

# ILGWU NEWS-HISTORY

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION ISSUE

CHAPTER 6

1915-1920

## LOCKOUT and FRAME-UP

# Turn N. Y. Cloak Lockout Into Strike; 7 Framed ILGWU Officers Acquitted

### Hundreds Stage Jubilant Demonstration on Hearing 'Not Guilty'

NEW YORK, Oct. 9, 1915—The five officers and members of the ILGWU who have been on trial for two weeks on the charge of murder were acquitted last night. The verdict, "Not guilty!" from the foreman of the jury brought a cheer from a hundred friends and relatives of the defendants. Mrs. Sigman screamed and fainted. The victorious labor leaders are: Morris Sigman, secretary-treasurer of the ILGWU; Isidore Ashpis, former vice president of the International Union; Morris Stupnickier, employee of the Joint Board of the Cloak and Skirt Makers' Unions; Abraham Weidiger, member of Cloak Operators' Union; and Max D. Singer, member of Cloak Operators' Union.

The verdict was announced at 8:30 o'clock after less than three hours' deliberation. The extra detail of police and court guards could not prevent a demonstration. Solomon Metz and Julius Wolf, who had been defendants until their acquittal on Thursday, were the first to reach their comrades. They embraced and kissed each other, tears of joy welling in their eyes.

A great shout roared through the Criminal Courts building as the hundreds of men and women outside the court room heard the welcome news. All the spectators poured out into Center St. where cheers brought a detail of police who tried to drive the celebrators away. All remained until the five happy cloakmakers and their wives were hurried into automobiles with their families and taken to their homes.

Morris Sigman, against whom the conspiracy was chiefly directed by the Sulkes Agency, was radiant with joy, not so much because he and his comrades were free but because the ILGWU was freed from the stigma of the murder charge. "I am happy not so much because of our own victory but because it is a victory for organized labor, which was the real defendant in this case," said Sigman. "The charge of murder was brought against me and my brothers because we were of organized labor. The blow at the Cloakmakers' Union, which was planned to destroy the great organization by vilifying the leaders, failed because the conspiracy of the Sulkes Agency was too apparent."

### D. A. Aided Fake Union

Morris Hillquit, counsel of the ILGWU, delivered a scathing criticism of the District Attorney for aiding the frame-up of the Sulkes scab agency.

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### ASSOCIATION SNUBS COUNCIL RULING ON PREFERENTIAL HIRING

By DR. FELIX ADLER  
(Chairman of Mayor's Council of Conciliation and founder of Society for Ethical Culture)

NEW YORK, Apr. 26, 1916—We were asked by the union to interpret the sense in which the word "preferential" should be understood. Other things being equal, a unionist shall be preferred to a non-unionist by the employer. It is perfectly evident that such an arrangement is unstable.

We were asked to interpret the words which provide that in the hiring of help, a member of the union is to be preferred. The union claimed that the word "hiring" should be so understood that the employer prefer a union man not only in the moment of hiring him but also later on.

We decided, however, that though the spirit of the agreement really implied what the union claimed, we could not stretch the word "hiring" so as to extend it beyond the

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### 1,400 in Montreal Win Wage Benefits After 9-Wk. Strike

MONTREAL, Mar. 31, 1917—The bitter, nine-week strike of the Montreal cloak and skirt makers ended today with an outstanding victory for the 1,400 workers.

Most independent employers had settled with the union during the first weeks of the strike, but the manufacturers' association, in whose shops more than half of the workers are employed, were at first adamantly opposed to any negotiations with the union.

However, when the association finally became convinced that the strikers' determination could not be broken, its members consented to a conference with the union. In the negotiations, the association agreed to all union demands on wages and conditions.

—NEW POST

### 30,000 Answer General Strike Call—Join Locked-Out Comrades

NEW YORK, May 3, 1916—At the stroke of 11 o'clock today there was a flutter of circulars in 2,000 garment shops of New York and the great army of workers, after one brief glance at the heading, "General Strike Declared," quietly left their

benches, put on their coats and wraps and filed out into the street without disorder.

Like scenes were enacted on the West Side and the East Side, downtown and uptown, in the Bronx, Westchester County and in Brooklyn. Thirty thousand men, women and girls were soon tramping through the streets on their way to the various strike headquarters. With those locked out by the employers last Saturday the total reached 60,000.

The spectacle was an impressive one. Around Union Square and along Fifth Ave., from 14th St. up to the streets in the Thirties, the cloak and skirt shops are distributed as thickly as raisins in a plum cake. A few minutes before 11 o'clock these streets were comparatively deserted. A few minutes after

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### Pact with Boston Assn. Grants All Strikers' Demands

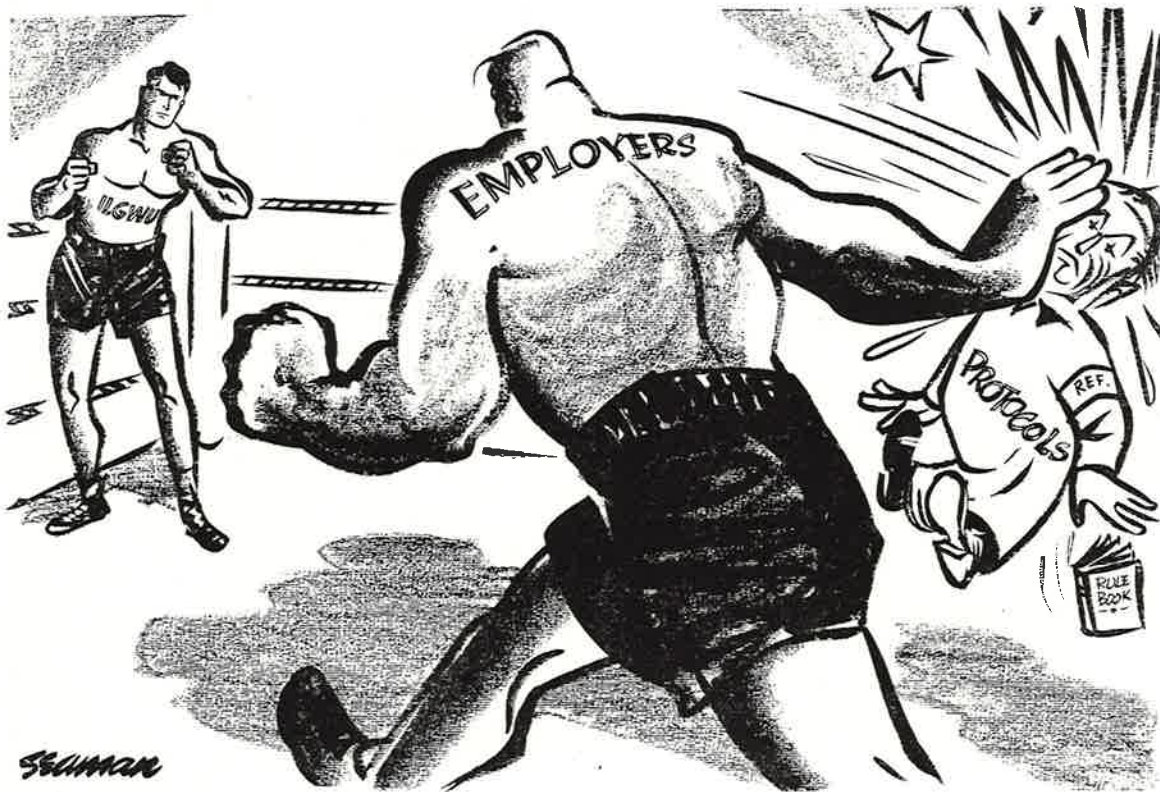
BOSTON, June, 1919—The union presented demands to the manufacturers, which included the 44-hour work-week, abolition of all contracting work, week work, double pay for overtime, minimum wage scales and a "guarantee" for a certain number of weeks of steady work during each season.

