17,639.28	135	13.	.0108
1925	26	1,578,833	157,885.37	24,510.60	12	15.5	.0155
1926	23	1,679,084	167,908.38	14,557.01	10	8.7	.0087
1927	17	1,359,173	133,912.27	14,795.02	7	11.	.011
1928	14	1,191,006	119,100.58	19,295.93	7	18.3	.0183
1929	11	1,027,412	102,741.17	5,693.50	5	5.55	.0055
1930	12	948,033	94,803.29	7,693.50	10	8.	.008
For 10 years	232	\$14,242,517	\$1,488,666.85	\$194,749.25	135	13.	.0130

Cleveland Wage Scale in the Women's Garment Industry Compared to Competitive Markets, 1931

Workers	Cleveland	Proposed Cleveland	New York	Chicago	Philadelphia	St. Louis
Cutters	\$43.50	\$39.15	\$52.00	\$52.50	\$50.00	\$50.00
Finishers, Coat	28.00	25.20	46.00	58.00	40.00	30.00
Finishers, Dress	21.00	18.90	26.00	30.80	40.00
Finishers, Skirt	20.00	18.00	26.00	30.80	22.00
Operators, Coats	46.00	41.40	55.00	52.50	50.00	50.00
Operators, Dress	32.00	29.80	44.00	39.60	44.00
Pressers, Coat	42.00	38.80	50.00	52.50	50.00	50.00
Pressers, Dress	42.00	38.80	50.00	44.00	48.40
Hours per week	42	42	40	40	42	44

How Wage-Cutting Has Brought Germany to the Brink of Ruin

In the name of God, I ask you to think.
—Demosthenes.

When someone comes asking us to do something for our own good, it is but decent and proper—also necessary for our protection—that we examine the thing proposed, find out if possible, where, when and how it has been used and what was the result.

So, now when there come those who would cut wages as a remedy for existing conditions, we should seek to find out where, when and how cutting wages has benefited either those whose wages have been cut or those who cut wages.

Let us, though, before seeking that, take a look at present conditions and what caused them.

The reader of papers, magazines, and books has been given a thousand and one "reasons" for the present condition of unemployment and distress, which is world-wide and appears to be growing worse. Those "reasons" run all the way from mysterious ills called Reparations, War Debts, Inflation, Tariffs, High Wages, Unfair Competition, Greed, Extravagance of the Worker and various and sundry other mysteriously working ailments—causing confusion to become confounded and heads to ache.

Other "reasons," more plausible perhaps, are given, among them being Displacement of Men by Machinery, Mass Production and Introduction of Economies.

In and among a mass of stones, pebbles and drift is sometimes found a nugget of gold, more valuable than all its surroundings. So in a welter of words, predictions and pronouncements found in a recent issue of a publication sent out by the United States Department of Commerce we find this nugget:

"Norway—Growing unemployment and decreased wages are making collections difficult."

That is a real nugget, true gold, indeed, and is worth more than all the vaporizing of all the so-called "economists" that now are so busily engaged in making a very simple problem appear complex and mystifying their solutions with long words and puzzling "explanations."

We might rest on what has happened in Great Britain to show that lowering wages on railroads, in the textile industry and mines has not aided in abolishing hard times.

We could show that in Austria, Poland, Australia, New Zealand and other countries repeated cuts in wages have not cured but added to the ills those countries suffer—and thereby prove how utterly preposterous is the claim that

By OWEN DARRAGH

lowering wages tends to bring back prosperity.

Let us, however, take the country where wages have been cut more often during the last ten years than in any other. Let us take the country where "our American Bankers"—the chief proponents of wage cutting—have had full power to do as they wished and see what has been the result. Let us take no illy equipped non-industrial backward country. Let us take the country where mass production, machine production and adaptation of chemistry to industrial purposes had their beginnings and reached maturity years before those things were known in this country. That country is Germany.

During the last ten years labor's share of the dollar paid for the products of industry in Germany, has continually fallen until now it is so low that it is less than one-tenth—surely making for prosperity, if the soothsayers and magicians are right. Yet unemployment grows and want and misery cover the land.

Nor has wage cutting been a recent "remedy" used to cure depression in Germany. They have been cutting wages there since 1922—nearly ten years. And it is not one cut in wages the workers in Germany have "enjoyed"—they have "enjoyed" many such cuts.

You have all heard how Mr. Dawes was sent to Germany by "our American Bankers" years ago, and what great boasts were made about his having settled for all time the trouble Germany was in?

