Justice (Vol. 1, Iss. 9)

Keywords
International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union, ILGWU, labor unions, clothing workers, textile workers, garment workers, garment industry, New York, United States

Comments
Justice was the official publication of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union ILGWU from 1919 to 1995. Editions of Justice were published in English, Italian, Spanish, and Yiddish. When compared side by side, the content of some of these different editions of Justice shows significant differences. This is the English-language edition of Justice.
This was eight years ago, on the 15th of March, 1911, on a Saturday which since then is known by the dreadful name of "Triangle Tragedy." It is declared the greatest fire in the history of the city, the entire city of New York, the entire country and, indeed, the whole world. The mothers were horror stricken at the terrible Triangle fire, in which 147 young lives of ladies' 'waistmakers' suffered the most horrible death imaginable.

It was an accident, it was a horrid hellish crime. The victiims were caught in a fire-trap. why? It was all so filthy and cheap conspired to destroy these young lives. The doors through which the girls could escape that have been barred at the order of the Triangle bosses. Nor were there any fire escapes that might have served as a means of escape to some. The elevator was not run at once. It was, indeed, the one choice — a choice between two deaths: to be burned on the elevator, or to jump from the windows and be dashed to pieces and cover the sidewalks with flesh and bone.

It was a weird alternative, and on that Black Saturday 147 human beings were virtually killed in the ladies' 'waist' factory of the Triangle company, a name which no one can recall with the wrath and abhorrence which it deserves.

Eight years passed, and no other such accident — may, massacre, for no other name can be given to the disaster of 1911, — has happened since.

It is because the court sentenced the Triangle bosses to long terms of prison at hard labor, and this sentence cast fear upon all other employers? Oh, no! The court, after a dragged out trial, pronounced the foremost and greatest capitalist of the past century. The world is not the bosses' fault that another Triangle disaster has not occurred between 1911 and 1919. It is the Ladies' Waistmakers' Union, which, having refused to pay tribute through the death of 147 of its members, has kept its vow made at the time of the great march of 1911, that such massacre would happen again.

Perhaps this is news to our new members. If so, let them know that it is their lives persisted in the fire that form the foundation of the Union. These martyrs would have died in vain if upon their mangled bodies were not erected the fortress of the Ladies' Waistmakers' Union, which is now conducting the determined and bitter struggle with bosses of the Ladies' Dress Establishment.

The bosses perhaps wonder whether the girls draw their energy and endurance. Especially since they know that it would be possible to come to some sort of understanding in the matter of wages and hours, which, the bosses think is the main thing with the workers. Why, are they waging so bitter and stubborn a fight for the question of discharge, a question, which, after all affects the majority of them but little?

The bosses evidently do not realize that among the ranks of the living strikers are also the spirits of the dead martyrs who appeal to their brothers and sisters on earth in an ominous voice of martyrdom and warn them:

"Beware of yielding on this point of discharge! If you give in on this point you forfeit your Union, and if you forfeit your Union, know that the same lot, which brought us to our early graves, is in store for you: then, you too, will be burned and mangled and suffer agonies of hell in the minutes that will separate you from a horrible death!"

The scarred arms of the dead martyrs stretch from the graves with a mute appeal:

"For your own lives sake, in the name of your honor as women, do not yield to this point of discharge, and thereby destroy the Union for whose strength and power we fell victims!"

"With our life-blood we built your Union, your stronghold; and now, if you destroy it, be vigilant lest evil befall it. Remember that in your present conflict there is more at stake than a few cents increase, a few hours' leisure. Your dignity, your future, your very lives are at stake!"

It is this voice of our Triangle martyrs that sweeps off the apurposious issues of the bosses like so much cobweb. And it sends the strikers strength to go on and on with the struggle, till the victory is complete, till the Union becomes invincible, and the enemies who will not even in their dreams dare plan for its destruction.

THE LADIES' WAIST MANUFACTURERS COME ONE BY ONE, BUT COME THEY DO!