A general strike was ordered, which lasted only four days. The manufacturers formed an association and requested the union to deal collectively with them. This request was conferred with, and after several conferences an agreement was reached.

Practically all the demands of the union were granted and the minimum was made \$1 higher.

—REPORT, ILGWU CONVENTION, 1920.

### "No Holds Barred"



### N. J. Workers Hit Health Violations In Struck Shops

NORTH HUDSON, N. J., May 20, 1916—A. Goldberg, of 352 Spring St., West Hoboken, one of the striking garment workers of that town, has complained to the West Hoboken Board of Health that six or seven persons sleep under unsanitary conditions at the shop of G. Rosenblum, at 810 Monastery St. He declared that the proprietor was afraid that the men would not come to work again if he let them outside the building at night.

Health Officer Frank A. Frederick referred the striker to August Graf, factory inspector of the State Department of Labor, who is located in Hoboken, and the officer is expected to make an inspection.

The strikers of North Hudson claim that out of 400 employed in the 13 ladies' garment shops in North Hudson, 300 are out on strike. Practically all the shops throughout North Hudson are closed.

At a recent meeting the strikers declared that "we strikers of West Hoboken, Union Hill, West New York and North Bergen pledge ourselves to stay strong with the Cloak and Skirtmakers' Union."

—HUDSON OBSERVER



## Hundreds Flock to Union As 200 New Shops Settle

NEW YORK, Feb. 9, 1916—At 2 o'clock this afternoon, sights and scenes were witnessed in the shop district which will never be forgotten. All the waist and dress shops were emptied of their human contents and for more than an hour they marched in orderly procession, principally through Fifth and Fourth Aves., filling the cross streets and other thoroughfares. Large masses of girls, interspersed with men, marched down to Union Square. Here they passed the offices of the ILGWU.

As early as 6 A.M., committees with the red strike circular in their hands spread all over the shop districts. They stationed themselves at every point of vantage, so as not to miss a single worker going to work.

Several girls were arrested by the police for distributing the circular. This didn't stop the committees.

The walkout and march to the halls proved a most impressive demonstration of solidarity and organized power.

As to the girls, they were of varied nationality and tongue; some very young, having the appearance of school children; others probably mothers of poor families, forced by dire circumstances to be breadwinners in the daytime and housekeepers in the evenings.

American, Jewish, Italian and Negro girls and women were marching side by side. Russian, Polish and some Chinese girls were seen in the ranks of the marchers. All walking with proud, conscious gait, feeling that it was a battle for rights, for bread and freedom.

A well-dressed couple on Fifth Ave. stopped some of the girls and inquired as to the meaning of the march. When the latter answered gleefully "on strike" the couple was dumbfounded.

The strikers marched downtown to the halls assigned for them where the conversation referred principally to incidents of the great walkout. They told of how the workers of the open shops had joined the army of strikers.

### Independents Sign

On the third day of the strike hundreds of applications for settlement were received from independent employers. The workers returned to work as fast as settlements were made. A squad of 2,000 pickets watched the remaining shops.

The union has won an increase of wages for all the workers. The working hours now are 49 instead of 50. The union has won something that no union in this or any other country has ever won before, however bitter or prolonged the strike. We mean the extra pay for overtime to piece workers.

### Union Rolls Doubled

Above all, the union has been immensely strengthened. Its membership has almost doubled, and it has organized more than 200 new shops.

The workers now realize their organized power and the strength of unity more than ever. What is necessary now is to keep up the spirit of unity, loyalty and organization. The secret of strength is: all the workers united in their shop, all the shops united in their union. Seek to learn and understand; carry out all orders and decisions; pay your dues regularly; attend the meetings punctually and consult the officers and act on their advice in regard to all difficulties.

—THE MESSAGE,  
Feb. 18, March 3, 1916.

## 'Even the Devil Don't Love Scabs'

By "MOTHER" JONES  
(Militant strike leader of the  
Pennsylvania coal miners)

Today I visited garment shops in 20th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves., and saw girls escorted down to automobiles by the hired bloodhounds of the employers. Any girl who allows herself to be picked up by one of those bloodhounds does not deserve the name of woman.

I remember the time when the miners worked 16 hours a day, but conditions have improved. They have improved because the men and women were willing to fight and, if necessary, die, for they knew that those who remained would benefit by their sacrifices.

I tell you girls that the day is coming when you will work only six hours a day. And that is long enough for anybody to remain at a machine. But you will have to fight for it, just the same as you have had to fight for the nine-hour day.

When I have the working girls behind me I know that they will fight to the finish and we will make the slave-driving bosses come to terms. If they try to intimidate you girls by their hired gunmen and thugs, who believe that they can force you to go back to work by clubbing, don't stand for it.

Don't give up! Stay on the picket line. No policeman has the right to stop you. If they try to stop you 40,000 women will march down to the Mayor and make these corporation dogs of war stop their strike-breaking activities.

Don't go scabbing, or we'll put a label on your back that will keep you out of heaven, and even the devil doesn't want a scab.

—THE MESSAGE, Mar. 3, 1916

## WALKOUT OF 450 AT CORSET CO. BRINGS ILG TO SPRINGFIELD

SPRINGFIELD, Mass., Nov., 1915—The origin of the Springfield local is to be credited to a great extent to the untiring efforts of Miss Rose Schneiderman. She was sent to Springfield by the general office at the request of a member of the Massachusetts Wage Board of the Corset Industry.

Upon her arrival she held an open-air meeting in front of the Bay State Corset Co. building and invited the girls to come to a meeting at the headquarters of the Central Labor Union. They came and lost no time in speaking out loud their grievances and complaints.