Why, it was even said he "saved Germany." You know all about that, but it is not generally known that what Dawes really did was to cause wages to be cut in that country.

The railroad men were the first "beneficiaries" of Mr. Dawes' plan. Their wages were cut as he demanded, whereupon those railroad men struck and won a partial victory, in that the whole cut was not put into effect.

Germany, after being "saved" by Mr. Dawes, had to be again "saved" by a Mr. Gilbert, another representative of "our American Bankers," who declared economy was necessary all along the line and, like his predecessor, Dawes, demanded wages, and especially those of railroad men, be cut.

They were cut, but again Germany failed to stay saved, so a Mr. Young, another representative of "our American

Bankers" was sent there to save Germany again.

He saved it as did Dawes and Gilbert, by again demanding and securing another cut in the wages of railroad men and other employes of the government, with the result that Mr. Hoover had to again save Germany only a short time after Mr. Young had gotten through saving it.

And on October 8th last, the government of Germany—at the demand of "our American Bankers"—again cut wages of railroad employes—and after Mr. Hoover had "saved" Germany.

Those are facts, undeniable facts, and to those must be added the further fact that all during the time wages of railroad workers were being cut in Germany, so were the wages of all other workers cut, until now men work—volunteer to work—for just clothing and food.

When wage cutting began in Germany wages, as we noted above, were already too low to allow the great majority to purchase what was produced, and they were so low that a ten per cent cut in wages when reflected in price only amounted to about two cents on the dollar of price, which was not much of an aid to industrialists seeking to monopolize world markets.

This, though, happened. Every cut in wages meant millions to the industrialists of Germany, which millions they used to still further increase unemployment by displacing men with improved machinery, improved methods of production and still greater development of chemical processes—with the result that production has actually increased, and the industrialists have increased in wealth and the power that goes with concentrated wealth.

Along with that great increase in the wealth of the few, has gone an uninterrupted decay of the middle class; a destruction of property values in the holdings of modest investors; a destruction of the family life and home ownership of people once reckoned prosperous from savings built up through the years—until now stark reaction and red radicalism face each other fighting for mastery, with no buffer of a middle class to prevent the inevitable clash of those two forces.

That has been the result of wage-cutting there. Is it wise, is it sensible to allow "our American Bankers" to play hob with this country as they have with Germany?

In the name of God, I ask you to think.
—Demosthenes.

—The Railway Clerk.

The Month in Local 10

By SAMUEL PERLMUTTER

Dress Cutters Register in Record Numbers

A check-up at Arlington Hall, the strike headquarters of the cutters, revealed the fact that over two thousand dress men responded to the call of the general strike.

On Tuesday morning, February 16, one hour after the time set for the walk-out, Arlington Hall was jammed with cutters who quit the shops and came to register. On the following day, a mass meeting of cutters was held in the same hall with the following speakers: David Dubinsky, Samuel Perlmutter, Maurice W. Jacobs, Philip Oretsky and Max Stoller, hall manager.

The fine spirit displayed by the striking dress cutters was typical of the loyalty and solidarity of the members of Local 10 in general. At the conclusion of the meeting, sub-committees divided in large groups were at once organized and assigned for picketing activity in the dress center.

Agreement Reached with Affiliated

Conferences looking toward a settlement of the strike were begun on Monday, February 22, Washington's Birthday. The Affiliated Association, the "inside" group of employers, withdrew all the demands previously submitted by it, among these a request for a 10% reorganization right and for a reduction in wages, and after several meetings, accepted a number of the Union's terms and changes in work conditions. This resulted in an understanding, which led to the renewal of the agreement with the Affiliated and the return of the workers to their shops after about two weeks of striking. At this writing, a tentative understanding was also reached with the Wholesale Dress Manufacturers' Association, but no contract has yet been reached with the contractors' association, and the strike committee has therefore decided to begin independent settlements, which was started on Tuesday, March 1.

Important Modifications Incorporated Into New Agreement

Here are some of the important amendments added to the Affiliated agreement:

In the event of the discharge of a worker, the impartial chairman shall have the right to decide that the worker in question be compensated for loss of time, if in the opinion of the impartial chairman said worker is to be reinstated. Heretofore, when a worker was dis-

charged, regardless of how long the interval between the discharge and the decision of the impartial chairman, even when his decision was that the discharge was unjustified and the worker was to be reinstated, the worker in question was compelled to suffer the loss of earnings as long as he remained out. This modification will protect the worker not only against wrongful discharges but will also reduce the number of discharges, the employers fearing the possibility of being obliged to remit back-pay.

