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Comments
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Editorial Notes

For Over Thirty Years, Morris Hillquit, the candidate of the Socialist Party for Mayor of New York City, has been the champion and defender of the trade union movement and its loyal and tireless advocate.

Morris Hillquit—For Mayor

Hillquit's name has been inseparably associated with every movement of our workers, with their struggles for recognition as a force in industry, with their conflicts for shorter work hours, higher earnings and humane treatment in the shops. He has been the guiding spirit in most of our battles, representing and defending our cause in the courts, at arbitration bodies and in the forum of public opinion.

In this municipal campaign, surrounded as we are by a staggering economic depression and industrial crisis, the platform upon which Comrade Morris Hillquit is running offers the only ray of hope, the only courageous, honest and sincere approach to the solution of the appalling problems of unemployment and of municipal government in the interests of the labor masses of our great community as contrasted for the hopelessly corrupt and decayed rule of the boss-ridden political machines of the old parties.

The trade union movement of New York City, and our organization in particular, owe Morris Hillquit, as the standard-bearer of the Socialist Party in this campaign, not only a debt of personal recognition for inestimable services but they owe no less a sacred duty to the masses of the workers whom they represent to rally all wage-earners in this great community to the support of Hillquit's candidacy and the imperishable principles which it symbolizes.

The splendid campaign which Comrade Hillquit is put ting up should be a matter of sincere interest to all our members. Hillquit has served the labor movement wonderfully well, and it is our duty, as a part of that movement, to be of help in this campaign as much as we possibly can. Subscription lists for the Hillquit campaign fund have been distributed in all cloak and dress shops. Let every man and woman contribute to this fund—a dime, a quarter, a half dollar—each according to his or her ability. There will be a great mass-meeting at Madison Square Garden on Thursday evening, November 3rd; let us help fill that great hall to overflowing and close the Hillquit campaign with a magnificent demonstration.

Above all, remember, whether we can elect Morris Hillquit as mayor of New York this year or not—a great vote for him will strengthen immensely the position of the labor movement, because Morris Hillquit is one of us, he is our leader and our spokesman.

It Was A Hard-Working, steadily-gearcd meeting of the General Executive Board that was held early in October at Unity House, a full, unbroken week of continuous reporting, debating and discussion. In fact, it has to be all work and no fun at Unity House in October, especially on rainy, inclement days and evenings.

There was little glamour or exuberance in the accounts presented by the members of the Board, gathered from all centers of women's garment making at this first meeting of the G. E. B. since the Philadelphia convention. Each report reflected the general industrial situation in the country, and in our industries as well—poor work seasons, little earnings, a sharpened feeling of insecurity next to dismay among the workers, employers using every pretext to violate union work conditions, and, above all, a burning need for organizing activity, for strengthening the ranks on all fronts.

Yet, in the face of these uniformly disquieting reports, our organizations, in New York City and the country over, are carrying on—not on as grand a scale as in the pre-crisis days—but, nevertheless, doggedly, and with a grim earnestness fighting their way through the maze of the current economic calamity. They have trimmed their sails to weather the storm, they have made retrenchments, introduced economies in management, they are fighting on the defensive wherever they are pressed too hard by the employers, but they have stuck to their guns, with their eyes continually fixed on the morrow, and constantly hoping and watching for a better turn.
The reports, an extensive, all-embracing one by President Dubinsky, and a score of others by every member of the G. E. B., covering each market, trade, and activity, give a composite graph of the International for the past four months. Since May, the I. L. G. W. U. has gone through a string of labor events and the closing of the National Union to the activity of our key industry, the cloak industry of New York, for a renewal of collective agreements; the election of David Dubinsky to the chief stewardship of the organization, the tense, trigger-hair discussions with the cloak employers stretching over a month and a half; the two referendums and the general stoppage which assumed the proportions of a real strike; then a poor work-season which has made the enforcement of the new contract achievements in the cloak shops all the more difficult and onerous.

In Cleveland our workers are mobilizing their strength for a battle royal to force the employers who had slipped out from under union contract obligations to assume responsibility for work conditions. They are preparing for a real fight in that market; it is, indeed, a question of life or death to them. In Toronto the cloakmakers are getting themselves for an organizing drive that would bring back the organization to its former standing in the local market. In Indiana the Joint Board is carrying on a desperate fight against several employers who are attempting to "run out" on the Union by opening sweat shops in Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana cities. In Philadelphia the cloakmakers are doing their best in a slumping local industry and a very bad season to hold up their position, while the dressmakers, with only a small part of their trade unionized, are stubbornly defending this nucleus of an organization and are waiting patiently for an opportunity to launch in a drive to unionize the rest of their shops.

And so on, all along the line—in Montreal, in Toledo, in Baltimore, in San Francisco, wherever our workers are struggling against the tides of unemployment, acute want and employer aggression, all of them in unison directing their appeal to their parent organization, the International, to come to their aid and to give them all the moral and material support it can muster in this, their hour of need.

Has the quarterly meeting of the G. E. B. answered all the urgent pleas of our organizations? Has it found a solution to all the problems that are harassing our unions far and near?

It has, certainly, done its very best with the materially shrunk means at its command at the present moment. Frankly, it required courage of no mean order, in the face of gloomy reports from so many quarters, to decide on immediate organizing drives in a number of cities to offset the demoralizing effects of the crisis and of the union-destroying tactics of the employers. But the General Executive Board, under the leadership of President Dubinsky, rose fully to the height of the situation at that meeting. Depression or no depression, as long as there is an ounce of strength left in the parent organization, it will be placed at the disposal of our struggling unions—in New York and elsewhere—in their fight to keep their heads above water in this all-engulfing crisis.

It was decided, and steps were taken at once to carry out these decisions, to come to the aid of the Cleveland organization, to help direct the drive in Toronto, to assist the activity in Baltimore, to consider effective organizing work in the Philadelphia dress market, to continue the encouraging work being done in the Chicago dress field, in addition to sanctioning the very material support already given by President Dubinsky to the New York Dress Joint Board in their organizing work during this season and to consolidate all available efforts for a greater drive in the dress industry during the coming spring season.
November, 1932

the finances of each and every local and sub-division and
direct them how and when to make necessary economies and
cutting down of expenses.

We expect that these conferences and the work of the
Finance Committee will bring substantial gains in economy
to some of the locals who are themselves sincerely interested
in this problem. Once such a question is stripped of its
political lining and is examined and tackled in the light of
reasoning it can be settled right and to the ultimate benefit
of all concerned.

THE NEGOTIATIONS which President Dubinsky has
been conducting in recent weeks with the Unemploy-
ment Emergency Relief Committee and the New York
chapter of the Red Cross concern
the making up of
dresses and underwear for
the needy families in the New
York district by members of
our Union, have attracted considerable
notice.

Originally planned to be made up by "volunteer" labor,
by amateur seamstresses in homes, trade schools and ins-
itutions, this 4,750,000 yards of cotton material donated
by the Government to the Red Cross, is of course pret-
tain to be made up by unemployed members of our organi-
ation. Under the terms submitted by President Dubinsky to
the Emergency Relief Committee, the work would be made
up by workers employed in two shifts at six hours each.
On a rough estimate, the material at hand would give 1,000
workers employment for two months and would yield 60,
dozen garments. This does not include several thou-
dred of men's shirts which are to be made up by men
shirtemakers.

Wholly apart from the work which this arrangement
would afford a considerable number of our idle people
during the approaching slack period, perhaps the major point
of interest in this transaction is the revealing fact that
a labor organization can organize its collective force
with comparative ease for practical production purposes. It
also opens up a new vista of possibilities for cooperative
efforts by trade unions in conjunction with governmental
and semi-public agencies in the promotion of large public
undertakings that would provide work to unemployed under
decent labor conditions.

