The Ladies’ Garment Worker, Volume 8, Issue 9

**Description**
First published in April 1910, *The Ladies' Garment Worker* was the official publication of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU) through 1918. The journal appeared monthly and included sections in English, Italian, and Yiddish. *The Ladies’ Garment Worker* was discontinued at the end of 1918 and replaced in January of 1919 by the new weekly journal of the ILGWU, *Justice*.

**Keywords**
International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union, ILGWU, The Ladies’ Garment Worker, labor unions, clothing workers, textile workers, garment workers, garment industry, New York, United States, English, Italian, Yiddish, Jewish

**Publisher**
International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU)

This book is available at DigitalCommons@ILR: https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/lgw_vol8/9
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<td>37. New Haven Corset Cutters</td>
<td>12 Parmenter Ave, New Haven, Conn</td>
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**Named shoes are frequently made in Non-Union factories**

**DO NOT BUY ANY SHOE**

no matter what its name, unless it bears a plain and readable impression of this UNION STAMP

All shoes without the UNION STAMP are always Non-Union

Do not accept any excuse for absence of the UNION STAMP

**BOOTS AND SHOE WORKERS' UNION**

246 Summer Street, Boston, Mass.

**JOHN J. JOBIN, Pres.**

**CHAS. L. Baine, Sec'y-Treas.**
Our General Executive Board at its quarterly meeting in Boston held last month, considered a very important plan involving all the 400,000 ladies' garment workers in all cities of the United States and Canada.

The plan is that the International shall draw up a series of general demands for all the workers of the fifteen trades affiliated with it, and endeavor to carry them through by all means at its command.

Included in these demands there shall be a forty-eight hour week; a minimum wage for full-fledged workers and beginners; week work replacing piece work, etc. Questions affecting the trades separately shall not be included.

Our International feels that the time has arrived when it can act as a great industrial union; when we can move all our fifteen separate armies at once, in one big drive for a general victory along the entire line.

There was a time when we had barely strength enough to conduct strikes in one or several individual shops at the same time. To-day we are at the opposite extreme. Now we feel that we are in a position to carry on a general fight that will include all the 400,000 workers engaged in the ladies' garment industries in the United States and Canada. We feel that we can engage in such a fight and win more quickly and easily than in every industry separately.

Naturally the plan will be submitted to the next International Convention to be held in June, 1918. We have no doubt that the great masses of our people will receive it with enthusiasm and that the convention will heartily indorse it.

* * *

We feel sure that the cloak makers throughout the country will receive the decision to introduce week work in all branches of their trade with enthusiasm and will co-operate with the General Executive Board in the effort to convert the decision into reality. Most of the piece workers in the cloak trade have long since discovered that the $40 or $50 a week they may earn in the few weeks of the season do not amount to more on an average than
the wage of the cutter, which is not more than $31.00 a week, or even that of the presser whose wage scale is $28.50, in spite of the fact that they work twice as hard.

Week work will do away with the system of price committees and the discriminations resulting from bargaining about prices. It will abolish the unseemly wrangling with the manufacturers, the heated arguments of both sides and persecution and discharge of our more active union men.

Week work will gradually eliminate the sub-factories. The piece work system makes it possible for the same garment to be made in every shop at a different price. Thus it pays the manufacturer to send his work out cut or unfinished to other shops, or sub-factories, whose prices are settled at lower rates than in his own factory. But under week work there will be one scale for all the workers of the same class, and the inside manufacturer will have no need to look for bargains in sub-factories because he will know that the operator-finisher gets the same scale of wages in all the shops.

When the workers of the trade will work by the week there will be no need for our unions to spend thousands of dollars every season on price adjusters and strikes caused by disputes about prices. The union will be in a position to care for the interest of its members with half the number of its present officers, and the thousands of dollars expended now, under the piece work system, on price adjusters and strikes will be diverted into useful funds to help the members in sickness and distress in the manner of our Cloak Makers' Union, Local No. 35.

Week work should henceforth be the slogan of the cloak makers. They must work or be paid like human beings.

THE VICTORY OF THE NEW YORK CLOAKMAKERS

Last month the New York cloakmakers won an important victory. Without resorting to warlike means, by amicable negotiation and conferences with the employers, the union secured for the workers an increase of wages which we may all consider as satisfactory. The increase may be seen from these figures:

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<tr>
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<th>1916</th>
<th>Present</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cutters</td>
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<tr>
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<td>28.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skirt Upper Pressers</td>
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<td>19.00</td>
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<td>16.50</td>
<td>17.50</td>
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<td>Jacket</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>24.00</td>
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<td>Skirt Blousers</td>
<td>15.50</td>
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<td>Drapers</td>
<td>16.00</td>
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<td>Skirt Flappers</td>
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| Buttonhole makers—an increase of 5 cents on 100 buttonholes.
Piece workers secured an increase on the base-rate per hour. The base-rate for the operators was raised from 75 cents to 80 cents per hour, and the base-rate for the finishers was raised from 55 cents to 60 cents an hour.

To appreciate this gain it must be borne in mind that the agreement with the manufacturers, signed after the strike of last year, was for a period of three years, and still had fully two years to run. That, naturally, was a good advertisement for the manufacturers. From the standpoint of the cold letter of the agreement we had no right to ask for a revision and a higher wage schedule. But the union felt that justice was on its side, and justice is very often above the law. We based our case on the fact that within the last year the cost of living has mounted up considerably. After all, wages represent the value of life's necessaries that may be obtained for the dollars and cents. We asked that the workers' wages should be more or less squared with the increase in the price of necessaries.

At first the manufacturers declined to listen to our requests, but we succeeded in weakening their opposition as the conferences progressed. First they offered a slight increase to a small number of the workers. Then they gradually conceded more and more, until we secured, not all we asked for, it is true, but a substantial part thereof. The essential point is, that all the workers got an increase as much or more than the increases granted at any former time after prolonged and bitter struggles.

The workers have every reason to congratulate themselves on this result. The bitter strike of last Summer, and the privation and sufferings of their families, must be still fresh in their memory. That strike resulted in an increase of wages and in rendering secure and safe the existence of the union. But when we compare that increase with the present one we cannot fail to see that the latter is more substantial. Aside from this, our recent negotiations with the manufacturers have considerably strengthened our position. We have demonstrated the fact that the union is strong with its own inner strength, without the aid of agreements; that the practical interests of the workers are above everything. We scored both a moral and practical victory. We won superior recognition from the manufacturers and have realized our superior power.

AS TO THE BASE-RATE FOR THE PIECE WORKERS

We want to consider here the question of the base-rate for the piece workers and the increase of 5 cents conceded by the manufacturers.

Reports have reached us that the piece workers are not satisfied. They claim that they did not benefit by the previous rates of 55 cents and 75 cents an hour, and they doubt whether they will get the present 60 and 80 cents rates.

We address ourselves here to the great masses of earnest piece workers who are permeated with the fundamental union principles of solidarity and harmony. We want to appeal to their true union sentiments and sound sense, and we say to them, come and let us reason together.
If the workers have not benefited by the base-rate in the last two years—is it their own fault? Who, if not they alone, should have endeavored to enforce the arrangements in the shops? If the base-rate is "a bluff" as some phrase mongers and irresponsible radicals in our union pretend—who turned it into a bluff if not the piece workers themselves?

The base-rate was one of many important gains the cloakmakers have acquired after prolonged agitation and difficult struggles. The question of price adjustment has been for many years an obstacle in the way of our progress. The principle the union has often won recognition and the right of the workers to earn a decent livelihood. But at the periodical price adjustments the improvements gained melted away. By diverse methods the employers succeeded in prevailing upon the price committees to be mild at price bargaining. In practice price adjustment is a business transaction; and as the employer has usually a keener business sense than his employees it was natural for him to get the best of the bargain.

After careful and diligent pondering over the problem the union finally arrived at a plan which at the time was received by the workers with the greatest enthusiasm, and rejected by the employers with indignation.

This plan was the said base-rate per hour for piece work. A distinct provision was inserted in the agreement between the union and the manufacturers' association stipulating the amount per hour to be earned by piece workers, and this amount was to serve as the basis or measure for settling piece prices.

