

ILGWU NEWS-HISTORY

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION ISSUE

CHAPTER 4

1910 - 1911

THE GREAT REVOLT

Strike of 60,000 Paralyzes Cloak Trade

Wave of Humanity Surges Through Streets of Manhattan—Strike Halls Jammed

By Abraham Rosenberg

NEW YORK, July 7, 1910—At about two o'clock several members of our strike committee, together with many representatives of the press, gathered in the cloak district to see to what extent the cloak and skirt makers would respond to our call.

The lawyers whom we had appointed were already stationed in the courts, in the eventuality of any skirmishes with the police. Fortunately, not a single arrest occurred.

Among those who were curious to see if the mass of workers would come out were Abraham Cahan and B. Schlesinger, the editor and the manager of the "Forward."

Naturally we stood with our hearts beating in our mouths, scarcely able to await the results. The passing moments seemed like all eternity. When the clock pointed to ten minutes after two, with still not a worker in sight, Cahan asked one of us, "Noon, so where are your workers?" Our hearts almost stopped beating.

But at that very moment we perceived from afar a wave of humanity surging from all the side streets toward Fifth Ave., on its way down town. Each moment the mass became mightier.

By half past two, all the streets in New York from 38th St. down and from the East River toward

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Earlier Protest Failed to Stop Contract Work

JULY 23, 1910—The causes for the strike can be traced back through 18 years to the failure of the last general strike of the cloak-makers. At that time the employers, by means of a lockout, broke the spirit of the union. The workmen went back on the employers' terms. Since that time the trade has been carried on by means of a contracting system. The garment makers work in two kinds of shops. The "inside" shops are owned and managed by the manufacturers; the "outside" shops are owned by contractors.

In the "inside" shops conditions appear endurable; but in the "outside" shops, which are virtually sweatshops, the conditions of work are distressing. The big manufacturer pays the contractor about the same price for the same amount of work as he pays his own employees; and the money that the contractor makes consists of the difference between that price and the price that he can force his own employees to accept.

—THE OUTLOOK

Call Out Reserves To Disperse Large Rally in Brooklyn

BROOKLYN, July 12, 1910—The reserves of the Stagg St. police station in Williamsburg were turned out yesterday to suppress disorderly scenes on the part of about 500 striking cloakmakers at Leonard and Scholes Sts.

About 100 of the strikers, mostly Italians, came from Manhattan across the Williamsburg Bridge, and first halted at a large manufacturing tailor shop on Broadway, near Bedford Ave., where they persuaded a number of journeymen to join their ranks. Then they continued their march through the area calling on others to join them.

At Leonard and Scholes Sts. they made their greatest demonstration, and it was necessary to hustle out the police reserves. More than 5,000 strikers and their followers were dispersed.

—N. Y. TRIBUNE

ILG DELAYS MAKING SETTLEMENTS UNTIL ALL RECEIVE TERMS

NEW YORK, July 9, 1910—Anyone who was present at strike headquarters at Hotel Victoria even for a short while yesterday could see that the cloak general strike already is half won. Bosses continually streamed in to demand that the union settle with them immediately. And these weren't just small manufacturers; some of the largest in the trade came to the strike committee to hand in their applications for settlements.

However, the committee informed them that for the time being, no settlements were to be made, until copies of the union's demands were sent to all employers.

Meantime, the committee will be kept busy maintaining order in the halls. There are still many shops for which halls have not yet been obtained. A special hall committee was selected yesterday to find and rent as many halls as possible. By 5 P.M., places were found that will hold about 1,500 strikers.

Until then, however, those workers who can't get in the halls and must remain outside, must keep orderly. Above all, they should avoid encounters with police or with bums. When a worker is told by police to move, he should comply.

—DAILY FORWARD

Shops Completely Deserted—Police Make First Arrests

NEW YORK, July 8, 1910—The gigantic strike of the cloakmakers began yesterday at 2 P.M. At the same instant, all cloak machines in the hundreds of shops scattered throughout Greater New York were silenced. To a man, the tens of thousands of workers got up from their places quietly, and went to the halls

which the union had prepared for strike headquarters.

The battle now has begun, and we are happy to report that it was a remarkable, outstanding beginning. Everyone went out, without exception. Even shops which organizers long had given up as hopeless, which were deep in the swamp of scabbery and slavery, even these shops answered the call. Workers who never heard of a union and didn't want to hear of it were out marching on Fifth Ave. to the headquarters of their union.

Bosses who thought that God would protect them from the "damned" union were left alone with their stilled, paralyzed machines, in cold, deathly quiet shops.

The cloakmakers have awakened! Thursday, July 7, will be eternally recorded in the history of the cloak trade.

From 9 A.M. on, excitement grew around the cloak shops, as copies of the "New Post" were distributed

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7 ILG Men Jailed; Tried to Prevent Scabbing in Mass.

GREAT BARRINGTON, Mass., Aug. 2, 1910—Seven New Yorkers, including Joseph Roger, Samuel Wilson, Louis Demo and Irving Burke, members of the ILGWU, are in jail here awaiting trial charged with trying to stop strikebreakers from tailoring in Great Barrington.

Following the strike in New York, a New York tailoring establishment sent several of its strikebreakers to Great Barrington to get off some rush orders. A cider mill was fitted up as the scene of action and work progressed without interruption for about a week.

The New Yorkers arrived in Great Barrington, went to the plant where the non-union men were at work and tried to induce them to quit. The arrival of the police prevented a riot and the seven men were locked up.

—THE CALL

"Till Death Do Us Part . . ."



Philadelphia Mfrs. Agree Not to Scab For New York Firms

NEW YORK, July 15, 1910 — It leaked out yesterday that many of the bigger manufacturers have been scouring the states of New York and New Jersey for locations to establish shops. Locations were easily to be found, but since there seemed not the slightest prospect that any of the striking cloakmakers would desert their ranks, the bosses abandoned this plan.

The cloakmakers on strike in New York yesterday likewise gained new allies in the manufacturers of some of the leading garment centers in the East and West. Thus the manufacturers of Philadelphia formed an association yesterday and resolved not to permit any Philadelphia cloak house to do work for a New York manufacturer. They decided upon this course in order to avoid a strike, which would inevitably follow any attempt on the part of a Philadelphia manufacturer to do work for a New York cloak firm.

Similar messages were received from other cities.

—THE CALL

'Survival of Meanest' Has Become Law of Cloak Trade

We offer no apology for the general strike. If at all we should apologize to the tens of thousands of the exploited men and women for not having aroused them before. . . .

The cloak trade at present is the trade par excellence in which the "survival of the fittest" has come to mean the "survival of the meanest." Among employers the manufacturer who is merciless in reducing wages and in stretching out the hours of labor, the manufacturer who disregards in dealing with his employees all laws human and divine is most likely to succeed. The employer who neglects all sanitary requirements, who does business with money taken from the workmen under the guise of security and who levies a tax upon the employees for the use of electricity, is a danger not only to the employees but to every reputable employer in the trade. . . .

We charge the employers with ruining the great trade built up by the industrious immigrants. We charge them with having corrupted the morale of thousands employed in the cloak trade. . . .

The man who licks the boots of his employer, the individual who works without regard for time and for conditions is promoted in the factory. Treachery, slavishness and espionage are encouraged by the employers as great virtues of the cloakmakers.

Movement of the People

This general strike is greater than any union. It is an irresistible movement of the people. It is a protest against conditions that can no longer be tolerated. This is the first great attempt to regulate conditions in the trade, to do away with that anarchy and chaos which keeps some of the men working 16 hours a day during the hottest months of the year while thousands of others have no employment whatever. . . .

We cannot trust ourselves to the kind mercies of the employers. To our sorrow we have trusted them long enough. We ask for humane treatment; we demand the right to live; we refuse to be annihilated. We realize that we must be united; we know that we have the sympathy of every man that deserves the name. We know that organized labor throughout the country will applaud our efforts. We appeal to the people of America to assist us in our struggle.

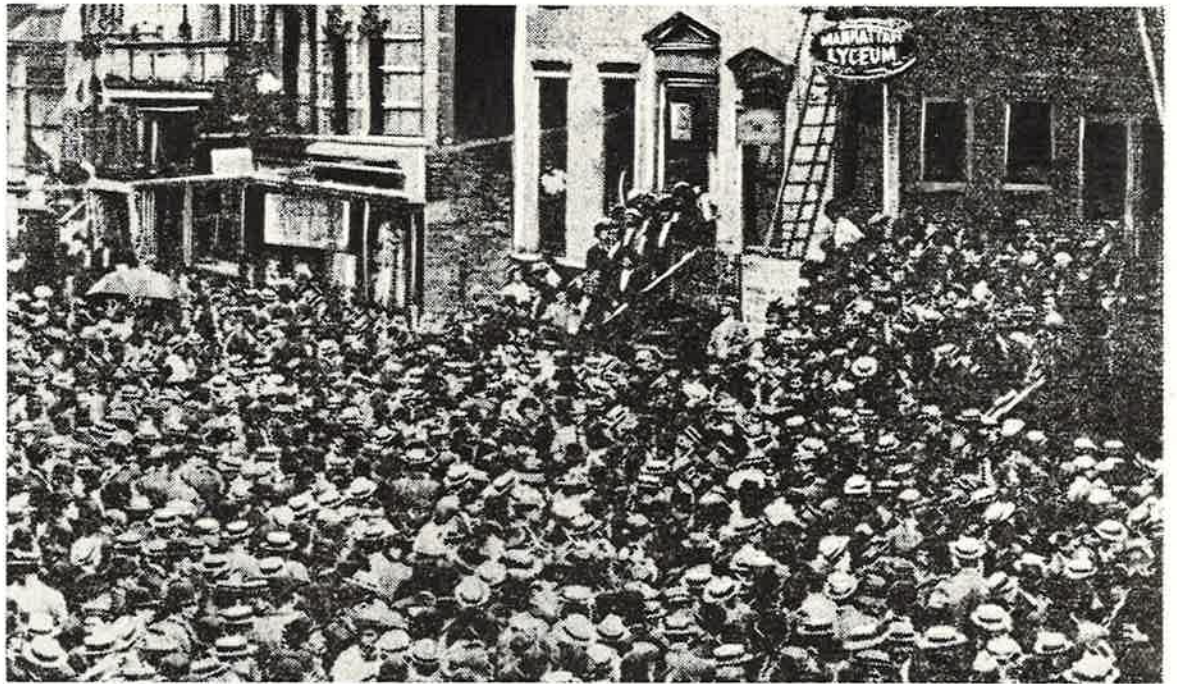
—MEYER LONDON, *statement for Cloakmakers' Strike Committee, July, 1910.*

A Committee Begins Its Work



—Daily Forward
A shop group takes assignments from its chairman.

At Manhattan Lyceum Strike Hall



Thousands were unable to get into the crowded strike halls.

—N. Y. Tribune

Small Bosses Beg Lawyers to Sign Union Demands

NEW YORK, July 14, 1910—Yesterday was manufacturers' day in the cloakmakers' strike. It was manufacturers who held meetings, manufacturers who made speeches, manufacturers who protested against "oppression" and "tyranny," manufacturers who pleaded for "fair play," and sent in a call to the East 22nd St. station for 10 policemen to keep them, the staid, solid and respectable citizens, from jumping at each other's throats.