THE DECISION of the G. E. B. to expand the work
of the "out-of-town" departments of the Internation-
ial, in the New York area and in the Middle Western's
wear markets brings out sharply the importance which
the small towns located near
the main production centers of
our industry have assumed in
the past few years.

The craze for cheap production and for cheap garments
and the sacrifice of skill and good materials for mass produc-
tion, shoddy goods and cheap labor is fairly eating the
very heart out of our trades these days. Of course, it is
all the result of the breakdown of the earning powers of
the workers in the cities and of the distressful condition
of the farmers in the rural districts brought on by the crisis.

Be it as it may, however, the fact remains that dress and
cloak employers are now moving out in larger numbers than
ever before from the big production markets to the hinter-
land in search of cheap female labor, cheap or free rentals
and, incidentally, "freedom" from union work rules and
standards.

Small wonder our unions are intensely alarmed over
this exodus of garment firms into the non-union areas. It
can easily be imagined that, if left unchecked, this migration
might gravely affect the very livelihood of thousands of
our workers especially in the cheaper lines of merchan-
dise which can be produced on section by semi-skilled
labor. The only effective way for combating this menace
is of course, organization work. The workers in the smaller
towns who are being mercilessly exploited by the "benefi-
factors" from the big cities who open cloaks or dress shops
in their locality and pay them the minuscule sums of seven
or eight dollars a week for fifty-five or more hours of
labor, can and should be approached and interested in
the cause of trade unionism. It has been done before with
success, and, while the task admittedly is a difficult one,
it is not an impossible one.

The allotment by the G. E. B. of two cents of the weekly
per capita income of the General Office for the work of the
Out-of-Town Department in the East and of a half a
cent of this revenue for out-of-towns organizing activity in
Chicago and Cleveland, marks the beginning of a very
earnest campaign to bring into the fold of our Union the
thousands of workers who are being ground under the
wheels of cheap mass production in the small localities sur-
rounding the chief markets of our industry. Many em-
ployer who has been figuring until now that he can "get
away with it" undisturbed on account of the prevailing hard
times may soon have cause to conclude that he had, after
all, reckoned without his host and change his plans ac-
cordingly.

ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, the I. L. G. W. U.
will unveil a monument over the grave of Morris
Sigman, its former president, and of the heroic figures
which have helped to mould its destiny and have left an
indelible stamp upon its his-
ory and course of development.

Morris Sigman died about sixteen months ago, in early
middle age, worn out by a life of intermittent struggle. A
rebel from his earliest days, a fighter who asked for no
mercy and gave no quarter, he was essentially a genuine
lover of his fellow men, to whom the greatest and the low-
iest looked alike, a real democrat and a generous char-
acter.

Morris Sigman was a fighter, yet a builder with a con-
structive mind and with a rare gift for divining the striv-
ings and the heart-throbs of his fellow workers, of the
masses who so gladly and enthusiastically followed him.
Less perhaps than any other leader of our union movement
Morris Sigman needs a monument of stone and steel to
keep green among us the memory of his wonderful per-
sonality. In the truest sense of the word, Morris Sigman
is reverently enshrined in the hearts of the tens of thou-
sands who have lived, struggled and suffered by his side.

These thousands will congregate on Sunday, November
20, at his grave, when the stone erected by the Interna-
tional is unveiled, to pay him again a part of the tribute
which never could be fully repaid, and to voice again in
simple words which he loved so well their profound, heart-
felt recognition of Morris Sigman, the leader, the fighter
and the man.

The Morris Sigman Monument Committee of the Gen-
eral Executive Board is calling upon the entire membership
in New York and nearby cities to come to Mount Carmel
Cemetery, Queens. Locals are expected to elect committees
to represent them. The unveiling ceremonies will start at
one o'clock in the afternoon.

The G. E. B. Committee consists of Vice-Presidents
Julius Hochman, Louis Levy, Charles Kreindler, Luigi
Antonini and Nicholas Kirtzman.
Cleveland Ready for Coming Conflict

Contract Parleys Will Begin November 15

Our agreement, which expires on December 31, provides that we are to notify the employers before October 15 whether we want to renew the contract on its old terms or would suggest modifications. This year, our conference committee reached the conclusion to postpone the negotiations until November 15 despite the fact that we have a number of important agreement changes to propose.

The reason for it was that this year our contractual relations extend only to a few manufacturers, representing not more than a quarter of the local industry. Before beginning to discuss agreement renewals, we deemed it of greater importance to launch a campaign to organize all the other shops in the trade and then suggest an agreement for all of them. This plan was approved at a special meeting of the Joint Board held together with all executive board members and shop chairmen and notice of this decision was forwarded to the employers accordingly.

Organization Committee Formed; Manifesto Issued

A committee of fifty active members was at once appointed to put the organization drive into effect. We divided them into eight sub-committees, each assigned to a designated building, with a chairman to supervise their activity. The campaign opened on October 12, with a circular which was distributed among the non-union workers calling upon them to fall in line with the Union members. The response was quite encouraging, though we realized at the start that the initiation fee of $5 would hinder our progress as the non-union workers are employed under sweat-shop conditions and cannot pay this amount.

A manifesto was, therefore, issued to all the workers in the non-union shops that they may join the Union for a $5 initiation fee for men and $3 for women. Within the past ten days, since this charge in admission cost had been ordered, we have enlisted a substantial number of recruits on our rolls. The manufacturers, as one might have expected, feel considerably disturbed over the headway we are making. Some of them, in fact, have called together their workers and have warned them that in the event they join the Union they would be discharged, while others threatened that they would close their shops rather than enter an agreement with the Union. We are satisfied that Cleveland non-union employers are taking our campaign seriously, and we are also glad that the press in this city is giving our side a sympathetic hearing in its columns.

President Dubinsky's Visit

Although President Dubinsky stayed in Cleveland only one day during last month he left a very good impression. He met with the Joint Board and with all the active workers on the local executive boards and learned from the actual state of conditions in the local market. We talked with our President about the changed situation in the Cleveland women's wear trade and of the urgency of strengthening the Union in this city and of extending its influence to the non-union shops. President Dubinsky was advised that all possible economies had been put into the local organization, yet the Joint Board is unable to meet the present financial needs for organizing the non-union shops, and if this is not done at present, there is danger that control of working conditions will be lost even in the union shops and Cleveland will be wiped off the map as an organized market.

In turn, President Dubinsky gave us a complete review of the condition of our industry in every important market in the land and the effect of the current economic upheaval upon it. Drives to organize the workers are a prime necessity, he told us, not only in Cleveland but everywhere. The International is, therefore, confronted with a multitude of problems, all of them of a pressing and urgent character. He promised, however, to have the Cleveland situation fully discussed at the G. E. B. October meeting and that he would make every effort to extend to us all assistance possible. He, nevertheless, emphasized the point that the Cleveland workers cannot and should not depend solely on the International but would have to do their full share of the work if they want to make their campaign a success. These remarks were met with hearty approval indicating clearly that our members are ready to do their bit in this drive.

G. E. B. Comes to Our Aid

When Vice-President Charles Krawdjier returned in the middle of October to Cleveland, he brought us the glad news that the G. E. B. did act favorably on the request of the Cleveland organization and decided to assist us in the campaign. This report was enthusiastically received by our members spurring them on to greater activity.

We at once increased our organizing staff, engaging Mrs. Gallagher and Miss Mayette, of the Women's Trade Union League, to do special work among the women workers in the non-union shops. In addition, several members of the League have pledged support to our drive.