Not content with this alone, the union drew up rules for the guidance of the workers in settling prices that proved the best and most effective safeguard under the circumstances. The most important of these were as follows:

Before the workers of a shop select a price committee they must hold a meeting to which only those who are members of the union in good standing are admitted. This must be held in a hall outside of the shop, where the employer's influence cannot penetrate. An officer of the union is invited to the meeting and explains the duties and obligations of the price committee; the character of the personnel it is to be composed of and the abilities required to hold its own against the employer at price bargaining. Upon receiving this information the workers of the shop proceed to elect their price committee.

Furthermore, we asked for price experts selected by both parties, the union and the manufacturers' association; so that in case a price committee and the employer cannot agree on the price for the garment, an expert should be called in to settle the price in accordance with the base-rate.

Surely these safeguards are like a strong protecting wall around the stipulated earnings of the workers, and when the union submitted this plan to them it was hailed with great enthusiasm. The most radical element in the union agitation for its adoption and vowed that they would not rest until it was carried into practice. The employers, on the contrary, feared that this plan would work against them. They saw that it meant the destruction of their old-time methods of gaining an advantage over the workers.

In the agreement with the manufacturers' association, signed after the
bitter struggle of last year, this plan was inserted in clear, unmistakable terms. Having succeeded in compelling the manufacturers to concede this demand in its entirety the union felt that it had gained for the piece workers the greatest improvement. And the workers felt so, too. They put it on record as one of the most important steps in their industrial progress.

A year has elapsed since the agreement was signed. The workers have had ample time to put this important gain into working shape and place it on sure, permanent ground: to practice it so firmly and with such determination as to make the employers abandon as a hopeless effort all their old-time methods of getting the best over the workers at price settlement. We know full well that it takes time before a rooted evil can be abolished. But we have had this time at our disposal.

Yet, we now hear complaints that the base-rate has left the question of prices in the same place where it had formerly stood. This complaint comes from certain elements, and to our amazement, from those who believe themselves to be “radicals” and “revolutionists”; precisely those who should have been the first to back the plan and carry it out in all its details. These malcontents are now disappointed with the increase of 5 cents on the hourly base-rate. They contend that since in their view the entire plan has been a failure, therefore, they gain nothing from this increase.

* * *

A wise man, when asked to define the word “luck,” said that luck meant—“availing yourself of your opportunity.”

In this world of ours, a world of conflict, where everyone must look out for himself and apply all his energy to the task of acquiring something in life, there is no such thing as luck, at any rate, not for the workers. There are opportunities, splendid opportunities, at times; and if we are looking for success we must avail ourselves of our opportunities.

All that a union can do is to provide the workers with an opportunity, give them a start and point out the way to improve their shop conditions. All the verbal struggles with the manufacturers at the conference tables, the signing of agreements and the agreements in themselves—the aim of all this is to provide the workers with a favorable opportunity of securing better conditions through unity, discipline and practical, systematic effort. The workers must avail themselves of this opportunity. When they rely on luck or miracles and miss their opportunity through neglect or indifference—it is their own fault.

When three years ago the German chancellor made his historical statement that a treaty is only “a mere scrap of paper,” he uttered a general truth that we must recognize in every sphere of life. A contract in itself has no value; it is only a scrap of paper liable to be destroyed in a moment. When a union enters into an agreement with manufacturers it does not rely on the scrap of writing hidden away in its safe, but on the organized power, the intelligence and spirit of unity of the workers of whom the union is composed. In itself the agreement does not insure the observance of its provisions. It does not give the employer a change of heart the very next day after the agreement is drawn up and signed. Its sacred principle does not impress or convince the employer that he must strictly and punctiliously
THE LADIES' GARMENT WORKER

carry on its provisions. If the workers fail to watch over the improvements prescribed therein, if they fail to infuse into it life and promise by unity and co-operation, the agreement is bound to become a dead letter.

Let the piece workers, who, in the last two years, have neglected to turn the base rate to their advantage, now turn over a new leaf. Remember that you are entitled to 80 cents an hour if you are an operator or piece worker, and 60 cents an hour if you are a finisher. All the employers as well as the union, recognize your right to these earnings. If your employer tries to take advantage of you, offer a strenuous resistance. You have a powerful union back of you, ever ready to protect you and fight your battles with all the power at its disposal. But you must be vigilant. Elect on your price committees men with courage to resist the employers whenever the need therefore arises. Elect sensible and practical members who know how to act and talk with opponents as occasion demands. As for the union, you can rely on its full active support at all times.

UNNOTICED HEROES

There are heroes who have never
Heard the fearful din of battle,
Heroes who, unknown forever,
Labor where no sabers rattle;
There are heroes who are giving
Joy to others day by day,
Who are making life worth living
Just by earning honest pay.

There are heroes who are wearing
No bright medals for their merit;
Heroes who may not be sharing
Splendor that the proud inherit;
There are heroes who prefer the
Tasks of righting wrongful things,
And thus make themselves more worthy
Than the pampered sons of kings.

There are heroes, uncomplaining,
Who are striving daily, yearly,
So the goals we would be gaining
May each morning shine more clearly;
There are heroes, unrewarded,
Who, by toiling late and long
In surroundings that are sordid,
Help the luckless to be strong.

There are heroes with wan faces,
Who uplift their fallen brothers;
Heroes who, in lowly places,
Labor for the love of others.
Why not pause sometimes to cheer them
For the courage they reveal?
Why not willingly revere them
For their patience and their zeal?

—S. E. Kiser.
THE AMERICAN UNIONS IN THE PRESENT CRISIS

GAINS IN VARIOUS TRADES

In such industries as have plenty of work, the employers, anxious to live in peace with the workers, prefer raising their wages to meet the higher cost of living. During last month information came that delegates from the Machinists' Union of St. Paul, Minn., met in conference the representatives of the local railroad company and adopted a new scale of wages, with an increase of six-and-a-half cents an hour. The agreement also provides for an eight-hour day, and time and a half for overtime. Formerly they received fifty-three cents an hour, and worked nine hours a day. Thus their increase amounts to about $3 a week.

In Peoria, III., the same union succeeded in raising wages ten cents an hour. In Bridgeport, Conn., its members in the munition factories won an increase of from three to ten per cent. through the mediation of the Federal Labor Department. In Canton, Ohio, the organized machinists won an eight-hour day and higher wages.

A VICTORY FOR THE TELEPHONE OPERATORS

The brave telephone girls of Aberdeen, Wash., who went out on strike when the company ordered them to leave the union, won a victory. After a strike lasting three weeks the company climbed down, recognized the union and conferred with a committee. The company pledged itself not to discriminate against any of the workers and raised wages twenty-five cents a day.

The Electrical Workers' Union with whom the telephone operators are affiliated, had threatened to extend the strike to the entire district, and this moved the telephone company to make a settlement.

MINIMUM WAGE FOR WOMEN WORKERS IN CALIFORNIA

The Industrial Welfare Commission of California adopted a minimum wage for women workers. The rule is to the effect that experienced women workers shall receive not less than $43.33 a month ($10 a week). Beginners under 18 years of age shall get a minimum of $6 a week, and beginners between 18 and 20, a minimum of $8 a week. The rule comes into force the third week in September and contains a clause that women or young persons must not work longer than eight hours a day or forty-eight hours a week.

RAILROAD WORKERS WIN IN WEST

Federated shop men employed by the Chicago and Eastern Illinois railroad won a new agreement. Mechanics' rates were increased 7½ cents an hour. The eight-hour day will become effective on January 1, 1918.

The shop men on the Chicago & Northwestern railroad secured a new agreement with an increase in wages and pay for overtime for certain months in the year. The eight-hour day is provided for to take effect as from September 1.

The unskilled workers on the Chicago & Milwaukee railroad won an increase of $5.00 a month, extra pay for overtime, and other improved conditions. These workers are affiliated with the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees.