It happened this way:

The Associated Manufacturers of Ladies' and Misses' Garments called a meeting at Teutonia Hall, 16th St. and Third Ave., and the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Assn. called a meeting at the Hoffman House. The object of each meeting was to consider ways and means of settling the strike as quickly as possible. As most of the manufacturers, however, are parvenues, or as they prefer to call themselves, "risen from the ranks" and "self-made men," they entrusted the leadership at these meetings in the hands of lawyers.

Little Bosses Have Bigger Bosses

Hundreds of little manufacturers who came to Teutonia Hall clamoring for a settlement and begging that the demands of the strikers be granted so that they be allowed to open their shops, found that the lawyers, who were the leaders at the meeting, had planned things differently. The lawyers made hot speeches against the tyranny of the union, talked about the rights of free-born citizens and urged that the manufacturers "stand together" and refuse the demands of the strikers until the rights granted every American citizen were vindicated.

As the lawyers sat down they were applauded by only one section of the audience, the bigger manufacturers and veteran enemies of organized labor. The smaller men began to murmur that they wanted a speedy settlement. A few even remarked that there was nothing exorbitant in the demands of the strikers. And it was here that the call for extra police was sent out.

—THE CALL

60,000 SURGE INTO DOWNTOWN STREETS, PACK STRIKE HALLS

(Continued from Page 1)
The west were packed with thousands upon thousands of workers. On many streets this pressure of humanity forced all the cars and trucks to stop running. Every one of the strikers had taken along his pack of tools and all were going in the direction we had instructed then in the "New Post."

I do not know how many people had ever witnessed such a scene. Many of our most devoted members wept tears of joy when they saw their long years of toil finally crowned with success. I had one thought in my mind: such must have been the scene when the ancient Jews of yore shook off their yoke and began their exodus out of Egypt.

Tens upon tens of thousands of workers marched past our office on 10th St., cheering our union as they went.

The town was turned upside down. Workers in other trades deserted their shops, rushing to see this most remarkable sight. Shopkeepers followed suit. The whole town turned out for the event.

On 4th St., between Second and

Third Aves., there were so many strikers it took hours of toil to clear the streets.

Seeing such an immense mass of workers, Abraham Cahan became so enthusiastic he climbed up on the fire escape of Manhattan Lyceum Hall where he congratulated the workers for their courageous action and pledged them the utmost moral and financial support of the "Forward."

By six o'clock in the evening all the cloak and skirt shops in greater New York were deserted.

—"MEMOIRS OF A CLOAKMAKER"

SHOPS ARE DESERTED AS BATTLE STARTS; COPS MAKE ARRESTS

(Continued from Page 1)
to the workers. Scores of workers went from shop to shop to distribute this fighting strike appeal.

On Fifth Ave., many of these distributors encountered "fixed" policemen, who had already received their "instructions" from the bosses. The police quietly sent for a patrol wagon, and arrested 11 distributors of the "Red Post."

In court, the judge freed eight of them, and fined the others \$3 each.

—DAILY FORWARD

The Strike for the Closed Shop

We are sorry for the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Assn. The manufacturers confront a general strike at their busiest season, in which the garment workers urge grievances of inadequate wages, long hours, overtime, home work, unequal distribution of work, and evils of the contract system.

The association promises to confer with the leaders of the strike with the purpose of settling every specified grievance, provided they do not demand recognition of the union or the exclusion of non-union labor from the shops, or a signed contract with the union. The leaders have thus far refused to agree to these terms for a conference. The issue is that of the "closed shop," which the employers denounced.

The chief factories of this trade have of late been located on lower Fifth Ave. at a cost of enormous rentals. There is a growing suspicion that the luxury of engraving a Fifth Ave. address upon the letterheads of the firms is paid for, not out of their proper profits, but out of wages denied the operatives. Anyway, the factories are ill-placed. The crowding of the thoroughfare at the noon hour by their employees has aroused the earnest opposition of the Fifth Ave. Protective Assn., because it injures the high class retail business that has developed naturally there. The factories should be placed in the inexpensive quarters of the East Side, where the hands might have time and opportunity to do their shopping, and where spectacles of wealth and fashion would not impress them with impossible standards of living. And the difference in rentals could be applied in a way to make the issue of the "closed shop" not quite so vital.

—Editorial, NEW YORK TIMES, July 25, 1910

Union Walks Out on Talks; Concessions Prove Phoney

NEW YORK, Aug. 3, 1910—It looks as if the cloakmakers' strike will be fought to a finish.

Conferences between the strikers and the manufacturers, which have been carried on for nearly a week, first through committees of 10 from each side, then

through attorneys for both sides, were broken off yesterday. Louis D. Brandeis of Boston had been acting as chairman.

Meyer London, attorney for the strikers, withdrew from the conference when it became evident that the manufacturers were trying to dodge the most important demands of the union. At the same time they were trying to give the impression to the public that they are willing to grant all the strikers' demands, that is, all that are "reasonable."

The bosses and their representatives constantly talked of "concessions" to the union, but when each of these concessions was examined by the leaders of the strikers it was found to be full of loopholes and "jokers" which would grant the workers nothing and would leave conditions in the cloak trade just the same as they were before the strike.

Immediately after the union broke off negotiations with the bosses, the spokesmen for the manufacturers issued a statement with a "tentative agreement" attached to it which they said they would submit to the cloakmakers' union, giving them till 10 o'clock this morning either to accept or reject. "Should the tentative agreement be rejected by the strikers," the bosses' statement reads, "the employers will feel that all negotiations with their former employees are at an end, and that it will be hopeless to try to continue them."

Leaves Grievances Untouched

The tentative agreement, which the bosses herald as another "concession" to the strikers, practically refuses to adjust any of the most important grievances of the union and offers to submit them to arbitration. It defiantly opposes the closed shop and offers to recognize the union "to the extent of cooperating with it for the general benefit of the trade," and pledges to "give preference to union men in matter of employment."

A copy of this tentative agreement signed by Julius Henry Cohen, counsel for the manufacturers, and addressed to Meyer London,

was shown to London and the other strike leaders by newspaper reporters. After reading it the leaders said they would submit it to the organization, but the sentiment was that it would be unanimously rejected, since it was nothing more than a repetition of all that has been discussed at the conference.

—THE CALL

Little Fellow Being Driven to Wall by Hold-Out Policy

NEW YORK, July 15, 1910—The split within the ranks of the cloak manufacturers widened still more yesterday. While a handful of the largest cloak firms, calling themselves the "executive committee of the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Assn.," issued a bulletin from their headquarters at the Hoffman House declaring they would resist the strike of the operators to the end, numerous smaller manufacturers thronged the offices of the union, clamoring for a settlement.

Among the smaller manufacturers, discontent with the high-handed manner in which a few of the clothing kings are running matters was widespread yesterday.

Many of these "little fellows" openly declared that while the association of manufacturers promised to protect them, they are in reality planning to sacrifice many of the smaller bosses by driving them into bankruptcy, for should the strike continue much longer many of these would simply have to go out of business.

"It looks," one of the smaller manufacturers said, "as if a few of the big manufacturers are simply gambling with our fortunes. The big houses can afford to keep their shops closed two weeks and even a month. We can't. We must either run our shops regularly or close them up permanently. If we don't settle the strike, the strike will settle us. We will be forced out of business."

—THE CALL

Relief Headquarters



Bags of food being distributed to needy strikers.

JUDGE HEARS ASSN. ARGUE INJUNCTION MUST BE CONTINUED

NEW YORK, Aug. 13, 1910—The courtroom of Special Term 1, of the Supreme Court, was crowded yesterday with cloak manufacturers and their striking employees, who came to hear the argument for a permanent injunction asked by the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Assn., against the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

The argument before Justice Goff was a long one and at times spirited. Julius Henry Cohen, for the manufacturers, referred to the workmen as "socialistic," and Meyer London, for the strikers, called the manufacturers "sweaters."

Counsel for the employing cloakmakers said that the strike was not one for higher wages, but that its object was to compel the employers to engage their help only through the defendant union. He argued that this constituted coercion.

London denied that the strikers had been guilty of any unlawful acts.

Wants Strike Declared Unlawful

Cohen wanted Justice Goff to go further than Justice Lehman, who merely enjoined the defendants from committing any acts of violence or intimidation. He wanted the strike itself declared unlawful, because, as he said, the strikers were maintaining an illegal combination in striking against the open shop. He said that the plaintiffs produced 80 per cent of the cloaks, suits and skirts manufactured in the United States, and that the issues were the most important ever involved in a strike.

The investments of the employers, the lawyer continued, represented between \$50,000,000 and \$60,000,000, and the strikers approximate 80,000. "Enough persons to populate a good sized city," he said, "and enough money to capitalize such a city."

London tried to get an adjournment because Alton B. Parker, who had been retained as special counsel, was unable to be in court. Justice Goff, however, refused to grant an adjournment.

Strikers Within Rights

Opposing the granting of the injunction, London said that if it were granted, it would practically wipe out trade unions in this state. He said the strikers were acting within their rights in refusing to work with non-union men and also in trying by peaceable means to induce the non-union men to join their ranks. He denied the allegations of threats and violence.

Justice Goff asked for briefs and reserved his decision.

—N. Y. TRIBUNE

A Tribune of the People



Meyer London, attorney for the cloakmakers, shown in his office with his staff.

Manufacturers Spread Rumor Union is Ditching Closed Shop

NEW YORK, July 26, 1910—Cloak manufacturers were "seeing things" yesterday—at least their press agent was. In a statement issued last night the manufacturers announced that Louis D. Brandeis, the Boston attorney whose "opposition to the

closed shop idea is well known," has been retained by the striking cloakmakers. By retaining Brandeis, the statement of the manufacturers goes on to say, "The strikers tacitly waived their demand for the closed shop," and thus the end of the cloakmakers' strike is in sight.

At the headquarters of the strikers the statement of the bosses was declared to be a fine specimen of fiction in which there was enough fact to lend it an aspect of truth—for a moment at least.

"The statement is a misstatement from top to bottom," said Pres. Rosenberg of the ILGWU. "In the first place, we have not retained Brandeis as our attorney. Brandeis was in New York in connection with a case in which he defended the Women's Trade Union

League against a suit for damages growing out of the shirtwaist makers' strike.

"The strike situation is today better than ever. The first of August is coming, and the first of August is to the cloak manufacturers what the Ides of March was to the ancient Romans. We are winning the strike."

—THE CALL

Gompers Promises Full Aid of AFL Executive Council

NEW YORK, July 10, 1910—Samuel Gompers has kept the promise he made to the cloakmakers 10 days ago at Madison Square Garden. At that time, he stated the American Federation of Labor would support with all its resources the efforts of the cloakmakers to win their strike. Yesterday, he started to put this promised aid into effect.

At 9 A.M., Gompers arrived at strike headquarters in Hotel Victoria, accompanied by John Lennon, AFL treasurer. For several hours, they held a confidential conference with the strike committee, and naturally, it is not yet possible to disclose all that was discussed.

Gompers made the following statement to the press:

"This fight is against the inhuman conditions which cloakmakers have endured until now. The cloakmakers' case has not been made before the public as yet, but after we expose these conditions, we are confident there will not be a single person in the country who will not take the side of the strikers."