The problem of organizing the Italian element still remains a hard problem for us. Local 44, our Italian local, has not succeeded in developing the leadership which a drive among non-union workers requires. We are on the lookout for organizing talent in the local field as we realize that we must start the ball rolling among the Italians if we are to succeed in this campaign. If we don't succeed in finding an Italian organizer here, we expect to ask the General Office to send one of our Italian vice-presidents to Cleveland for a short time to assist us in our work and to make, at least, a good start in organizing the Italian workers.

Let me just say at the finish: Judging by the eagerness with which our circulators are being read by the non-union workers, on one hand, and by the readiness of our active members to give all their time and energy to this drive, we may safely state that all indications point to the success of our work. The manufacturers obviously realize the seriousness of our campaign, and they have good reasons for it: We mean business.
At the Crossroads in Toronto Cloak Market

By SAMUEL KRAISMAN, Manager,
Toronto Joint Board

which is about to be launched will also
be carried on in the same spirit and with
the same telling results as on previous
occasions.

The Joint Board and our members
hauled the decision of the G. E. B. with
delight, and plans are already being
formulated for intensive organization
work. Meetings of shops are being held
daily, and the only topic discussed at
these meetings is the forthcoming organi-
sation work. Our Joint Board, execu-
tive boards and the local meetings will
from now on be concerned with one topic
only: the coming drive and how best to
win back all such cloakmakers as have
dropped out of the Union as members
in the past two years. We are striving
every effort so to arrange our activities
that when the organizer from the inter-
national reaches Toronto, he may find
that we have already covered consider-
able ground on the road of re-establishing
a strong cloakmakers' union. We can
also give advance assurance that the
organizer will find a lively group of
members ready and willing to do all
they are called upon to do in order to
bring the campaign to a successful con-
clusion.

Revival of Old Spirit
at Hand

We have abundant hope that with the
revival of the old fighting spirit among
our old members and with the readiness
displayed by our active groups, the com-
ing spring season will see an effective
cloakmakers union in Toronto. It now
depends on the general membership
of our Union and also on such cloakmak-
ers as are still on the outside to de-
vote their time and energy to reinforce
our ranks, to close up the gaps and get
into action with a will to install union
control in the shops.

The cloakmakers of Toronto will soon
be put to an acid test, and judging by
the past, there is reason to believe that
they will rise equal to the emergency
and responsibility placed upon them and
will reassert themselves as a control-
ing factor over labor conditions in their
shops, winning back in this manner the
prestige and power that their Union had
here but a short while ago.

Shorter Hours— The Only Way Out!
An Upheaval in the Garment Trades


2nd ARTICLE

Two cloakmakers were standing in front of a big show window of a department store in the heart of the retailing district, admiring somewhat expertly some women’s coats wrapped around “futuristic” mannequins. Said one to the other:

“Do you believe you could recognize a coat from our shop on any of these figures?”

“Not much. They change the looks of them as quickly as they leave the factory nowadays that you cannot tell which is which.” This came with an undertone of worry not unmixed with a sort of resentment.

A new wrinkle is being added to the many lines following the face of the coat-making industry this season, bringing more confusion to a trade already sufficiently complex. It is a technical complication, to be certain, yet one that car- ries with it implications that further disturb old producer-consumer relationships in the market. It is all about the so-called excise fur tax, levied by the last Congress on fur-trimmed garments, and the controversy between manufacturer and retailer as to who is to pay this assessment. Most every coat—and many ensembles—bear fur trimming and the fur on these garments often exceeds in value the material plus the labor invested in them. To settle this argument, many retailers, including some of the large department stores, have purchased furless garments from the manufacturers and later putting on the fur trimmings in their own alteration branches.

The result is a marked difference in the appearance of the garment in the shop from its finished looks in the show window. A good deal of its identity is gone, and this identity or style is one of the coat-maker’s principal assets. The manufacturer does not like this intrusion of the retailer into his domain, he does not like this fur-trimming done by the distributor, but he cannot help it. And, strangely enough, even the workers, whose interest in garment-making is generally supposed to be impersonal, even they seem to be resentful over this; this invasion of the factory by the retailer is something they instinctively do not like, as it convinced that it can do no good to the industry as a whole, that it certainly can do so good to them as workers...

A cloakmaker tells me the following story.

Times are incredibly hard, so his seventeen year-old boy had to quit City College. Luckily, he found for him a berth in the shipping room of the shop. It was a great pity to break up his studies, an able boy, a good kid. But, there is no use in battling against the impossible. But this work for a cloak firm, the old man appears to be worried about it:

“I don’t like to see him in a cloak shop... it would be much better elsewhere... What may he expect from this trade of ours anyway”...

The other day President Dubinsky of the I. L. G. W. U. spoke to me in a similar strain:

“At times it seems to me that our entire women’s wear industry, the very backbone of the economic existence of our masses, is giving way... People are running away from it like from a sinking ship.”

One hears the same melancholy refrain in the show rooms on the street corners in the cloak district, in union offices. There is still “money” in the cloak business, but the industry as a whole is becoming fast disintegrated; catch-as-catch-can methods and practices have eaten into its heart and have made it insecure and sappy. One often hears the remark in the cloak district: “They will be soon handing out cloaks over the counter as they are handing out cigarettes in tobacco stores.”...

The Schulte Cigar Stores, with which the “Retail Department Stores of America” are allied, (the latter extensive distributors of women’s garments), have gone in for marketing cloaks as retailers-producers after the formerly described Penney Stores fashion. David A. Schulte, originally David A. Goldber, the head of the cigar store combine, had taken over legally the name and the goodwill of his brother-in-law, Anthony Schulte, a merchant of considerable renown. It would seem that this David A. Schulte was molded for the chain-store or branch-store enterprises. Anything and everything he touched, he would expand along the chain plan—cigars, real estate, pharmacy, lunch counters, drugs and notions, bar and basement commodities from a “nickel to a dollar” and, finally, women’s cloaks.

The firm, it appears, has had in recent seasons rough sledding in some of the smaller cities which compelled liquidations here and there, but, on the whole, the Schulte retailing interests are still regarded among the growing chain businesses with stores in some forty odd cities. And the same is true of the Henry Rose Stores, a women’s wear subsidiary of the Sears, Roebuck organization, with eighty ladies’ garment stores in the country and a direct interest not only in the retailing but in production control of their merchandise.

Million-dollar firms from the “outside” are thus casting their shadows upon the garment industry and upon the lesser “legitimate” manufacturers who hitherto held sway in it. But the bigger capitalist, it seems, is no blessing for the cloak industry. Big money in the garment trade does not spell greater responsibility for conditions in industry and greater orderliness. On the contrary, it seems to stress, above all, cheap quantity production, low work standards, and the gradual elimination of skilled labor.

Some more facts.

Kansas City, Mo., has, for a while, been one of the “sore spots” of the cloak industry, a cheap production place. About three years ago, President Dubinsky found in that city a number of cloak factories which looked more like trade schools than regular shops, with a tran-
sent labor personnel, mostly women, dropping in and out during the work season. Such a worker element, it stands to reason, is best adapted for cheap production. The system in the Kansas City cloth shops is not unlike the system prevailing in some of the Brooklyn contract shops with one man mechanic "running" a flock of women "assistants" at section work.

Within the past couple of years, however, Kansas City has slumped considerably as a cloth market. Its production last year was no more than two and a half million dollars, less than half of Philadelphia's output, another cloth market which has suffered so heavily in recent years.