Last Wednesday Mr. S. Fahrer, the waist manufacturer, signed a contract with the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union at the office of the International, by which the manufacturers' establishments will operate only 44 hours a week and will get a raise in wages, the extent to be agreed upon later. As to the question of discharge, each case will be referred to an impartial chair man who will decide whether the discharge was justified or not, and also whether the boss must reinstate the discharged worker or not.

Fahrer's coming to the Union and his breaking away from the Association is of great significance. He is not only a member of the Executive Committee of the Association, but he is also the chairman of the Labor Board. Besides, he is one of the big manufacturers, the owner of the Lion Waist Co. and the Falcon Waist Co.

His breaking away from the Association is an indication of a present Ascension of power prevailing among the bosses who belong to the Association. They protest against being ruined rather than giving into the just demand of the Union that they are to reinstate workers who were unjustly discharged.

Mr. S. Fahrer was the first to break the ice. With the courage to break away and by doing so showed the prevailing spirit among the manufacturers. It will be easy for the rest to follow in his tracks.

After he signed the agreement Mr. Fahrer said: "A heavy burden is off my shoulders. I wish I had done this seven weeks ago. The stand that the Bosses' Association took in the matter of discharge of an unfortunate one, especially since the question of hours and wages was not greatly involved."

This is, indeed, common sense. The 147 of the dead bosses took it, it is now generally admitted, was an impossible one. There was never a shadow of a chance for them to win the struggle with an "issue," which is contrary to every sense of justice and fairness. Their fight was foredoomed to disaster. The bosses have already come to realize this, and now that the Labor Board has finally been created, they will not be able to take advantage of the remaining few weeks of the season.

THE HARBOR STRIKE

The New York Harbor strike is still far from settlement. On Wednesday, both the War and the Navy Departments agreed to the terms which the United States and the Labor Department offered to the marine workers and which the latter accepted. The strike was reduced to continuous picketing at New York to one between the unions and the private operators of tugboats, lighters, coal and grain vessels.

The strike began to enter an acute stage when the private boat owners made an open appeal for discharged navy men to operate idle harbor craft. Vice President, William A. Maher of the Marine Workers' Affiliation declared that plans had been adopted for taking drastic steps today and the difficulty in moving coal about the harbor tied up or delayed practically all shipping and made a shutdown of the subways one of the possible

WARRIOR LABOR BOARD TO QO

The War Labor Board, which has been so successful in adjusting differences between employers and labor will not continue in operation after the war is officially over.

In a letter to Charles B. Nelson, secretary of the Central Labor Union, H. L. Kerwin, assistant to the secretary of the Department of Labor, says:

"The War Labor Board was formulated by the Government as a court of supervision over industrial relations for the period of the war, and the authority of the board will obtain until the Proclamation of Peace is formally declared by the President."
English Labor and Conscription

We all remember the pledges given by the "coalition" candidates of Great Britain during the last campaign. As a working-class member, among many others, the pledge to abolish conscription was given. The British government, however, has introduced a new military bill which would mean the conscription of 900,000.

Unhappily, this is not the end of the bill last Friday William Adamson, the leader of the parliament, introduced the debate on the measure by
moving to reject the bill. He accused the government of making a bad beginning in their demands for the general abovemention of conscription throughout Europe. He pointed out that this measure, if adopted, would bring ugly memories to the hearts or those who believed that with Prussian militarism despotism has become unnecessary, and it would disillusion those who believed that this country had changed. James H. Thomas, another labor member, voiced the mood of breaking the election pledges in introducing the bill and asked the government intended for the invasion of Russia.

In reply, Mr. Churchill said that only "imperious necessity" forced the government to introduce the bill. But, he added, the pledges had been given this "imperious necessity" could not yet have changed the government will not send masses of conscripts to Russia.

In Spain

The Spanish General Union of Workers is a federation of the most important labor unions of Spain. It was organized in 1889, and its membership of more than 1,000,000, five years later the membership of the order of 1,000,000.

The General Union has always supported the Socialist Labor Party, for the workers of Spain have long ago recognized the necessity of fighting their enemies with both arms, political as well as economic. In fact the organization of the General Union can be traced directly to the activities of the Social Democratic Labor Party, which has been in existence for more than 13 years.