Gompers declared to the conference that the entire Executive Council of the AFL would help the strikers. Treasurer Lennon will remain in New York at the strike headquarters and will help carry on the fight until victory has been achieved.

—DAILY FORWARD

Striker, Nabbed for Hurling Bad Eggs, Offers to Eat Them

NEW YORK, Aug. 14, 1910 — Two eggs that were found in the waist of Angie Pinerio, 17, of 40 MacDougal St., were exhibited in the Jefferson Market Court when she was arraigned yesterday on a charge of throwing stale eggs at strikebreakers in Union Square.

Alderman Max Levine, who defended the girl, said that she was carrying the eggs to eat.

"She couldn't eat them. I dare her to," cried Angelina Santorra of 183 Thompson St., one of the girls who said she was struck with an egg of ancient date. "Those eggs are rotten, and so were the ones that hit me. Let her eat them if she will."

"We'll prove that they are fresh eggs," said Alderman Levine.

"You'll do nothing of the sort," exclaimed Magistrate Corrigan. "Give me those eggs. Be careful," he added as he turned his head aside and reached for the eggs. "I'll send this girl to the workhouse."

—N. Y. AMERICAN

Union Spokesmen Argue Their Case

Union and Employer Spokesmen Meet Before Brandeis—Schlesinger Warns Strike Will Go On—Negotiators Head for Stalemate—London Announces 450 Settlements.

A joint conference between 10 delegates from the union and 10 representatives of the employers' association began on July 28, 1910, in Room 5208 of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building. The attorney for the employer group was Julius Henry Cohen; Meyer London acted as counsel for the union. The union committee included Benjamin Schlesinger, John A. Dyche, Sol Polakoff, Morris Sigman, A. C. Rosenberg and J. B. Lennon.

Below is a portion of the minutes for July 30:

Mr. Brandeis: You have the floor.

Mr. Schlesinger: We ask for \$24 a week. We have taken the maximum that was paid in the line of sample tailoring, and we wanted to raise \$1 on it. You offer us less than the minimum. Don't you consider that ridiculous?

Mr. Cohen: There are 14 classifications in your list. Now . . .

Mr. Schlesinger: I am speaking of the sample tailor. I ask you if it is not ridiculous to offer us \$19 a week for such work as we have been getting \$23?

Mr. Brandeis: Let me ask you one question before he answers that. Do you mean to say that there is nobody in the trade who today is paying less than \$19?

Mr. Fishman: May I say, Mr. Chairman, that I pay \$15 a week.

Mr. Polakoff: It is a shame, if he pays \$15 a week.

\$21 Weekly Average

Mr. Schlesinger: Mr. Fishman is perfectly right. I believe he pays \$15 a week. I know a cloak factory in New York where 15 cents is paid for two duck jackets. I am sure there is not a man in this room that will pay such a low price. I should say that about 70 per cent of the sample makers in New York are getting on an average of \$21 a week. I was glad to hear something about Mr. Fishman. I would rather take you to manufacturers who are in this room that are paying \$22 and \$23 to sample hands.

A Voice: Will you take the average of manufacturers in this room?

Mr. Schlesinger: I don't know.

Mr. Cohen: Will you try it?

Mr. Schlesinger: No, I don't want to. I was requested not to mention names.

Mr. Cohen: But they are willing now.

Mr. Schlesinger: But I am not willing now.

Mr. Cohen: Why?

Mr. Schlesinger: Because I do not want to. I do not consider this a court. . . . I say the only remedy for the manufacturers is to employ none but union men, as long as the union is able to supply you with help. Should it be impossible for the union to supply you with help, then you should have the privilege of employing whomever you please.

Mr. London: You mean competent men at the work?

Mr. Schlesinger: Competent men, yes; that is understood.

Mr. Cohen: That is the chairman's proposition.

Mr. Schlesinger: If that is so, all right. I will put it as my proposition. As long as you will agree on prices and on all regulations in the shops, then I really do not see why you should not employ only union men. Now, you know, Mr. Lefcourt, that if you will have 60 union men

in your shop and 40 non-union men, there will be a continuous quarrel among the people. Either the union men will drive the non-union men out or the non-union men will drive the union men out, but before one party will drive out the other you will not be able to make your work.

The employment of union men only is the only proposition that can be accepted by our organiza-

Mr. London: I desire to say, Mr. Chairman, that I realize the importance of the question which we have been discussing for the last three days, and I share with Mr. Cohen the sentiments that we have approached a crisis. We are not responsible for the low conditions in which some of the people in the trade are today. We are trying to improve these conditions. Now, if you were to consent to employ union men as long as you can get competent union men, why, then, the question is settled. We have 60,000 men and women on strike. They are on strike because they feel there is something wrong; they want some change. Some of them joined the union two months before the strike was called, some of them three months before the strike was called, some of them were so calculating in their unionism that they paid the initiation fee in order to

select the best they can get. Otherwise, the trade cannot advance.

Mr. London: I should say in reply that the word "competency" will necessarily mean that. It will mean that the employer is at liberty to employ a non-union man as long as the union is unable to furnish him with a man competent to do the work required. As soon as you put in the word "equally" you introduce two elements; you introduce the non-union men along with the union man. You have to take our people as they are.

Because our people have not been as well organized as they should have been, you should not declare in favor of continuing the strike. It is up to you. You are the strike leaders today. You are the organizers and the agitators. Mr. Johnson, do you like that? Do you want 60,000 men to stay out for five or six weeks? I know they have been

those who signed, will not live up to the union agreement.

Mr. London: If the union will live, we will make every reasonable effort in the world that the manufacturers with whom we have settled should live up to the standard.

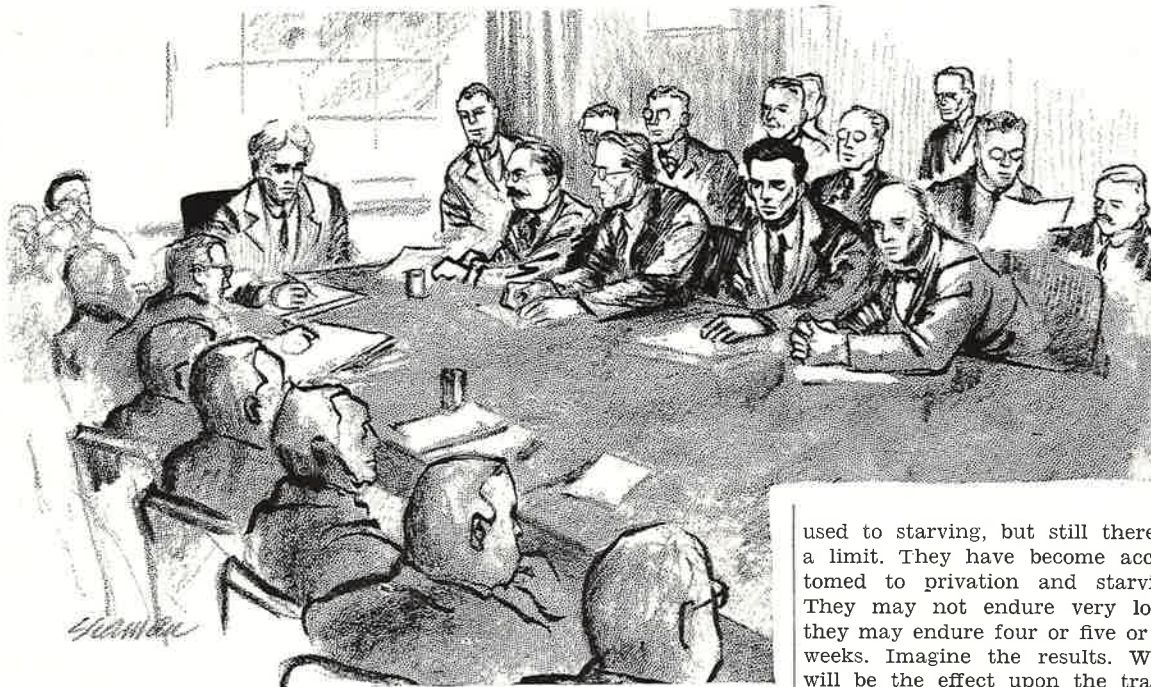
Mr. Dyche: I have had experience with union shops and non-union shops for a number of years. I will tell you what I do know, and that is this: that the same as a bad coin drives a good coin out of the market, so non-union men drive union men out of the shop. I have seen it as soon as non-union labor has been introduced in a union shop that a stampede took place.

Actually, the fact is it is not a question of how the arrangement has been drawn, but of the temperament and disposition of the people we have to deal with. No amount of agreements or no document, however finely devised, will change at once—it may in time, but not now—the nature of the people. I tell you, a stampede took place, and a week or two passed and the shop turned non-union. For the sake of self-protection you would be committing suicide to go into an agreement where such a condition prevailed. Give us a chance for a half year, and let us see if we can make good.

Mr. London: One of the important reasons for our anxiety to end the conference is that with the continuing of this conference we lose opportunity of sending daily from 1,500 to 1,200 people back to work. Settlements have been proceeding along these lines, along union lines. We had from 60 to 75 settlements a day. Now, since this conference has been made public the number of settlements fell off, and a number of employers told us frankly that they were awaiting the result of this conference. Under the circumstances it becomes unjust to the men who are in a position to return to work under union conditions to continue this conference indefinitely, and that is why I would ask the gentlemen on the other side of the table to work overtime.

A Voice: That is against union principles.

—“THE CLOAK MAKERS' STRIKE”



BRANDEIS PRESIDING AT A MEETING OF THE EMPLOYERS' AND UNION COMMITTEES.

tion. Should we accept your proposition, that is, having non-union men working hand-in-hand with us, then we will lose our organization, as every organization was lost that went into deals like you are trying to make us go into.

This minute is a very serious one. If we do not agree now, we will have to keep up the strike, and we cannot tell how long. If our union fails in its present effort, then it would not take very long before a good many of the very small firms will drive you people out of business, as they drove out a good many large manufacturers 16 years ago when we had a strike. At that time, gentlemen, we lost our strike. Some of you remember it. At that time a good many were driven out of business. We lost that strike, but the result was nevertheless that the manufacturers had lost.

Strike to Continue

If we leave this room now, it means that the strike will go on. Mr. Cohen and Mr. London and Mr. Brandeis are attorneys. They all did the best they could in this matter, but it is up to the manufacturers to do the right thing. Mr. Cohen thinks it is possible for union men to work alongside of non-union men, but you know it is impossible. You know you will have fights in your shops.

Mr. Brandeis: Mr. London, I think you had something to say.

go on strike and in order to get immediate benefit for the \$1 or \$3 that they paid in. We have practical people among us. Now you have to take those men and women as they are.

We realize that you should have the right to employ non-union men when it is impossible for you to get competent union help.

Mr. Brandeis: You mean "equally competent" individuals?

Mr. London: I bow with reverence to your great command of the English language, but the difficulty is this: if you will attempt to draw fine distinctions in any paper you will submit to our people, the more refined the distinction is the less they will understand it, and think they will be deceived; therefore, I ask you to strike out the word "equally."