Strange as it may sound, garment buying by women has hardly fallen in volume even during these times of depression. Garment buying is no more a luxury, it has become a prime necessity. What has dropped is the quality of the product turned out by the garment shops. Women buy today no less clothes than what they used to, in the better years, but they are buying very much cheaper garments. The American woman has become style-conscious; she refuses to wear a garment which is not fashioned in accordance with the degree of the season. The American woman, in fact, may deny herself other necessities rather than a dress or a coat of the current style. And if she cannot afford a good garment she will buy a cheaper garment as long as it conforms to the demands of the latest fashion.

These cheap garments, however, are an affliction upon the industry. In the large retailing places, in most of the popular department and chain stores, where the masses buy their clothes, one hardly finds an expensive garment today. The garment most in demand in these establishments today is the ten-dollar coat—or to be precise, the $9.90 garment. To make the production of such a garment possible, new cloth, "woolens" and lining materials are being woven and put into them, materials that may look good enough but which actually are of the old shoddy quality.

The logical outcome of this cheapness epidemic is a murderous competition all through the trade. The sub-standard shop, until recently a bootleg source of production, has now acquired a "legitimate" standing in the market; it is relied upon to furnish the extra-cheap product to make possible still lower price-marketings; in fact, to dictate to the majority of the shops in the industry where union work conditions still prevail and where the workers' organization is putting up a valiant struggle to defend the earnings of the men and women employed in them. And along with the ten-dollar coat, there has made its appearance in the market a new merchandising phenomenon—the coat plus hat and purse—all for the same ten dollars or less. This contact between the coat manufacturer, the purser and the millinery producer, is being made by the distributor, the retailer, who thus appears as a connecting link between these three distinctly different crafts and is able thereby to influence these producers to fit their output to his own needs and demands.

To what extent this epidemic of cheaper and ever cheaper production is affecting the industry may be seen from the sudden impulse it has given in the past few years to the exodus of cloth shops from New York into adjacent territory in Connecticut, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Chambers of commerce, rotary clubs, citizens' committees in scores of small towns within a hundred miles or so from New York are launching drives for bringing shops into their communities—promising protection against "union interference," and not infrequently even free power and lots. They are flooding the garment manufacturers in New York—and Chicago—with such offers in the hope of providing their home folk with jobs, jobs at any wages and work hours. In some of these towns candidates for city offices are even campaigning on the issue of "bringing garment industry shops to their localities.

A few weeks ago, a representative of the Penney Stores Co. came, by invitation, to a meeting of the New York Cloth Commission whose members were anxious to learn to what extent this huge chain store corporation was ready to assume some of the work standards under which the garments retailed by them were being made up.

There is one garment sold by the Penney stores which is exclusively union-made, and that is men's overalls. But that, of course, is another story. Overall are largely union-labelled and their label is a well advertised selling asset, which means, in turn, good business. To what extent they would go in confusing their buying and producing of women's wear to union-controlled shops is another question. The element of profit and loss would probably be the controlling factor in shaping their policy in this matter. I am told that Mr. J. C. Penney had met, some time ago, William Green, the president of the A. F. of L., at the latter's request, to discuss with him the subject of union-made housey, an article which the Penney stores sell in huge quantities. Mr. Penney, I am told, argued at that conference that he does not have to recognize any labor union directly, that industry and business to him are a matter of dollars and cents. Human interests, workers' rights, social justice, are like religion, things apart from business; they do not make a living.

This policy the Penney organization maintains not only with regard to the production of its women's wear, The Penney firm produces men's clothing. Officially it is stated that it obtains its ready-made men's clothing from the "English-American Tailoring Corporation" of Baltimore. Now the Penney system has started a new garment line, a "made-to-measure" service in all its fifteen hundred stores. It has also a subsidiary in the corsets and underwear lines, the "Crescent Corset Co." of Cornell, N. Y., with a huge output. There was a time, not so long ago, when the manufacture of white goods in New York employed thousands of Jewish girls. Now underwear and lingerie shops are to be found in countless small towns, filled with a different type of workers and run by a new type of employer.

Representatives of several large stores in New York have recently met to think and talk over plans of "saving" the garment industry from the morass of cheapness and quality disintegration into which it has been sinking so steadily.


I have read the account of that meeting, to the extent that it was reported in the trade press, and I have my doubts whether these gentlemen, regardless of their excellent intentions, will succeed to any material degree in "saving" the industry. I am even inclined to believe that these representatives of New York leading retailers fall to perceive clearly the forces which are operating behind this breakdown of quality and standards in coat and dress making.

What are their plans? One plan is to start an effective propaganda all over the country for "better and higher priced garments." And extensive advertising campaign covering newspapers, the radio and the movies, as well as special window displays, would be employed as part of this propaganda. Simultaneously, the leaders of this drive plan to exert a "moral" influence upon other retailers to stop playing up price-slashing as a means for drawing trade.

This plan, in other words, centers wholly on publicity, on the belief that the printed word and the "educational" message may lift the falling standards of garment making. Against this, arises the question: How big, indeed, is the consumer market today that can afford better and higher-priced garments? The fact starting in the face every sober-minded person is and outside the gar-
meet industry is that there are today no less than 11 million unemployed people in the country, besides those who are employed on part time, and that these millions represent with their dependents at least a quarter of the nation’s population, some 35 million human beings. It is doubtful if an advertising campaign alone would induce the farmers, the miners and the mill workers to ask for better garments. Clearly, the question of a disintegrated consumer market in the garment business is interwoven with the critical economic situation in every industry all over the land.

A former Princeton professor, now the head of a research bureau of a large chain store company, talked to me about it.

A gravely earnest man, one whose business it is to keep an eye on the credit standing of all firms with which his concern is doing business and to study merchandising and production costs. He it was who told me: “You can’t ignore this point: It is a serious item in garment production and garment distribution.”

We were talking about models, theatre parties, gifts-to-buyers and similar “recreational” business-getting devices in the cloak and dress industry. My informant was asserting that these items constitute a substantial part of the sales costs of women’s apparel; that they are treated as a legitimate weapon in the competitive game of selling to buyers and, eventually, in retaining them. A few “friendly” acts here and there in the show rooms and outside of them often go far to “make” a season for a garment firm.

“It is difficult, of course, to determine how high these ‘sales’ costs are,” my informant further told me, “they are never entered as a separate item on the books of a manufacturer, but they are, probably, not small. Some few years ago, an Atlanta, Ga., newspaper had published a sensational ‘expose’ with regard to garment merchandising practices in New York City, stating that our producers here are giving a bottle of olive oil to every garment purchased by an outside buyer, and that it is high time to ‘emanate’ the country from the New York garment supply, as instead of garment quality New York is furnishing only olive quality.”

“This silly attack received at that time a proper rebuke from the leaders of the cloak and dress industries and was practically squelched. The fact, however, remains that ‘selling costs’ constitute a heavy item in garment merchandising and that parties and gifts are a substantial part of such costs. And it is also true that models in the show rooms, while as intelligent and, with very few exceptions, as morally wholesome as their sisters in any other occupation, are being nevertheless exploited as ‘pullers-in’ in the merciless competition which characterizes this industry for the past several years in particular.”

In a recent conversation with Mr. Samuel Klein, the executive director of the “inside” cloak manufacturers’ association, we touched upon the role of the resident buyer and his function in the cost and suit business.

Mr. Klein explained to me that there are three types of such buyers in New York. Not all out-of-town retailers are sending periodically buyers to New York; instead, they connect with permanent buyers in New York, while others send buyers not to the manufacturing firms directly but to legitimate resident buyers. Other resident buyers act as intermediaries between the manufacturers’ show rooms and the department stores, and still another group is serving selected clients, usually the largest retailers in the field. This service consists, in addition to buying merchandise, of industrial and economic research and careful surveying of all developments and trends within the industry.