GAINS IN OTHER TRADES

Journeymen bakers of Newark, N. J., won an increase of $3 a week and pay for holidays, after a strike of several weeks. The waiters of Buffalo, after a strike of forty-eight hours, won an agreement for two years, providing for higher wages, shorter hours and one day off every week.

The waiters of Boston won similar conditions and also the point that only union men shall be employed. This notable gain has increased the local membership from 400 to 2,500.

Members of the International Typographical Union won higher wages in Peoria, Ill., in parts of Texas, Battle Creek, Mich., Newark, N. J., and Philadelphia.

This is only a partial list of unions which won higher wages and improved conditions during last month.
When America entered the war many patriotic people believed, that in order to the war successfully the government would limit their hunt for profits and respect the wishes of the workers. But the good people evidently had no knowledge of the human nature of those who have such moderate wages much and want much more.

It so happened last month that just in the trades where the workers' claims were ignored. Some 14,000 union metal workers employed in the yards in and around New York, were on strike. The trouble has been brewing since several months. A representative of the government, who made a special investigation of the workers, has merely asked for a slight increase of wages.

At this writing the trouble has not been settled, and rumors are afloat that the government will compel the contractors to grant the workers' demands.

A VICTORY FOR THE CARPENTERS

Early last month thousands of carpenters around New York, working on cantonments for the army and navy, put forward a demand for the recognition of the union, and that only union men should be employed on these jobs. The contractors firmly insisted on the right of refusing to work in open shops, direct government work, and in some places strikes broke out. Immediately on the second day the contractors gave in, there was no alternative other than agreeing to the workers' claims and signed an agreement that only workers of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America shall be employed under the union conditions determined by the government agencies or committees.

A SERIES OF STRIKES

Strikes affecting war work, more or less, were also reported in the textile factories East and South, limiting the supply of cloth and similar materials.

Strikes took place or were threatened on several railroads. In course of the month government representatives settled a strike of trainmen with a gain for these workers.

Government mediators participated in a conference between the ship owners and the Seamen's Union at which the scale of wages for sailors was raised and better conditions granted.

Strikes and lockouts were reported among the metal miners in Arizona and New Mexico and among the coal miners of Pennsylvania and Kentucky.

Telegraphers connected with five railroads presented demands for improved conditions.

Ammunition workers in Utica conducted a strike for higher wages and recognition of the union.

COMPULSORY ARBITRATION ON GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

Throughout last month many rumors have been current that the Government would take over all industries manufacturing for the war directly or indirectly. According to an article in "The Americas," a journal published by the National City Bank, the Government could carry on the war more efficiently on following the example set by Great Britain and taking over certain industries. It is asserted that all the difficulties that had existed there in 1914, and now abound in this country, have vanished and that the industries controlled by the British Government are well managed and in a flourishing condition.

A committee was appointed by the departments of war, navy and labor to investigate industrial conditions and restore normal relations. It was also reported that Secretary Baker intended to appoint conciliation committees in the disturbed industries.

The Council of National Defense appointed a commission of nine to act as a compulsory arbitration board. The commission is composed of three representatives of the Government, three of the employers and three representing labor. Both employers and employees engaged on government contracts will be required to refer their differences to this commission and abide by its decisions.

There seems to be a good deal of submitting of contracts on government work and all these vie with each other in trying to reap profits from labor's toil.
ported that certain work is done on government contracts without the workers being aware of the fact. The council decided that in any kind of work on government contracts the eight-hour day and time and a half for overtime must be observed.

FUR WORKERS’ STRIKE IN MONTREAL

The International Fur Workers’ Union reported last month a lockout by the fur manufacturers of Montreal. To this the union quickly replied by declaring a general strike, and at this writing about 800 workers, men and women, are involved.

The employers practised systematic discrimination against active union men and violated almost every provision of the agreement, and because the workers protested against it they were locked out.

The strike is backed by the International Fur Workers’ Union. The strikers stand firmly together against an attempt on the part of the manufacturers to crush their union in Montreal. They demand forty-four hours a week and a minimum wage scale the same as prevails in New York.

CAPMAKERS ORGANIZE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The United Cloth Hat and Capmakers’ Union is bringing into being a comprehensive scheme of education decided on by its recent convention. The scheme includes courses of lectures, concerts and amusements, classes for imparting to its members a knowledge of trade unionism, the labor movement, history, English, singing and dancing.

By a referendum vote the recommendations of the convention were carried to create a new office of general president, to raise the per capita to the International and to establish a consumption benefit of $50.00.

HEART-RENDING MESSAGE FROM RENA H. MOONEY

Under date of August 13, Mrs. Mooney sends a message to labor in which these passages occur:

I am still in prison at San Francisco. A regular jury, a labor jury, a committee of club women and the general public are convinced of my innocence and still I am denied my liberty.

For a year I and my fellow victims have paid the penalty for our loyalty to labor. We have interfered with their exploiting plans. We attempted to organize their men into a union.

Did you ever stop to think of the ordeal of a trial? Nine weeks of insults by heartless attorneys who plead with a jury to hang you? Did you ever realize what it means to sit there day after day and have paraded before you a foul black crime, pictured in all its hideousness to make a lasting impression on the jury?

Can you imagine the feelings of an innocent prisoner at bar facing John McDon­ald on the witness stand? You know all the time that he is framing up his story according to orders from the prosecution?

What I want to know is how long I must stay here? How long must Tom Mooney, Billings and Weinberg lie in prison? How long must Nolan be held by the “law” without even a charge against him?

You have done nobly by us during these trying months that we have been prisoners of the industrial war. You have come forward with your hard earned dollars to rescue us from the frame-up that sought to railroad us to the gallows. Much has been gained for the cause of labor, but candidly Comrades, do you not feel that we have been here in prison long enough?

I want to go back to my music work. The little folks tell me they want me. Will you do your part? Will you help the boys and me to get out of here? We are innocent. You know what it takes to get us out. Public opinion must be aroused. Lawyers must be retained. That takes money. I hate to ask it, but feel I must appeal to you lest you forget in these terrible days of war.

Don’t let them bury us here! A few more vigorous blows will free us all, so I ask you Comrades to see that the International Workers’ Defense League, 210 Russ Building, San Francisco, is not hampered for funds to carry on the fight and even though I and Weinberg should be granted bail, remember that Billings has a life sentence hanging over him and Tom Mooney faces the gallows. THEY ARE INNOCENT! HELP GET THEM OUT!

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION

At its recent sixty-third convention at Colorado Springs, the report of the officers of this International Union told of remarkable achievements. This union has arbitration agreements in almost every city in the United States and Canada, which are a guarantee against strikes and lockouts. Its membership received a net increase of nearly $4,000,000 in wages for the year ending May 31, 1917, while only $4,600 was spent in strike benefits. Its three great institutions, old-age pensions, mortuary benefits and the Union Printers’ Home, were maintained at a cost of $800,000.
Sesessions of General Executive Board

A Brief Preliminary Review

The quarterly meeting of the General Executive Board held in Boston last month, beginning with August 15, resembled a convention more than a board meeting, both in point of attendance of committees and the character of the proceedings.

Committees from the New York Joint Board and from the locals separately, and a committee representing 2,500 members of Local No. 1, appeared before the meeting, urging the General Executive Board to end the state of disorder caused by the present Executive Board of the Cloak Operators' Union, Local No. 1, severing its affiliation with the Joint Board and acting in defiance of the entire organization.

Committees from Philadelphia, Boston and Worcester, swell the large gathering and make this meeting memorable.

The questions discussed had reference to the well being of our local unions and important resolutions were adopted.

A more detailed report will appear in the next issue of the "Garment Worker," as Secretary Bart. Quin not complete the records in time for this issue, so that only a brief resume of the decisions can be reported in this column.

The urgent questions alluded to absorbed so much time that August 21 the meeting had not concluded and was continued in the General Office of New York, until August 23. Upon request of the General Executive Board a committee representing the Executive Board of Local No. 1 attended the meeting for the purpose of hearing the complaints and charges against them and filing any answers they wished to do so.