Another important modification concerns Saturday work during certain parts of the year. This rule has now been amended so as to give the Union the right to prohibit Saturday work unless mutually consented to by both sides. In other words, the Union, when faced with the problem of unemployment, may deem it necessary to suspend Saturday work entirely. This change will give the Union the right to refer the entire matter to the impartial chairman with the request to suspend Saturday work for an entire season.

Effective Picketing of Cutters Yields Results

As a result of picket activity conducted by Local 10, particularly around buildings containing many cutting rooms, hundreds of cutters, many of whom are employed in large cutting rooms of from four to eighteen men, and are receiving very low wages, joined the Union. The fight against this type of firms, which pay their cutters as little as \$18 or \$20 a week, brought excellent results and many of them were forced to concede improved work conditions such as, higher wages, shorter hours, etc., in addition to union recognition. A detailed report on this will be made shortly.

February 19 Demonstration Most Impressive

One of the greatest demonstrations ever witnessed in the dress and cloak center was that on Friday, February 19. Thousands of workers gathered in and around Bryant Hall, one of the strike headquarters, from which point the demonstration started toward the dress section.

About 7:30 in the morning, the entire square block between 41st Street and 6th Avenue, and 40th Street and Broadway, was choked with humanity. The signs carried by the cutters' division were very conspicuous, and the turnout of the cutters at this demonstration was the greatest ever witnessed. About 9 o'clock the

entire garment district, from 41st Street to 34th Street, west of Broadway, was one huge parading mass of people.

The demonstration, in which more than 20,000 workers participated, was led by the Secretary-Treas. of the International, David Dubinsky, and by Vice-Presidents Breslaw, Nagler and Antonini. Thousands of marchers paraded down Seventh Avenue to the headquarters of the International office, 3 West 16th Street, where Brother David Dubinsky addressed them from a window in the International Building. He congratulated the mass of dress-makers for the wonderful enthusiasm and spirit displayed by them and spoke hopefully of the outcome of the strike. Brother Dubinsky's short talk was received with rousing cheers.

1,500 Cutters Ratify Agreement

At this writing, dressmakers are gathering around the various strike halls for the purpose of ratifying the tentative agreement reached with the employers.

At a meeting held by the General Strike Committee on Saturday, February 27, after a report submitted by Brother Julius Hochman, the agreement reached with the employers was unanimously approved.

At another meeting of the shop chairmen, which took place on Sunday, February 28, in Beethoven Hall, after a thorough discussion of the various modifications of the new agreement, the agreement was accepted unanimously.

On Monday, February 29, a great crowd of cutters assembled at Arlington Hall to listen to a detailed report of the new agreement. Manager Samuel Perlmutter dwelt at length upon the significance of the changes in the agreement, particularly on the one referring to the right of the Union to strike in the event of non-compliance.

Heretofore, he explained, after a complaint had been filed with the Association and after the claim upon investigation was found to be true, instructions would be given to the firm that a cutter must be engaged. If the employer did not comply with this instruction and failed to engage a cutter, there was no immediate way of forcing the firm to do so except by referring the matter to the impartial chairman. Very often this process would consume a great deal of time, and the firm would continue violating this clause of the agreement, yet the Union, under the agreement, was powerless to strike until the matter had finally been disposed of through the machinery of the impartial chairman.

The new amendment, however, gives the Union the right to strike if the offending firm fails to comply immediately, so that when instructions are given to any firm to employ a cutter

(Continued on next page)

The Month in Local 10

(Continued from preceding page)

and it fails to comply, the Union may immediately enforce this decision by the means of a strike.

There were approximately 1,300 cutters inside Arlington Hall, while hundreds of men were forced to stay out in the lobby due to lack of room.

\$15.00 Tax Accepted at Special Meeting

On Monday, February 8, nearly eight hundred cutters gathered in Arlington Hall to ratify the \$15 tax recommended by the joint executive board meeting of the Cloak Joint Board.

Manager Samuel Perlmutter, in the course of his remarks, referred to the communication forwarded to the Union by Mr. Samuel Klein, manager of the Industrial Council, requesting that conferences be held regarding some modifications of labor conditions in the cloak industry. The changes indicated in that letter aim not only at the elimination of week-work but also include other demands which might greatly affect the interests of the cutters. Already, many employers are attempting to reduce standards in the shops. In many shops the workers, intimidated by the threat of having the work sent outside, are inveigled into working longer hours and accepting lower wages.