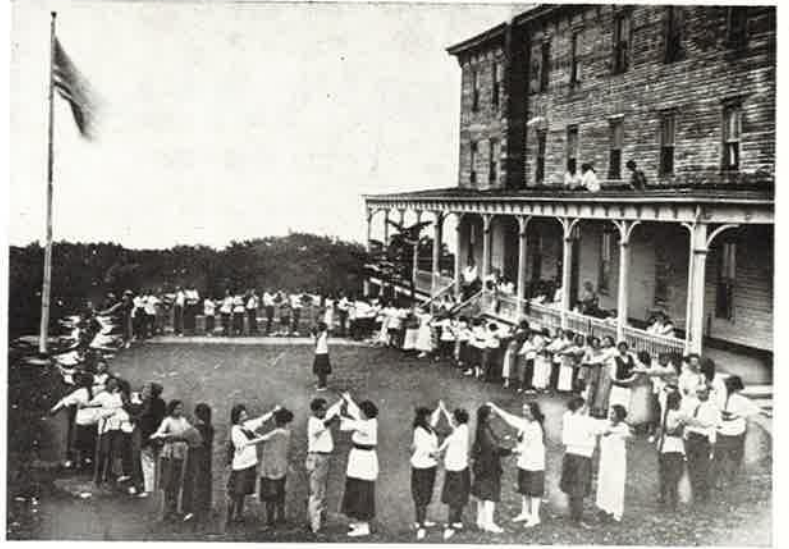
The following morning the firm discharged six of the girls appointed as the shop committee at the meeting. Immediately the shop rose in revolt and before the noon hour came every one of the 450 girls at the shop walked out. They were followed by 50 girls employed by the Quaboag Corset Co.

Then things began to happen. A meeting was held immediately at Central Labor Hall, at which many of the leading labor men in town were present as speakers. The Teamsters' Union of the town issued an order that union teamsters were not to do any hauling for the Bay State factory while the strike was on. The whole town was aroused in sympathy for the brave girls who dared to organize to improve their conditions.

One of the main grievances of the girls was the thread tax which forced them to buy the thread they were using in their work, which ate pretty deeply into their meagre earnings, and numerous other complaints, such as unsanitary conditions of the shops, cruel treatment by the forewomen, etc.

The first days of the strike passed in a state of deadlock. The girls picketed the shops, and the firm stood pat on its refusal to deal with the girls collectively. The Massachusetts State Board of Arbitration sent over a commissioner to Springfield and he, together with Miss Schneiderman and a committee of the local Central Labor Union, has finally succeeded in bringing a conviction to the struck firm that they were up against a real fight.

## Unity House at Overlook Mt.



Folk dancing at the union's popular upstate New York resort.

## Beard Among Noted Educators Opening ILG Workers School

NEW YORK, Nov. 30, 1917—An evening of extraordinary inspiration was the impression of all members of the International who had the good fortune to be present at the opening of the Workers' University of the ILGWU. A group of speakers such as is seldom gathered for the labor movement or for any other audience came to register their congratulations and their desire for service to the labor movement in its great new educational undertaking.

Dr. Charles A. Beard, who recently resigned from Columbia University as a protest against the restriction of free speech, offered his services to the new educational undertaking as chairman of the advisory board, and pointed out the two great needs of the labor movement, Knowledge and Solidarity, each of which aids and encourages the other. The true object of labor education, he said, should be to produce an intelligent working class, but not to lift workers out of their class.

—THE MESSAGE

After a week of striking they signed an agreement which conceded to the girls practically every point under discussion.

—LADIES' GARMENT WORKER

## Toronto Employers Brought to Terms By 11-Week Strike

TORONTO, July, 1919 — In the first days of July, after a preliminary effort to open negotiations with the organized cloak employers of Toronto had failed, a general strike was declared, simultaneously with the walkout of the Montreal cloakmakers. The employers' association was found not unprepared, and it soon became evident that a protracted strike was imminent. The employers' association enlisted on its behalf the cooperation and support of all the organized employers of Toronto, and the individual cloak firms were bound financially not to give in to the union.

The strike lasted for more than 11 weeks. The International Office generously supported this stubborn fight, endeavoring to bring it to a victorious conclusion. At one time the General Executive Board was inclined to call off the strike and to renew it the following season with more vigor and determination, thus wearing out the employers in a continuous series of battles.

Finally, the contest was settled through negotiations. The principal objects sought by the union, among which were the 44-hour week, substantial raises for the workers, time-and-a-half for overtime and eight legal holidays with pay, were granted. The questions of week work and some minor demands were referred to subsequent negotiations between the representatives of the union and the employers.

—REPORT, ILGWU CONVENTION, 1920.

## 48-Hr. Week, Union Shops in Cincinnati Secured by Strike

CINCINNATI, Mar. 9, 1917—The general strike of the Cincinnati cloakmakers, which began Feb. 7, was settled completely during last week, and practically all workers already have returned to their jobs.

Settlement terms include the following:

1. Complete union shop (only union members will be employed);
2. A 48-hour work-week;
3. Wage scale of \$26 for cutters, \$26.50 for sample makers, and raises of \$2 a week for all other week workers;
4. Piece rates to be settled by a price committee on the basis of 75 cents an hour for jacket operators, 60 cents for skirt operators, 60 cents for pressers and 50 cents for finishers.

—NEW POST

## Celebrating Pickets' Release



This group of Herzog workers in Chicago turned out to greet their co-workers being released from jail. Pickets were arrested during 1915 strike.



# General Cloak Strike Called

(Continued from Page 1)

ter 11 o'clock they took on the appearance of the Bowery at 6 o'clock, when the great streams of workers flow westward from the marts of industry on their way home.

Both sides of Fifth Ave. were filled with tramping workers, some going quietly, others with waving of hats and cheers. The side streets emptied their tributary currents into the main stream constantly. Along Union Square from 11 o'clock on there was an uninterrupted procession. At noon they were still marching southward and eastward along the square and down Fourth Ave. to the halls where the strikers have so often met in the past—Arlington, Beethoven, Webster, Clinton, Progress, Assembly, Manhattan Lyceum, Grand Central Palace and so on.

On the 10th floor of 32 Union Square a keen-eyed and alert man, Benjamin Schlesinger, president of the ILGWU, received reports of the gradual speed of the strike with evidence of calm satisfaction. Everything had worked out as it had been planned. Within a short time after the calling of the general strike 5,000 pickets, under the picket committee, were at their posts, and the settlement committee was in session at the Hotel Latham.