In course of a long discussion, in which all the members of the G. E. B. participated, general regret was expressed at the action of the officers of Local No. 1, which led to the present situation in the Cloakmakers' Union of New York. Everyone felt that this irresponsible and disorderly state of affairs must not be allowed to continue, and that strict measures must be taken to restore order and discipline in our union.

DECISION OF THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD IN THE MATTER OF LOCAL NO. 1

The General Executive Board of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union has fully considered the situation arising out of the controversy between Local No. 1 (Operators) of New York and the Joint Board of Cloak, Skirt and Reefer Makers' Unions of that city.

More than three days were given by the Board to the hearing of the charges against Local No. 1, to the defense and counter charges of the latter and to arguments on both sides. Local No. 1 was represented by a committee consisting of brothers Meyer Rubin, I. Friedman, A. Bisno and A. Padover; the Joint Board by brothers M. Sigman and J. Kimbarowsky, while each of the ten locals affiliated with the Joint Board was either separately and specially represented by committees or presented its attitude by means of written statements or resolutions.

A written petition bearing the signature of about twenty-five hundred members of Local No. 1 was also presented to the Board, requesting the latter to put an end to the state of strife and chaos created by the officers of the Local.

Upon a fair and careful consideration of all the evidence and arguments, the General Executive Board unanimously finds that Local No. 1 and its officers have flagrantly, deliberately and repeatedly violated the constitution of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, as well as the most fundamental principles of trade unionism and working class solidarity.

It has severed its affiliation with the other Local Unions of New York by withdrawing from the Joint Board; it has called shop strikes without the sanction of the Joint Board; it has undertaken to negotiate with employers for separate agreements and has generally inaugurated a policy of irresponsible individualism and anarchy, detrimental alike to its own members and to the workers in all other branches of the industry.

Such a policy, if tolerated and continued, would inevitably lead to constant internal
strife within our own ranks, which would benefit none but the employers and spell ruin and disaster to the workers.

The General Executive Board feels that it is in duty bound to take immediate and energetic action to save the situation, and hence decides:

1. That Local No. 1 is hereby ordered, a) to forthwith call off any and all shop strikes inaugurated or conducted without the consent of the Joint Board; b) to immediately withdraw all separate agreements, concluded or proposed, between Local No. 1 and any employer; c) to re-affiliate itself with the Joint Board at or before the next regular meeting of the Board in accordance with the provisions of the constitution of the International and upon the same terms upon which it was affiliated before seceding.

2. Should Local No. 1 fail to comply with the above order or any part of it, it shall stand expelled from the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, such expulsion to take effect on the 15th day of September, 1917.

3. In the event of such expulsion a new local of cloak operators shall at once be formed, and all members of Local No. 1, who desire to remain affiliated with the International and to work harmoniously with their fellow workers in the trade, shall be allowed to transfer to the new local without initiation fees or other charges.

4. That a committee consisting of the president of the International and Vice-Presidents S. Koldofsky and H. Schoolman is hereby appointed to fully investigate all jurisdictional and other controversies between the workers in the cloak and reefer trade, and to recommend a method of permanent adjustment to the next meeting of the General Executive Board.

5. If Local No. 1 complies with the above orders, all members of that Local as well as members of Local No. 17 (Reefer Makers) shall be allowed until final disposition of the question, to work in cloak and reefer shops without transfers.

SOME IMPORTANT DECISIONS

The General Executive Board decided:

To begin a general movement in our industries for week work and the eight hour day.

To continue the organizing campaign in Cleveland and call shop strikes where necessary for the purpose of enforcing union conditions.

To renew the movement for better working conditions and union recognition in the waist, skirt and dress industry of Chicago.

To indorse the demands on their employers of Local No. 52 of Los Angeles.

To refer to President Schlesinger the advisability of visiting St. Louis for the purpose of going into the question of the workers' demands on the local employers, and backing them, if necessary.

A committee from the Philadelphia Joint Board requested that Vice-President Amdur return to that city and resume charge over local affairs. In the name of their Joint Board and the membership of its affiliated locals they ask the General Executive Board to use its influence in that direction. After a warm discussion during which it was proved convincingly that Brother Amdur's return to the cloakmakers of Philadelphia was absolutely necessary, Brother Amdur acceded to the request.

Vice-President Metz agreed to take over the duties of general organizer in Montreal in place of Brother Amdur. The General Executive Board felt gratified at the fact, as by a consensus of opinion Brother Metz was believed best filled for the work at Montreal.

Agreed to restore to the Boston locals the autonomy of which the Philadelphia convention had deprived them.

President Schlesinger was given full power to appoint an Italian-speaking general organizer, in view of the fact that in every center of our industry Italian workers are employed alongside of other workers and it is necessary to organize them.

In regard to the subject matter touched on in Secretary Baroff's report, as to the attitude of President Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor to the Jewish-American unions, it was decided to issue a statement, which we shall publish in the next issue of the "Ladies' Garment Worker."

THE DREAMER

A dreamer is frequently a correct precursor of the future, but he does not feel like waiting for it. That which nature needs thousands of years to accomplish he wants to see achieved during his lifetime.—Lessing.
During the past few months I paid two visits to Philadelphia. One visit was on April 30th, for a mass meeting of farewell to Brother Ab. Baroff, who had resigned as manager of the Skirtmakers' Union of that city. My second visit was on the occasion of the opening of the Unity House of Local No. 15, the Waist and Dressmakers' Union.

Our Local No. 15 is one of our best locals, conducting its business in a splendid manner. The local has accumulated a substantial treasury. It has a library at headquarters of more than 1,000 books. A recent picnic brought them in about $500 profit, which has contributed towards the library and the Unity House.

The Unity House idea in Local No. 15 will be a great success. At the opening of the house there were about 250 members, and they all expressed gratitude and satisfaction with the work of the union. They are raising enough now to buy the house. I hope that the other locals of our International will follow the example of our sister local No. 15.

While I was in Boston the question of autonomy for the locals was again raised. All the locals, with the exception of Local No. 12, have gone to the present arrangement and they do not want to take chances on going back to the old chaotic state. But some of the active members of Local No. 12, the dressers, are very insistent on getting the autonomy back, and it seems to me that it will be necessary for the International to grant their request.

I went to Boston in June to settle a strike in one of the largest raincoat shops, Jacobson's. Eighty of his workers, members of Local No. 7, refused to work, insisting that the foreman of the shop be sent down. The Executive Board of Local No. 7 had not endorsed the strike, but the workers refused to go back until their organizer Henry D. Cohen, and Brother Snyder, were unable to settle the controversy. The manufacturer insisted that before taking up the grievances against the foreman, the workers must return to work. After confering with Mr. Jacobson, the manufacturer, and Mr. Lichtman, the president of the association, for a couple of hours, I proved to them that it would be to the benefit of the concern that he be removed from his position and placed as a worker in the shop. The manufacturer agreed to my proposition and the workers returned to work the next day.

I was also called to Boston recently on the question of Local No. 7, Raincoat Makers' Union. Their agreement with the manufacturers' association expired, and prior to my coming they had had a number of conferences with the manufacturers for the renewal of the agreement. Among their demands was an increase of 20 per cent. The manufacturer claimed that they were paying more for labor than the New England manufacturers, and they stubbornly refused to increase the wages. The workers decided that they would call a general strike, if the increase was not granted. I had the matter postponed and proceeded to Boston. At a conference with the employers' association, at which a committee of workers from the Raincoat Makers' Union was present, I finally succeeded in adjusting the matter. The manufacturers granted the workers a 15 per cent. increase.

The workers, at a meeting the same evening, expressed gratitude and satisfaction with the aid rendered by the General Office in adjusting the dispute promptly, and cheered the International Union.

I also attended a shop meeting of a certain firm controlled by Local No. 49, at which the jurisdiction question between the Skirtmakers' Union and the Waist and Dressmakers' Union, was taken up, and it was arranged to have one meeting a month of members of Locals 12, 24 and 49, when all questions of the three locals shall be discussed and decided. My opinion is that if Brother Schlesinger were to visit Boston he could adjust this matter.