There is also in this industry a group of “commission” buyers, usually ex-salesmen, who live on commissions from jobbers and often resort to selling practices which are no credit to the business and which involve “basement bargain” tricks. In the long run all these go-between costs come out of the earnings of the workers. For, while the manufacturer obviously cannot force the worker to take into account these extravagant selling costs, he invariably looks to his labor costs—weekly wages or piece prices—to cancel his inordinate middleman expenses.

(Continued in the next issue)
Run O' The Month

By MAX D. DANISH

The reasons why I am going to vote for the Socialist ticket this year are quite simple: I will not vote for Thomas as a person, though I admire him; I shall vote for the Socialist Party because I should be ashamed to think that the present order in America is the best we can have. I believe that human nature does change and that blind as we may be, we are still going forward and I should rather be with those who are going ahead than with such as go backwards or remain in one place...

"The Socialist Party may not reflect all my ideas and all my hopes; it is today, nevertheless, the best vehicle for realizing these ideas and every one of us should help to build a society that would fully and adequately express our common aspirations and desires."

DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION of unemployment insurance has been bloated and complicated for years by calling it a "dole," and by polemics of England as the horrible example. The "dole" has demoralized English workers. America has been told. Men stop work to live on the "dole." young men and women are demoralized by it, it has encouraged pauperism and almost bankrupted that country.

Yet, a study just made by Arthur Hunter, chief actuary and vice-president of the New York Insurance Company, and printed in many respectable journals refutes all these charges. Mr. Hunter finds that English workers do not quit work to live on the dole, and cannot, since, with a few sharply defined exceptions, no one can draw unemployment insurance for more than six months in one year.

The system is not demoralizing British youth. Mr. Hunter reports. On the contrary, it is helping unemployed to get a start in life at the right trade, and keeping them in school.

"The men do not feel that they are receiving a dole," says Mr. Hunter. "They consider that the payments are rightly due them as they, their employers and the state are contributing thereto." As for the expense, it is heavy, but Mr. Hunter estimates that the degree of unemployment from which we often suffer would be expensive anyway. He might have added that unemployment in America is costing the country twice the national debt each year in decreased production of wealth.

IT MAY HAVE BEEN in a moment of unguarded frankness—or perhaps during a spell of defiant swashbuckling—that...
Mr. James J. Walker, by now a nearly forgotten ex-Mayor of New York, had spoken his heart freely upon his arrival from Europe, after a rather brief self-imposed exile, to a crowd of newspapermen. What he said, however, was of more than passing interest.

"Jimmy" attributes his downfall to the merciless campaign which nearly all the papers in the city were waging against him. The ex-Mayor, however, is inclined to believe that New York would still acclaim and reward him for the present anguish if he ever chose to run for office, any office. The newspapers may be against him but not "his voters."

"Where I get my votes," Walker said, "the newspapers do not amount to anything. The residents of Ninth or Tenth Avenues, or of First and Second Avenues, for that matter, have no time for newspapers. The organization is the main thing there."

Jimmy does not think much of his electorate. He is sure that they do not bother with such nonsense as the printed word. They are all too busy to waste their precious idle moments on the press or magazines. They cannot afford the extravagance of examining the worth or value of candidates. They only have hands to vote with, and these hands are being deftly manipulated by the better minds of Tammany Hall, up there on Union Square.

Jimmy is right. "The organization is the thing." The sovereign citadel of New York is as much in the hands of Tammany as are the masses of Chicago voters in the hands of the Chicago political machine, or the Philadelphians free electorate in the hands of the Republican gang. It is the ballot of sorbid, machine-run politics in every American city, big or small.

Anyway, Jimmy Walker is at times a candid sort of a fellow.

GLAD TIDINGS ARE ABORE that we may have beer, honest-to-goodness beer, before the Winter is over.

There is reason to believe that this prophecy might actually be realized. Whoever wins in the national election, Roosevelt or Hoover, the "wet" cause cannot lose. The prohibition "experiment" is clearly on the tobergan.

And along with the real beer news comes the no less plausible forecast that the country is due for another lacket-up of taxes during the coming short session of Congress. An attempt will, quite likely, be made to push through, with the aid of the "same ducks," a sales tax, and this sure is bad news for either "wets" or "drys."

The present nuisance taxes are admittedly a flop. They are not producing even a portion of the revenue they were supposed to yield. Legalized beer might produce about $50 million dollars in taxes but that would not be nearly enough to cover the present huge deficit.

So it looks like now and higher taxes on all common necessities, taxes on the kitchen, on household furnishings and on clothing. With earnings continually decreasing and unemployment still increasing all over the land, this prospect of added burdensome taxes is nothing short of a calamity.

UNEMPLOYMENT RIOTS, for the moment, are showing political news into a "back seat" in England.

Several thousands of bedraggled and misery-ridden unemployed are converging from all ends of the British Isles on London, while Hyde Park, where these weary hunger marchers are expected to concentrate, is being guarded by thousands of policemen, mounted and on foot.

While there is little doubt that this particular demonstration is being inspired by consciously the cause for it is the government's new idea "means test" by which many subsistence recipients have been stricken from the lists.

Regardless of inspired dispatches to America, there seems to be a revival in English industry and unemployment has reached the highest mark ever recorded in British history. All the "economies" effected by the Tory-controlled government, since the Labor Party was so overwhelmingly defeated in the elections, have been at the expense of the poor. Relief, which had offered only a bare existence, has been cut drastically, or, in thousands of instances, abolished entirely.

There have been bloody hunger riots in Belfast and looting of food stores in numerous other cities. Armed soldiers, constables and special police are patrolling the streets, like under martial law, in the towns most seriously affected by unemployment. And over the whole scene hangs the threat of a gigantic, nationwide railroad strike to resist the plans of the railway magnates to put through a ten per cent wage-cut.

The Month in Montreal

By ISRAEL FEINBERG, Vice President Manager Montreal Joint Council

October has brought no change in local cloak trade conditions. To some extent this may be due to the unseasonable warm weather we have been having, and we are hoping, therefore, that the advent of normal colder weather might still bring some work to our shops.

At any rate, our people are having quite a hard time of it. Yet, despite the hardships, the feeling generally prevalent among the cloakmakers is that if not for the Union, things would have been much worse. They just visualize what merciless advantage our employers would have taken of them if not for the fear that the organization might retaliate. They, after all, have a memory and they have not forgotten the past.

Times, we know, are bad, but these hard times are not going to last forever; they have lasted long enough as it is. Conditions are bound to change, and it is for that change that we are now waiting.

To See the Union Through

That's exactly what the Montreal cloakmakers have on their minds constantly those days. We have got to keep the organization intact during the difficult period so as to be able to make improvements later when the opportune hour arrives. We are calling shop meetings, chairmen meetings and are taking up union matters with many workers individually in the office to keep the workers closely together. My feelings in this matter are that we shall be able to weather the storm and preserve the Union here notwithstanding the difficulties.

We have loyalty on our side and the self-interest bred and strengthened by past experience, which is a fine teacher. The Montreal cloakmakers have seen the light and-by that light they will continue to cling to their organization and to protect it against every form of attack.

THANKS!

We, the workers of the dress firm N. M. Zucker, 1375 Broadway, express our hearty thanks to our shop chairman, Bro. J. H. Thomas, for the loyal, unselfish, and exceptionally able services tendered by him to us.

We consider it a great pleasure to be able to present to him as a token of our recognition a library and smoking table and we hope that he and his family may use it in good health.

THE COMMITTEE:

Sam Panas
Louis Gilbert
David Silverman
Members of Local 22.
Chicago Dressmakers Making Headway

By BERNARD SHANE,
General Organizer, L.I.G.W.U.