"This is the most far-reaching strike in the history of the garment trades in this city," said Schlesinger, as he watched the unbroken stream of workers file past the door on the way to the halls, "but it is not of our making. The manufacturers brought it on by declaring the lock-out."

—BROOKLYN EAGLE

## \$200 Check from Blind Writer to Aid Cloak Battle

By HELEN KELLER  
(Deaf and blind American author and lecturer)

I am with the cloak strikers, heart and soul, in their heroic struggle. If it were possible, I should come to New York to help them with my voice, too. I enclose a check for \$200—my earnings—to be used for the strikers in the fight for better wages and a more human life.

May you remain strong and united until your battle is won. Whatever may happen, yours is the strength of a just cause. You are fighting for the right to a life better than the soul-quenching struggle for daily bread, the happiness of your children. Your courage, your enthusiasm, your perseverance are the hope of fellow-workers, who bear grievous burdens. Your solidarity will help them win their battles. Let the result of this strike be what it may, the daring fight you have made will be a proud memory, an inspiration, a challenge to all who toil.

The cloakmakers are not asking for charity. They ask for a chance to live. Every dollar you contribute today will count as much as two dollars tomorrow. It will relieve want, and it will help prove to the employers that they cannot defy public sentiment. Show them that the day of cave-man ethics is past.

—NEW YORK TIMES, July 8, 1916

## ASSOCIATION SNUBS COUNCIL RULING ON PREFERENTIAL HIRING

(Continued from Page 1)

very moment in which the contract was made. That was a signal defeat for the union.

At our next meeting, the union presented the following request: "Since you cannot interpret the word 'hiring' in what you yourselves admit to be the spirit of the agreement, at least give us the assurance that the man who is hired, in the moment in which he is hired, is a bona fide union man in good standing."

When we gave the first decision, the manufacturers' association was entirely satisfied with it. When we defined the word "unionist" to mean a "unionist in good standing," they threw our decision in our faces, and declined to abide by it, despite the fact that they had agreed to abide by the agreement for two years, and despite the fact that when after 23 sessions in the hot month of July, 1915, we finally obtained the consent of both sides to the agreement, it was understood that the council itself should be the interpreter of this agreement.

We were acting strictly in accordance with this understanding, and we were interpreting to the best of our ability and good faith the language of this agreement. And then we had the mortification of finding that one side refused to abide by our decision.

The union then first declared that the manufacturers, by refusing to abide by the decision of the council, had thrown up the arrangement, and declined to have any further official arrangements with the manufacturers' association.

—"The Lockout in the Cloak and Suit Industry."

## THOUSANDS LINING EAST SIDE STREETS CHEER CLOAK MARCH

NEW YORK, July 6, 1916—Cloak strikers by the thousands gathered this morning in the side streets between Second and Third Aves., from 13th St. to 2nd St. in preparation for the parade which marks the 10th week of the struggle against the manufacturers.

The East Side, as much of it as lives in that district, was on the street, applauding its fathers, brothers and husbands, and even its sisters and daughters, who also took part in the parade. There were few bands and no uniforms, the only spots of color being great American flags carried at the head of the divisions and red roses worn on the white waists of marching girls.

But even those whose clothes hung most loosely and whose straw hats were of last year's vintage, whose limbs were old and no longer supple enough for the long stride that carries one easily over long miles of parade—even they stepped out bravely with their comrades and waved to their friends who lined the sidewalk to watch them pass. For this parade was the vindication of their union, a demonstration that it was still alive after 10 weeks of no wages, that it had not yet given in to the manufacturers and would not until its just demands were heard.

—EVENING POST

## Showing Strikers' Strength



Sol Polakoff addresses huge rally of cloakmakers in Union Square on July 6, 1916.

## Professors Blame Assn. For Making 60,000 Idle

NEW YORK, May 29, 1916—Responsibility for the lockout of 60,000 garment workers is placed squarely upon the shoulders of the executive committee of the Manufacturers' Protective Assn. in a statement issued yesterday by a group of political scientists and economists, including the best known instructors in those subjects at Columbia and other local universities.

The breakdown of the agreement between employers and employees, which has kept peace in the trade for five years, seemed highly im-

portant to these men, who got together and agreed to study the causes. They received statements from the Manufacturers' Protective Assn. and from the ILGWU. These statements were compared, and afterward a statement of facts believed to be correct was drawn from them.

This was submitted to the manufacturers' association, with a request that it be corrected when wrong, or amplified where inaccurate or incomplete.

The conclusion of the noted educators follows:

The officers of the association have replied that our statement of the facts is substantially correct.

From these facts, which are now undisputed, our conclusion after careful consideration is that the Manufacturers' Protective Assn. broke its two-year agreement, which had still more than a year to run, without other justification than the fact that the agreement might hereafter be broken by the union at a time less favorable to the manufacturers' interests.

The basis for this fear that the union was planning to strike at a favorable time is hard to discover.

It seems to us that the real reason for the action of the manufacturers is that its officers were unwilling to accept the consequences of their agreement and, as their president has stated, they wished to take advantage of an opportunity to return to the conditions existing prior to 1910.

We regard this as little less than a public calamity and urge that every effort be made to restore the agreement not only for the protection of the employees, but also for the protection of the public interests so vitally involved in the economic security of those who are just entering upon industrial life in America.

In our opinion a just interpretation of the admitted facts warrants fixing the burden of responsibility for the present crisis directly upon the shoulders of the executive committee of the Manufacturers' Protective Association.

Charles A. Beard  
Wendell T. Bush  
J. P. Chamberlain  
John Dewey  
Franklin H. Giddings  
Robert L. Hale  
Carlton J. H. Hayes  
Samuel McCune Lindsay  
Arthur MacMahon  
William P. Montague  
Parker T. Moon

Herbert L. Osgood  
Thomas I. Parkinson  
James Harvey Robinson  
Robert Livingston Schuyler  
Henry R. Seager  
Edwin R. A. Seligman  
Robert N. Shenton  
W. R. Sherperd  
James T. Shotwell  
A. A. Tenney  
Donald B. Tucker

—THE CALL

## Strike Relief



Striking cloakmakers waiting before their East 21st St. headquarters to collect \$2 weekly strike benefit.



## STRIKE BULLETINS

**MAY 6, 1916**—Five hundred independent cloak and suit manufacturers have made application to the settlement committee of the Cloakmakers' Union to be permitted to reopen their shops and resume operations, which have been interrupted since the strike went into effect last Tuesday.

It was stated today at union headquarters that within another week, the majority of the 30,000 strikers employed by the independent firms would be back at work, with increased wages, shorter hours and other advantages demanded by the union.

All those who return to work will give 10 per cent of their wages to the union while the strike is in progress.