Of the meetings I have attended during the time, I may mention the installation meeting of Local No. 82, New York Examiners, Squarers and Bushlers' Union, and a few meetings of the Executive Board of Local No. 25. I also installed their newly elected Executive Board.
I attended an Executive Board meeting of the Raincoat Makers' Union, Local No. 20. The question of military waterproof garments and the attitude of some of the employers who are under the impression that no strike can be called in shops where government work is made, is still of some concern to the local. I advised them and promised that the International would try to get in touch with the authorities in Washington and see to it that their grievances are taken up and adjusted.

Recently I have adjusted a personal trouble in Local No. 6, Embroidery Workers' Union. Owing to the dull season the local decided to dispense with the service of one of their paid officers, and a disagreement arose as to whether the manager or his assistant should be retained. I called the Executive Board and a committee of fifteen before me. They agreed to abide by my decision, and after hearing the views of both sides I rendered a decision, part of which was as follows:

Taking into consideration the fact that the by-laws adopted by your local give your Executive Board power to appoint paid officers, dispense with their services and enforce such discipline as is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the organization, I sustain fully the decision of your Board in this matter (that Manager Weiss should be retained).

I do not believe that it is proper to hold election for officers now. The right of voting for officers through ballot was adopted by our union in order to give every member an opportunity to take part in the elections. But now in the dull season, it is impossible to get the members to participate in elections, and it would be highly unfair to deprive them of their privilege.

Considering, furthermore, that the agreement with the Manufacturers' Association will expire soon; that conferences with the manufacturers about revising or renewing the agreement are to take place in the near future; and being that Brother Weiss did attend all the association shop until now, and that he is fully acquainted with the workings of the agreement in these shops, we recommend that elections for new officers shall be called by your local by the end of October or during the month of November. Some one ought to visit the corset workers' locals regularly at their meetings. Locals No. 33 has on more than one occasion requested such assistance from the General Office, and we have tried our best to comply with the request.

We heard from our Local No. 43 of Worcester, Mass., that Brother Rubin, their secretary and business agent, was leaving for Russia, and that his successor is not able to serve in the capacity of business agent. They therefore ask that an International organizer should visit them once a week and try to help them build up their union. While in Boston I made arrangements with Brother Snyder to visit Worcester for this purpose.

The condition of the Bridgeport corset workers' local has lately improved considerably, both as regards their membership and the influence on the local industry. A long slack season has affected these organizations very unfavorably during the earlier months of the current year, but work in the shops has resumed its normal course, and the active members of the locals are endeavoring to put life into the organization. Some one ought to visit the corset workers' locals regularly at their meetings. Locals No. 33 has on more than one occasion requested such assistance from the General Office, and we have tried our best to comply with the request.

At the last quarterly meeting a committee was appointed to work on the question of the label. Since then I have repeatedly received letters from individuals and organizations asking us to advise them where they can obtain garments' with the union label.
I suggest that the Board instruct the committee to take this matter.

According to S. J. Kaufman, manager of the Cincinnati locals, conditions in Cincinnati have improved remarkably since the last strike, and the existence of a permanent organization in that city is now practically assured. Of course, the locals are still weak financially, but they have already exerted enough influence in the shops to force the employers to pay them satisfactory wages. This has given the young organization a considerable prestige, and the more active members are elated over the prospects for the future. The local control practically the entire trade in the city except for the two shops which were left untouched after the strike.

Our St. Louis organization is also making considerable strides, judging from the reports of Gene Gilbert, in that cloakmakers are working out demands to their employers, and there is a genuine sentiment for a more active campaign for higher wages and better working conditions. Such a movement would have an impression on the employers, who do not appear willing to face a repetition of the struggle of 1913, which brought enormous results to the manufacturers and the trade in general.

During last month the cutters of Toledo cloak shops organized into a local union and made demands upon their employers for improvements. Bro. Pierce, stationed in Cleveland, was requested to proceed to Toledo and after a bit of trouble he succeeded in settling the matter to the satisfaction of the parties.

After Brother Pierce had left Baltimore, Miss Anna Neary, the staff of the American Federation of Labor, was assigned by Secretary Frank Masson to our Baltimore office, our office contributing a part of her salary. Baltimore is a big, miscellaneous industry, and an energetic organizing campaign would yield marvellous results.

Our official journal, the "Ladies' Garment Worker," has undergone lately a number of changes both in its make-up and contents, changes of an overwhelmingly favorable character, due chiefly to the efforts of President Schlcsinger, who has been writing the editorials and looking after the various departments of the journal. Indeed, we have noticed quite a perceptible change in the attitude of our readers towards the journal, and we have gained several hundred subscribers during the last two months. But the increase of expenses voted by you at the last meeting for the purpose of placing a business manager for the journal to improve the circulation and secure advertising matter has proved quite useless. There has not been the slightest improvement in this direction.

Regarding our auditing department—from reports I have received from secretaries of locals, I understand that the audits made by our department at present, while covering to a certain extent the needs of the locals, are not made completely and thoroughly. It is not the fault of the auditor, but is due to the fact that our department is still very small to do the work in a more exhaustive manner, which would require at least the trebling of our present expenditure for this work from $3,500 to at least $10,000. In my opinion the work of the auditing department is very important. During the last three years our locals have saved thousands of dollars in auditing bills, having their books audited solely by our auditors.

I would therefore recommend that the General Executive Board authorize the Secretary-Treasurer of the International to take up with the locals the question of annual compensation for the services rendered by our auditing department to them. It would at once relieve us from carrying the full burden of this department, and would enable us to enlarge its force, and extend it to all the locals that have not been receiving its benefits heretofore.

Another matter is the subject of initiation fees. You will recall that Vice-President Schoolman was authorized at the last meeting of the G. E. B. at Cincinnati, to submit a resolution on this matter. I am heartily in favor of this resolution, which is as follows:

"WHEREAS, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union keeps control of the assessments and dues paid out by the members of the respective locals through a system of stamps which serve as receipts to the members for the money paid in; and "WHEREAS, this system has proved to be an efficient mode on the part of the International of having knowledge of and being able to control the finances of the respective locals; and "WHEREAS, the initiation fees, as col-
lected by the respective locals, are simply recorded by the secretaries in writing, so that the International cannot keep control of the money collected for the initiation fees by the respective locals; be it therefore

"RESOLVED, that the General Executive Boards be empowered and ordered to issue stamps in denominations of one, two and five dollars to be sold to all the respective locals at a discount of 99% on the dollar, so that the members receive a receipt from the International for initiation fee, paid in stamps to be pasted in the membership books, and also that the International be kept informed as to all money collected for initiation fees in all of the respective locals."

In regard to our financial standing I wish to say that our International will never be a factor of strength so long as its financial basis is as unstable as at present. We must have a reserve fund, upon which to fall back and from which to draw our fighting strength. It has been told repeatedly, and it is about time to convert it into a fact. The policy of retrenchment is a matter of prime necessity.

Permit me at the end to say a few words regarding the attacks of President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor, on the Jewish unions and their representatives. President Gompers did not miss a single opportunity to place these organizations in the wrong light before the world. In the last number of the official organ of the A. F. of L. there has appeared a scurrilous attack on the Jewish American labor movement, written in an antisemitic and irresponsible manner. Apparently President Gompers clings to the idea that as citizens we have no right in a lawful manner to view passing events from our own working class point of view. I believe his action and the action of some of his lieutenants in stigmatizing everything and everybody who dares to disagree with them as unpatriotic, is wrong, unfair and injurious to the labor movement, and I believe that the General Executive Board must raise its voice in protest against the action of President Gompers along these lines.

Fraternally submitted,

(Signed) AB. BAROFF,
Gen. Sec'y-Treas.

THE PLEDGE

Here's a pledge to you my brothers;
A pledge and a comrade's hand;
By the roads we have built for the masters,
By the rivers we have spanned;
By the forge of our foundry prison,
Where flesh is as cheap as grass,
My heart and my hand forever,
For my own—the working class!

By the hungry seas we've conquered
And strewn with our sailor dead;
By the land we have bathed in life-blood,
And that life-blood rich and red;
By the ease we've brought our masters,
By the loads 'neath which we groan,
My heart and my hand forever,
For the working class—my own.