Mr. Brandeis: No. It is a question of using language which you and I and Mr. Cohen and 20 other gentlemen here who are patiently listening to us can understand. I can perfectly well conceive that you may have 10 or 15 or 20 persons, all of whom are declared competent, and yet if I had to choose a tailor or a lawyer or a physician, I would be able to draw a distinction between the competency of the one and the competency of the other. Now, the variation might not be as great in tailors as it would be in physicians, but there must be the liberty of choice of the men to

used to starving, but still there is a limit. They have become accustomed to privation and starving. They may not endure very long; they may endure four or five or six weeks. Imagine the results. What will be the effect upon the trade?

We have just now settled with 450 manufacturers—some substantial ones and quite a number of small manufacturers. If the union exists, we will, in these 450 factories in which the conditions have been more or less disgraceful, improve things.

Mr. Fishman: I want to say this, that those manufacturers, some of

Riot Breaks Out When Mfrs. Attempt to Reopen Factories

NEW YORK, Aug. 9, 1910 — As a result of the cloak manufacturers' attempt to open their shops yesterday, there was a riot on West 21st St., and in almost every precinct in lower Manhattan reserves were held ready if occasion required.

The trouble that grew into a riot, with bloodshed and cracked heads, was at the shop of Bernstein and Co., 250 West 21st St. Fifteen hundred persons charged the police there and invaded the factory. Windows were smashed and heads were broken in an hour's fight. The factory is on the 12th floor of the building, and in the mix-up sewing machines were dropped from windows, material flung out and shears sent clattering to the street as the shop was wrecked.

The disturbance began in the

afternoon when a few policemen and special officers intercepted strikers trying to reach strikebreakers going into the building to join others at work. In a few minutes there were several hundred strikers battling to reach the strikebreakers.

The police arrested 20 of them and started for the station. The crowd, which was growing steadily, charged the police, broke the lines they had formed, with the prisoners inside, and rescued 18 of the 20.

The crowd managed to get to John Hunter, one of 300 specials employed by the cloak manufacturers. Hunter was beaten so badly that he was attended by an ambulance surgeon when a mounted policeman had saved him from the crowd that was kicking and beating him.

—N. Y. AMERICAN



NEW YORK, March 26, 1911—At 4:35 o'clock yesterday afternoon, fire springing from a source that may never be positively identified was discovered in the rear of the eighth floor of the ten-story building at the northwest corner of Washington Place and Greene Street, the first of three floors occupied as a factory of the Triangle Waist Company.

At 2 o'clock this morning Chief Croker estimated the total dead as 154.

More than a third of those who lost their lives did so in jumping from windows. The firemen who answered the first of the four alarms turned in found 30 bodies on the pavements of Washington Place and Greene Street.

It was the most appalling horror since the Slocum disaster and the Iroquois Theatre fire in Chicago. Every available ambulance in Manhattan was called upon to cart the dead to the Morgue—bodies charred to unrecognizable blackness or reddened to a sickly hue—as was to be seen by shoulders or limbs protruding through flame-eaten clothing. Men and women, boys and girls were of the dead that littered the street; that is actually the condition—the streets were littered.

The fire began in the eighth story. The flames licked and shot their way up through the other two stories. All three floors were occupied by the Triangle Waist Company. The estimate of the number of the employees at work is made by Chief Croker at about 1,000. The proprietors of the company say 700 men and girls were in their place.

Whatever the number, they had no chance of escape. Before smoke or flame gave signs from the windows the loss of life was fully under way. The first signs that persons in the street knew that these three top stories had

turned into red furnaces in which human creatures were being caught and incinerated was when screaming men and women and boys and girls crowded out on the many window ledges and threw themselves into the streets far below.

They jumped with their clothing ablaze. The hair of some of the girls streamed up aflame as they leaped. Thud after thud sounded on the pavements. It is the ghastly fact that on both the Greene Street and the Washington Place sides of the building there grew mounds of the dead and dying.

And the worst horror of all was that in this heap of the dead now and then there stirred a limb or sounded a moan.

Skeletons Bending Over the Machines

Within the three flaming floors it was as frightful. There flames enveloped many so that they died instantly. When Fire Chief Croker could make his way into these three floors he found sights that utterly staggered him—that sent him, a man used to viewing horrors, back and down into the street with quivering lips.

The floors were black with smoke. And then he saw as the smoke drifted away bodies burned to bare bones. There were skeletons bending over sewing machines.

Heroic Elevator Boys Saved Hundreds

The elevator boys saved hundreds. They each made 20 trips from the time of the alarm until 20 minutes later when they could do no more. Fire was streaming into the shaft, flames biting at the cables. They fled for their own lives.

Some—about 70—chose a successful ave-

nue of escape. They clambered up a ladder to the roof. A few remembered the fire escape. Many may have thought of it but only as they uttered cries of dismay.

Wretchedly inadequate was this fire escape—a lone ladder running down to a rear narrow court, which was smoke filled as the fire raged, one narrow door giving access to the ladder. By the score they fought and struggled and breathed fire, and died trying to make that needle-eye road to self-preservation.

Shivering at the chasm below them, scorched by the fire behind, there were some that still held positions on the window sills when the first squad of the firemen arrived.

The nets were spread below with all promptness. Citizens were commandeered into the service—as the firemen necessarily gave their attention to the one engine and hose of the force that first arrived.

The catapult force that the bodies gathered in the long plunges made the nets utterly without avail. Screaming girls and men as they fell tore the nets from the grasp of the holders, and the bodies struck the sidewalks and lay just as they fell. Some of the bodies ripped big holes through the life-nets.

Concentrated, the fire burned within. The flames caught all the flimsy lace stuff and linens that go into the making of spring and summer shirtwaists and fed eagerly upon the rolls of silk.

The cutting room was laden with the stuff on long tables. The employees were toiling over such material at the rows and rows of machines. Sinisterly the spring day gave aid to the fire. Many of the window panes facing

(Continued on Page 6)

154 Perish in Triangle Blaze, Many Killed in 9-Story Leap

(Continued from Page 5)

south and east were drawn down. Draughts had full play.

The experts say that the three floors must each have become a whirlpool of fire. Whichever way the entrapped creatures fled they met a curving sweep of flame. Many swooned and died. Others fought their way to the windows or the elevator or fell fighting for a chance at the fire-escape—the single fire-escape leading into the blind court that was to be reached from the upper floors by clambering over a window sill!

On all of the three floors, at a narrow window, a crowd met death trying to get out to that one slender fire-escape ladder.

It was a fire-proof building in which this enormous tragedy occurred. Save for the three stories of blackened windows at the top you would scarcely have been able to tell where the fire had happened. The walls stood firmly. A thin tongue of flame now and then licked around a window-sash.

Ladders Too Short

On the ledge of a ninth story window two girls stood silently watching the arrival of the first fire apparatus. Twice one of the girls made a move to jump. The other restrained her, tottering in her foothold as she did so. They watched firemen rig the ladders up against the wall. They saw the last ladder lifted and pushed into place. They saw that it reached only the seventh floor.

For the third time the more frightened girl tried to leap. The bells of arriving fire wagons must have risen to them. The other girl gesticulated in the direction of the sounds. But she talked to ears that could no longer hear. Scarcely turning, her companion dived head first into the street.

The other girl drew herself erect. The crowds in the street were stretching their arms up at her shouting and imploring her not to leap. She made a steady gesture, looking down as if to assure them she would remain brave.

But a thin flame shot out of the window at her back and touched her hair. In an instant her head was aflame. She tore at her burning hair, lost her balance and came shooting down upon the mound of bodies below.

From opposite windows spectators saw again and again pitiable companionships formed in the instant of death—girls who placed their arms around each other as they leaped. In many cases their clothing was flaming or their hair flaring as they fell.

Shortly after 7 o'clock the police had to face the most severe test. Great mobs had

been marching up from the East Side. The crowd that at 5 o'clock was 10,000 had grown to 20,000. In this number were frantic fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers. They could barely make out in the darkness the bodies being lifted into the coffins.

One in the Washington Square crowd cried agonizingly the name of a girl and rushed blindly at the police ranks. It started the huge crowd. The police were swept away. One thousand men and women had torn through the fire lines.

The police closed again quickly and drove without those who had forced their way in. But before they had done so men and women had rushed to the tarpaulin-covered mounds and knelt and prayed. Here and there a woman caught up a hat or a slipper or a fragment of a burned skirt, grasped it wildly and ran to firemen and policemen, begging them to throw the light of their lanterns on the things.

And one of these women, looking at a poor, stained shoe, fell into a pool of water and was carried away struggling and utterly mad with grief, as if she had surely recognized in it a daughter's possession.

Dark had fallen before the work of removing the bodies from the building itself had been brought down to any system. A block and tackle was rigged from the cornice, by which the bodies, each wrapped in a rubber blanket, were lowered.

As each body was started downward the searchlight picked out its dark outline and followed it to the street. At each of the windows past which the body went a fireman was on duty to swing it clear of the sills, and on the sidewalk a squad of policemen waited to receive it.

Each body was wrapped anew in a blanket on the street; a tag was attached to it; a coffin was carried from a great bank of them on the opposite side of the street and in this the body was put on a patrol wagon.

By 8 o'clock the available supply of coffins had been exhausted, and those that had already been used began to come back from the Morgue. By that time bodies were lowered at the rate of one a minute, and the number of patrol wagons became inadequate, so that four, sometimes six, coffins were loaded upon each.

At intervals throughout the night the very horror of their task overcame the most experienced of the policemen and Morgue attaches at work under the moving finger of the searchlight. The crews were completely changed no less than three times.

—THE WORLD

At the Height of the Tragedy



The water towers were of no avail. They reached only to the seventh floor.

Girl Who Escaped Sees Friends Jump to Death

By ROSEY SAFRAN

I, with a number of other girls, was in the dressing room on the eighth floor of the Asch Building, in Washington Place, at 4:40 o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, March 25, when I heard somebody cry "Fire!" I left everything and ran for the door on the Washington Place side. The door was locked and immediately there was a great jam of girls before it. The fire was on the other side, driving us away from the only door that the bosses had left open for us to use in going in or out. They had the doors locked all the time.

The fire had started on our floor, and quick as I had been in getting to the Washington Place door, the flames were already blazing fiercely and spreading fast. If we couldn't get out we would all be roasted alive. The locked door that blocked us was half of wood; the upper half was thick glass. Some girls were screaming, some were beating the door with their fists, some were trying to tear it open. There were seven hundred of us girls employed by the Triangle Waist Company, which had three floors, the eighth, ninth and tenth, in the Asch Building. On our floor alone were two hundred and thirty. Most of us were crazy with fear and there was great confusion. Some one broke out the glass part of the door with something hard and heavy—I suppose the head of a machine—and I climbed or was pulled through the broken glass and ran downstairs to the sixth floor, where someone took me down to the street.

I got out to the street and watched the upper floors burning, and the girls hanging by their hands and then dropping as the fire reached up to them. There they were dead on the sidewalk. It was an awful,

awful sight, especially to me who had so many friends among the girls and young men who were being roasted alive or dashed to death. I can't describe how I felt as I stood there watching. I could see the figures, but not the faces, the police kept us all too far back. We hoped that the fire nets would save some, but they were no good for persons falling so far. One girl broke through the thick glass in the sidewalk and fell down into a cellar.

