

RESEARCH CLASS SHOWS TEXTILE BARON'S PROFITS

By BERTRAM D. WOLFE.

PASSAIC, N. J., March 10.—"Bosses, open your books and show us your profits." With this slogan the striking textile workers of Passaic, Garfield and Clifton marched in their ten-thousand-headed parade and demonstration of solidarity.

The day following the parade the director of the Workers' School appeared before them in two large halls of Passaic and before their astonished eyes opened the "books" of their bosses and revealed the \$1,145,553 profit of the Gera Mills for 1924 and a profit of over a half million from the workers of the Botany in the first half of 1925.

Members of the volunteer corps of research workers and students of the Research class of the Workers' School performed this feat. The textile strikers, who had never up till then realized that education can also be made an instrument in the class struggle when it was true working class education, cheered the School and demanded that circulars, containing the information, be printed and distributed broadcast among the strikers so that next time the boss, or his foremen, or his newspapers, or his

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preachers, or his teachers, should begin a propaganda offensive of the impossibility of the "poor" boss paying the "exorbitant demands" of the workers, they (the workers) can "rub the circular bearing facts into the bosses' nose," as one spokesman of the strikers expressed it.

The Gera Worsted Mills.

Bulletin 377 of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics was the source which had enabled the research workers to open the books of the Gera Worsted Mills, and they have revealed that the New Jersey Worsted Mills owned the Gera. They revealed further that the poverty-stricken bosses had secured \$1,145,553 out of the workers of the Gera Mills, before enforcing the wage cuts, in a single year, and this after having already paid interest to the banker, rent to the land owner, taxes to the government and various additional charges.

The Botany.

In fighting the Botany Worsted Mills the workers learned from the results of the researchers of the Workers' School that they are fighting one of the biggest textile companies in the entire world. A study of the "Standard Corporation Record" and "Moody's Analysis of Investments" revealed that the Botany Consolidated Mills own the Botany Worsted Mills, the Garfield Worsted Mills and have a controlling interest in two German textile groups which have 30 affiliated companies in Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Latvia and Holland. During 1924 this "poor" company that has cut wages "in order to get along" loaned \$2,000,000 to German concerns and secured an option to purchase 50 per cent of the stock of that company.

The Botany plant itself, which covers 67 acres in Passaic and 44 in adjoining boroughs, has 10 buildings, 2,200 looms and about 6,000 workers. In 1924 each share of Class A stock received a dividend of \$6.43 and each share of common stock a dividend of \$2.43, and this before cutting wages. The net profits (after dividends are distributed) of the Botany, during 1923, were \$2,880,147. In 1924 the profits and earned surplus ran over \$3,000,000 and then they cut wages because they weren't making enough out of the workers.

Some of the Other Mills.

The Forstmann and Huffman Company, which many workers believe to be a small concern, has mills in the Rhur Valley in Germany and owns the merged Forstmann and Huffman Mills of Werden, Germany, with the Augsburger Kammgarn Spinnerei.

The Essex Cotton Mills, a Delaware corporation, in addition to its Passaic plant, has a big plant called the Essex Cotton mills in Newport, Mass., and owns the entire \$500,000 of capital stock of Taylor, Armitage & Eagles of New York. Its net profit (after dividends were paid) in the year 1924 were \$1,346,209.

Work and Die.

Other reports, which the research workers dug up and which are neither written in the language that is intelligible to workers nor intended for their eyes, revealed the health conditions in which the Passaic textile workers work.

The government report lists accidents from unguarded machinery, fatigue caused by speeding up and by the piece work system, injury to health due to constant standing, bad seating, and eye strain. The government speaks of anthrax and then in parenthesis calls it by a name that must be very pleasing to Passaic workers: "Wool sorters' disease."

It describes insanitary shop conditions, lack of ventilation, bad lighting and air laden with dust and fumes.

It tells how workers in the wool scouring process and in the dyeing and wet-finishing processes are exposed to fumes from benzine, benzol and other chemicals. Then it adds the cheerful news: Two to three parts of benzol in a hundred parts of fresh air breathed for a few hours may cause loss of consciousness. (This means that two-thousandths of 1 per cent of benzol fumes in the air are enough to cause unconsciousness.)

Mortality Statistics.

A study of statistics as to the death rate among wool workers as compared to the general average death rate of the population of the United States reveals that the death rate is much higher among wool workers in many diseases. For example, in tuberculosis 42 per cent of wool workers between the ages of 25 and 34 die from this disease, as against 31 per cent of the general population. Deaths from pneumonia and Bright's disease also show a higher percentage than that of the general population.

The result of these investigations by the Workers' School Research Department have made the textile workers of Passaic more determined than ever to fight for the restoration of the 10 per cent that was robbed from them, for a 10 per cent increase, and to demand a general cleaning up of the sanitary conditions in their shops.

Women Urged to

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The working-class housewives must join the proletarian women's organizations and all women of the working class must join together to fight for specific issues which arise and which strengthen the class-consciousness of the working-class women.

Working-Class Wife and Mother.

The double burden that the working-class wife and mother bears was pointed out by Matilda Kalousek. Not only do the working-class women work in the shops and in the factory after marriage, but they must maintain their homes and care as best they can for their children in addition. There is no freedom thru marriage for the working girl. There is no normal family life under the capitalist system. And while the mothers of the working-class children are toiling for 10 hours each day the children are learning from others the catchisms of the capitalists—the jingo patriotism which is to prepare them for entering the next war. It is up to us workers to organize so that the war which is sure to come within a decade will not be used to enrich the capitalists. It is up to all working-class women to join with the working men under the leadership of the Communist International for the liberation of all workers.

Speakers in Lithuanian and in Russian added their words to the general sentiment that the organization of working-class women was a thing necessary and desired.

The entertainment, between the speaking, was in keeping with the spirit of the meeting. The meeting ended by a unanimous vote in favor of the following slogans:

Raise Fighting Slogans.

"For the women in industry—

"Equal Wages for Equal Work.

"Abolition of night work and overtime.

"Allowance for women in industry of eight weeks before and eight weeks after confinement with full pay.

"No child labor.

"Sufficient well-equipped schools in the working class districts, doing away with the present over-crowded, double shift, platoon system in the rotten, ill-ventilated buildings that serve our children now.