By the day when the strife is over
And the worker comes to his own;
By the dawn of the glad to-morrow,
When we reap what we have sown,
When the last of the slaves shall be freemen
And the last of the masters pass—
My heart and my hand forever
For my own—the working class!

—W. E. Williams.
Local News and Events

(In this department, which is a regular feature of this journal every month, local life and movement is being reported for the information of our members and readers.)

Compiled By M. D. Danish

PHILADELPHIA CLOAKMAKERS, LOCALS 2, 53, 59
Manager J. Feit, of the Philadelphia Cloakmakers Joint Board, reports:

"Our union is still confronted with the problem of unemployment, a problem which is almost impossible to solve. It is quite startling to see that while prosperity in practically all the trades is the rule all over the country, cloak and skirt makers of this city do not get even a sniff of the so-called good times, and are in bad straits. Our busy seasons for the last two years have been only a name in name, and there was practically no work at all during the slack seasons. Under these circumstances it is quite natural that there should be discontent among the members and considerable bitterness against those employers who use every chance to send their work out to sweat shops to save a few pennies.

"At the last formal conference held between the committee representing the manufacturers' Association and the committee representing the union, headed by President Schlesinger, it was finally agreed that all concessions embodied in the agreement relative to shorter hours and increase of wages, shall begin to take effect on Monday, August 13th. The agreement was formally signed on that day in New York City, at the office of the International Union, where the representatives of the Philadelphia employers association met President Schlesinger and a committee from the union."

BALTIMORE CLOAKMAKERS' UNION, LOCAL NO. 4
Secretary D. Thomas writes:

"As far as we know, this method has worked satisfactorily; the prices so settled are quite fair, and the members are able to make decent wages. The way it looks, we will have the season in full swing by the middle of September. The men are pleased with the results that have been obtained for them through the help of the organization.

"We have had a hotly contested election for business agent, and the business agent in office until now was re-elected.

"The membership is paying dues now. We have for the last few weeks had a fairly good income and have already accumulated some money in our treasury. In short, Local No. 4 is in very good shape.

"Of the other locals of the International that we have here in Baltimore, Local No. 101, Ladies' Tailors; Local No. 110, Cutters and Local No. 72, White Goods Workers, are not in very good shape just now, owing to the slackness that prevails in their trades. But even now, when the hope of some sort of a season is in view, I am in doubt whether they will be able to do something for themselves, without the assistance of the General Office.

"The Joint Board of Baltimore is trying its best to assist them in their organization work, from its small financial resources.

"We had a picnic here a few weeks ago, and any profit realized will be spent in strengthening the above referred to locals."

CINCINNATI CLOAKMAKERS, LOCALS 53, 90 AND 98

Brother S. J. Kaufman, manager of the Cincinnati locals, reports as follows:

"As you will recall, one of the two shops left unsettled after the last general strike in Cincinnati was the firm of Egger, Sudhoff & Co. I succeeded in getting a member of the firm to talk business regarding the set
tachment of that strike. I called a special meeting of the Joint Board, and recommended that a settlement be made with the firm, but this effort has not materialized, and our negotiations with the firm are broken off again.

The Emergency Fund is a success, and the members are paying their dues in advance. We have also increased our membership, as the reports of the financial secretary show.

"The Cincinnati cloakmakers are anxious to have a representative of the International for a day or two. Our people here like occasionally to get a visit from an International representative, as it helps very much towards maintaining the proper spirit in the organization."

SAN FRANCISCO CLOAKMAKERS, LOCAL NO. 8

Brother O. Bloch, secretary of the San Francisco Cloakmakers' Union, Local No. 8, writes:

"The local is in pretty good shape now, numerically; financially we are in about the same position as two years ago. Lately we have had a number of mass meetings, which proved a good means for building up the local."

"For the last ten weeks we have had a voluntary organizer who has done real good work and has helped materially in consolidating the union. Many members who were in arrears paid up their dues and we have gained a number of new members. The organizer resigned at the last meeting, as he had been working for the local in his leisure hours and could not stand the double strain. We are now on the lookout for another man to take this volunteer job. We must have the services of a good man for at least another six months, a man who would teach our workers here the benefits of our organization, make them class conscious and inspire confidence in our International Union. Then we could easily control the situation."

"As things are now, the employers do as they please: in the busy time they hire and in the dull season they fire whenever they please. They employ the people at piece work and again at week work, as it suits their own advantages. In a few shops, where we have agreements with the employers, things are quite different. There we have the week work system, a minimum wage, equal distribution of work in the dull season, the eight-hour day, time and a half for overtime and double pay for Sundays. We want to establish this system throughout the trade, if only our members will get ready for it.

Some time ago the International promised to send us a good organizer, and our faithful ones live in great hopes. We are ready to pay part salary of a permanent organizer, and hope that the International will assist us in putting an energetic man on the job to organize the trade in San Francisco."

TOLEDO CLOAKMAKERS, LOCALS 67 AND 84

Vice-President John F. Pierce writes:

"While in Cleveland last month, I received a telegram from President Schlesinger instructing me to proceed to Toledo to adjust the scale of prices for the cutters of that city."

"The Toledo cutters' local No. 84, was organized about four months ago. They have enrolled every cutter in the city into the union and they seem to be a fine set of men. Their wages ranged all the way from $16 to $25 per week, and as a rule they work steadily. The local sent in demands to the manufacturers, asking for an increase of 35 per cent., with a minimum scale of $28. The employers offered them an increase of $2 per week, which they refused to accept."

"When I reached Toledo I held a meeting with the men and got in touch with the firm of Cohen, Friedlander and Martin, one of the largest concerns in the city. I succeeded in arranging a conference with the other employers in Toledo. At the conference an agreement was reached, whereby the cutters were to receive an increase of 20 per cent., with a guarantee of forty-six weeks work in the year. The employers also agreed to give the men back pay from the day the demands were presented. The cutters received this agreement with much satisfaction."

"On August 16th, while at the meeting of the General Executive Board in Boston, I was instructed by President Schlesinger to proceed again to Toledo to adjust a strike which had suddenly broken out in the shop
of Cohen, return to work on Monday, August 22nd. A number of improvements and increases of wages were secured.

Montreal Cloakmakers, Locals 3, 13, 19 and 61:

Vice-President Max Andur, Manager of the local organization, writes:

"I have already reported that we have adopted the system of organizing the regular calling of shop meetings. We began at first with the independent shops which I succeeded in making better union shops. I also had meetings with the French workers employed in one of these shops. We all opposed the strike, this was in the shop of Greenberg & Martin. Upon my return to work on Wednesday, August 22nd, a number of improvements and increases of wages were secured."

New York Ladies' Tailors, Local No. 80:

Manager S. deGelder reports as follows:

"The movement among the ladies' tailors of New York to form a better organization, which was set in motion by the Philadelphia Convention, has been making headway during the last few months. The conditions prevailing in the ladies' tailoring and the alteration trades in New York are quite peculiar. Usually, in every garment shop the workers undergo more privations in the slack time than in the season, and are more apt to listen to the call of organization when work ceases in the shops. In the ladies' tailoring trade, however, the workers are all away from the shops during slack time; they work at different trades and do not come back until the season has started. They therefore cannot be organized in slack time, but the effort to get them together must come during and shortly prior to the season.

"Within the next few weeks a big movement for the organization of the ladies' tailors will have to come to a head. We are confident that the International will come to our assistance and help us make our campaign a success. Judging from all signs, the ladies' tailors of New York have awakened to the necessity of a union. The well-attended mass meeting at Mount Morris Hall, on Tuesday, August 21st, was a good sign in this direction. Other meetings will follow in swift succession, and we hope soon to be on the road towards the object set before us by the Philadelphia Convention, the organization of a strong ladies' tailors union in New York."

Bridgeport Corset Workers, Local 33:

Miss Mary Gould, Secretary of the Bridgeport Corset Workers' Union, Local No. 33, writes as follows:

"You already know from my previous reports that a number of our members have left the trade and are now working in munition plants. Bridgeport is one of the great centres for the manufacture of ammunition, and, as wages have been comparatively high in the arms factories, many of our workers have been lured into them."