It was about a year ago that we began the present work of organizing the dressmakers in Chicago, and, although we realized from the very start, of course, that the task would be a difficult one, the obstacles that we met were such, that many a time during the past year we were so overcome with pessimism that we were ready to give up.

First of all, we expected too much help from the clackmakers. It so happened that they had too much trouble of their own that they could give us very little help. Secondly, many of the old-time dressmakers who still remember the loss of the general strike of 1924 were too pessimistic about building a new dressmakers' union here.

Nevertheless, we kept plugging along, and results are now beginning to show. We could do very little organizing during the fall season of 1931. I arrived in Chicago in the beginning of October, and before that, an opportunity of getting acquainted with the most active members, the season was over. There remained nothing else for us to do but make preparations for the beginning of the spring season.

At first, we did everything possible to organize shops in their entirety. A group of the most active women workers formed an organizing committee, working day and night, sacrificing their time and energy, but without results. It was simply impossible to bring the girl dressmakers into the Union. We then decided to concentrate on the cutters and pressers.

Cutters, Pressers in the Vanguard

In previous reports to "Justice" we reported about the cutters, how they were the first to respond to the call of the International, and how they benefited the most by it. The pressers, who had a separate independent club supported by the "lefts," joined the Union towards the end of the spring season. We can now report that we have here a wonderful dress pressers' branch numbering close to three hundred members.

We calculated that by organizing the cutters and the pressers we would be able not only to get better working conditions for the shop, but that through them we might organize the girls even if we had to strike some houses by calling out the pressers and cutters, and force thereby the operators, finishers and drapers into the Union. Now we can happily report that our hopes are beginning to materialize.

and evening, a hundred people picketing the shop at times.

The Pressers' Branch deserves most of the credit in this strike, for they supplied the biggest number of pickets. The operators' group was on the job almost continuously, and we want to compliment the workers of the G. & G. Dress Co., who did their picketing work diligently. The result was that after four days of striking, the employees realized that no business can flourish on strikes and, like a sensible business man, he signed a contract with the Union and gave a slight pay increase to the operators and finishers.

The interesting part about this strike is that the settlement was effected at a conference of all manufacturers in the building, five in number, with an understanding that they would all unionize their shops. One of these manufacturers afterward changed his mind, but after a stoppage of a few minutes he, too, signed a contract with the Union.

Union's Move Impresses Local Market

These few strikes and settlements have made a good impression in the market, both on the manufacturers and the workers. Some houses have put in new locks on their factory doors (even though a new lock could keep the work over from the Union). Others, who are more sensible, have made arrangements to unionize their shops without a strike.

Our only trouble at the present time is that the trade has become slack all over a sudden.

One encouraging incident occurred last week which deserves mention. Two workers of Steinhardt's shop approached us asking if they might have a shop meeting. Of course, we said yes. Nevertheless, we did not believe this possible, as the girls working there had never been in the Union. To our great surprise, however, all the workers from that shop, about twenty in number, appeared at the shop meeting, joined the Union, and we now have another complete union shop.

We take it as a good sign in our organization campaign. Only a few weeks ago it was impossible to get any of these girls to join the Union, even when we had taken them down. Now they appear to realize that the Union means business; besides, they also know that in every case where a shop was unionized the girls received a slight increase in their prices, and that stimulates their interest in the organization considerably.
Why Union Leaders Die Prematurely

The recent deaths of Morris Sigman, Benjamin Schlesinger and Abraham Baroff, following each other in rapid succession, at a comparatively early age, should draw the attention of the man outside the Labor movement to the high rate of mortality among leaders of labor.

Statistics on this subject are, of course, unavailable for the reason that labor leadership as an occupation is not yet specially listed or designated in the mortality tables. However, if I were to write or classify death certificates of union officials, I should consider myself justified in answering the question as to the "predisposing causes of death" with the diagnosis of "unionitis." This may as yet be a novel, and an unaccepted, term, but, I am inclined to believe, quite an accurate designation.

Union Officers Found Ailing

The records of the Union Health Center, where hundreds of union officers have been medically examined during the last twenty years, show that hardly one of them was found without a number of physical ills and that they are affected in a much larger proportion than the rank and file of the workers.

The maladies from which the union officers suffer mostly are: functional neuroses, gastric disturbances and arterio-sclerosis with hyper or hypo-tension. Most of them were found to be suffering from either one or more of these diseases.

There is, of course, a reason for that, and it is not far to seek.

A worker in the needle trades, or for that matter in any other trade, who has risen from the ranks to a post of responsibility in his local or national office, changes at once the whole tempo of his living. He no longer has merely the troubles of his private job to contend with. He becomes a representative of hundreds of workers to whose troubles and complaints he must listen carefully, and on whose confidence his future rests.

He must at times conciliate his membership, and often employ diplomacy; he has to carry on running battles against employers, and he has frequently to combat hostile opinion on the floor of his union meeting. He is constantly under a nervous strain. He rarely has a day of leisure. He is often called to meetings at any hour of the night, and is expected to be on hand before morning. He is often called upon to make speeches or be interviewed by the press. His work is never finished.

So it stands to reason that these men, who are constantly under strain and stress of work, would be subject to the trammings of arterio-sclerosis.

Insecurity Another Source of Worry

To these handicaps, there is added insecurity of office and the constant apprehension of being voted out at the next election. No matter how long a union officer has been in office he is never secure from defeat by either an able person in the ranks or by a general change of sentiment or policy within the organization. His financial condition, to say the least, is not stable.

He is the first to suffer when the union treasury is at a low ebb. Moreover, despite the usually moderate salaries paid to union officers, they are compelled by the exigency of their office to be liberal and frequently personally assist needy union members whose distress calls for immediate aid.

The spectre is always before them that, after holding office for years, and after having become practically unfit to work again at the bench or machine, they are liable to lose their office in their middle age and be left adrift with no support from their fellow members, actually thrown out on the scrap heap of life.

Is there any wonder that the ordinary labor leader is older than his age, that he suffers from insomnia and nervousness, from indigestion and other gastric disturbances, that he is subject to too high or too low blood pressure, develops early arterio-sclerosis and thus becomes an early candidate for the Grim Reaper?

A Doctor's Suggestions

If labor organizations wish to attract and retain as their leaders an intelligent and able personnel, and if the leaders of labor are not continually to be burnt up physically and mentally by the terrific pressure of their posts, a radical change must be made in the treatment and in the aspect of trade unions toward their officers, both with regard to security of tenure, the burdens put upon them, the treatment accorded to them, and last but not least, in reasonable pensions to be allotted to them after years of service.

Above all, labor leaders should recognize the immense value of periodical medical examinations that would check regularly and sometimes poorly chosen and too rich food. He has no rest during the day, enjoys no week-end recreations, and seldom enjoys a real vacation.

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Women's Trade Union League Classes Open October 17

The New York Women's Trade Union League has started its ninth year of evening classes during the week of October 17. The program includes a wide variety of courses. An introduction to Social Philosophy will be given by Dr. Max Lerner, of the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences. This course will include an analysis of the work of social thinkers such as Marx, Veblen, Dewey and Freud. Men and Women who want to study and to analyze the current trends of modern social thought will find an opportunity in this group.

Miss Josephine Colby of Brookwood Labor College will give a course in Public Speaking for Use in the Labor Movement for those who want to be able to speak readily when called on at meetings. The program also includes a course in Imperialism with special emphasis on the problems of North and South America. There is a class in English for those who feel they have something to say but can't say it, and a more advanced class in Literature for those who love to read and write. The League is again giving a class in Pottery, which is open to industrial workers at a reduced fee—$7.50 for 20 lessons.