The General Union has a membership of about 700,000, and the government has a membership of almost 150,000.

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Chicago Raincoatmakers

Loud Greenman, manager of Local No. 54, writes:

"The Raincoat Makers' Union is the same bee-hive of activity today as it ever was. In fact, business is better than ever. When the Chicago raincoat makers were resting on their laurels that time, we had a little to do at home, but we don't hesitate to go out to work wherever they possibly can."

Just recently the firm of Samuel L. Nash had a sale on the city sidewalks for eighteen months here in Chicago, decided to part company, and they moved to Milwaukee. The Union, quite aware of their intentions, went all out for them and before they succeeded in finding a snug nest for themselves in Milwaukee, made them feel the raincoat maker organized labor is enough to reach everywhere. Today this firm, we understand, is doing another "haven of refuge." We have plenty to do in Chicago, with the large number of new shops and we are relentlessly going ahead with our work. Our county is blessed, as Speaker of the House, M. A. Head, put it the other day, with "a beautiful city, with a developed city, with a well-warranted reputation for the largest and busiest community of the kind in the United States, and the largest and busiest of the kind in the world." The Board of the War Department has already shown their good intentions to the soldiers by ordering them to the Board of the War Department on the demands which we have not yet received. They have a local a lot of prestige, and the local members are pleased. St. Schenectady, we believe, those hearings will have a lasting influence upon our trade conditions.

"There is a good deal of idleness in our industry in Chicago at the present time. When the making of coats started, there was a large number of workers remaining without jobs. In order to solve this problem we endeavored to the utmost to divide the work equally among the local number of workers, and to then relieve the unemployment. At the same time, we were making a large number of workers without jobs, and we believe that very soon everyone will have some work."

The fact that the Union, in the fall season is expected, and as a number of workers who have come on our trade during the last year have returned to their former occupations, we have reason to hope that the problem of unemployment will not be a vexing one in our organization.

"We are in full requisition on the interior. In the form of a daily, we are now the "Leather Craft" which is established in the Chicago Union. We have the "Leather Craft" in Chicago, and the "Leather Craft" in the city with and without difficulty took down the entire shop. And we are glad to announce that a large number of workers have been employed in various shops in New York to look after the work."

"The New Agreement of the Cincinnati Union"

"The Cincinnati Union is the first of the locals to open its doors to all." (26)

"We have not received the expected reply from Boston, but we have encountered considerable success. We have had several well attended meetings and at each meeting large numbers of tailors signed their names. The work in Boston has been started, and the work in the New York area has been started, and the work in the New York area has a number of tailors. It is difficult to state in one breath the reason why they have been so successful. In the next number of the Cincinnati, we believe, however, that the time is ripe for the organization and we intend to make a campaign as fast as possible. We have recently applied to the International for the renewal of their charter."

"At the time of the Hickson strike in New York, a few weeks ago, Worker, Magna Vista, of Local No. 50, New York, came to Boston and ordered the Board to write the local union branch. We have received the reply, and the work has been started.

"We visited the Worchester clockmakers recently, and found the time has fallen on them. We succeeded in signing up new agreements with the employers, and we are confident that the result of improvements to the workmen has been a special meeting of the Joint Board together with the executive committee and the locals that was called together to consider the emergency. The emergency was the most remarkable that I have ever attended in Cincinnati. It is a well-known fact that the price of coal and the wages of the workers have been increased, and we are now instead of meeting our modest terms with a conciliatory spirit, have been met with a spirit of increase in wages, claiming that now the critical conditions are not faced. We believe that over the workers had no right to demand a living wage. Just think of it! The Union actually insists on operators earning not less than 80 cents per hour, and 60 cents per hour. We made a thorough investigation and found that there was no strike work done for weeks in Fall River by the Order Made Waist Co., at that.