Local 10 is doing all it can to combat reductions of wages, and it is the duty of the cutters to cooperate with the office in every way possible to help fight reductions of wages. To alleviate the problem of unemployment, Bro. Perlmutter suggested the reduction of work hours from 40 to 36 per week. That, he further stated, would have to be our next demand to our employers, a meas-

Attention

The meetings in March will take place in the order as herein arranged.

1. Regular Membership Meeting
MONDAY, MARCH 14
2. Good and Welfare Meeting
MONDAY, MARCH 21
3. Regular Membership Meeting
MONDAY, MARCH 28

All the above meetings are to be held in Arlington Hall, 23 St. Marks Place, at 7:30 P. M.

Cutters are urged to attend without fail.

Books will be stamped signifying attendance and the \$1.00, fine for non-attendance will be strictly enforced.

ure, which has been upheld by some of the leading economists in the country.

In conclusion, Bro. Perlmutter stated, the employers at the termination of this agreement will in all likelihood decide to wage a fight for reduction of all standards. We must prepare to meet them at their own game, and for that the raising of a strike fund is imperative. He urged, therefore, the adoption of the \$15 tax as approved by the Executive Board so as to provide the financial means to conduct the coming cloak general strike.

Several other members participated in the discussion, among them Brothers Philip Oretsky and David Dubinsky, Secretary of the International Union, who in a few brief remarks called attention to the unavoidable conflict in the cloak industry. Samuel Greenberg, Nathan Saperstein, Maurice W. Jacobs and Irving Horowitz also spoke. When the matter was finally submitted to a vote it was adopted by a vote of 619. No one voted against it.

Attention

CUTTERS OF LOCAL TEN

CUTTERS ARE HEREBY URGED TO REPORT AT ONCE TO THE OFFICE OF LOCAL 10 TO PAY THE \$15 TAX.

Attention

CUTTERS OF LOCAL TEN

A Good and Welfare Meeting will be held MONDAY, MARCH 21, at Arlington Hall, 23 St. Marks Place, at 7:30 P. M. sharp.

In view of the fact that this is the first good and welfare meeting to be held this year, each and every member should attend without fail.

A Regular Meeting of the Miscellaneous Branch will take place on MONDAY, MARCH 7, at the INTERNATIONAL AUDITORIUM, 3 West 16th St., at 7:30 P. M. Sharp.

All Children's Dress and Underwear Cutters are to attend this meeting without fail.

Books will be stamped signifying attendance and the \$1.00 fine for non-attendance will be strictly enforced.

COST OF GUARANTEE

(Continued from Page 13)

the 7½ per cent of the payroll or the amount placed in escrow.

Thus the guarantee of work was a direct barter for a 15 per cent reduction in wages.

Guarantee Changed

The work guarantee was changed from 41 to 40 weeks in 1923 with overtime not counting toward fulfillment of the guarantee and again to 1600 hours, or 38 weeks in 1930, with overtime counted.

The escrow deposit was changed through the industry to 10 per cent of the payroll in 1923. This provision is still in effect.

In 1928 when the problem of producing cheaper garments faced the industry here, the "outside" shops, those who contract with the "inside" shops for work, were relieved from having to deposit the 10 per cent, in order to enable them to compete with shops in other markets. At this time an unemployment fund was established under the same agencies as the work guarantee fund to protect the workers in the outside contract shops.

This insurance fund was secured by the employers paying in 1 per cent of their total payroll and the members of the union half the pay that they had been receiving for the six legal holidays. The percentage was made 2 in 1931. In the new 1932 agreements the workers surrender all their holiday pay to this fund.

Paid to Unemployed

The money thus secured is paid out to the unemployed of the outside shops on a percentage basis according to the number of days the man is out of work. The following table shows the amount in this fund each year:

Year	Received	Paid Out
1928	\$9476.74	\$9476.74
1929	9753.41	9753.41
1930	8477.10	8477.10

The insurance is paid to the workers three times a year, in July, October, and December. There are 450 workers now protected by this fund.

The accompanying table shows the operation of the work guarantee fund, which now applies to 700 workers in the inside shops. It shows, a bigger percentage of deposit forfeited, and of percentage of wages cost because the garment industry has been very shifting. Out of the original 34 firms participating only 12 remain; all the rest have gone out of business. When this liquidation has occurred before the end of a year, the company has had to pay a much larger forfeiture, one such case occurring practically every year.