"There is a feeling among our membership that as we have not received an increase in wages since 1915, we are entitled to ask for an increase at the present time. At the last meeting of our Executive Board a recommendation was adopted that we should do something towards the increase of our earnings in view of the enormously increased cost of living since 1915. We in
tend to ask the International office to send a representative down here and to instruct us as to the proper method of going about this matter. The active members of the local feel that this movement, if started right, will prove successful, and they are ready to do almost anything in order to put the organization on a stronger basis.

“Our local will be represented at the state convention of the Connecticut Federation of Labor to be held on Labor Day at Danbury, Conn., by three delegates, Miss Mary Gould, Miss Grace Cannon and Miss Julia Condon.”

**CHICAGO RAINCOAT MAKERS’ UNION, LOCAL NO. 54**

Vice-President Sol Scidman reports as follows:

“You are already aware of the fact that the Chicago raincoat makers were out on strike for about three weeks. About one hundred workers were involved in this strike at four contractors’ shops working for the firm of Kling Brothers.

“The reason for calling this strike was that the firm had engaged a new contractor, by name Meyers, on government work, with the intention of installing a section system and running a non-union shop. This man at once refused to have any dealings with the union, and the Kling Brothers’ firm also maintained this attitude regarding this particular shop.

“On August 1st I received a telegram from President Schlesinger, instructing me to try to settle all controversies in the shops of the contractors of Kling Brothers. I arranged for a conference with these contractors, including Meyer, and at first could make no headway, but finally, after days of conferring, I succeeded in settling the trouble. The workers received a uniform raise on the garments, and the shops were to continue under union conditions. The firm, however, refused to send down the strike breakers they had imported from New York. President Schlesinger asked Judge Julian W. Mack, the chairman of the Board of Arbitration in the cloak trade in Chicago, to arbitrate this matter. Judge Mack decided that these men should join the union, paying $30 initiation fee, and that they be permitted afterwards to remain in the shop. I succeeded in convincing the workers to adopt this settlement, and the controversy has since been straightened out to their satisfaction.”

**THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE WOMEN’S TRADE UNION LEAGUE**

Vice-President Fannia M. Cohn reports

“At the last quarterly meeting of the General Executive Board I was appointed delegate to the convention of the National Women’s Trade Union League, which was held in Kansas City in the first week of June.

“About seventy women delegates attended the convention, many of them representing state and city federations of labor. On the whole I may state that the convention was very successful. The women delegates displayed a spirit of solidarity and a keen interest in the very important work that lay before them. The convention, assembled at such a grave time, when the minds and the emotions of the people are stirred by different feelings and conceptions about the causes and aims of the war, succeeded in giving full expression to every shade of opinion, even the most radical, in an earnest and serious manner.

“The important question of women’s work in war time was taken up by this convention. It was realized that because of the abnormal conditions brought on by the war, men will be gradually replaced by women in many industries, and the fear was freely expressed that the work standards in many trades may be lowered on that account. The only way to prevent such a condition was to demand equal pay for equal work, and since the Federal Government is now indirectly the biggest employer of labor in the country, the convention passed a set of resolutions on this question and sent a committee to Washington to present them to the President and the secretaries of war, labor and the treasury, and to President Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor.

“While in Washington, the committee, among whom was the representative of our International, met Secretaries Baker and Wilson, and received assurances from them that everything will be done by the Government to protect the garment workers employed on government orders in the uniform factories and in the ladies’ garment shops which were converted into uniform factories of late.”
Our Free Forum

This column is for letters and short articles of members and readers on current trade and labor topics. Avail yourself of this free forum and express your views. The editor reserves the right to publish or withhold communications at his discretion and is not responsible for opinions expressed. He advises correspondents to avoid all personal attacks which may be mistaken for fair criticism, and will be glad to answer queries.

PROBLEMS OF THE CUTTERS,
LOCAL NO. 10.

"The cutter! What a useful hand for the employer, for each member of the shop, for the operator, presser and tailor, and what a helpless person for himself!"

We, cutters, remember the time when we had to overcome many hindrances to realize our ambition to become affiliated with the International. All of us expected great results from this affiliation. The operators and the other co-workers of the cutter in the shops expected assistance from him in their daily struggle for better prices, and the cutter looked for their help in his fight for decent treatment. I lay stress on the term "decent treatment," and will explain the reason why. The cutter as a week-worker is being harshly used during the season, and is kept out of the shop for a long period during the slack time.

People who know something about our trade are not surprised to hear that the weekly average of the cutter's earnings is not more than $15. The active and intelligent members of Local No. 10 know how hard it is for the cutter to keep up his family. Hundreds of them are jack-of-all trades, which they are compelled to ply in order to support their homes. The question arises, "Who is to blame for it and why is the organization so helpless to remedy this evil?" There were times when these burning questions were solved by one answer, "We have no able, radical leader to solve these problems for the cutter." Well, we have already had at the head of the organization radicals from whom the membership expected much and yet we were disappointed. The questions, "What is to be done, how are the evils of the trade to be abolished?" are just as burning now as they were ever before, and this has resulted in the fact that to-day men from the ranks have organized themselves into a group to solve these questions for the cutter. This group of men is practically now in power in the local and they are trying by all means to educate the cutter, to awaken his interest in union matters and to win his full confidence.

Our present problems are:

1. The sub-manufacturing question. It is a noted fact that most of the sub-manufacturers are doing their best not to employ union cutters. Let it be stated here, to the shame of our brothers, the operators and the tailors, that they care very little as to who cuts their bundles, as long as they get them in their baskets. It should be the rule of the Joint Board, prompted by the goodwill of all the workers in the shops to stamp out this evil.

2. Equal distribution of work in slack seasons. It is already five years since our membership has been demanding that this principle be once for all established in the cutting trade. A great deal of energy and money has been spent to put this idea through, and by a referendum our men voted almost unanimously in favor of this proposition. Yet the officials of our union at that time left this entire matter to the membership, and it has never been put into practice in the cloak and suit industry. Now that a radical element is in power in the union, we are firmly resolved that at the end of this season this principle shall become a reality.

3. The protection of the cutter's job. Very often the good, old time mechanics are forced to change their jobs in the height of the season, being constantly in fear of the noon hour on Saturday. Every worker in the other branches of the shop is entitled to be retained on the job, and the
union is under obligation and ready to strike in order to fully discharge him when he is wrong-fully discharged—call except the cutter. He is being on call. The results are that the cutter develops into a person without a backbone who is afraid to insist upon his union rights and who is bound in the course of time to become a lick-spittle of the employer and the foreman. He is ready to work over and above his hours and behind the back of the union officers and ready to violate all union rules. When the cutter has gained the favor of the powers-that-be in the shop and is assured of a steady paycheck, he is through with his fellow worker, and the last one to accuse him, for conscience and our own fault have made him what he is. It is hard for one man to carry the burden of the union in the cutting room.

4. The Philadelphia Cloak and Suit Case Co. Local No. 53, has taken notice of the fact that vacancies in the several shops are filled through the medium of the union. I believe that Local No. 53 will have to do the same thing. It is not possible to conform, but no operation of this kind can be performed without some pain. Too many undesirable persons carry the union badge in a manner that produces prompt results; they do not work at the trade or do not work anywhere, and belong to the union for selfish reasons, which is very injurious to our membership. Another reason is the direct negotiations between the employer and the individual cutter are responsible for a number of demoralization cases in our local. The meetings of our local union are full of such cases. The secretary compels us to adopt this reform.

The cutting room in some shops is a regular "ladies' dressing room," where no "outside" union members look into. We know that in many cases the cutter's pay envelope is being wraped with, and under the present system it is hardly possible to get either the worker or the employer with the "good will of man" to carry the union可怕的 into the cutting room, where no "out-siders" are to be found.

R. WANDA, Local No. 10.

A KEY PEACE

Editor The Ladies' Garment Workers:

As a regular reader of your columns I was interested in a query by a reader why our trade journal never refers to the war, and your answer to it.