"The workers claimed that the payments belonged to a New York manufacturer whose shop was where the workers labored. We made a thorough investigation and found that while the work belonged to a firm on strike in New York, it was contracted for a long time before the war was any outlook for a strike in the New York industry. In order to avoid a stoppage in this shop, however, we were forced to make a demand for back 350 days and uncut wages to the New York City which we found on the premises."

"I also went to Worcester to look into the situation and see what could be done in order to renew agreements with the employers for Local No. 48, and also to investigate whether there was any strike-work being done in Worcester. From what I learned from the situation I advised the local organization that the town of Worcester was beaten for settlements, as the local shops were not very busy. I expect that in all the factories in Worcester and to give whatever aid I possibly can to the local to get an agreement and better conditions for the workers."

"The war has added to our difficulties of raising a fine, the papers have been published, and the spirit of patriotism and love for the local loveable man and staunch defender of the nation has been on the lookout here in Boston and vicinity for shops where work would be attempted to be made for the New York strike-bound shops. Every one in a shop is anxious for a suspicious place or report and would at once trace it down to the factory."

"Quite recently we were informed from New York that there is a new long strike in Fall River by the Order Made Waist Co., of that city. The workers claimed that the payments belonged to a New York manufacturer whose shop was where the workers labored. We made a thorough investigation and found that while the work belonged to a firm on strike in New York, it was contracted for a long time before the war was any outlook for a strike in the New York industry. In order to avoid a stoppage in this shop, however, we were forced to make a demand for back 350 days and uncut wages to the New York City which we found on the premises."

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This is "Daddy," the idol of our brave, spirited plectrs. Never mind that his name is Henry Werner, member of Local No. 10. He is "Daddy," dear, good, kind Daddy, and the girls refuse to know him by any other name.
Our rich ladies, who have been in the habit of buying the most expensive waists on the market, are naturally rather ready to realize that waists, as a rule, do not drop from the sky to the storekeeper's ready-made; that strange, as it may sound, waists must be made by human hands and that the astounding discovery in that order that they may drop up in price, is the result of a conflict to their envious friends, and hide the cruel pranks that capitalism has on the forms, many young, tender-blossoming girls must stay in the mud and their needles and exhibit, in addition to the vast amount of patience, a great deal of taste and talent.

Our rich ladies are angry. And they are quite right. They want the very best in waists. Prices are no consideration. But the costs of production are in their shoulders. "It's the strike." "It's the strike that is going to put up with what you can get."

"What a strike!" "My, but that is a shame. They have no business to strike!" Poor, innocent little girls who are supposed to be so silly as to refuse making waists. They take it as a personal affront. The grown-ups are told that the manufacturers are only too willing to accommodate them. They sell them all the money on police, gauntlets and all sorts of thugs just so the poor little girls can't strike them. But all this is of no avail. The thugs can accept money for their "sacredness." the women succeed in furnishing "protection." The street waists, the ace, pretty waists, the ladies love so much. And all account on all of those silly girls. The strike continues. As a result of the strike, the workers themselves, the union workers never feared the Association to the extent of quitting their jobs, that is, until the waists were naturally confident of winning their battle, but it was not. This is what the strikers thought the bosses would do, and it stood to reason, for who in their right minds would think that the bosses would take leave of their senses and work ardently for all the workers who were now at work? The bosses would not have gone out on strike the way the workers did, come to a realization, and they will say to its advisors and ring-leaders: "Stop this foolish and ruinous caper."

And the remarkable thing about it is that our strikers are not the only ones that are feeling the vindication on the part of the rich ladies. On the contrary, they are doing their very best to support waists, the rich, pretty waists the women can't buy, rather than stay in the shops and make artistic, fashionable waists.

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It was common sense to expect that the Bosses' Association of the waist industry has been disorganized by the strike and that all of the work that was being competed with them through lower wages and longer hours would have dealt a knockout blow by the strike, would be only too glad of the boost the strike would give them and would lose no time in concealing the demands of the workers.

It occurred to nobody that the bosses would suddenly become interested in the "struggle just as it is still our field?" That you will retain and enjoy the new conditions you have fought for with equal all the same conditions will be gained by us.