One girl jumped from the ninth floor and her clothing caught on a hook that stuck out from the wall on the eighth. The fire burned through her clothing and she fell to the sidewalk and was killed. Another girl fell from the eighth to the sixth floor, when a hook supporting a sign caught her clothes and held her. She smashed the window of the sixth floor with her fist and got in the shop and went down to the street, saving herself.

I was in the great shirtwaist strike that lasted 13 weeks. I was one of the pickets and was arrested and fined several times. The union paid my fines. Our bosses won and we went back to the Triangle Waist Company as an open shop having nothing to do with the union. But we strikers who were taken back stayed in the union, for it is our friend. If the union had had its way we would have been safe in spite of the fire, for two of the union's demands were adequate fire escapes on factory buildings and open doors giving free access from factories to the street. The bosses defeated us and we didn't get the open doors or the large fire escapes, and so our friends are dead and relatives are tearing their hair.

—THE INDEPENDENT, April 20, 1911

The Altar of Greed



Here their lives were snuffed out; from here they leaped to death.

Workers Doomed by Lack of Fire Escapes

By Arthur E. McFarlane

Loft buildings were never constructed to be factories, and they first came to be used as such almost by accident. Some 15 years ago certain garment makers from the tenements of the East Side and the old dark warehouses of Canal and Grand Sts. began to look for factories in the regulation sense.

The "tenement-made" label was coming and they wanted cheaper light and power and insurance. But there were no regular factories to be had. They tried the loft buildings, and in these "lofts" they found exactly what they wanted. They got cheaper insurance, because loft buildings were fire-proof. The installation of motors and shafting allowed them to use electricity instead of the old gasoline engines, and electricity was cheaper. There was daylight until five o'clock, even in winter, which meant a saving of gas.

City 'Took a Chance'

Their sub-contractors, or sweat masters, could put a quarter more operatives into the same space, and for this reason: The New York factory laws say that every factory worker shall have 250 cubic feet of air. A tenement ceiling is not more than eight feet high; a loft ceiling ten or eleven. And obviously the more space there is above the worker, the less there need legally be around him. Considering the very great amount of floor area always taken up by tables, men and girls and machines could be packed as closely as the chairs could be put and the factory owner still be within the law. There was a saving on every side.

For example, when you permit 500 workers, of which four-fifths are women, to be put into a single room 150 or 200 feet above the asphalt, it is necessary to know what you are going to do in case of fire. The most efficient of fire departments will guarantee to fight fire successfully only to a height of 85 feet—about that of the seventh story—the height to which water-towers can reach and throw their streams in levelly.

But New York did, in the case of her loft factories, what it has become our national habit to do in the matter of danger from fire—decided that there really was no danger, or that, if there were, one could always "take a chance on it."

In the Asch Building, it was estimated by the Fire Commissioner that the occupants of the three upper floors could not have got down by the fire-escape in less than three hours.

The Triangle Waist Company occupied the eight, ninth, and tenth floors. It was in this shop that the New York shirtwaist-

makers' strike of 1909 first started. The officers of the Women's Trade Union League stated that the proprietors Harris and Blanck had stood for all the bad conditions which brought this strike about.

There have been various explanations of how the fire started.

On the street, 100 feet below, the fire was heard before it was seen. An Italian named Cardiane, standing at the Greene Street entrance, heard a sound "like a big puff." He saw smoke and flame come out with it, and a noise of falling glass started a horse to running away. The falling glass came from the first eighth-floor windows that blew out.

"We run first to the elevator," says Natie Weiner, "and he was not up. We knocked on the door, and he didn't come." Then they turned to the stairway door. "It was locked and there was no key there. . . . I tried to break it open, and I couldn't. . . . There was a woman 40 years old there who was burned—Mary Herman—and Bessie Bischofsky, and there was others, and they were next to me and with me at the door; and I said to the woman, 'You try. You may be stronger.' She said, 'I can't.' So then I said, 'Let us all go at it!' And we did."

By that time, even had they been able to get the door open, could they have got past the fire now pouring itself up that stairway from the eighth floor? However, they never got it open. The lock, with the bolt shot, was found later in the debris, a few paces in front of where the charred remnants of floor-board and paneling still held together till the firemen burst them in.

Heroic Elevator Men

On the Greene Street side one of the elevator men ran away at the first cry of fire. His car stood useless till an elevator man from the street, a young fellow named John T. Gregory, who happened to be passing, threw himself into the car and made trip after trip in a building that was already a nightmare. He ran the car until he was half dead himself and until the bodies of those who could not wait and flung themselves down the shaft kept the car from running any longer.

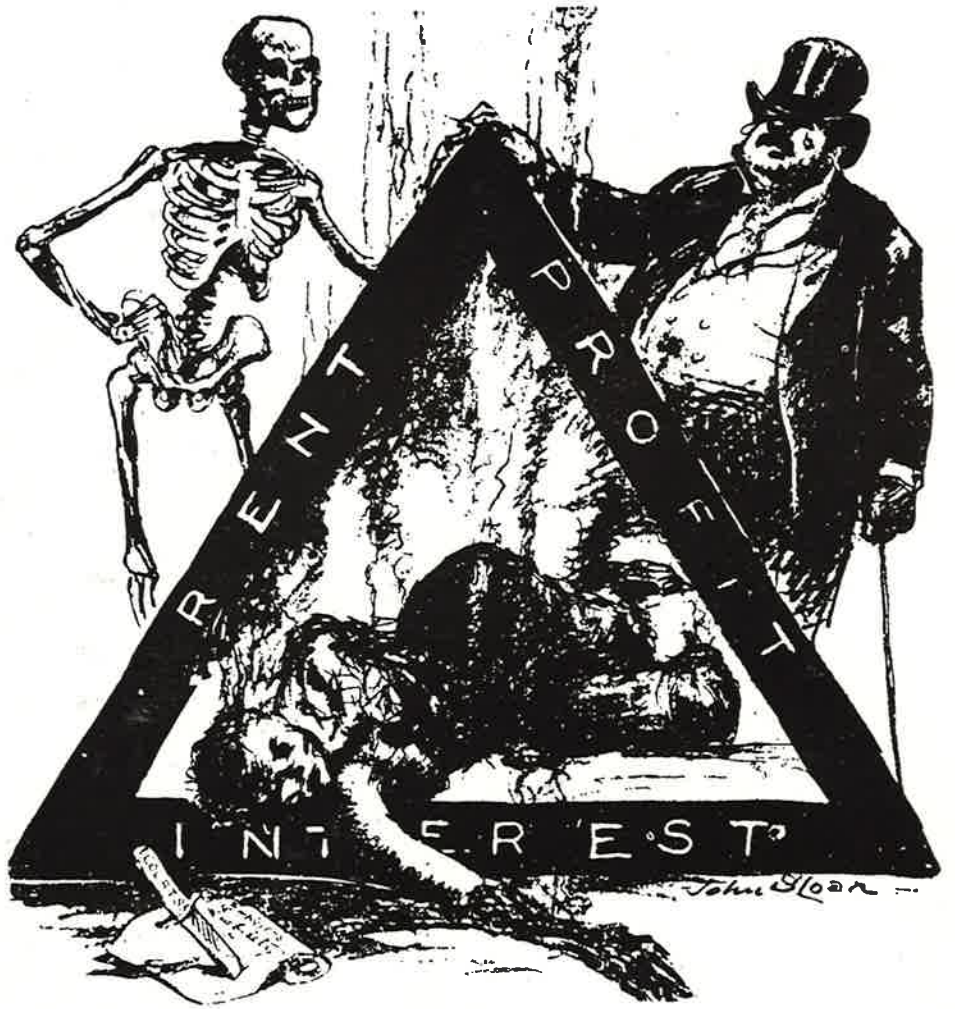
Thomas Horton, a Negro porter, helped keep the machines going in the basement. "They ran until they couldn't run," he testified; "we were putting in the switch cables till they were overrun with water. They stuck. The circuit-breakers were blowing out."

One of the elevator men, Giuseppe Zito, ran his car until he fainted; and he still shows the effects of what he went through. But his companion, Gaspar Mortillaro, tells the story:

"I had too much on the car. The car gave way. They jumped down and everything, on top of me." (Because of the smoke the operators could not see where the floor levels were, and had to open their doors at random.) "They were holding my hands and pulling my hair and jabbing me in the face. I do not know what I hit. The door would not close and all the glass came down on me. They fell on me and I could not stop them. They slid down the ropes." (Many tried to slide down the "ropes." An Italian woman, Levantina, gave another the center cable "because it would be easier." And when somehow she got to the bottom herself, she found herself putting her foot on a dying girl who said, "Please don't step on me.") "They jumped on top of my car. About twenty jumped on top of the roof." Even when the cars were far below them, the girls continued to jump, and their bodies wedged in between car and shaft. Above one elevator

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"The Real Triangle"



—John Sloan in The Call

Locks to Keep Out Union Spell Workers' Downfall

By Martha Bensley Bruere

The Triangle Shirt Waist Shop in New York City, which was the scene of the great fire on March 25th, was also the starting point of the strike of the 40,000 shirt waist workers in 1909.

The girls struck because they wished to stand together for decent shop conditions, wages on which they could live and reasonable hours, and neither Mr. Harris nor Mr. Blanck, both of whom were members of the Manufacturers' Association, would allow their workers to unite in any way at all.

It happened that I did picket duty morning and night before that shop and saw the striking girls go up to the strikebreakers and ask timidly:

"Don't you know there's a strike by the Triangle?"

It was in front of this Triangle shop that the girls were clubbed by the police and by the hired thugs who assisted them; and it was in the streets around it that a large number of arrests were made. The girl pickets were dragged to court, but every one from this shop was discharged. The police and the government of the city had banded themselves together to protect the property of Harris and Blanck, the Triangle Shirt Waist firm.

The 600 girls who worked at the Triangle shop were beaten in the strike. They had to go back without the recognition of the union and with practically no change in conditions. On the 25th of March it was these same policemen who had clubbed them and beaten them back into submission, who kept the thousands in Washington Square from tramping upon their dead bodies, sent for the ambulances to carry them away, and lifted them one by one into the receiving coffins which the Board of Charities sent down in wagon loads.

The city government, which through its policemen and detectives had compelled the girls to go back to work at the Triangle shop; was quite powerless to save their lives.

There were two reasons why the three natural exits, the doors to the stairway, the elevator, and the roof were obstructed: first, to guard against a sudden exodus of

employees in concerted protest; second, to prevent the girls from stealing anything. Said Ida Deutchman:

"This is the worst shop I ever worked in. When applying for work you must undergo a half hour examination about union affiliations. When a girl was hired, after working at the machine she would again be asked by the man in charge of the floor if she was a member of the union. For the five months I worked in the shop I saw women come and go on account of the spy system they have."

Well, the fire is over, the girls are dead, and as I write, the procession in honor of the unidentified dead is moving by under my windows. Now what is going to be done about it?