A new group will be organized this year—the Workers' Dance Theatre which is a scholarship course open to industrial workers, both men and women. It is hoped to make this the nucleus of a Workers' Theatre and there will be an opportunity to make use of a wide variety of talent—dancing, acting, scenery designing and building, as well as writing.

Fees for the courses of 20 lessons range from $2.50 to $5.00.
A Work-Week Geared To Production

By RICHARD H. WALDO,
President, McClure Newspaper Syndicate

For some years I observed the steady decrease of working time and our vast increase of wealth with the conviction that they were closely related. My first job as an office boy in 1894 brought me into contact with the 12-hour day, six days a week. My $1 weekly wage was in keeping with the standards of the time. If we had maintained that schedule of working hours we must have remained on approximately the same standards of living.

From 1910 to 1918 mass production—and therefore labor-saving—machinery was developed by this nation in the face of European skepticism. Over the same 20 years, American labor was conceded reductions in working time—mostly by the strike and lockout routes—in a roughly proportionate measure. By the end of the Great War Europe no longer scoffed at mass production. Perhaps the greatest single achievement of the war was the convincing of the nations that mass production would rule the future.

United States Equipped Europe

Capital did not foresee and labor did not forecast that the war would give the United States a temporary golden time while Europe was getting on its feet, and that thereafter we should have from at least the European countries a competition that would level the peak of prosperity to the plane of a struggle for subsistence.

When capital and labor agreed in 1918 to a standard eight-hour day they brought into effect an average 50-hour week. In 20 years ten hours a week had been cut from the average individual's working time. We can see now by the charts that it was not enough, but that the average of 30 minutes' reduction a year for 20 years was a wholesome move in the right direction.

Had the agreement carried with it a provision for further reductions proportioned to the development of machine efficiency we would not be where we are today. Instead, the eight-hour day had been treated as a sacred thing, and between 1918 and 1929 a reduction in average working time of only 30 minutes for the entire period was conceded—less than three minutes a year was handed back to the employee-consumer while our prosperity was rocking the world.

That Hog-Wild Era

And that prosperity was built in large measure upon the failure to make proper reductions in working time. Book profits of corporations and small concerns alike piled up as pay rolls were cut down. These profits stimulated the purchase of labor-saving machinery, of bond issues based on profit showings, of stock flotation founded on prospective profits, and lock-splitting over justified by profits yet to be achieved. Everybody could get in on the operations and nearly everybody did. But there was a major error in the whole project. Yet the separation of consumers from pay rolls at a steadily ascending rate was viewed with alarm by but a few—and their warning voices were drowned in the clicking of the tickers.

We had come to the peak of our production economy, but we could not see it. During the brief life of the Republic we have fostered production as though there never could be enough. Our economists, our bankers, our business men and therefore our political leaders have called for savings to the end that they should be invested in the production of more goods and more service. That consumption, growing by its own pressure as natural gas flows out of the earth, presently must be planned and measured has registered on few minds. But the time has come upon us now when we shall either make orderly plans for stabilizing and upbuilding consumption or we shall see the end of our economic system through the natural pressure of grave social disorders.

Which Way For Us?

Few indeed would approve a return to the twelve-hour day. With the inventions that we have developed it is manifest that a comparatively few plants, working their machines twelve hours a day, could turn out more than enough to meet our present consuming demands. It is also quite clear that increased millions thus unemployed would have to be taken care of by charity or a dole.

At the other extreme we can picture what would happen if we attempted to rula our machines but one hour a day. Though employment were to reach an approximate 100 per cent we could not meet the existing consumers' demand. If we contrast the two extremes we shall seek a reasonable medium. At some point general employment would produce general consumption, and general consumption would maintain general employment. The eight-hour day has failed to meet the specifications. Then what working time will meet them?

Jobs and Confidence

The sound and very able statistical section of the American Federation of Labor estimates an average six-hour day as an approximation. The American Legion endorses the estimate.

In 1929 our average pay roll time was formerly six and a half hours a week. If 98 per cent of the people available and competent for employment had been put to work they would have produced with an average of thirty-four working hours a week all that we could have then consumed. The fifteen and a half-hour error compelled layoffs, which dug the initial pit in which we have fallen. We have widened and deepened that pit steadily. Fear and the burden of caring for the unemployed will continue their underlining work until jobs and confidence in jobs reestablish the spending habits of our people.

Leaders of the world as we have been in mass production and mass consumption, we have drawn the rest of the world into the pit with us. Our machines they have, our training of their men they have, our money they have, but even less than we have they any grasp of the fact that machine efficiency must be balanced by proportionate reduction of human working hours if consumption is to be sustained.

The thirty-hour week, or its approximation, is not an experiment. More than 600 concerns throughout the country have taken it on. The Kellogg Cornflakes people have shown the high efficiency of the single six-hour shift without break as against the eight-hour day with lunch time out. Reducing working time has been demonstrated simply as producing increased employment and stabilized profits.

—International Labor News Service.

Morris Bialis Re-elected in Chicago

As we go to press, we received the news that Vice-President Morris Bialis has been re-elected manager of the Chicago Joint Board in the election held on Wednesday, October 26.

All the locals affiliated with the Chicago Joint Board took part in the voting. The number of ballots cast was 789, of which the successful candidates for manager and secretary-treasurer, Morris Bialis and M. A. Goldstein, received 533 and 462 respectively.
American Labor After the Depression

By Paul Scharrenberg, Secretary, California State Federation of Labor

In 1923 American labor received eleven million dollars in wages. In 1929, eleven billion five hundred million dollars. During the same period the claimed volume of manufactured goods increased nearly one billion dollars.

The difference between wage increases and production increases leaves goods worth eight billion five hundred million dollars on the pile. The goods can’t be bought by the wage increase.

The failure to give as much attention to fairly equitable distribution of wealth as we now give to developing production has landed us in a blind alley. The only thing for us to do is to look into the mirror and turn back.

There have been plans and systems galore for leading us out of this economic mess, Labor’s program is very simple.

The traditional union plan is to reduce the cost of labor and increase the worker’s income proportion to increasing production.

For many years the American Federation of Labor has worried what would happen if the plan were not followed. By neglecting this lesson, we have destroyed the one advantage we have over the plans of our capitalist opponents.

Temporary relations between labor and management must be dealt with under the laws of the land. But, where the government has passed laws, the States, the States have been to the standard of the cities.

In California coal miners and steel workers have reduced wages, while union men are working for their board, but without any resort to the ballot box.

Charity raised $50 million in the rich city of typographical union embers raised three cents.

The only way to do is to turn to the ballot box. We must get well organized and not have to talk about depression.

My radical friends are wrong and say the entire system must eradicate it. The only real way to do is to turn to the ballot box. We must get well organized and not have to talk about depression.
Nearly $5,000 Paid Out For Relief

In conformity with the decision of the membership meeting held on August 29, ratifying the recommendation of the Executive Board to levy an assessment of 3 per cent on the wages of all employed cutters up to December 1, to raise an emergency relief fund, the office proceeded to set up the machinery for the collection of this tax and simultaneously installed a system for checking up on all those who might fail to pay wholly or in part to this fund.

In view of the fact that many cutters, even at this time, which is supposed to be the peak of the season, are working only part time, the collection of the tax did not come up to the expectations. Our records show that the majority of the men working in sub-manufacturing shops are employed only one or two days a week. It is quite obvious that the tax receipts from these men could not be large. Nevertheless, it may be said to the credit of the vast majority of our members that up to this time they were prompt in their payments and very few attempted to dodge. Thanks to this, the Local has been able to pay out until this date in relief an amount well over $4,000.

Over 400 Needy Members Receive Relief

As a result of this emergency relief fund many members who were in dire need were able to get some help. Until now more than 400 members have already received relief.