—EVENING TELEGRAM

**MAY 8**—Although 8,000 of the 60,000 striking garment makers in this city are to return to work today in 73 independent shops, little progress has been made toward settlement of the dispute between the union and the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Assn.

There are indications that the strike may be extended into Bridgeport, Conn., and towns in New Jersey. Officials of the union are investigating reports that contracts have been sublet and women's suits and skirts are being manufactured for New York shops in nearby cities.

—EVENING TELEGRAM

**MAY 9**—The clothing strike may extend to the fashionable shops on Fifth Ave., according to a statement issued yesterday by Benjamin Schlesinger, president of the ILGWU. Mr. Schlesinger said that he had information that many of the fashionable Fifth Ave. shops were making models for the manufacturers' association, which this union is fighting. If proof is received, the president of the union said that he would call a strike of the union employees in the shops.

—N. Y. HERALD

**MAY 10**—"This is not an arbitrable matter," was the response received today by Michael H. Reagan, industrial mediator of the State Bureau of Mediation and Arbitration, when he urged the Manufacturers' Protective Assn. to take the initiative in restoring peace with the garment makers, 60,000 of whom are out of work through lockout and strike.

Mr. Reagan was informed by the organization that "this is a fight to the finish. The manufacturers don't want any arbitration. They're not seeking peace. They want this fight to go on until the union recognizes the right of an employer to run his own shop."

—EVENING SUN

**MAY 25**—Collection of an \$800,000 fund to fight the Cloakmakers' Union was begun yesterday by the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Assn. An assessment of 1 per cent of the business done by the members during the last year has been levied by the executive committee of the association. This will be devoted to hiring 500 strong-arm men to guard the 400 association shops. The guards will be recruited from local "detective" agencies which make a specialty of furnishing thugs for strike duty.

—THE CALL

**MAY 30**—Organization of the greatest cooperative enterprise ever launched in New York is perfected and within a few days the ILGWU will put into operation eight commissary centers which will furnish food to 100,000 men, women and children affected by the cloakmakers' general strike. Prominent men and women have volunteered to aid the strikers in their gigantic enterprise. The ILGWU will spend \$250,000 on supplies for the stores and when this sum is exhausted it is believed wealthy sympathizers will provide funds to keep the workers and their families from starving.

—THE CALL

**JUNE 2**—E. J. Wile, president of the Cloak and Suit Manufacturers' Assn., last night said his organization is "through with the union" in referring to the 50,000 locked out and on strike.

To 400 members of the Garment Salesmen's Assn., gathered at the Hotel Martinique last night, he declared, for the first time since the trouble began, that the struggle with the workers' organization would be war to the death.

"We are through with the union forever," he cried. "We have been preparing for this struggle for several years, just as the union has been doing."

—N. Y. AMERICAN

**JUNE 2**—The lifting of the lockout yesterday in the cloak and suit industry produced no apparent result beyond the tightening of the lines around the union camps.

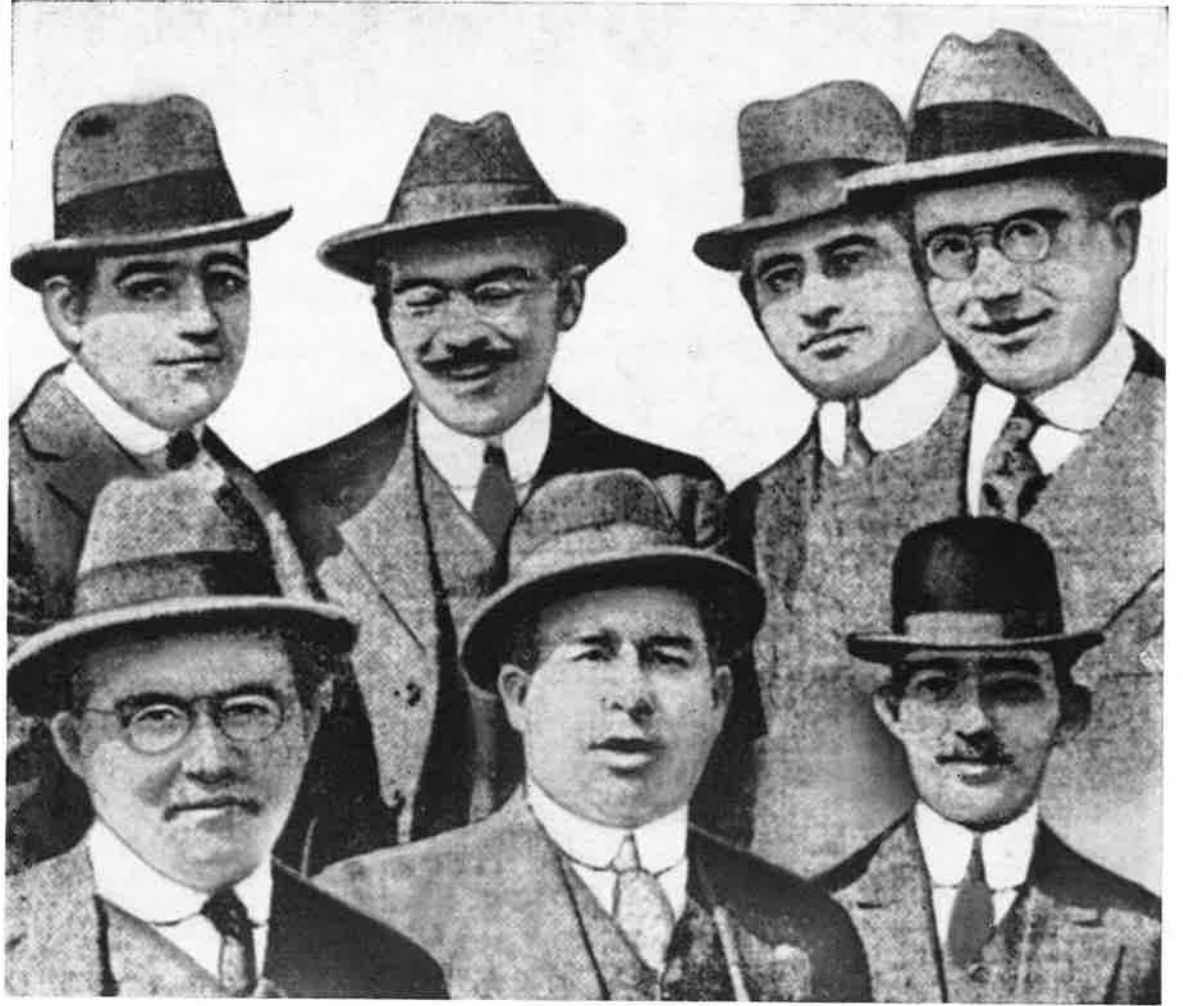
"It is simply Hester St. strategy upon the part of the manufacturers," said Benjamin Schlesinger, president of the union.