Firm Offers Week's Wage

Harris and Blanck, the Triangle Company, have offered to pay one week's wages to the families of the dead girls—as though it were summer and they were giving them a vacation! Three days after the fire they inserted in the trade papers this notice:

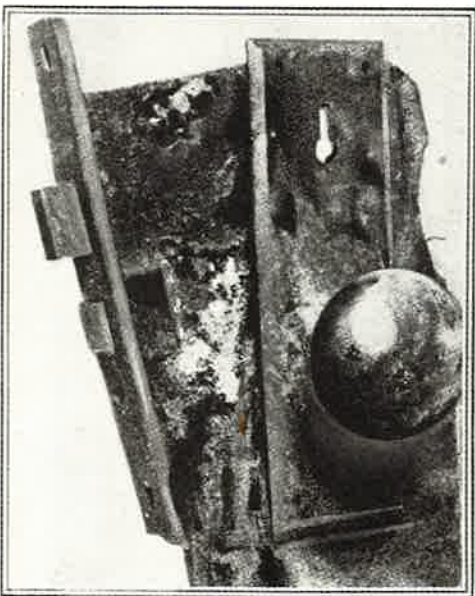
"NOTICE, THE TRIANGLE WAIST CO. beg to notify their customers that they are in good working order. HEAD-QUARTERS now at 9-11 University Place."

The day after they were installed in their new quarters, the Building Department of New York City discovered that 9-11 University Place was not even fire proof, and that the firm had already locked the exit to the one fire-escape by two rows of sewing machines.

And still as I write the mourning procession moves past in the rain. For two hours they have been going steadily by and the end is not yet in sight. There have been

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Lock Out



—McClure's

After the fire, the lock on the door that barred the way to escape was found. The bolt was still out.

50,000 Mourn Loss In Deathly Silence

Under a sky suited to their grief, between pavements lined with miles of open umbrellas like mourning bands, 50,000 claiming the seven unidentified dead in the Triangle fire as their brothers and sisters, marched for five hours in the rain last Wednesday in

New York, bearing the legend, "We Mourn Our Loss," inscribed below a triangle. Girls in shoddy clothing and paper-soled shoes were soaked to the skin and, as the ambulance surgeon stationed at Washington Square said, risked from pneumonia the loss of as many frail lives as were lost in the fire. Along the streets were ranged as many again, all workers, who did not march, but like the others willingly gave up a day's pay to honor the dead.

It was not a funeral but a memorial march, for the authorities had refused these patient people the bodies. While the parade was plodding silently through the streets, Rabbi J. L. Magnes of the Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, the Rev. William B. Morrison of St. Ann's Episcopal Church, and Monsignor William J. White of Brooklyn laid the seven coffins with three simple services in the plot at Greenwood and above them heaped flowers, some sent by their fellow workers and some by a Fifth Ave. florist.

The leaflets sent out by working class organizations or distributed by 400 girls at shop and factory doors the day before gave 12 o'clock as the time of meeting, and from then until the march began at 2 the constantly swelling ranks stood four abreast, waiting at the starting points at Rutgers Square for the downtown division, at the Women's Trade Union League for the uptown. The uptown division, numbering about 10,000, was made up of delegates from the Bronx and Brooklyn labor bodies and from the Women's Suffrage Party, a large part of the membership of the Women's Trade Union League, a group of unorganized Italians, large delegations from special unions—notably the bakers and the garment trades—the Socialist Party, and the Industrial Workers of the World.

This made its way in groups about half a block long, headed by mourning emblems,

by triangles of fresh white and pink roses, and by black draped flags.

At Washington Square came a long wait for the downtown section, the first part of which was to lead up Fifth Avenue. This made its difficult way through the obstructed streets of the East Side, where houses were draped with mourning and many of the spectators were in tears, so personal was their emotion, and passed up MacDougal Street, skirting the Triangle Building, and through Washington Arch.

60 Unions Participate

First, symbolic of the hearse, came a flower-filled carriage drawn by six black horses; then the survivors and some of the mourners, and then, in interminable ranks, the shirtwaist workers. After them came, as it seemed, the whole East Side. Some 60 unions took part, the majority in the United Hebrew Trades, conspicuous among them the cloakmakers. In addition, unorganized workers, progressive education groups, two large sections of the Workmen's Circle, the Forward Association, the downtown division of the Socialist Party, the Peddlers' Association, and countless others. This downtown division, too, was dominated by the workers' flag and by a flag of mourning. On the latter the triangle appeared more impressive by being made one with an old Jewish symbol, the six-pointed Star of David, formed of two intersecting triangles.

The uptown section fell in behind the waistmakers, and the procession passed in front of the black-draped Church of the Ascension—the only uptown church in mourning on that day—up Fifth Avenue to 33rd Street and across to Madison Avenue. There, under the direction of the police, the separate sections dissolved in one side street or another with no confusion.

The most impressive part of the whole parade was the silence. Only three times was this broken—when a mourner cried out,

Heading the Memorial March



—The World
The flower-draped funeral wagon moves through silent crowds.

when a few young Industrial Workers grouped around their red-draped axe shouted a revolutionary cry, and when, toward the end of the procession, the Musicians' Union played a funeral march. Otherwise a silence that protested louder than words came from this never-ending multitude of human beings marching in drenched phalanxes often a half block apart, so that the march would seem to be over only to begin again after a moment. And all these were not only mourning the dead, but appealing dumbly for their own protection.

Cloakmakers Join March

Perhaps it was no coincidence that those who turned out in the largest groups and bore their own banners have been known as strikers in New York during the last two years. The expressmen bore no banner to distinguish them, but besides the shirtwaist and the cloakmakers the groups that stood out were the bakers, the neckwear girls, the boxmakers, the hat trimmers—who went out with their brother hatters two years ago—the shoemakers of Brooklyn, and the tailors, the retail clerks, and the bank clerks of the East Side, all of whom in the last year have struck for shorter hours and better pay.

Harris and Blanck, the proprietors of the Triangle shop, have been indicted by the Grand Jury for manslaughter. The specific offense charged is locking a door contrary to law.

—SURVEY, April 15, 1911

Bereaved Jam Area Hunting Bodies of Kin

NEW YORK, Mar. 27, 1911—The Dewey Arch—memento of a triumphant occasion a decade ago—looked down upon a wild scene yesterday morning.

Washington Square and the nearby avenues of traffic surrounding the scene of Saturday's piteous and punishing conflagration were flooded by tens of thousands. In the throngs that swirled and eddied against the immovable cordons of police that were thrown about the entire block were observable only two types—the bereaved and those impelled hither by curiosity.

The former commanded attention. Worn and weary after a fruitless search for tidings of missing dear ones, they had been drawn at the first faint glimmer of dawn back to the spot where Fate had dealt them heart-breaking blows.

Many of them had tramped from morgue to hospital to police station. And everywhere the answer was the same: "Only God knows."

And at dawn they had found their way
(Continued on Page 9)

The City Weeps as Victims Go to Their Resting Place



—N. Y. Tribune

The mourning procession as it headed up Fifth Ave. after passing under the Dewey Victory Arch at Washington Square within view of the scene of the Triangle tragedy.

Judge's Ruling Makes Closed Shop Unlawful

NEW YORK, Aug. 28, 1910—Justice Goff ruled against the striking cloak-makers yesterday, handing down a decision in the Supreme Court which branded as illegal not only a closed shop agreement but any strike having such an agreement for its object. The decision is regarded as one of the broadest of its kind ever issued in this country and a pioneer so far as its application to the closed shop is concerned.

Representatives of the cloakmakers' unions had been hailed to court by the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Assn. on an order to show cause why a temporary injunction obtained by the association should not be made permanent, "further restraining them from acts in aid of any conspiracy or combination, alleged to exist, to compel members of plaintiff's association to employ only members of the defendant labor unions."

The court continued the injunction, saying:

"The primary purpose of this strike is not to better the condition of the workman, but is to deprive other men of the opportunity to exercise their right to work and to drive them from an industry in which, by labor, they may have acquired skill, and which they have a right to pursue to gain a livelihood without being subjected to the doing of things which may be disagreeable or repugnant."

Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, was greatly stirred by the decision of Justice Goff, which in effect declared that efforts to enforce the "closed shop" were in violation of law on the restraint of trade. Gompers said:

"Justice Goff quotes an unjust decision in support of his own, and that is supposed to be good law. The unions of labor will live despite injunctions and decisions which invade constitutionally guaranteed rights and human liberty. Without the unions there is no possibility for protection to the workers against the tyranny of the absolute autocratic ways of concentrated capital and greed."

—N. Y. TRIBUNE

Marshall Brings Parties Back into Negotiations

By Edith Wyatt

After the breaking off of the conference, the cloakmakers who had settled gave 15 per cent of their wages to support those holding out for the closed shop, and volunteered to give 50 per cent. The "Daily Forward" headed a subscription list with \$2,000 for the strikers, and collected \$50,000.

A furor for the closed shop arose. Young boys and young women and bearded old men came to the office and offered half their wages, three quarters of their wages. One boy offered to give all his wages and sell papers for his living. Every day the office was besieged by committees, appointed by the men and women in the settled shops, asking to contribute more than the percentage determined by the union.

This furor was continuing when, in the third week in August, the loss of contracts by the manufacturers and the general stagnation of business due to the idleness of 40,000 men and women, normally wage earners, induced a number of bankers and merchants of the East Side to bring pressure for a settlement of the strike. Louis Marshall, an attorney well known in Jewish charities in New York, assembled the lawyers of both sides. They drew up an agreement in which the preferential union shop again appeared as the basis of future operations, formulated as at the Brandeis conference.

Imagine what these days of doubt, of an attempt to understand, meant to these multitudes, knowing no industrial faith but that of the

closed shop . . . wanderers from a strange country, turning wildly to their leaders, who could only tell them that they must determine their own fates, they must decide for themselves.

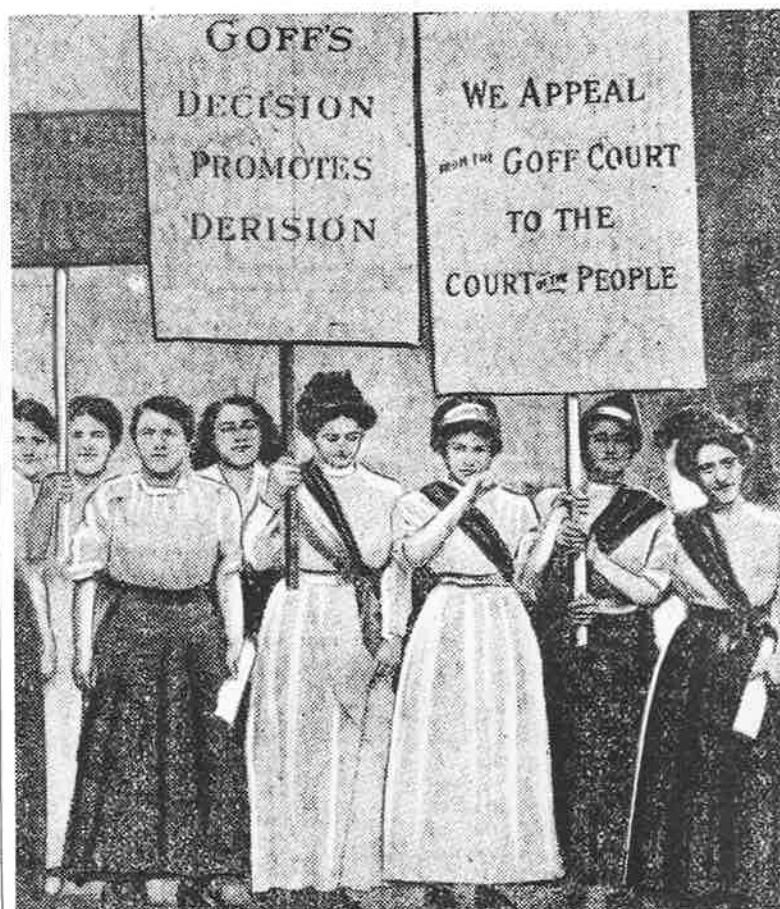
However that may be, when the workers and their families surged around the Forward office and asked the leaders if they had betrayed them, Schlesinger, the business manager, and the old strike leaders addressed them from the windows, and said to the people, with painful emotion: "You are our masters. What you decide we will report back to the association lawyers. What you decide shall be done."