The headquarters of the Local were swarmed during the past few weeks with hundreds of cutters on the nights the Relief Committee met. The office was kept open very late on such nights, and with the exception of one or two, all those who applied obtained relief.

The Relief Committee, appointed by the Executive Board, consists of Brothers Louis Forer, chairman, Louis Pankin, Harry Friedman, Morris Strauss, Morris Wulfskay and Morris Pellez. This committee, in addition to fixing the amounts of relief to be given to applicants, is also charged with the duty of investigating numerous cases, their eligibility for relief and the degree of their need. To be sure, within the last few weeks a number of complaints were filed in the office against some members who applied for relief, charging that they were working right now either in the trade or were earning money at other occupations.

Incidents of such a nature are bound to arise with the establishment of a relief agency in an organization with a membership of several thousand. It may be expected that unscrupulous fellows would attempt to take advantage of this fund at the expense of those who are in actual need. The Relief Committee, together with the Executive Board, will have to be on the alert and act severely with such as misrepresent themselves as being out of work. It could be stated, however, with certainty that nearly all who received relief were absolutely entitled to it. This Committee will also have to be equally strict with those who deliberately fail to meet the payment of the 3 per cent tax.

Old Age Pension Another Feature in Local

In addition to the many members who are being helped by the Relief Fund, our Local is facing another important problem in its aged members.

About five years ago, Local 16 conceived, upon the initiative of President David Dubinsky, then manager of the local, the idea of an old age pension fund for aged members of the local who found it difficult to secure employment. Such a fund was instituted with an initial capital of about $18,000. This fund was raised from advertisements in a souvenir printed in connection with a ball and entertainment held in 1928. Brothers Samuel Perlmuther, Isidore Neiger, David Dubinsky, Maurice W. Jacobs and Louis Pankin were then elected as a committee to plan for the fund. That committee suggested an amendment to our local constitution providing for an annual tax of 1% per member which would go towards that fund, and the amendment was adopted.

Besides these two funds, Local 16 also has a tuberculosis fund which entitles a member to $100 in case of tuberculosis affliction. These are the three major benefit funds existing in the organization.

Ladies' Tailors Strike Settled

The recent strike in the ladies tailoring trade has brought about the renewal of agreements in many shops. Among them were the firms of Hartle Carnegie, Millgrim Bros., Mont-Sano & Prunx and others. Local No. 18 attempted also during this strike to organize the firms of Nettie Rosenfeld, Corena Drum and Copeland Drum, but did not succeed as the workers in these shops, with the exception of the cutters, failed to respond to the strike call.

At this writing, Local 16 is still continuing strikes against these firms and their cutting departments remain paralyzed. The firm of Corena Drum in particular, an old firm that never had a union shop, is expected to put up a stubborn and protracted fight. Local 16 is nevertheless doing all in its power to get the firm to grant union conditions to the cutters in this shop.

As regards Hattie Carnegie, we had several conferences with them prior to the signing of the agreement with which the firm submitted a list of demands to us, among them reorganization, which implied the dismissal of about 50 per cent of all workers, including cutters, and reduction of wages. The Union, on the other hand, informed the firm that unless the demand or reorganization is withdrawn it would at once be declared on strike. The firm finally withdrew the demand for reorganization and also agreed to the suggestion of the Union that the reduction of wages, not in excess of 10 per cent, should be submitted to arbitration. This tentative agreement was ratified by the workers and a strike was thus averted. The wage question and some other minor points will shortly be submitted to arbitration.

Several Important Firms Lay Off Cutters

The condition in the cloak and dress industry at the present, instead of improving, has been growing worse despite the fact that this is supposed to be the height of the season. For about a week or two those members to be a slight indication of the beginning of a season. Some sub-manufacturers started to work on merchandise received from jobbers, but at this writing it appears that this was but a flash in a pan. Several firms, in fact, have laid off cutters while the sub-manufacturers are still far from starting any sort of a season. Whatever work the jobbers do have, is going out of town largely, and this presents one of the gravest problems to us and menaces the very existence of our Union.

The General Executive Board at its recent session held at Forest Park, Pa., decided to appropriate 3 cents of its weekly per capita revenue towards out-of-town organization work, and it is hoped that this activity will now be started on a wider scale, and an effective out-of-town organizing work could help this situation materially.

(Continued on next page)
Charges of Non-Cooperation Unwarranted

At a recent meeting of Local 22, we were informed, charges of non-cooperation with the Dress Joint Board locals were openly directed against locals 10 and 35. Not being a member of Local 22 and not being present at that meeting, I cannot, of course, explain the motives behind these insinuations. If the failure of the Dress Joint Board to function properly were due to lack of cooperation on the part of Local 10, I should consider it a very serious charge, and Local 22 should have referred such charges directly to the International. So far as I know some officers of Local 22 have from time to time, in and out of season, made general statements accusing everybody, Local 10 included, but never have they been able to show definitely when Local 10 was not cooperating to the fullest extent. As a matter of fact, at the Philadelphia convention, after some of the delegates of Local 22 had repeated these charges, the writer of these lines challenged their statements and proved that Local 10 had at all times met its financial obligation to the Dress Joint Board. He also proved that in a number of shops such as the German Mantel and Chas. Armour, where strikes were declared by the Joint Board, the cutters were the only ones to answer to the call while the rest of the workers who are supposed to be members of Local 22 had failed to come out, with the result that the loyal cutters lost their jobs.

Our Record in Our Best Defense

I am authorised by the Executive Board of Local 10, to state emphatically that these charges are absolutely false and are nothing short of a deliberate attempt to besmirch a Local Union of the International whose record can be traced back 45 years as an organization which at all times was ready to take the first trench lines in supporting every enterprise undertaken by the Interna-

The Month in Local 10

(Continued from preceding page)

national whether in time of strikes, organization campaigns or of the leaders of the organization. They should remember the struggle which Local 10 has had to fight as a whole, they should reflect the several recent attempts at the local level to take the leadership and enter into the conflicts which all the members and officers of Local 22 should therefore appear quite ridiculous and unwarranted to support the active worker alliance with the International or with the labor movement in general. It would seem to me that those who are making these accusations do not themselves believe in them.

I submit for our Local 10 and for our Executive Board that we have no quarrels with any local in the Dress Joint Board or in any other Joint Board. No Joint Board or other body can possibly progress unless all its component parties are united and work to a common harmony. As far as Local 10 is concerned it has always had the highest esteem for our parent body, the International and its leadership, especially today. Our suggestion to Local 22 is to please stop making Local 10 a target for their fibs and insinuations and rather direct all of the support of the other locals in more effective and constructive work for the benefit of the dressmakers and of our entire Union.

ATTENTION
CUTTERS OF LOCAL 10

The meetings for the month of NOVEMBER, will take place in the order as herein arranged:
1. Regular Membership Meeting, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1932
2. Special Membership Meeting, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1932.
All the above meetings are to be held in Arlington Hall, 23 St. Marks Place, at 7:30 P. M.
Cutters are urged to attend without fail.

ATTENTION CUTTERS OF LOCAL 10

A SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

for the purpose of nominating officers for the term of 1933, will be held on MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28
at ARLINGTON HALL,
23 St. Marks Place, at 7:30 P. M.

READERS OF JUSTICE

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

Are You An American Citizen?

IF NOT—LET US HELP YOU

We have opened a branch office near Union Square for the convenience of the members of the International. American citizenship is of vital importance to you as a worker, as the head of a family, as a member of a labor union.

Come to us for all necessary information.

Naturalization Aid League
Room 302—Hand School—7 East 18th Street, New York
Telephone Algonquita 4-4731
Open from 10 A. M. to 7 P. M.