—N. Y. HERALD

**JUNE 14**—Members of the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Assn. flatly refused yesterday to attend a conference arranged by the Citizens' Committee, a neutral body composed of wealthy and influential New Yorkers who have been trying to settle the differences through arbitration. The manufacturers also sent to the strikers an official notice, written in three languages, saying in substance that it was their plan to hire an army of strikebreakers if they were forced to. The statement informs the strikers that they will get "a reasonable time to return to the shops, but that if they do not do so soon, steps will be taken to fill their places."

—THE SUN

## Found Not Guilty



The seven defendants shown during a recess in the trial. Left to right (top): Sol Metz, Morris Sigman, Isilore Ashpis, Julius Wolf; (bottom) Max Singer, Morris Stupnickier and Abraham Weidiger.

—The World

# Jury Acquits Seven Officers Indicted on Fake Evidence

(Continued from Page 1)

"This is a complete victory, not only of the defendants but of organized labor," said Hillquit. "It is a complete condemnation of the Sulkes scab agency and its methods of manufacturing evidence to send responsible labor leaders to prison, if not to the electric chair."

Former District Attorney Olcott opened yesterday's session at 10 o'clock with the summing up for the defense. He reviewed the struggle of the cloakmakers to better their conditions, describing their revolt in the general strike of 1910 against intolerable conditions. Before the general strike, he said, the well and the diseased were herded in sweatshops.

"These toilers did not have sufficient food and were compelled to work excessive hours for less than a living wage," said Olcott. "These conditions might have been righted by the employers, but that was not done, and the strike for better lives and fair treatment was led by men of determination and wisdom, among whom are these defendants."

"We must expect that strong-arm methods are not those of these people. The District Attorney has admitted that the tales of the participation of Dopey Benny and his strong-arm men were false."

"It was proven that the great strike was conducted with orderliness and that the only violence that marked the eight weeks' contest was the death of Liebowitz. If there had been other acts of violence the District Attorney certainly would have brought evidence of

them to show that there were similar occurrences.

"The blow that caused Liebowitz to cry out 'Oi' not only brought tears to the eyes of his widow, but it caused these defendants to groan with anguish. Violence of any sort was the one thing they had to fear, for they knew they would lose the confidence of the public if strong-arm methods were used. All during the strike the leaders succeeded in restraining the most emotional lot of men in this city."

Isaac Levine and Benjamin Polar are "proven perjurers," according to Olcott. Their testimony that they saw Sigman and Stupnickier strike Liebowitz was a fabrication concocted, he said, because of the hatred of the Sulkes scab agency for the leaders of the legitimate cloakmakers' unions.

### All a Sulkes Conspiracy

That the entire case was a conspiracy of the scab and detective agency of Max Sulkes was charged by Olcott. He said four years passed after the death of Liebowitz before the proprietor of the scab agency promised the protection of the District Attorney to those who would testify against the leaders of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

"When Levine and Polar, with their minute minds, said they told their story after four years because of the promised protection of the District Attorney, they forgot that the police department at any time during these years would have afforded the same protection," said Olcott. "They waited four years, not

because of their fear, but because of Sulkes.

"Back of all this perjured testimony is Sulkes, the private detective who sought largess and contributions from the men who wanted to continue sweatshop labor. Sulkes chose Levine as the most promising perjurer to charge organized labor with a murder, and strike down with an irreparable blow the legitimate cloakmakers' union. Sulkes knew that if he could fasten the stigma of murder on a labor organization it would go down into oblivion. With the powerful union out of the way, Sulkes could exploit the cloakmakers and manufacturers by his fake union."

### Defendants Not at Scene

Olcott showed that the defense proved Sigman, Ashpis, Singer and Stupnickier were not near the picket committee hall at the time of the attack on Liebowitz early on the morning of Aug. 1, 1910. Weidiger, the only one of the defendants who was in the hall, Olcott showed, was not near the scene of the fight in which Liebowitz was injured, and first knew of it when a picket rushed in with the news from the street.

Assistant District Attorney Delahanty, in his summing up for the prosecution, painted a pretty dreadful picture of the supposed labor court of the picket committee at which strikebreakers were sentenced to punishments that ranged from beatings to death. The speedy verdict of the jury indicated how much they believed Delahanty's wild tale, which has won much publicity in the capitalist press.

—THE CALL



## STRIKE BULLETINS

**JUNE 24, 1916**—Several thousand tailors and sympathizers—among whom were many anarchists, according to the police, assembled on Fifth Ave. yesterday without notifying the police. The parade came to a halt in front of the Union Club at 51st St.

"Go back to work," cried a member of the club, sticking his head out of a window and commanding the mob to disperse. He was jeered and quickly pulled in his head to avoid a derby hat hurled his way. "Go back to work yourself!" many in the crowd shouted at him.

Meantime, a riot call had been sent in by a patrolman, and while the club members were peeping out the sides of their windows, expecting an attack in force, the police reserves dashed into sight from the East 51st St. station.

—THE WORLD

**JULY 13**—Although for a time yesterday afternoon the conferences between representatives of the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Assn. and the ILGWU threatened to end in a hopeless break, a conciliation was effected. When the sessions adjourned until this afternoon, both parties were more optimistic than at any time since the meetings started. It was intimated that Samuel Gompers might be present this afternoon to act as presiding officer at the conference.

—N. Y. HERALD

**JULY 17**—While 15,000 pickets patrolled the cloak and suit manufacturing districts today, representatives of the strikers and employers, in conference in the Metropolitan Tower, battled on the preferential union shop issue.

Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, presided at the conference. He made it plain that he had at his back the united strength of 2,000,000 members of his organization who would fight to uphold the dignity of the union.

—EVENING MAIL

**JULY 19**—With charges and counter-charges of bad faith and unfair aggression flying back and forth, the striking garment workers and the employers yesterday broke off their conferences working toward a settlement of the strike and lockout.

The seventh meeting between representatives of the association and of the union in the Metropolitan Building proved to be the last. Samuel Gompers, president of the AFL, who had been attending the peace meetings, abandoned hope of a settlement and left for Washington.

—THE SUN

**JULY 20**—Following the announcement in Washington today that President Wilson had called for an immediate Federal investigation into the cloakmakers' strike here, representatives of the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Assn. and officials of the union went into secret session at the Hotel Knickerbocker this afternoon, with the intention, if possible, of agreeing upon tentative terms of a settlement. It was predicted on both sides that the conference would lead to a final settlement.

—EVENING POST

**JULY 26**—Shortly before midnight last night the General Strike Committee of the 60,000 striking cloakmakers, by a divided vote, decided to accept in its entirety the tentative agreement reached between representatives of the union and the cloak manufacturers Monday night at their conference, and to submit it to the strikers today for ratification. This action followed a session at the Broadway Central that had lasted throughout the day and far into the night.