We will not appeal to their workers in name of fairies and solidarity, that as union men we desire to see all of them with all their mighty brothers and sisters still on the picket line. We know them to the last one that when they returned to their shops they did not intend to return to the subject of the decision of the union that they are to contribute ten per cent of their wages and any one per cent that were won for them. No, it is useless to appeal to them to recognize their own interests. We want them to realize that if the strike of the ladies' waist makers should be abandoned because of lack of funds, because the strikers will be unable to go on with the strike, all of them, too, will lose all their gains.

This is what we should like to impress upon those laggarows who are slow to contribute the ten per cent of their wages that would be sufficient to carry on the present moment of intense struggle. In saying that the letter has not been written by a union man, but by another stupid on the part of the bosses, to discredit the union in the eyes of the masses of workers, who do nothing but extort the hard-earned dollars from the poor working people under all sorts of excuses. The surprising thing is that, as the newspapers write, that the whole thing was a trick of the bosses. The letter is full of slander written by an employer, who forgot to hide his hand, he was written in bad English, but as he was so longing to make his letter a very good "law" of slanders, it is not what we are concerned with. We mention this letter because it is a typical one of the many that have been written by the northern and the south, and that it is a clear indication of the letter of a callous man in a measure expresses the feelings of the rank and file. And it is this that we regret. We hear that a special group of the 2000 waists makers back to work to fall in line and prove that they are no equal, support union men and women.

DESERVED HONOR TO A SINGER OF THE PEOPLE

Our Yiddish-speaking members and indeed, all the Jewish workers celebrate last night the twenty-fifth anniversary of the literary activities of Abraham Lesan, the eminent Yiddish poet.

Our club has dedicated the honors accorded him by his many friends and admirers in and out of the labor movement. We take this belated opportunity to wish the best wishes to the poet to whom the cause of the poor and oppressed has been a source of inspiration for a quarter of a cen-
The first congress of the Woman's International League, which was held last Saturday and Sunday, is a milestone in the movement for the alleviation of the toil and sorrow of the working woman. The women of the United States have won the right to vote, but the struggle for the betterment of the lives of the working women is far from over. The congress was held in New York City, and the delegates represented women from all parts of the United States and other countries.

The keynote of the congress was the need for cooperation among all working women. The delegates discussed the need for better working conditions, higher wages, and the right to organize. They also discussed the need for education and training for women in order to prepare them for better jobs.

The congress was a large success, with over 2,000 delegates in attendance. The resolutions adopted at the congress will be sent to the various labor unions and women's organizations for action. The congress was a step forward in the fight for the betterment of the lives of working women.
OUR EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

By S. LIBERTY

It will surely please our members to learn that a new feature has been introduced and has already proved a success. This feature is known as the "Our Educational Activities," which will appear as a regular column on a future issue.

The purpose of this column is to keep our members informed about educational activities that may be of interest to them. The column will feature articles on a variety of topics, such as recent developments in education, educational resources, and opportunities for professional growth.

The first article in this column, "How We Know What It Is," is written by Alfred L. Porta. In this article, Porta discusses the importance of effective speaking.

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Before Mr. Gompers called for France to attend the Peace Conference, he addressed a message to American Labor urging them to stand by the principles and declarations that might further the cause of Bolshevism in this country.

Later Mr. Morrison, the secretary of the A. F. of L., sent a circular with the stated conditions against the "Red Peril," and Mr. Bolshievnikow, the menace to the standards of living of the American workingman.

Of course we all were scared to death. We pictured in our minds the total collapse of Lawrence, the failure of all of our industries. In this way we were frightened, the more so that this whole paroxysm of Bolshevism is a mere sham.

And because of our ignorance we are now unable to prepare to meet the possible outcomes of this unknown, formidable foe.

We are all anxious to be enlightened on the nature of this evil that threatens us. We are all anxious to know how to defend ourselves.

Now, at last, this enlightenment has come. We know what menace our country is in, and we may be ready for the defense. For the first time in this crisis of Bolshevism, we are indebted to Mr. Gordan, the brilliant lawyer, and the American Manufacturing Association.