Terrible was the position of these men. Well they knew that the winter was approaching; that the closed shop could not win; that the workers could not hear the truth about the preferential union shop, and the man who stood avowedly for the preferential shop, now the best hope of victory for the union, would be called a traitor to the union.

In great anxiety, the meetings assembled. The workers had all come to the same conclusion. They all rejected the Marshall agreement.

—McCLURE'S, April, 1911

Protest Goff Injunction



—N. Y. American

Garment workers in parade that protested injunction issued by Judge Goff.

Bosses Fear Assn. Crumbling; Scores of Firms Settle Daily

This is how the strike situation shapes up, in this sixth week:

As you are aware, scores of manufacturers are settling every day. You've seen the long lines of workers returning victoriously to their jobs.

Apparently, things are not going too well with the bosses. They've been holding meetings three or four times a day; the association's lawyer, Julius Henry Cohen, has to speak several times a day, urging them not to "scab," not to desert the manufacturer's association.

Last Friday, the bosses' association appealed to Judge Goff for an injunction dissolving the union. Their lawyer really exerted himself in attempting to prove that the union was only a conspiracy to ruin the manufacturers, and he demanded the injunction be granted then and there.

The next day, the bosses suffered defeat when Acting Mayor John Purroy Mitchell ordered the police to cease dispersing pickets and, above all, not to use their clubs. The Mayor stated that as long as the workers conduct themselves in an orderly manner, they have a right to speak to whomever they wish, without interference from the police.

Firms Deserting Association

As if this were not enough, the same day they met with another setback, one which they didn't expect at all. Six members of the manufacturers' association settled with the union and deserted the organization. And when bricks start dropping from a building, it isn't long before the whole building collapses!

In the past few days, the bosses have published many "open letters" and "appeals" in the newspapers in which they promise the workers they will receive the best of conditions if only they will become scabs. They refer to themselves as "gentlemen." Gentlemen! You know that when you ever dared protest unjust conditions in the shop, they would call police to throw you out of the shop.

If you ever chanced to earn a bit more than usual one week, these "gentlemen" saw to it that some pieces would be "missing" the next week. These "gentlemen" treated you like children whose parents take their entire pay, allowing the children to keep only a few cents spending money.

It's Only a Matter of Time

Now, let's consider just how much the bosses are granting, and, even more important, to what extent we can depend on the bosses' "fairness," especially when they will be free to employ both union and non-union workers, and to what extent they will prefer union members. . . . You know that the bosses never will agree that the work of a union man is as "good" as the non-union worker.

Sisters and brothers! We know that many of you suffer from hunger and poverty. We know that many wives of strikers do not have the means to provide milk for their children, but nevertheless we appeal to you: Be loyal to your union! The bosses will have to give in; it's only a matter of time! The greater our suffering, the greater will be our victory! Have courage, victory is ours!

General Strike Committee

—NEW POST, Aug. 16, 1910

Determined and Undaunted



Neither rumors nor false reports lessened the determination of the cloakmakers.

Protocol: New Deal For the Cloakmakers

By Charles H. Winslow

Prior to the advent of the Protocol the employers endeavored to establish prices for piece workers without regard to the wishes of their employees. Since the establishment of the Protocol, prices are fixed by the employer and a price committee representing the employees, with right of appeal to the Board of Grievances.

Decrease in the Number of Hours of Work from 54 to 50. This decrease represents more than it appears, since the 50 hours are now in force for those who formerly worked from 60 to 70 hours per week for sub-contractors, as well as for some manufacturers.

Increase in Wages for Week Workers. This not only accrues to week workers in Protocol shops, but has permitted an approach to a standardization of wages in shops not governed by the Protocol. The increase represents about 10 per cent.

Abolition of the Inside Contracting System. The abolition of the contract system inside the factory avoids the evils of a padrone system.

Introduction of Electricity as Power and Installation of Means of Production (Sewing Machines). Formerly many otherwise well-equipped establishments refused to introduce electricity, on the ground of economy, evidently blind to the advantage of increased efficiency through its use. This is also true regarding the ownership of the means of production. Prior to the strike, a very considerable number of employees owned their sewing machines and were obliged to install them at their own expense. The adoption of electricity is not yet complete. In July, 1911, of 779 shops south of Houston St. only 199 used electric power. During the next six months 310 were induced to install it.

Restriction on Overtime Work. Prior to the present agreement, overtime knew no bounds. It was simply a question of how much work a man was able to get from his employer, and on the part of the employer, how much work he could have finished ready for delivery in a given time. The present method prevents excessive overwork for any individual, distributes the work more equally among the employees, lessens the strain of the rush periods and tends to shorten the dull season.

Abolition of Home Work. The practice of taking work home, aside from the evils involved of making garments under insanitary conditions, prevented a proper or equal distribution of work.

Pay to Week Workers for 10 Legal Holidays. Payment for holidays was formerly at the discretion of the employer. At present the 10 legal holidays as established by the laws of the State of New York are being observed almost universally.

Regular Weekly Pay Day and Pay in Cash. Prior to the strike of 1910 many employers paid their employees at will, having no regular pay day; others changed the pay day to suit their convenience.

Minimum Scale of Wages for Week Workers. The establishment of a minimum scale of wages for week workers has not only worked to the advantage of those making the scale, but has tended to establish the same scale in the entire industry.

Double Pay for Overtime of Week Workers. Double time for overtime is becoming the established practice in the industry.

Creation of Conditions for Safety and Health of Workers. This was brought about through the establishment of the Joint Board of Sanitary Control.

Protection Against the Lockout. In accordance with Section 17 of the Protocol, the parties to it have agreed that there shall be no lock-out until the controversy has been submitted to the Board of Grievances. In the event of the board's failure to adjust such grievance, the controversy shall be submitted to the Board of Arbitration for adjustment.

Abolition of the Practice of Exacting Security From Employees. Unscrupulous manufacturers and contractors, as well as some so-called legitimate employers, practiced this evil to a very considerable extent. Indeed, it was said that thousands of dollars of employees' money had been tied up through this process.

—“CONCILIATION, ARBITRATION AND SANITATION IN THE CLOAK, SUIT, AND SKIRT INDUSTRY,” 1912.

Cloak Agreement Big Improvement On Original Terms

By Mary Brown Sumner

SEPT. 17, 1910 — The “Protocol” signed on Sept. 2 modifies the original scheme in many important particulars and gives greater security to the union.

The last week in August a conference was arranged between the lawyers for both sides, Meyer London for the union and Julius Henry Cohen for the manufacturers, Louis Marshall consenting to act as representative of “public opinion.” An agreement on almost the same lines as that of the Brandeis conference was offered, and rejected by overwhelming vote of the strikers.

A week's work modified the agreement in the following particulars. Both earlier documents left hours and wages to arbitration; the Protocol of Sept. 2 fixes a definite wage scale and a fixed number of hours per week, the union making concessions on its original demands in regard to wages and hours, the employers giving up the right of arbitration in this matter.

Even more important the union considers the modification made in the original preferential union shop idea. The terms of the agreement, by omitting the words “as distinguished from the closed shop,” make no such deliberate antagonism between the two forms of union shop; nor do they leave a loophole for the dreaded open shop to mask

Final Definition of 'Union Shop' Ends Great Cloak Strike

By J. B. McPherson

The manufacturers announced their intention of resuming work on the “open shop” principle on Aug. 8, but the union leaders succeeded in keeping their ranks solid against successful attack, and the effort failed.

To onlookers it seemed as though the differences were irreconcilable, and the two sides as far apart as ever. From the very breaking-off of negotiations, however, Mr. Filene, assisted by Meyer Bloomfield and Philip Davis of Boston, also members of the Civic Federation of New England, and Dr. Henry Moskowitz of New York City, had been striving to learn the real cause of the breach.

It was soon discovered that strong objection was made to the phrase “a man of equal ability to do the job.” What was needed was a satisfactory definition of the “union shop.” Both sides were practically agreed upon the “preferential union shop,” but the difficulty was to draw up an agreement

under the name of preferential union. The “preference” too is put upon a broader basis.

In the first agreement the choice was to be between two men of equal ability, one union and one non-union. By the agreement of Sept. 2, the employer can only choose a non-union man provided he finds no man of equal ability available in the union.

He must, that is, exhaust the union resources first. Among union men his choice is unhampered by rules of precedence.

Furthermore, the earlier agreements would not recognize a shop delegate; this provides that the chairman of the price committee shall also act as representative of the employees in a shop.

—THE SURVEY

Negotiators Take Tentative Pact to Shops for Opinions

SEPT. 17, 1910—Credit must be given to the counsel for the union and the chairman of the strike settlement committee for the admirable method finally used to reach an agreement.

After a proposal was drawn up by the strike settlement committee (composed of the counsel for the union, the counsel for the employers' association and a non-partisan third person), no public announcement of the agreement was made until the union had adopted and put into practice a system which they term “the House of Representatives.” In compliance with this system, the shop (chairmen) explained this tentative agreement in all the shops and secured from the rank and file a vote as to what demands they would insist upon and what ones they would yield.

The results of this canvass in the shops were put before the strike settlement committee, and the agreement was revised to meet the wishes of the workers as expressed through their representatives, the shop (chairmen). This final agreement met with the entire approval of both sides.

—THE OUTLOOK

which to the manufacturers did not mean the “closed shop,” and to the wage earners did not mean discrimination against union men. The burning question was: Who is to construe the words “a man of equal ability” or decide the matter of competency?

Each Side Suspicious

On the one hand, the men felt that if the decision were to rest with the employers, non-union men would always be chosen; on the other hand, if competency was to be decided by the unions, the manufacturers felt that union men would always be deemed the competent men. Apparently the strike leaders wished to make sure what the “preferential union shop” meant, and would be construed to mean. Each side was suspicious of the other, and wished the meaning so clearly defined before peace was declared that no question of construction could be raised later.

Many times during August there were expectations of an agreement, but as often as they were raised, they were shattered. Each side was facing more and greater difficulties with each day's postponement. While money was being contributed to the union and its treasury was in fairly good condition, the strain on its resources was tremendous, and it was a question of how much longer the struggle could last.