—THE CALL

### Meeting Adjourned



After the whitegoods workers regular meeting at Hennington Hall.

## Bitterly Fought Strike In Dress, Waists Wins 44-Hour Week, Raises

**APRIL, 1919**—The last agreement between Local 25 and the Dress and Waist Manufacturers' Assn. was to expire on Jan. 1, 1919. Both sides were to meet two months before its expiration to discuss the terms of the new agreement. Local 25 decided upon a number of new provisions to be embodied in the new agreement. Together with the International it submitted these demands to the manufacturers and proposed immediate arbitration on all these questions in case of failure to come to a mutual understanding in conference.

The manufacturers met all these demands with a flat refusal, and in addition served notice upon the union that unless it will give the manufacturers the freedom to discharge workers at will, it will no longer deal with the union.

Shortly thereafter, at a great mass meeting in Madison Square Garden on Jan. 18, 1919, the waist-makers endorsed unanimously the demands presented by Local 25, and on Jan. 21 the industry in New York City came to a standstill.

### 3,500 Arrests

The strike was by far the bitterest in the history of the local. The tens of thousands of women workers fought with indefatigable courage and self-devotion the battle for their rights and for the standing of their organization. It would be impossible to recite the events of that strike within the brief space of this report. Suffice it to say that no less than 3,500 arrests were made for the crime of peaceful picketing.

This marvelous fight has added another glorious chapter to the history of the working women organized under the banner of our union. The remarkable Monday morning picketing demonstrations aroused the entire city and directed the attention of the country to the issues of our contest. The conflict soon developed into a test of endurance—a test which threatened very soon to destroy the production of the entire season and to wipe out numerous firms together with their business.

### Dress Assn. Settles

After the strike was in progress for three weeks, a large number of dress and waist manufacturers withdrew from the association and with a great many heretofore independent dress firms organized a separate association of dress manufacturers. This new association, soon after its formation, entered into an agreement with the union, conceding practically every demand of the workers including the 44-hour week.

The jobbers in the dress trade also organized themselves into an association and signed an agreement with the union for all contractors.

The fight thereupon narrowed down to the waist industry which was controlled by the Dress and Waist Manufacturers' Assn. With the aid of all our New York locals and the locals outside of New York, the International raised a big defense fund.

At the end of nine weeks (towards the end of March), after an attempt made by Drs. W. J. Schiefelin and Henry Moscowitz, we were brought together with the manufacturers and the conferences were again begun. On Apr. 7 an agreement was reached which ended the protracted contest.

## London, Other Candidates Get Active ILG Aid

**DECEMBER, 1919** — During the campaigns of 1918-1919, our locals in New York City and in many other cities were actively engaged in aiding the candidates of labor in the political field.

The Joint Board of New York and all its affiliated locals were particularly interested in the campaign conducted in several congressional districts in New York, notably in the candidacy of Meyer London and of a score of Socialist candidates in a number of assembly and aldermanic districts. A corps of speakers and canvassers was organized, which devoted a great deal of time and energy during the campaign and on election day.

During these campaigns it was more than ever demonstrated that the great masses of our members are deeply interested in the political problems of labor and that they could always be relied on to give unstinted support to the party which expresses the aspirations of labor at the polls.

—REPORT, ILGWU CONVENTION, 1920.

means, through a display of a spirit of conciliation and understanding.

—REPORT, ILGWU CONVENTION, 1920.

## New Cloak Pact Revives Workers' Right to Strike

**NEW YORK, Aug. 4, 1916**—The striking cloakmakers ratified the new agreement with the manufacturers' association yesterday by a substantial vote. This is what they gain:

**Wage increases from 6 to 10 per cent.**

**Regular work-week of 49 hours.**

**Overtime limited to 10 hours.**

**Double pay for all overtime.**

**Committee to establish prices.**

**Right to strike against injustice.**

The principal gain is the liberty of action to the union.

The referendum of cloakmakers, taken in 20 union halls yesterday, ratified the new agreement between the union and the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Assn. It is expected that the union will order all members affected by the agreement back to work on Monday.

The ballots were taken in the halls, counted by the shop chairmen and reported to the General

Strike Committee, which met last night at Central Opera House, 67th St. between Second and Third Aves. Here it was announced by Benjamin Schlesinger, president of the union, that the vote to approve the new agreement was carried by a proportion of seven to three.

Members of the General Strike Committee and Joint Board of Cloakmakers in attendance breathed a great deal easier when Schlesinger announced the result of the voting. At last the strain of the long strike was over. They behaved like children released from school, slapping each other on the back and congratulating the union leaders.

—THE CALL

### Labor Solidarity



This group of Chicago ILGers are out to raise money for the striking steel workers.



# NEWS-HISTORY

## Editorials

### We Are 130,000 Strong

The unavoidable course of history finally has caught up with industrial relations in our industry. After six years of mending and patching, of backing and filling, the "Protocol Agreement" came to a violent death in the cloak and suit trades in 1916, and to a more peaceful extinction in the dress and waist industry—first in New York and shortly after that in the other markets where "Protocol" features were in operation.

We had just emerged out of that fearful nightmare—the Murder Trial of the Seven Cloakmakers—in 1915 with heightened spirits and we plunged into organizing activity on a large scale the country over. In New York, the haggling with the employers over the term "preferential shop" and its limitations continued. The Mayor's Council of Conciliation's *modus vivendi* in 1915 proved only an armed truce. The cloakmakers were chafing at the leash which forbade action against conniving anti-union employers, and the Cloak Protective Assn. was led by men who still thought that they could vanquish the union by one drastic coup.