In a statement made public in the interest of the American manufacturing community, Mr. Gordon informs us that the striking Dress and Waist Makers of New York City in this city are entirely free of charge to our members. On the same afternoon we also have the class in Advanced English, Correct Pronunciation and Removal of Foreign Accent.

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The Dress and Waist Cutters have closed shop last Monday which is the closing of the strike begun last March 2nd by the Waist Cutters' Union of the New York State Federation of Labor to protest a reduction in the rate of pay of $12 per week for the trade. Men working there were paid $3 per week for the duration of the strike, which closed the shop.

**GROWTH OF FORGOTTEN LABOR**

The continued growth of organized labor in the face of the most bitter opposition proves that it is a movement of the future. This point should be appreciated by the most prejudiced investigator. But the employer who has never had dealings with trades unions, where associations have been such that it would be impossible for him to hold other than pleasant compensations for their institutions, will claim that organized labor, if he should enter into contractual relations with it, would interfere with his business and dictate what he should or should not do. In addition to these arguments against collective bargaining.

The principles and policies of unionism should be condensed and explained in the one word "co-operation." Co-operation cannot be defended—it must be given voluntarily and is the outgrowth of mutual confidence. It results from the belief that there is a benefit to both employer and employee where the future of the worker may be on the line, the wages of the master, there will be friction, distrust and the important thing with the manufacturer-reduced production.

Where organized labor is employed, where conditions and wages are satisfactory, where the workman knows he has not been discharged unless the employer becomes conscious of any actual physical harm to the factory, and the dependence of the employer on the workman, the employer may, after all, be the stronger party, and the struggle goes on.

**A CORRECTION**

In the last week's issue of this paper a report appeared relating to the closing of a shop and the strike of the Waist Cutters Union of the New York State Federation of Labor. It should be corrected inasmuch as the report was based on an article that was published in the New York World. The report appeared in this paper on the 3rd of March.

**JERSEY TAILORIES**

**AT A STANDSTILL**

At four o'clock Wednesday morning, all the conductors and motormen of the trolley lines in Northern New Jersey went on strike in protest to the shop. The strike was called a shop strike and was a result of the action of the American Federation of Railway Employees of America.

The strike affects 12 counties, and the strikers' demand is that there is a complete standstill.

**LABOR FORUM**

Fourteenth St. and Second Ave. in the city of New York.

**Open Forum**

Sunday, March 16, 8 P.M. "Socialism Under the New Governments in Russia." Speaker—HERBERT F. HOFFMAN

"The Rise of Socialism in Russia after the Revolution," by Dr. W. D. Durant.

"The Rise of Socialism in America after the War," by Dr. W. D. Durant.

"The Rise of Socialism in Germany after the War," by Dr. W. D. Durant.

"The Rise of Socialism in Italy after the War," by Dr. W. D. Durant.
TO ALL LOCALS AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS' UNION.

Greetings:

The New York Call is the only English daily paper which has fought loyally the battles of our workers; and it has made our cause, and aspirations its own. It has always rendered valuable service to us in the hour of need and we must do our utmost to protect it from all possible harm and to insure its future existence.

We are informed that its existence depends upon the good will of a private printer; that it could be made self-supporting, that it could treble its usefulness and become a great organ and mouthpiece of labor, if it obtains its own press and printing plant and is made independent.

The Call needs $50,000 in order to get a printing plant of its own. It has issued 18,000 shares of stock at $5.00. The bonds are non-assessable and are guaranteed to yield 5%. They can be paid out in weekly installments and are an excellent investment. It wants you to buy stock and thus become part owner of the printing plant.

Individually and as an organization it is our duty to come to the assistance of the Call. It is our duty to buy bonds; and we plead with you not to fail to respond to this call.

Remember, the press is the greatest weapon in the hands of the enemies of the workers. It is also our greatest weapon. Let us strengthen it by all means at our command.

Fraternally yours,

AB BAROFF,
General Secretary-Treasurer.

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