May I ask you for any facts you may know of any peace movement in Germany? In this country we are constantly told that the German people still loyally follow their government in its wish to continue the war, and this is the only difficulty in the way of a speedy and just peace. Is that entirely true? I should be glad of a reliable answer, if possible.

E. F. MEISTER

Answer—Not only the German people, but also the English people, the French people and every other people in the war seem to support their governments in their wish to continue the war until they can gain some advantage and call it a victory. It is only the question were submitted to a vote of all the peoples, including our own, after the people were duly enlightened on the matter, we should find that the great majority of the working people everywhere are in favor of a speedy and just peace. There is nothing to gain from prolonging this cruel and inhuman war.

As to whether the German people are patriotic and loyal to their government more than other peoples—we do not get as much news from there as from other European countries. But it is certain that popular peace movements are going on there as everywhere. This can be seen from the following translation of one of many peace leaflets distributed among the German people, recently published by the New York Call. This leaflet addressed to the Kaiser affords the information our reader desires, and is in part as follows:

"We will no longer follow you. We demand a representative government. We condemn as insane a system in the government which lays all power in the hands of one single man who may be, like you, driven by ambitions and vanity. We wish to take our place among the free nations of the world. We wish to take our place among the free nations of the world, and together with them tread the path of civilization and progress. You strut in full armor before the world as the world's lord. Yes, truly, war and death for us, but comfort and safety for you! Peace will come when the German people awake from their dreams."

When will peace come? When the German people say to Emperor William: "What have we won by the war? Two years ago the world lay at our feet; strangers from every land came to our cities, and in every land were the industries of our merchants the most successful, our products most in demand. Everywhere was the German spirit welcome. And now, over the whole world, we are despised and hated. On our forehead rests the curse of Cain. Men shun us in the streets, and our language is forbidden. You we thank that the achievements of a century of national effort have been lost."
Unknown Heroines In the Russian Revolution

Working Women Who Did Much Spade Work to Help Bring About the Revolution, Without Wishing for Honor or Applause, and in the End Were Arrested and Imprisoned or Exiled to Siberia

Gathered from Reliable Sources

By A. Rosebury.

In 1905 a revolution broke out in Russia, which played its role mostly in the big industrial cities of Russia and Russian Poland. Nicholas was compelled to grant a form of constitutional government, by creating a national assembly (the Duma) which was only party elected by the people. But that revolution did not succeed in its main aim. The people were not sufficiently organized and Nicholas and his henchmen took advantage of this fact, drowned its pioneers in blood, filled the prisons with its active spirits and exiled to Siberia all the others suspected of sympathy with the movement.

Terrible times then followed for the revolutionists. A period of terror and repression was inaugurated by Stolypin, the Russian prime minister of that time. What was called "Stolypin's necktie" simply meant that hundreds, perhaps thousands, were hanged for their free ideas and activity in the revolutionary movement. This was followed by widespread depression. Fear gave rise to despair and despair brought on a stupor, a freezing of thought and desire for action. Many good people gave up working for and thinking of the revolution and abandoned themselves to debauchery and sensual pleasures, exchanging their former idealism for a purposeless animal life.

But the revolution was not destined to die because of the wholesale defection of weak-minded people. However great the defeat of the forces of labor and radicalism, there always remain the faithful few who silently carry on the work and wait for brighter times. Here and there in Russia there were such faithful souls who held on to the banner of freedom. Tyrant Stolypin met his death by one of these people, and among them there were many young working women whose earnestness and devotion deserves to be placed on record. We want to give one or two brief pen-pictures of those noble girls.

Katia—A Born Organizer

She was not a professional organizer, for she was only sweet seventeen, and had no education to speak of. Yet about the year 1911 she organized small groups of ten or twelve persons in clubs for self-culture.

Katia was her name, and we nick-named her "Katherine the Second" because of her energy and love of action rather than talk. She was a tall, slender blonde with expressive blue eyes, and a perpetual smile on her lips. No doubt it was the smile that brought success to her work, for in barely six months she organized more than twenty clubs for self-culture.

Yet she was not cultured herself. The culture she had was natural, instinctively human rather than manufactured in some college or university. She had read only a few socialist pamphlets and attended an occasional lecture. Katia seldom took part in discussion at meetings, first because she held that action was more important than talk, and secondly because she was content to have the fighting out of certain principles to the most intelligent in the group.

Sometimes she felt that she ought to compare well with some of her comrades in knowledge and culture. Friends told her that being so young she could acquire it in a short time. "But who will do my work?" she asked.

Her very successful work made her fearless. Katia simply laughed at danger, in spite of timely warning. A spy in our ranks eventually betrayed her. She was arrested and imprisoned. She knew that Siberia was her immediate destination, but she contemplated the future with the same natural, sweet smile. Her only care was—who would take her place in the movement and do her work, and how would she employ her idle time?
After being kept in prison for fourteen months Katia was exiled to the district of Archangel for an indefinite period. Here we lose track of her. But she continues to live in our memory.

Julia
Organized with Song

Another girl who resembled Katia in many ways was Julia, whose family name was very difficult to pronounce. She was called Julia, but her real name was "Judiff." Julia's principal attraction consisted in her jolly disposition. She lighted up the secret surroundings of the revolutionary group by her gaiety and good cheer, and she made everyone forget that they were supposed to be a secret group.

Julia had a wonderful personal magnetism. When she chose to get someone into the group, she inevitably succeeded. Her power could not be resisted. She did not preach devotion or Socialism openly; she simply organized a social club for entertainment partly for reading and discussion. But anyone who joined remained in the group. It was too useful a gathering for anyone to turn his or her back upon it.

A friend of Julia's who lived with her told us that when arrested she asked her captors whether they had prepared cake for her, as she had been too busy to have her supper. Like Katia, Julia, too, had been betrayed and met with the same fate—imprisonment for fourteen months and exile to the Archangel district. She did her bit to make her country free. Like Katia, we do not know whether she is alive or dead, but we think of her with admiration.

Light Reading Sophia

The word "Sophia" comes from the old Greek and means wisdom or knowledge. As a pioneer of the Russian revolution Sophia was true to the meaning of her name. She unconsciously lived up to the task which her name seemed to have assigned to her. Sophia distributed what was then regarded as illegal literature. She spread the knowledge and wisdom that helped bring about the revolution.

This task was more dangerous than secret organizing. Anyone distributing revolutionary literature risked certain suspicion and arrest. Yet, when we bear in mind that Sophia was a mere child, looking no more than fourteen or fifteen years old, we are seized with love and admiration for the brave heart of this young and self-sacrificing girl revolutionist.

Yet her face did not show any strength of character. She had a rather mild, pleasant expression and piercing black eyes, which stood out boldly under a mass of black curls. Her expression stamped itself upon the memory, and once seen, her image could not be effaced.

Perhaps it was her childish appearance that proved her protection. For a long time she succeeded in her task because she attracted no attention. She visited impossible places and won for the group numerous readers. She frequented the largest factories in all parts of the city, and in time the people actually waited for her coming and for the written message that she brought in her train. Not only did Sophia distribute literature, but she collected money which aided the good work of spreading the message of freedom.

She expected to fall into the clutches of the police sooner or later. She knew her fate, but she never flinched, never hesitated in continuing her task. Several times she was warned against visiting a certain danger zone. But the very danger attracted her and she disregarded the warning, succeeded in her mission and reported astonishing results.

Sophia was one of those who were betrayed by the same spy and met the same fate as Katia and Julia. We think of these and of many others with sacred emotions of love, admiration and deep gratitude. We do not know whether they are still among the living, but they will continue to live in our memory and in that of future generations.

THE LADIES' GARMENT WORKER
Official Organ of the
International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union
Published Monthly

Address all Communications to
LADIES' GARMENT WORKER, 31 Union Square, New York City
Telephone: Stuyvesant 1126-1127

Subscription Price:
10 Cents per Copy One Dollar Per Year

Entered as second-class matter at the New York Post Office.

GENERAL OFFICERS
Benjamin Schlesinger, President
Ab. Baroff, General Sec'y-Treas.
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