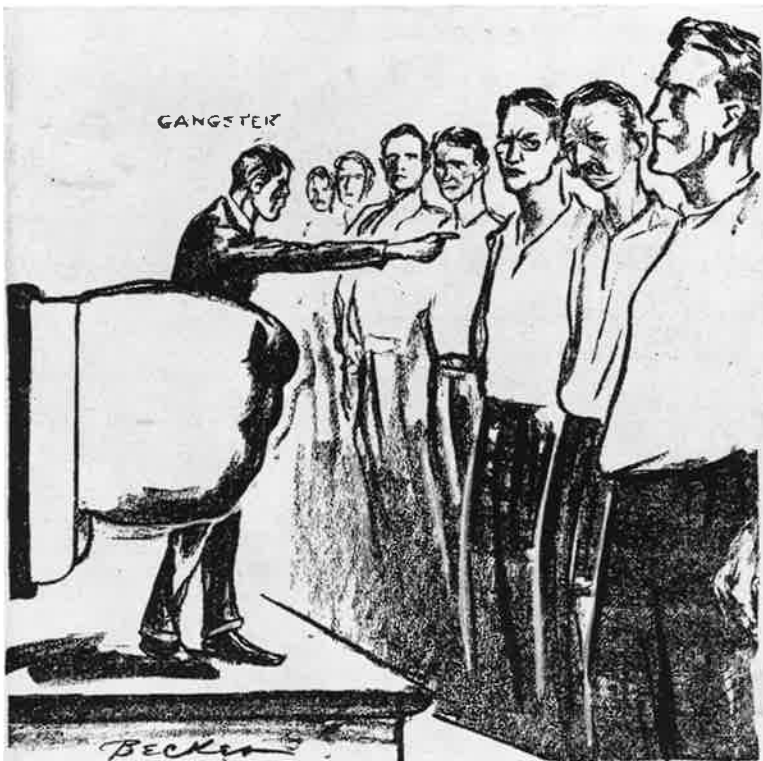
The climax came when on April 28, 1916, the "Protective" locked out 25,000 workers from its 409 shops, and the union forthwith pulled out the other 35,000 from the independent and contractor shops. A bitter conflict lasting 14 weeks, during which public opinion was completely on our side, ended with the abolition of the "Protocol." We signed a straight union shop contract with the industry, giving the workers the *liberty to strike* but also granting the employers the *right to hire and fire*. Our people were jubilant.

\* \* \*

It should not, however, be said or thought that the "Protocol" was a complete waste in our industrial experience. When inaugurated in 1910, it had the positive quality of a basic stabilizing factor in an industry without a semblance of order or decency. It taught the employers a mighty—if not fully digested—lesson in treatment of labor. And it lifted the women's garment trades from the status of a despised industry to that of national interest and importance.

The outcome of the cloak lockout-strike and the economic successes scored during that same year in the dress industry of New York, once again has cleared the field for the International Union for far-flung organization work.

### "Finger Man"



—Becker in *The Call*

### Look to Week Work for End Of "Speed-Up"

The change in the system of work would abolish, first of all, the haggling over prices and all the troubles attending and resulting from the piece-work method. Every worker in our trades knows well what hardship and inconvenience are caused by the continual wrangling with the employers over piece prices; how difficult it is to get proper price committees; how hard it is to avoid the underhanded methods of tricky employers to deceive and get the better of the committees, and what ill-feeling is thereby created between the employers and the workers, resulting in discharges and even frequent strikes.

The history of our unions for the last few years fairly bristles with such events and disturbances of the piece-work system. All this would automatically disappear with the abolition of the piece system. Of course, it may be argued that some other difficulties would appear to take their place, but these possible drawbacks would be of a limited nature and would not involve the union in a constant and endless series of wrangling.

Week work would also, to a certain extent, eliminate the evil of sub-manufacturing. With the present system, when every shop adjusts its own prices, it is impossible to prevent some shops from doing the same work at different prices. In fact, in most cases the earnings depend largely on the composition of the price committee in the shops. Where the price committee is firm and courageous, it succeeds in gaining good earnings for the workers, and where the committee is weak and indifferent, it consents to lower prices. This absence of uniformity of action leads to competition among the workers, which inherently weakens the union and is injurious to the welfare of our membership. Under week work all this would naturally disappear.

The hurry and rush and the over-taxing of strength, which is so natural under the piece-work system, will disappear together with the idea that in order to secure larger earnings they must drive their machines with all the energy left in them. The system of week work must tend to prolong the seasons, because it will be impossible to get as much work done in short seasons as at present.

We fully realize that an industry, the output of which is determined by the style factor, can not furnish work all the year round, but it would be a great gain to us if we succeeded in extending the seasons by two months; that is, each season should start four weeks earlier. Two months additional work in the year would be of considerable benefit to our members. We believe that week work would give us the possibility to fortify our union and to apply our energies and efforts to purposes other than mere conduct of shop strikes and adjustment of price disputes which at present tax our time and resources all year round.

The Cloakmakers' Union of New York, after having discussed the matter from every angle at various district and shop chairmen's meetings, decided to put the proposition to a vote of the general membership. The referendum vote in which thousands of cloakmakers took part lasted six weeks and resulted in a vote in favor of week work, and against the retention of the old system.

—REPORT, ILGWU CONVENTION, 1918.

### "No Man's Friend"



—Cesare in *The Evening Post*

## Soaring Dress Prices Laid to Profiteering

May, 1920—We had expected that with the reduction of the hours of labor from 49 to 44 and with the introduction of week work, our working seasons would be lengthened. Our calculations were clear and sound. It stood to reason that to produce the quantity of clothes required by the market under a week-work system and a 44-hour week, would take a great deal more time than under a piece-work system. We find now, however, that the seasons have not only not been lengthened, but in many cases are even shorter than they were formerly.

The paramount cause is the expensiveness of clothes. Women's wear is so high-priced that women have stopped buying it. The manufacturers have put forth the increased wages of the workers as the reason for the expensiveness of clothes. This is an untruth which must be nailed down.

The wages of our workers have been increased during the past few years only about 80 per cent while the prices of garments have risen by 300 and in some cases even 400 per cent.

The fact of the matter is that prices of garments are being boosted through profiteering. Manufacturers and jobbers are at present making profits such as they never dreamed of. Before the material which is to be made up into a garment reaches the manufacturers, on its way from the mill to the cutting table, it passes, in many cases, through the hands of five or six jobbers and each of these jobbers and middlemen who sell and resell these goods pile up handsome profits for themselves.

This is the worst sort of profiteering and this is the true reason why the prices of ladies' garments have soared so high—so abnormally high that a large portion of the population cannot afford to buy

new clothes. This, in turn, means shorter seasons and less employment for the workers. In fact, our workers suffer through this situation in a double way: they have less work and in addition have to face the terrible cost of living.

This situation must be made clear to the government so that steps will be taken against this marauding. If there are not enough laws on the statute books to punish the profiteers in our trades, it is the duty of Congress to enact such laws, and we recommend that this convention decide to urge Congress to act upon this matter with the greatest rapidity.

—REPORT, ILGWU CONVENTION, 1920.

### \$65,000 from ILGWU Aids Steel Strikers

The GEB of our International decided to start a nationwide campaign for relief for the strikers, by inaugurating a movement for a quarter-of-a-million-dollar fund for the steel strikers.

The example set by the ILGWU was quickly followed by a number of other internationals. The voluntary assistance, so generously offered to the strikers, served to stiffen their ranks and was a source of strength and inspiration in their hours of darkest despair. The sum collected from our members for this strike and forwarded to the strike committee was \$65,000.

—REPORT, ILGWU CONVENTION, 1920.