Winter was approaching; businessmen on the East Side were beginning to discuss the situation; the credit of the wage earners was being curtailed; many strikers were in danger of eviction, and it was felt that if the injunction made permanent by Judge Goff on Aug. 8 were put into full effect, the strikers could not get as favorable terms later as they could then.

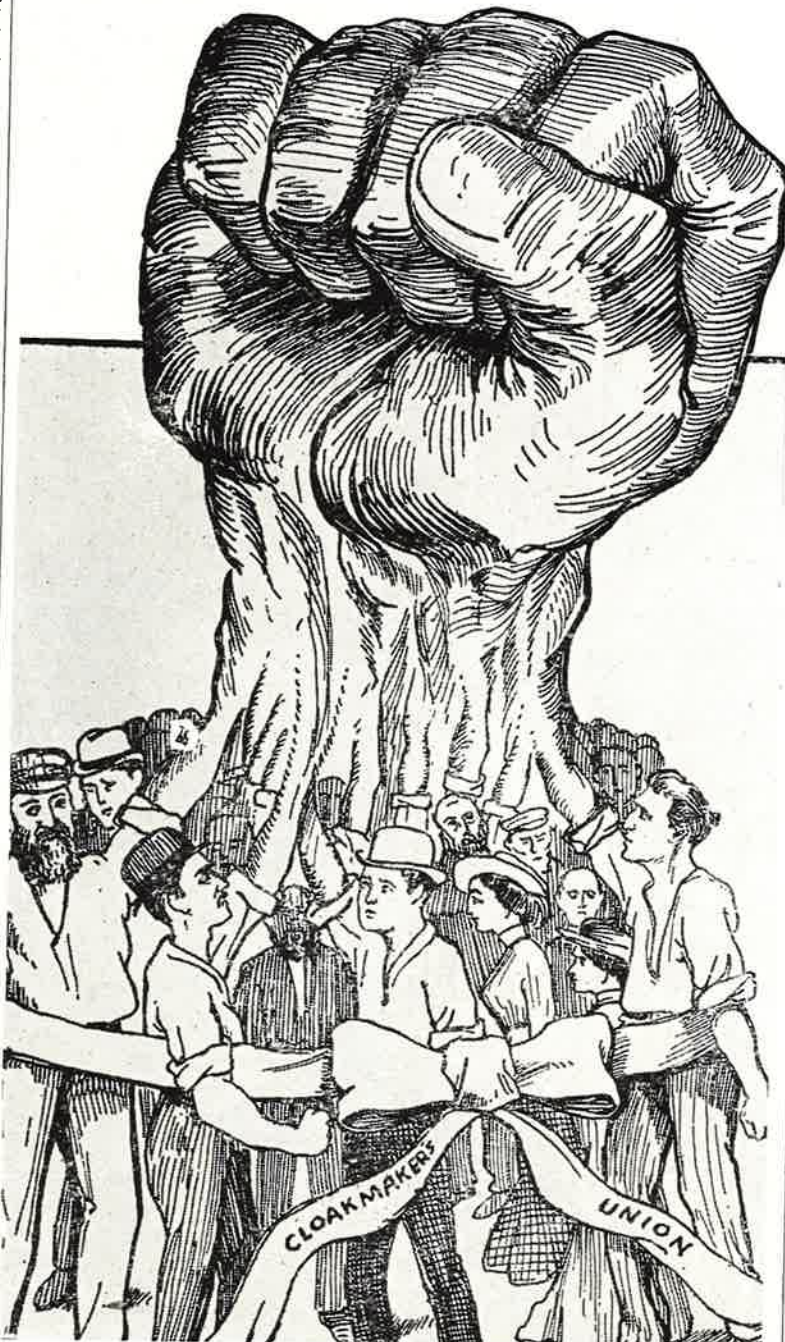
Define 'Union Shop'

The final agreement, as signed Sept. 2, differed from the Protocol and from the Brandeis plan in a few particulars, some provisions being incorporated into it which were deemed necessary to safeguard the interests of labor. The shop issue over which the conference had differed and over which much anxious thought had been expended was solved by dropping the “closed shop” term entirely. The provision as finally adopted read:

“Each member of the manufacturers' association is to maintain a union shop; a “union shop” being understood to refer to a shop where union standards as to working conditions, hours of labor and rates of wages as herein stipulated prevail, and where when hiring help, union men are preferred, it being recognized that, since there are differences in degrees of skill among those employed in the trade, employers shall have freedom of selection as between one union man and another, and shall not be confined to any list, nor bound to follow any prescribed order whatever.”

—JOURNAL OF POLITICAL ECONOMY, March, 1911

“The Fist”



Lola in “The Big Stick”

NEWS-HISTORY

Editorials

On to Victory, Cloakmakers!

The long-suffering New York cloakmakers are out of the shops. The greatest strike in the history of the needle trades is on!

Sixty thousands of them—old men, young men, women, young girls, yes even kids in their 'teens—they are parading in front of the cloak shops from West 23rd Street down to Canal Street, East and West, in the huge lofts "uptown" and in the basement and cellar "shops" of the contractors and sub-contractors of this most sweated industry of our free land.

Less than six months after the strike of the shirtwaist makers had come to a close, a strike that for the first time opened the eyes of America to the horrible exploitation to which the garment workers were being subjected, this magnificent walkout of the cloak workers has once again startled New York out of its callous indifference to the fate of its needle workers. Once again, is our International Union marshalling an army of aroused workers in a battle for human decency.

On these fundamentals there will be no compromise, no deals. We had thirty years of one-season unions in the cloak industry; and look at the results! We had cloakmakers by the thousand flocking into the union a week before the season would open only to melt away and disintegrate two weeks after they would get back to their machines. And together with their union would vanish the higher pay, the shop committees and the hope for better treatment for which only yesterday they had fought so hard and so enthusiastically.

This strike, better organized and led with greater experience because of the glorious example set last year by the waistmakers, is the most dramatic example of what solidarity can accomplish even against the adamant opposition from the millionaire magnates of the cloak industry and their array of high priced lawyers. On our side there are no money bags, no friendly newspapers, no influence with the powers that be—nothing except justice.

Out of this struggle, no matter how long it takes, we shall emerge the winners. Out of this struggle, we shall emerge with a union that will be solid, stable and permanent. And this union, once organized, will continue to lead us to further achievements, further progress.

"Cry for Justice"



—Boardman Robinson in N. Y. Tribune

Revolt Brings End To Slavery Under Sub-Contracting

By Benjamin Schlesinger

The general strike of the New York cloakmakers in 1910 was not a strike but a revolution. Idealism no doubt played a big part both in the calling of the strike and during the eight weeks that it lasted. The main driving force, however, was the virtual condition of slavery under which the cloakmakers then labored. The cloakmaker was wholly at the mercy of his employer.

Each operator or finisher employed on the average from three to four helpers. Among the pressers, it was even worse; in this craft the sub-contracting system prevailed. At the beginning of the season the employer would make a contract with two or three pressers whereby the latter undertook to turn out all the pressing work in the shop for a stipulated amount, and these contractors would then hire the other pressers needed to do the work. There were shops where 30, 40, or even 100 pressers were employed, but only the two or three sub-contractors worked directly for the employer. The rest worked for these sub-contractors.

Since the earnings of the third who worked directly for the manufacturer were so small that they did not have enough for their livelihood, one can easily imagine how meager were the earnings of the two-thirds who worked as helpers for the first third. It was a system of slavery to slaves. The operator who worked directly for the boss was the boss' slave, while the three or four helpers employed by him were HIS slaves.

What did the strike mean to the cloakmakers in dollars and cents? It meant this: in the year following the general strike the 50,000 cloakmakers received \$10,000,000 more in wages than in the year before, while working eight hours a week less than formerly.

But the material side of the victory was small compared with the moral side of it: 50,000 despondent immigrants suddenly found themselves, began to believe in their own strength and ceased to be submissive.

—SOUVENIR JOURNAL OF
1910 CLOAKMAKERS
GENERAL STRIKE

Strike Leaders Count Gains in Over 2,000 New Shops Organized

Among the various gains that we obtained, we are not, at this time, going to review the wage increases—you're quite familiar with that. We want to call attention to the fact that we have been successful in getting a half-day off on Saturday; abolished the 7-day work week; abolished the inside contracting system; established a minimum wage scale for week-workers; forced the bosses to respect the union, and organized over 2,000 inside and outside shops. And if there still remain in a few shops some non-union workers, that can't be blamed on the bosses, but simply on the fact that until now we have not been prepared to approach in entirety a mass of 70,000 workers. However, generally speaking, all shops are union shops in the fullest sense of the word.

—NEW POST, Sept. 23, 1910

"Dr. Cloakmaker"



Lola in "The Big Stick"

Victory Thrusts Union Into Van of U. S. Labor

By John B. Lennon
(Treasurer of the AFL)

NEW YORK, Oct., 1910—The great strike of the Cloak and Skirt Makers' Union of New York City which began on July 7 and closed two months later was as clear-cut a demonstration of the practical effectiveness of the trade union movement to better the condition of the wage workers as has ever taken place in the history of the labor movement in this or any other country.

Two months prior to the strike, the trade was practically unorganized, there being only a very few thousand in the city. When the strike began, the union within two months had been increased to about 60,000 members.

The demands of the union covered not only the question of an increase of wages, but also contained demands for the redress of certain grievances which had become intolerable and could no longer be borne. The people who operate machines had to pay for the power which was used to operate them. The demand was made that this should cease. Many of the employees had to leave deposits to cover the alleged breakage of machinery, poor work, etc.

In the factories, sub-contracting existed in no small degree, the contractor receiving a large wage and those who really did the work were all the year round very near the verge of starvation. The union demanded that their members should not be required to work in any but sanitary shops.

When the final settlement was made, complete victory was secured as well as the settlement of all grievances complained of. The increase in wages will amount to about 25 per cent. The hours of labor will probably be made 50 per week. This contest was remarkable in several of its features, the most remarkable I have ever known though I have been in the trade union movement for 40 years.

With 60,000 people on strike, representing with their families from 300,000 to 400,000 people, there were practically no scabs out of the entire number. The few non-unionists who were secured came large-

ly from other cities and a very few remained at work when the strike was first called. But the best information that we were able to get indicated that at the end of eight weeks, there were considerably less than 500 non-unionists employed in shops where the 60,000 went out.

If any craft or calling can show a record to beat this, I don't know where it is to be found. The enthusiasm of both the Hebrews and the Italians who composed the entire number of people involved in the contest was a revelation to me. I never saw anything equal to it. Their willingness to starve rather than go back to work was something marvelous.

Aroused Sympathy

Nearly everyone in New York, outside of the manufacturers who employed these people, was in sympathy with the efforts of the cloak and skirt makers to get better conditions. And it is also true that a large number of manufacturers were willing to concede better conditions, perfectly willing, since they knew it was an absolute necessity in order for the people to live.

I believe there can be no question but that the victory won by the Cloak and Skirt Makers Union was the greatest ever won in a single industrial engagement by men or women in any part of the world. It opens up to them an opportunity of building one of the greatest trade unions in North America. And if the enthusiasm of the Hebrews and Italians which was manifested in the strike has practical continuity, the result will be a union that can and will be something of an example to all trade unionists on this continent.

—THE LADIES' GARMENT WORKER